



SANTA CRUZ VALLEY NATIONAL HERITAGE AREA

SCVNHA FAQ

What is a National Heritage Area?

The National Park Service describes a National Heritage Area as a place “where natural, cultural, historic and recreational resources combine to form cohesive, nationally distinctive landscapes arising from patterns of past and present human activities shaped by geography.”

National Heritage Areas (NHA) are different from National Parks and other types of Federal designations because they do not impose Federal zoning or regulations on land use, and do not involve land acquisitions. Because a National Heritage Area is locally initiated and managed, it is a community-based conservation strategy that recognizes that the people who live in a heritage area are uniquely qualified to preserve its resources.

There are currently 55 designated National Heritage Areas across the country. Visit the [National Heritage Areas Program](#) through the National Park Service to learn more.

What is the Santa Cruz Valley National Heritage Area?

The SCVNHA honors and celebrates the natural environment, cultural traditions, historic places, and working landscapes of the watershed of the Santa Cruz River in Pima and Santa Cruz counties.

The 10 interpretive themes of the Santa Cruz Valley National Heritage Area highlight significant aspects of the natural and cultural history of the region. These are the special stories of the region, and they are unique among National Heritage Areas.

- Sky Islands & Desert Seas
- Streams in the Desert
- Bird Habitats & Migration Routes
- Native American Lifeways
- Spanish & Mexican Frontier
- Desert Farming
- U.S.-Mexico Border Culture
- Ranching Traditions
- Mining Booms
- U.S. Military Posts on the Mexican Border

What is the role of the Santa Cruz Valley Heritage Alliance?

The Santa Cruz Valley Heritage Alliance, Inc. is identified in the legislation as the local coordinating entity. We are a 501(c)3 not-for-profit organization, with a mission to connect people to the cultural,

historic, and natural treasures of the Santa Cruz Valley through education, preservation and promotion of its unique resources. As the local coordinating entity for the National Heritage Area, the Heritage Alliance is responsible for developing and implementing a Management Plan for the National Heritage Area and coordinating heritage projects and programs throughout the National Heritage Area.

Support for the NHA includes:

- Former Governor Janet Napolitano
- All county, city and town governments within the NHA
- Tribal governments
- Federal land and park managers
- State land and park managers
- Arizona Department of Tourism
- Area museums and historical societies
- Agencies and organizations promoting tourism and economic growth
- Groups and nonprofits involved in historic preservation, nature conservation, and environmental education:
- Ranchers, farmers, and agricultural businesses
- Small business owners
- Civic and business organizations
- Chambers of Commerce

Are property rights impacted?

No. National Heritage Areas are not regulatory and do not affect private property rights, land use zoning, property taxes, or the right to renovate or remove existing buildings on private property. Private landowners within the NHA are not required to allow public or government access to their property. Specific language is included in the authorizing legislation that protects private property rights. NHAs cannot designate, acquire, or own lands for conservation. Any conservation of resources on private lands is voluntary.

For more information please contact info@santacruzheritage.org