

Item 20-17: National Heritage Area Sign Policy

Recommendation: Revise the CA MUTCD to include National Heritage Area signage.

Requesting Agency / Sponsor: Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta Conservancy and Caltrans / Monica Kress-Wooster, CTCDC Voting member

Background:

After years of tireless efforts by Congressman John Garamendi and Senator Dianne Feinstein, the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta National Heritage Area was created on March 12, 2019 when the John D. Dingell, Jr. Conservation, Management, and Recreation Act was signed into law. Although there are now 55 National Heritage Areas (NHAs) nationwide, the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta NHA is California's first.

The Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta NHA traces back to the 2009 Delta Reform Act, which charged the Delta Protection Commission with developing a proposal to protect, enhance, and sustain the unique cultural, historical, recreational, and agricultural values of the Delta as an evolving place. The proposal included a plan to establish state and federal designation of the Delta as a place of special significance, such as the federal designation of the Delta as a National Heritage Area.

NHAs are designated by Congress as places where natural, cultural, historic, and recreation resources combine to form a cohesive, nationally-important landscape. NHAs are a grassroots, community-driven approach to heritage conservation and economic development. Designated local coordinating entities collaborate with communities to determine how to make heritage relevant to local interests and needs. The NHA program is administered by the National Park Service (NPS).

Recognizing that one of the main issues highlighted in community surveys has been the lack of helpful signage in the Delta, the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta Conservancy and the Delta Protection Commission have partnered to develop a Delta Sign Plan, which recommends new signage to promote and increase visitors to the Delta area. The intent is to place signs in safe locations along Caltrans rights-of-way, where they will have the most impact in informing visitors that they have entered the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta National Heritage Area.

The Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta Conservancy is a primary California state agency in the implementation of ecosystem restoration in the Delta. The Conservancy supports efforts that advance environmental protection and the economic well-being of Delta residents.

The Delta Protection Commission is also a California state agency that represents the people who live, work and recreate in the Delta region, and advises on how best to "protect and enhance the unique cultural, recreational, natural resource and agricultural values of the Delta as an evolving place." Among the Commission members is the Secretary of the California State Transportation Agency, whose current designee is Dennis Agar, Caltrans District 10 Interim Director.

The project team is submitting two designs for approval, to allow for the flexibility to use the National Park Service (NPS) logo if approved by the NPS.

National MUTCD allows the states to develop word message signs. Therefore other states have developed signs for NHAs, see examples below:



Proposal:

Proposed Policy Changes

Note: **Red** text is proposed text.

~~Struck-out black~~ text indicates federal text not applicable in California.

~~Struck-out blue~~ text is to be deleted from the CA MUTCD.

Section 2M.02 Application of Recreational and Cultural interest Area Signs

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Guidance:

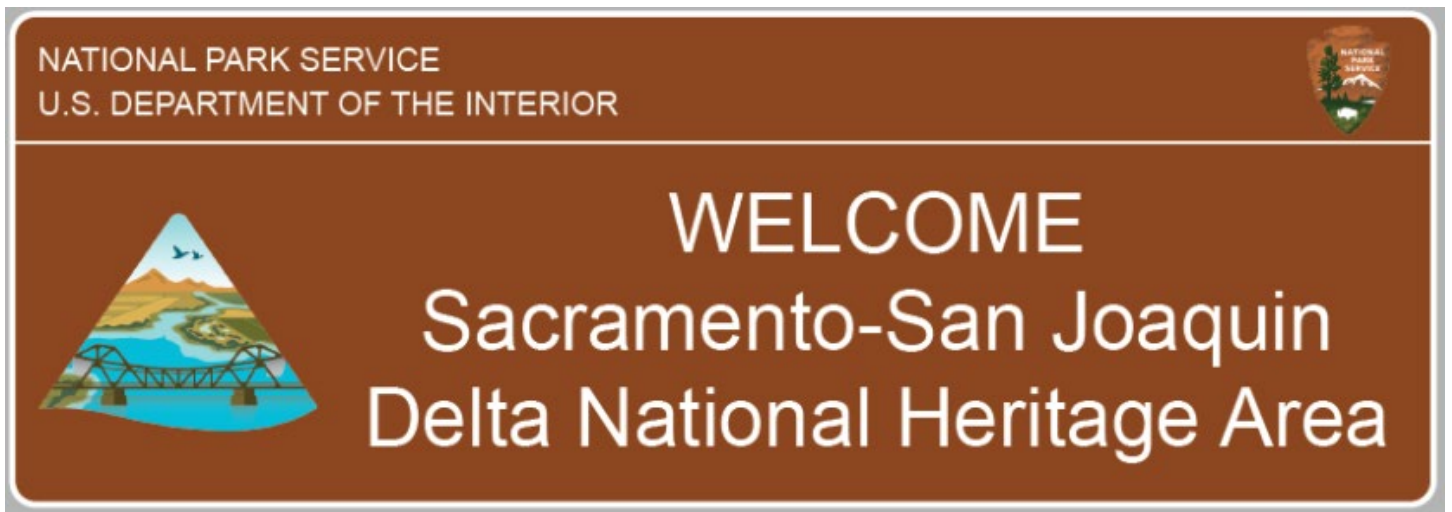
⁰⁶ *Recreational area signs to **National Heritage Area**, National Parks and State Parks should normally include the name of the area. County and City Park signs should not normally include the name.*

