

THE PRESERVE AMERICA PROGRAM IN ARKANSAS:
THE ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF THE PROGRAM AT THE
STATE LEVEL
JUNE 2009

COMPILED BY:

THE HISTORIC PRESERVATION ALLIANCE OF ARKANSAS

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INTRODUCTION

Travel is a \$500 billion industry and one of America's fastest growing business segments. In Arkansas it is the second largest industry, and heritage tourism is becoming increasingly popular. The Preserve America grant program, started in 2006, funds community projects in research and documentation, education and interpretation, planning, marketing, or training that develop sustainable heritage tourism projects. The grants require a dollar for dollar match and encourage partnerships between public and private entities.

Since 2006, \$17 million in Preserve America grants has funded 228 projects across the United States. This program has leveraged \$17 million in private cash and in kind investment, created sustainable programs and partnerships, created jobs, and encouraged economic development in hundreds of communities nationwide. Though it may be difficult to measure the effects of these projects in the short term; they are, by their nature, focused on developing heritage tourism in the intermediate to long term. If these projects continue, the economic benefits will undoubtedly continue at the local, statewide, and national level.

A recent study by Rutgers University on the economic impacts of historic preservation in Arkansas estimates that with a 5% increase in Arkansas's heritage tourism visits, the state will see approximately:

- 1,100 new jobs
- \$16 million in new household income annually
- \$3.7 million in new state and local tax revenue each year

In Arkansas there is potential to develop several different heritage tourism themes that would attract visitors from all over the world and increase the number of heritage tourists by far more than 5%. A few of these themes are:

- Civil War
- Great Depression
- The Trail of Tears
- Military history
- Japanese internment camps
- Musical history
- President Clinton
- Johnny Cash's boyhood home
- Black heritage

These could all be developed with Preserve America grants, but few other funding sources recognize the connection between historic preservation, heritage tourism, community involvement, and economic development.

The following contains more information about the Preserve America program and how it is helping Arkansas, as well as the Preserve America Community Agent program that is specific to the state and intended to be a model for other states in the future.

THE PRESERVE AMERICA PROGRAM

Preserve America is a federal program that encourages and supports community efforts to preserve and enjoy our priceless cultural and natural heritage. The program strives for a greater knowledge about the nation's past, strengthened regional identities and local pride, increased local participation in preserving cultural and natural heritage assets, and support for the local economic vitality of our communities.

The Preserve America program was started in 2003 and involves several components: Presidential Awards, America Communities, Grants, Stewards, History Teacher of the Year Award, Educational Outreach, Executive Order 13287: "Preserve America," and the Preserve America Summit. (see appendix 2 for more information)

The Preserve America Grant program started in 2006 and has contributed \$17 million to 228 projects in communities across the United States. These grants are available to State Historic Preservation Offices, Tribal Historic Preservation Offices, and designated Preserve America Communities, and have been the major incentive for community involvement.

On March 30, 2009 President Barack Obama signed the Omnibus Public Land Management Act of 2009. The law includes the text of the Preserve America and Save America's Treasures Act, formerly H.R. 3981/S.2262 in the previous 110th Congress, which permanently authorizes both programs.¹ (see appendix 3 for full press release)

¹ Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, "Omnibus Public Land Management Act Becomes Law, Authorizes Facets of Preserve America and Save America's Treasures," Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, <http://216.3.143.83/news090330.html>.

PRESERVE AMERICA SUMMIT

The Preserve America Summit, held in 2006, marked the 40th anniversary of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA); the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP) issued thirteen recommendations based on issues raised at the Summit. The recommendations focused on actions the federal government should take to enhance the effectiveness of the national historic preservation program as it moves toward 2016, the 50th anniversary of the NHPA.

Recommendation of 2006 Preserve America Summit regarding Preserve America Community Agent:

Provide more technical assistance to local communities to promote historic preservation and heritage tourism, and explore the concept of a Preserve America Community agent or similar mechanism to work more actively with local communities.

All preservation is ultimately local, but lack of local resources or knowledge can hinder preservation efforts. The Protecting Places That Matter panel suggested the federal government expand the impact of the Preserve America initiative through creation of a system of “Preserve America Community Agents.” The Preserve America Community designation program, administered by the ACHP, recognizes communities that demonstrate their commitment to the preservation of their heritage assets. **A Preserve America Community Agent**, designated by each State and Tribal Historic Preservation Office, would provide technical assistance to Preserve America Communities and would encourage additional communities to apply for designation. Exploration of this concept would need to consider options for enhancing existing federal avenues for providing technical assistance, such as the National Park Service’s Certified Local Government program and the Department of Housing and Urban Development’s technical assistance program.

Suggested lead agencies: the ACHP, National Park Service, Department of Housing and Urban Development²

² Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, “The Preserve America Summit Executive Summary” (2007), http://www.preserveamerica.gov/docs/Executive_Summary_lr.pdf.

PRESERVE AMERICA COMMUNITY AGENT IN ARKANSAS

In 2008, the Arkansas State Historic Preservation Office was awarded a Preserve America grant to develop the country's first Preserve America Community Agent program for one year. The Arkansas Historic Preservation Program (State Historic Preservation Office) developed a partnership with the Arkansas Department of Parks and Tourism and the Historic Preservation Alliance of Arkansas (statewide nonprofit for historic preservation) to create this position and become a model for other states to follow.

