

CULTURAL RESOURCE STRATEGIES FOR ADAPTATION

FIRST: IDENTIFY RESOURCES SO PRIORITIES CAN BE DETERMINED

So what do these adaptation options really mean:

DO NOTHING: once the need to address climate change vulnerability is recognized, making the decision to take no action is a possible decision.

- Low vulnerability has been determined, therefore no active intervention is warranted
- No action possible due to technical or economic constraints
- May include monitoring or plan to revisit decision at a future point in time
 - Crack monitors installed in historic structures,
 - water-level sensors added to coastal building foundations

OFFSITE ACTION: is definitely an option, but potential consequences need to be explored and better understood.

- Remove or deflect environmental stresses by taking action at some, remove from the resource
- Enhance resiliency while minimizing changes to physical materials or setting of the resource
- Action likely to impact surrounding resources such as natural habitat or infrastructure
 - Sandbags
 - Offsite retaining walls
 - Breakwater or “living” shoreline to reduce erosion
 - Upstream re-vegetation to reduce flood hazards

IMPROVE RESILIENCY: this option is where the crux of our problem-solving is going to occur. This one would have the most tiers, representing levels of intervention or modification.

- Alter or modify the resource itself to better withstand stressor or impacts
- Action intended for survival of the resource
- May (or may not) affect integrity of the resource
 - Treat structural materials to better withstand increased moisture, wind or an invasive species
 - Relocate building systems
 - Raise building above projected flood levels
 - Addition of a cap over an archaeological site
 - Changes in landscape plantings
 - Alternative storage arrangement of museum materials on site

RELOCATE OR ALLOW MOVEMENT: this option is essentially evasive action – getting out of the way of the threat.

- Actively relocate some or all of the resource to a less vulnerable location
- Allow natural movement or processes to occur
- Such shifts may move the resource outside of documented resource boundaries
 - Move building to new location
 - Relocate museum/library/town record collections to another sited
 - Allow marsh or barrier island to migrate inland
 - Allow culturally significant species to shift range

DATA RECOVERY, THEN LET GO: this option could mean everything from benign neglect (letting nature have its way over time), to triage in a few areas rather than the entire resource, to actively demolishing a resource.

- Comprehensively record or otherwise preserve as complete a record as possible
- Allow the geographic location of the resource to undergo full effects of environmental or other forces which are likely to destroy or remove the resource
 - Full excavation of an archaeological site
 - Exhaustive documentation of a building or structure

RECORD, THEN LET GO: this option suggests that we should be thinking of ways to enrich the recording of the resource data so that it allows for future study and investigation, not just preservation.

- Document or otherwise preserve a record of the resource
- Allow the geographic location of the resource to undergo full effects of environmental or other forces which are likely to destroy or remove the resource
- Documentation not as exhaustive as data recovery option
- May be appropriate when exhaustive approaches are infeasible or not warranted
- Potential merit in recovering or preserving only a portion of the resource
 - Archaeological site that may become inaccessible due to submergence, but is not anticipated to be fully destroyed

INTERPRET THE CHANGE: this should not be a separate option, it should be part of all the options.

- Allow effects to impact the resource
- Engage people with both the resource and the impacts of climate change on the resource
- May be used on its own or in combination with any of the other options
 - Interpretative signage explaining freeze-thaw cracking in historic bricks
 - Photographic series documenting changes in vegetation across a landscape
 - Interpretative markers showing water line where resource was submerged due to sea-level rise or other climate change-related disaster