



# United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE  
1849 C Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20240

## **Policy Memorandum 23-02**

To: National Leadership Council  
Superintendents  
National Heritage Area Coordinators

From: Director

Subject: Use of the Arrowhead Symbol by National Heritage Areas

### **1. Purpose and Duration**

This Policy Memorandum supplements [Special Directive 93-7](#), “Use of the NPS Arrowhead Symbol,” revised November 3, 1995, and [Policy Memorandum 12-01](#), “National Heritage Areas Program,” issued March 14, 2012. It sets forth updated guidance on the use of the National Park Service Arrowhead Symbol by congressionally designated National Heritage Areas.

This Memorandum will remain in effect until amended, superseded, or rescinded by the Director.

### **2. Background**

#### **2.1 National Park Service Arrowhead Symbol**

Since its inception more than 70 years ago, the Arrowhead has come to symbolize the major facets of the National Park System and serves as the National Park Service’s (NPS) most important graphic identifier. The Arrowhead Symbol is a registered trademark of the NPS (see [Registration No. 4706627](#)), protected in accordance with the Lanham Act ([15 USC 1051 et seq.](#)) and subject to the regulations found in [part 11](#) of title 36 of the Code of Federal Regulations. [Special Directive 93-7](#) provides guidance on its use not only by NPS offices and units of the National Park System, but also by outside entities. Exercising proper control of use of the Arrowhead is essential to its protection and enforcement as a trademark.

NPS brand standards provide for creation of graphic identifiers that lock up the NPS Arrowhead with descriptive language, creating a visual cue to a relationship between the NPS and a program.

#### **2.2 National Heritage Areas**

National Heritage Areas (NHAs) are designated by Congress as places where natural, cultural, and historic resources combine to form a cohesive, nationally important landscape. Through their resources, NHAs promote the conservation and celebration of our Nation’s diverse heritage

while sustaining the areas' economic vitality. Using financial and technical assistance to support partnerships between the Federal Government and States, Tribes, and local governments and communities to protect our Nation's heritage also furthers the purposes of the National Historic Preservation Act ([54 USC 300101](#) *et seq.*). NPS work with NHAs is coordinated by the NPS National Heritage Areas Program office.

Each NHA is managed by a local coordinating entity (e.g., a non-profit group, State or local government, Federal commission, or academic institution) that is the recipient of Federal Heritage Partnership Program funding. The funds are managed through cooperative agreements with substantial involvement of the NPS.

To demonstrate the NPS role in coordinating the NHA program, NHA local coordinating entities frequently request use of the NPS Arrowhead Symbol to highlight NHA special events, shared projects, publications, and exhibits. While Special Directive 93-7 does not specifically address use of the Arrowhead Symbol by NHA local coordinating entities, strategic use of the Arrowhead Symbol by them can serve to (1) highlight the connection between them and the NPS, and (2) further the purposes of education and conservation as they relate to the programs of the NPS.

This Memorandum introduces to NHA local coordinating entities and NPS employees a new graphic identifier (NHA System Graphic) that visually represents the NHAs as part of a national system managed by the NPS through the NHA program (see [Public Law 117-339](#), National Heritage Area Act, January 5, 2023). The NHA System Graphic is a lockup of the Arrowhead with general text that an area is a member of the NHA System. This Memorandum provides guidance on permissible and prohibited uses of the NHA System Graphic, the approval process for requests outside of these categories, and the technical specifications associated with use of the NHA System Graphic.

### **3. Policy**

#### **3.1 General – NHA System Graphic**

As outlined in this section, NHA local coordinating entities are authorized to use the approved NHA System Graphic for specific uses without prior approval from the NPS provided that certain conditions are met.

First, the use must be specifically listed in section 3.3 of this Memorandum as a permissible use by the local coordinating entity. If the use falls outside this category, the local coordinating entity must follow the process outlined in section 3.5 for conditional approval. The local coordinating entity can never use the graphic for any uses listed in section 3.4 on prohibited uses.

Second, the local coordinating entity must use one of the approved versions of the NHA System Graphic without any modification to the design elements or partnership language, although the overall size of the NHA System Graphic may be scaled to the use. Any use of the NHA System Graphic must follow all technical specifications as established in section 3.2 and referenced in [National Heritage Area System Identity Standards](#).

Third, approval to use the NHA System Graphic is only given to the official local coordinating entity associated with an NHA as designated by Congress. It is not transferable to any other entity associated with the NHA or other partners involved in an event or project, nor is the local coordinating entity allowed to use the NHA System Graphic outside of the parameters of this policy.

