



THE WASTE REPORT

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PULLING THE RUG OUT FROM UNDER THE TAXPAYER THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE IS SPENDING \$45K FOR A RUG

“That rug really tied the room together, did it not?” – Walter Sobchak, The Big Lebowski¹

Anyone that has tried to decorate a room or keep outside debris off a hard-surface floor knows the value of a good rug. A good rug can run thousands of dollars, but while hardworking Americans may be willing to spend such sums on their home, they will likely pause when hearing the **National Park Service (NPS) is spending \$44,890 for a 21-foot rug** at the Lincoln Boyhood National Memorial (Boyhood Memorial) in Lincoln City, Indiana.²

Historic Value?

The rug NPS is procuring is a replica of one made and given to the Boyhood Memorial in 1943 as a tribute to Lincoln's mother³ - 125 years after Mrs. Lincoln passed away.⁴

One has to ask, is the rug really of such historical significance that the Park Service needs to spend nearly \$45k to replace it?

What Happened to the Old Rug?

One may wonder why the rug in question needs to be replaced at all. Certainly a rug of such importance has been maintained and preserved? Not quite. People are actually allowed to walk on the rug. This concerned one commenter to the Boyhood Memorial as far back as 2005.

A letter that was included in the final 2005 *General Management Plan* for the park states, “I continue to voice my concern about the traffic on the rug in

Nancy Hanks Lincoln Hall... Hopefully it is rotated and turned frequently to keep wear-and-tear even.”⁵

So people are walking on this supposed national treasure, and concern was raised about this more than a decade ago?

In fact, in 2016, a professional conservator noted the rug was in poor condition and recommended it be placed in the park's museum.⁶ Perhaps it should have been there all along or at least for the last decade.

Even the company that got the contract to produce the replica was confronted with something of a problem due to the rug's poor condition.

Because the rug was not well preserved, the colors have faded, leading them to ask, “[D]o we go to the real colors ... or, since everyone is looking at that, do we match it?”⁷

If so little care was taken with the original rug, is it that historically important? Or, if it is so historically important to warrant a replica be made, why was it not cared for better?

¹ <http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0118715/quotes>

² <https://www.fbo.gov/index?s=opportunity&mode=form&id=14b3ae3f95a5d1d05713ba9d7c79485c&tab=core&tabmode=list&>

³ Statement of Work

⁴ <https://www.nps.gov/libo/learn/historyculture/nancy-hanks-lincoln.htm>

⁵ <http://bit.ly/2tFjFVT>

⁶ Statement of Work

⁷ <http://www.concordmonitor.com/braided-rug-lincoln-10613976>