

The North Coast Digital Heritage Project

A Network Initiative

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The North Coast Digital Heritage Project

- The Bureau of Land Management's Cultural Resource Program policy calls for establishing an effective means of sharing heritage resource information in digital format. This effort is called the Cultural Resources Data-Sharing Initiative (CRDSI).
- Ideally, the result of this initiative will be that all BLM field offices will hold all cultural resource documentation in digital format linked to a geographic information system (GIS) geodatabase. The data archived in this digital format will be shared with appropriate federal, state, tribal, and local agencies.
- At present, there is no integrated geodatabase for the north coast region of California (see Figure 1). The North Coast Digital Heritage Project (NCDHP) is designed to remedy this situation and add significant functionality to facilitate heritage research.

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Managing by Network

Network Goal / Vision

- The goals of the North Coast Digital Heritage Project are to go well beyond the BLM's CRDSI, since the California Historic Resource Information System's (CHRIS) North Coast Information Center (the state-contracted organization responsible to hold cultural resource documents) is not prepared to offer the information in geodatabase format.
- Moreover, the cultural resource community in our region has identified an important need to compile a much larger, broader-scoped collection of cultural and natural resource information than is typically available at CHRIS facilities.
- Ultimately, the NCDHP is envisioned as a research tool hosting digital versions of regional archaeological and ethnographical records and reports, as well as maps, photos, recordings and videos, of natural and cultural phenomena from across the north coast region.

Network Objectives

- The objectives of the NCDHP are to develop and foster a long-lasting cooperative partnership among interested parties in the north coast region of California.
- The project will work to identify, collect, and digitize all available sources of pertinent information and link those to an integrated secure geodatabase.
- Project data will be available for research purposes at varying levels of security, since some information, such as many site locations, are sensitive and provided protection against possible inappropriate disturbances.
- The integration of a wide array of cultural and natural resource data will allow for greatly enhanced research potential across the region.

Formal and Informal North Coast Digital Heritage Project Network Partnerships

➤ **Partners with Volunteers Agreements**

- None yet

➤ **Partners With Assistance Agreements**

- Humboldt State University
 - Cultural Resource Facility
 - Anthropology Department
 - Geography Department

➤ **Partners Under Contract**

- None yet

➤ **Intra/Inter Agency Partners**

- Six Rivers National Forest

➤ **Partners With MOU**

- None yet

➤ **Informal Partnerships**

- Bear River Band of Rohnerville Rancheria

➤ **Potential Partners**

- CalTrans
- Redwood National Park
- Humboldt Redwoods State Park
- CHRIS North Coast Information Center

Stages of North Coast Digital Heritage Project Development

- ✓ Visioning – The scope of the project continues to expand, to include many additional types of data.
- ✓ Conceptual – The nature of what can eventually be accomplished through various analyses of the integrated data is still not fully realized.
- ✓ Research and Development – Participants continue to seek out additional data sources and methods of incorporating those into the project.
- ✓ Implementation Planning – Partners are actively seeking additional sources of funding to improve the quality and availability of the project and associated data. A prominent goal is to attract additional participants by demonstrating the benefits of the project to regional land and resource managers.
- ✓ Active - Student interns and volunteers are currently working to collect, digitize, and integrate the data with the geodatabase. Actual use of the data at this point is difficult since few of the geographic areas are fully populated with appropriate data.
- ✓ Evaluating – The project is not quite to the stage at which we can evaluate its ultimate success. So far, however, the partnership is strong and participants are active and interested.

What are you doing at this stage to manage the network and move to the next stage?

- The project has a long way to go to be fully functional. At this point the geodatabase-hosting hardware is probably (though not definitely) a temporary arrangement. Additional sources of data and rights to them remain to be identified and obtained. Long-term maintenance of the project has yet to be addressed. Further planning is required and will continue to be a group effort.

Network Geography

North Coast Digital Heritage Project

Communities of Place, Identity, and Interest

Where does your network operate?

The NCDHP partnership was originally envisioned to operate primarily within the north coastal California region. At the same time, given the working product of the partnership, there is no reason interested parties from beyond the redwood curtain should necessarily be precluded from benefitting from the partnership.

Who benefits from the development of your network?

The initially identified beneficiaries of the NCDHP network are the many cultural resource managers consistently living and working within the north coast region. As the project develops, however, it is possible that it may serve as a model for other regional database initiatives, and, in fact, could become the basis for a much larger network of information.

Benefits of The North Coast Digital Heritage Project Network

Present

1. Working to meet BLM cultural program objective of digitizing and sharing cultural resource data.
2. Gathering additional cultural resource data into integrated system for benefit of partner agencies.
3. Building trust and cooperative capacities among regional stakeholders.
4. Creating vision for cutting-edge resource management/research oriented geodatabase on regional scale.

Future

1. Providing for regional repository of digital data to improve accuracy and completeness of cultural resource-related projects.
2. Maintaining spirit of cooperation and trust between a wide variety of regional agencies.
3. Initiating expandable network of both partners and resource data that can integrate on larger spatial and topical scales.

Evaluating Network Potential and Performance

	Evaluation Criteria	Comments
1	Advance strategic priorities of the agency	The NCDHP provides a very effective boost to the BLM CRDSI, by contributing digitizing and linking of data to GIS
2	Leverages funding	Reduces expenses of collecting data not currently held in the field office, since partners are pooling sources
3	Demonstrates big-picture thinking	Goes well beyond agency policy, adding valuable data sources to enhance resource management capabilities
4	Demonstrates entrepreneurship	End product is a valuable research tool for social and physical scientists - provides opportunities for expanded breadth of grant proposals by partner organizations
5	Management of formal agreements and contracts	Project initiated as youth funding proposal to engage students in resource-management strategies through assistance agreements. May lead to additional agreements and/or contracts
6	Demonstrates effective external and internal communication	A work in progress, still a long way to go to achieve ultimate project goals
7	Demonstrates accountability	Also a work in progress, will tie in with network security and access issues, but ultimately enhances agency (including partners in other federal, state, tribal and local organizations) resource management objectives and goals
8	Potential as a network management model	Possible, not yet demonstrated but certainly a desirable long-term goal

Lessons Learned About Network Management

List two to three lessons learned about network management that you wish to share with colleagues within your agency

- Valuable partnerships can be made through collaboration in mutually-beneficial projects. A bit of creative funding proposal work can go a long way when directed towards a highly desirable end goal.
- A really good initial idea can spark creativity from partners that can lead a project well beyond its original conception.

List one to two lessons learned about network management that changed the way you interact with partners

- True partnerships allow for shared management, reducing the amount of work for any one entity while providing greater benefits to all involved.
- Demonstrating trust with current and potential partners improves participation enhances outcomes and may lead to further collaborative efforts in the future.