

# Grey Towers National Historic Landmark

USDA Forest Service  
Northeastern Area  
State and Private Forestry



**Description:** *Grey Towers National Historic Landmark* was the home of USDA Forest Service founder and first chief, Gifford Pinchot. Set on 102 acres in Milford, Pennsylvania, this French chateausque mansion is one of the nation's most significant historic sites associated with forestry and conservation. Grey Towers was donated to the public by the Pinchot family and dedicated in 1963 by President John F. Kennedy. Serving as a national symbol and center for the support and nurturing of conservation, Grey Towers continues to carry on the Pinchot conservation legacy through its unique partnership between the public and private sector. The Forest Service collaborates with its non-profit partner, the Pinchot Institute for Conservation, and others to provide leadership through a full calendar of conferences and meetings, symposia, lectures, conservation education, interpretive tours, outreach, and public affairs. With the bulk of an extensive renovation now completed, focus has now shifted toward improving visitor services, building programs and expanding capacity by increasing collaboration with partners.

**Key Issues:** Enhancing and expanding visitor services with site improvements and programmatic growth continue to be the key issues at Grey Towers.

- **Site Improvements:** Visitor services, Phase IV, commences in Spring 2004 and will enable Grey Towers to more fully accomplish its goals. A federal, state and private cost-share project, the work will enable simultaneous use of the site by visitors and conference attendees; eliminate unsafe parking situations; provide full use of the site through improved walkways and paths; provide visitor orientation to the site and restroom facilities near the parking lot. Other site improvements include maintenance facility and landscape/garden renovation and improvements.
- **Programmatic:** We continue to build our capacity by strengthening the existing and forging new partnerships, collaborating with local, state and federal agencies and improving community involvement. We continue to fulfill our mission by expanding conference center use; improving heritage and recreation opportunities and expanding the conservation education program.
- **Accomplishments:** Programmatic accomplishments include:
  - Enhancing community relations and economic and recreational opportunities by improving services and expanding programs, hours of operation and multiple/concurrent use of the site, resulting in 16,000 visitors;
  - Improving the conservation education program to service nearly 2,500 regional schoolchildren;
  - Cultivating existing and initiating new collaborations with government agencies and NGO's through conference center use by more than 1,900 participants;
  - Increasing the scope of program offerings to include Conservation and the Arts, conservation history, natural resource education and leadership development;
  - Establishing permanent Pinchot Institute for Conservation staff at Grey Towers, resulting in more PIC programs launched from this site, including deer management, chestnut restoration and Conservation & the Arts.
  - Housing the Highlands Forest Conservation and Stewardship coordinator at Grey Towers, assisting in the development and implementation of forest conservation and management strategies in the NY-NJ Highlands region.

The restoration of Grey Towers has been a multi-phase project and an investment to date of more than \$12,000,000. Construction accomplishments include:

- Renovation of the Letter Box for use as a conservation education center, with funds from Save America's Treasures and matching funds from the private sector, is our most recent renovation accomplishment;

- Securing of funding, letting the contract and commencing construction of Phase IV, Visitor Services, which includes a visitor pavilion, parking lot, walkways, lighting and drive improvements;
- Restoration of the Mansion, Ice House, Bait Box, Gate House, Farm House and surrounding landscape;
- Construction of a curatorial storage building and acid rain monitoring room in existing greenhouse;
- Continued landscape restoration.

**Budget History:**

<b>Grey Towers National Historic Landmark</b>				
<i>(\$ Thousands)</i>				
	<b>FY 2001</b>	<b>FY 2002</b>	<b>FY 2003</b>	<b>FY 2004</b>
Operations	\$1,368	\$1,650	\$1,650	\$1,950
Construction	675	500	497	497
<b>Totals</b>	<b>\$2,043</b>	<b>\$2,150</b>	<b>\$2,147</b>	<b>\$2,447</b>

**Future Direction:**

The Forest Service’s ongoing commitment to the extensive historic renovation and unique adaptation of the site is evident through the programs and projects now being launched from Grey Towers. Also evident is our commitment to work with partners and collaborate with others by adding staff from other organizations and agencies at Grey Towers to facilitate these program improvements. We will continue to strengthen the partnership with the PIC and others, exploring and expanding programs in natural resource education, Conservation and the Arts and conservation history. Grey Towers is progressing toward establishing a fee collection program to help offset the cost of providing improved visitor services. Work is currently underway to focus on conservation leadership with a new program that will be beneficial both internally with the Forest Service and externally with various partners. Future, unfunded construction needs include renovation of the historic swimming pool area and construction of a maintenance support facility.

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