Fourth, where the local coordinating entity intends to use the NHA System Graphic on publications, webpages, waysides, or other interpretive materials, the NHA System Graphic must be accompanied by language describing the partnership in the text of the materials.

### 3.2 NHA System Graphic

To demonstrate the NPS role in coordinating the NHA Program, promote the use of a consistent graphic identifier, and streamline the process for approval of standard applications of the NHA System Graphic, local coordinating entities are encouraged to use the NHA System Graphic as follows:



The Harpers Ferry Center for Media Services developed brand and identity standards for use of the NHA System Graphic by NHA local coordinating entities. These standards define technical specifications, treatments, and provisions for use of the NHA System Graphic. See [National Heritage Area System Identity Standards](#).

Any technical questions regarding use of the NHA System Graphic should be directed to [NPSbrand@nps.gov](mailto:NPSbrand@nps.gov).

### 3.3 Permissible Uses

Each NHA has its own unique logo that should serve as its primary graphic identifier. The NPS acknowledges that situations arise when the NHA local coordinating entity or the NPS may want to highlight their partnership relationship, such as for special events, educational or interpretive materials or exhibits, or waysides and signs. The NPS has created the NHA System Graphic for use in these situations, subject to this Memorandum. In such situations, the NHA System Graphic should not replace the NHA's primary graphic identifier but may be used in association with it.

For the following listed uses, local coordinating entities are authorized to use the NHA System Graphic without prior approval from the NPS, provided that the use meets the conditions and is undertaken in the manner described in sections 3.1-3.2:

- NHA publications (including brochures);
- NHA webpages (but not in association with fundraising or membership);

- NHA-staffed visitor centers (but not as the primary identifier of the center);
- on temporary signs when recognizing NPS funding on projects;
- highway signs (refer to Department of Transportation (DOT)/State standards and requirements);
- interpretive waysides; and
- exhibits.

For other uses not listed, please refer to the approval process in section 3.5. For questions related to NPS sign standards, please contact [NPS\\_SI@nps.gov](mailto:NPS_SI@nps.gov). While it is unlikely that there will be space for the NHA System Graphic on highway signs given space limitations, should there be interest, please refer to DOT/State standards and requirements and contact [NPS\\_SI@nps.gov](mailto:NPS_SI@nps.gov) with any additional questions or support.

### 3.4 Prohibited Uses

No reproduction of the NHA System Graphic that changes the wording or design elements found therein will be permitted. In addition, the use of the NHA System Graphic in the following situations is prohibited:

- as the primary graphic identifier for the NHA or the local coordinating entity;
- as the primary graphic identifier on NHA local coordinating entity materials (e.g., primary profile image for web and social media platforms);
- mementos, trinkets, giveaways, or sales merchandise;
- vehicles, boats, and any other equipment that does not belong directly to the NPS and/or is not operated by NPS staff;
- buildings or structures that do not belong directly to the NPS and/or are not operated by NPS staff;
- sites not owned or operated directly by the NHA local coordinating entity;
- clothing or uniforms for NHA staff or volunteers;
- business cards for NHA staff; and
- any prohibited use in Special Directive 93-7.

### 3.5 Conditional Use Approval Process

For any use of the NHA System Graphic by local coordinating entities or NPS employees not described in section 3.3, the following review and approval process has been established.

Requests should be sent to [npsbrand@nps.gov](mailto:npsbrand@nps.gov), with a copy to the NPS regional NHA coordinator, and must include the following information:

- intended use and list of materials that will be created;
- intended audience;
- requested start of use (note that approval can take up to six weeks);
- sample where appropriate; and
- any additional details.

### 3.6 Use of the NPS Arrowhead Symbol

This Memorandum covers the use of the NHA System Graphic as outlined in section 3.2. Requests to use the NPS Arrowhead Symbol specifically will follow the normal process, i.e., a request should be sent to [npsbrand@nps.gov](mailto:npsbrand@nps.gov), with a copy to the NPS regional NHA coordinator, to include the following information:

- intended use and list of materials that will be created;
- for use on websites, a URL and mock-up of webpage;
- intended audience;
- requested start of use (note that approval can take up to six weeks);
- sample where appropriate; and
- any additional details.

### **4. No Third-Party Enforceability**

This Memorandum is intended only to improve the internal management of the NPS and is not intended to, and does not, create any right or benefit, substantive or procedural, enforceable at law or equity by a party against the United States, its departments, agencies, instrumentalities or entities, its officers or employees, or any other person.

*-----End of Policy Memorandum-----*