

PRESERVATION PLANNING IN THE BAKKEN: PROTECTING RURAL CULTURAL AND PHYSICAL HERITAGE

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ABSTRACT

The development trends of North Dakota's rural communities near resource extraction sites lack a clear planning process and community input. This paper discusses a proposed preservation planning method by which critical thresholds of disturbance can be identified at the state level and encourage communities to start the heritage preservation process at the local level.

This study's focus is the Bakken Oil formation, which stretches 200,000 square miles through portions of Montana, North Dakota, Saskatchewan, and Manitoba; its development underlines an arc of physical implications (flaring of thousands of oil and gas wells) that can be seen from space, but little has been done to prepare rural communities for the surge of growth associated with the burgeoning workforce and subsequent drop as oil prices fluctuate.

This paper also illustrates a collaborative process where changing rural communities can identify heritage needs in the (quantifiable) built environment (via multi-scale geospatial analysis) and prioritize the socio-cultural qualities of agrarian heritage (via local value assessment interviews).

Richardton, North Dakota serves as the case study for the proposed Heritage Preservation process.

The downward turn in oil prices has hastened the importance of preservation planning following this process to provide rural communities on the threshold of critical disturbance with the guidance necessary to utilize new and existing resources for a sustained legacy.

Keywords

Historic Preservation, Quality of Life, Community Engaged Process, Local Values Assessment, Geo-Spatial Analysis