Option:

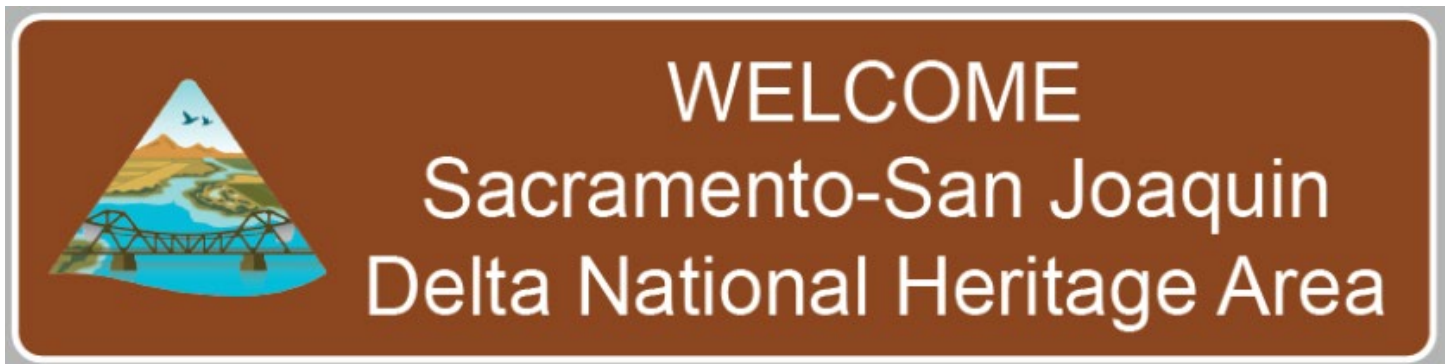
⁰⁷ Recreational area signs may be placed for the following facilities:

- A. **National Heritage Area**
- B. National Parks or Monuments.
- C. State Parks, when located within 5 miles of the highway.
- D. County Parks, when located within 3 miles of the highway.
- E. In urban areas, City Parks within 1 mile may be signed from conventional highways. Normally, City Parks will not be signed to or from metropolitan freeways.
- F. Campgrounds in National Forests or State Parks may be signed from conventional highways when the entrances are located on the highway. An advance sign reading "Campground 1/4 mile" may be placed. Signs at the immediate entrance will be placed by the agency having jurisdiction over the campground.
- G. Major rural recreational areas may be signed by name. When a recreational area is served by more than a single exit, the appropriate colored NEXT X EXITS (E9) sign may be used. Normally, the sign will include the name of the area and the text "RECREATIONAL AREA".
- H. In rural recreational areas, guide signs may be supplemented with white on brown symbol signs mounted below indicating recreational facilities available to the road users.

Proposed New Signs



Alternative 1 (Size 174" X 60")



Alternative 2 (Size 174" X 42")