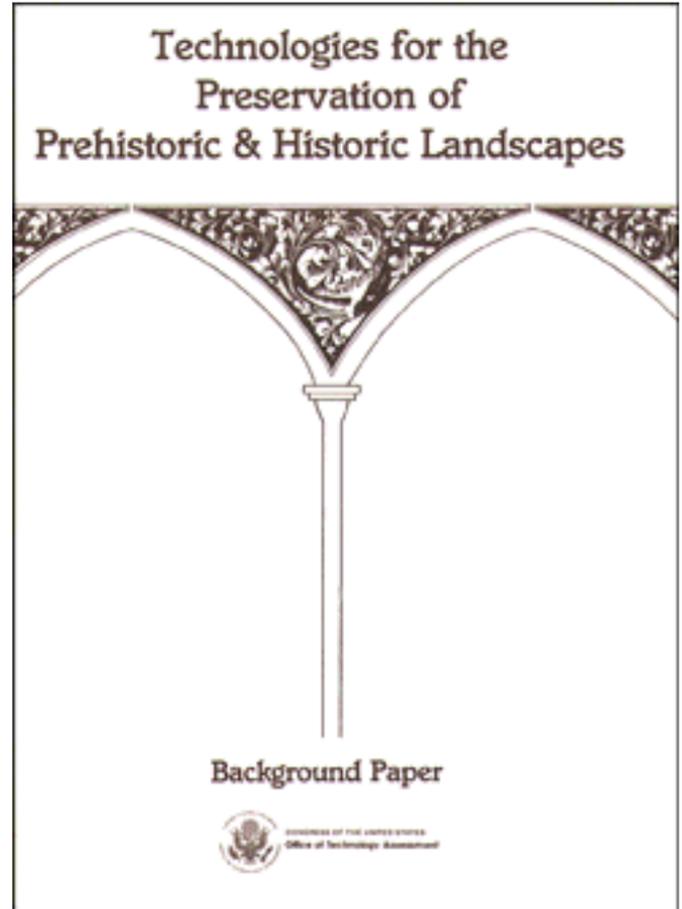


*Technologies for the Preservation of
Prehistoric and Historic Landscapes*

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Foreword

in recent years, the American public and Congress have become much more aware of the value of historic landscapes as teachers and guides to America's heritage. interest in preserving landscapes for the enjoyment and education of future generations extends well beyond saving historic battlefields and the grounds of historic houses, and now encompasses such varied cultural landscapes as the Pinelands of New Jersey, the historic courtyards of Arizona, tobacco farms in Kentucky, and the historic parks and gardens of landscape architects. These and other historic landscapes in every State of the Union reflect the exciting cultural diversity of rural and urban America.

As this background paper shows, the implementation of Federal historic preservation laws with respect to historic landscapes lags far behind the effort expended on historic buildings and archaeological sites. For example, to date, no one has inventoried the many gardens, parks, and other historic landscapes designed by the well-known firms of Frederick Law Olmsted and his associates. Yet these landscapes, which grace most major U.S. cities, stand out as prime examples of American design and cultural values. The desire to rectify this situation has led to congressional consideration of a specific bill, the Olmsted Heritage Landscapes Act of 1987, which is discussed and analyzed in this background paper.

Because landscapes are always living, growing, and dying, they are highly vulnerable to environmental changes, from both human and natural agents. This background paper illustrates the importance of continuing to apply certain high leverage, cost-effective technologies, such as remote sensing and computer hardware and software, if this Nation wishes to protect, restore, and preserve important parts of its rich heritage for future generations of Americans.

In undertaking this work, OTA sought the contributions of a wide spectrum of knowledgeable and interested people within Federal and State governments and the private sector. Some provided information and guidance, others reviewed drafts of this background paper. OTA gratefully acknowledges their contributions of time and intellectual effort.



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