The Preserve America Community Agent works with cities, towns, and counties throughout the state to achieve Preserve America Community status. The agent then helps those communities develop sustainable uses of their historic and cultural sites and cultivate economic and educational opportunities related to heritage tourism.

Since October 2008, the Preserve America Community agent has worked to

- Promote and develop the Historic Preservation Alliance of Arkansas across the state—educate about the State Historic Rehabilitation Tax Credit, National Register of Historic Places, Historic Preservation Alliance of Arkansas programs, and state and federal programs available
- Educate city governments and citizens about the importance of historic preservation and how to use it as a tool for economic and community development
- Send out monthly electronic newsletters to community leaders across the state about the Preserve America program, heritage tourism opportunities and resources, grant opportunities, the Historic Preservation Alliance of Arkansas, Arkansas Historic Preservation Program, and historic preservation in general
- Write an article in the *Arkansas Preservation Digest*, the Alliance's quarterly newsletter, sent to members across the state
- Develop relationships with over 50 communities throughout the state
- Develop working relationships with regional and statewide programs:
 - Rural Heritage Development Initiative
 - Delta Byways
 - Ozark Gateway Tourist Council
 - Main Street Arkansas
 - Arkansas Certified Local Government Program
 - Arkansas Department of Parks and Tourism
 - Department of Arkansas Heritage
 - University of Central Arkansas
- Give over 20 public presentations across the state
- Host a statewide Preserve America meeting in conjunction with the Arkansas Preservation Conference in May of 2009, giving over 30 Preserve America Community stakeholders the opportunity to share ideas and discuss the development of the program at a state level
- Plan projects with travel writers to highlight Preserve America Communities
- Increase the number of Preserve America communities from 9 to 16 (three more designated communities are expected to be announced soon)
- Assist with implementation of existing Preserve America grant projects throughout the state

Arkansas was awarded two Preserve America grants in round one of the 2009 cycle: North Little Rock for the branding of historic sites, and to the State Historic Preservation Office to continue the Preserve America Community Agent program for an additional three years. These were two of 31 projects in 17 states for which funding was granted, but not appropriated.

PRESERVE AMERICA PROGRESS IN ARKANSAS

Arkansas currently has sixteen Preserve America Communities, and three more are expected to be announced soon. Several other communities are interested in designation and have started working on applications. The benefits of the Preserve America program and the opportunities for grant funds have inspired cooperation among community leaders and private organizations in different ways around the state, but the benefits of the program and grant funds are evident in each city.

Batesville: Community designation created more visibility of historic and cultural preservation projects in the city and their importance as a tool for economic development. Since community designation, Batesville's city council has passed a preservation ordinance to protect their downtown; the Batesville Commercial Historic District is the city's first local designation.

Benton: Benton recently applied and is expected to be designated soon. Benton is a new Certified Local Government, the Historic District Commissioners were involved in the writing of the application and have attended statewide and national meetings and conferences and have become familiar with other Preserve America stakeholders in Arkansas.

Blytheville: Grant recipient—Blytheville Greyhound Bus Station Interpretive Project: \$55,088—has created a stronger working relationship between the City of Blytheville, the Chamber of Commerce, Main Street Blytheville, Arkansas Delta Byways, Rural Heritage Development Initiative/NTHP, Historic District Commission, CATCP City Advertising and Promotion and Tourism. Project is in the planning stages. Recipient of \$7,700 CLG grant to survey and nominate a new residential National Register district.

Dumas: Grant recipient—Arkansas Delta Gospel Institute Master Plan: \$60,590—created a partnership between the City of Dumas, Desha County, Arkansas Delta Byways, Rural Heritage Development Initiative, Main Street Dumas, Desha County Historical Society, Delta Area Community Foundation, and the Cornerstone Coalition. The project is underway; the committee is in the process of developing a RFP to select a consultant.

El Dorado: Community designation provided more visibility for the community, Main Street El Dorado, and the Historic District Commission. Designation provided an opportunity for Congressman Mike Ross to visit El Dorado and present the city with signs and a certificate; this event was held in conjunction with the city's historic preservation awards. Recipient of \$6,500 CLG grant to survey and nominate a new residential National Register district. The city will host the Arkansas Parks and Tourism Commissioner's meeting in June 2009, the Preserve America Community Agent will speak and attend the meeting. The city is a 2009 Great American Main Street Award winner. Destination Downtown will be held in September, 2009; hosted by Main Street Arkansas, co hosted by The Mississippi Main Street Association and the Louisiana Main Street Program.

Eureka Springs: Grant recipient—Eureka Springs Backstory, Bringing the Past to Street Level: \$62,760—the city developed a wayfinding program with banners, signs, and street markers; a Route 62 map and brochure; a walking tour brochure; photo exhibit; and new website: www.eurekaspringsthenandnow.org. Recipient of \$12,900 CLG grant to host statewide preservation conference, themed "The Heritage

Connection” and \$5,000 to develop an interpretive welcome center for the “Eureka Underground historic walking tour.

Fayetteville: recently designated, a meeting to discuss possible Preserve America grant projects brought together over twenty representatives from major community groups: City of Fayetteville, Fayetteville School District, Historic District Commission, Arkansas Air Museum, Fayetteville Downtown Partners, Hike Arkansas, Mount Sequoyah Retreat Center, Northwest Arkansas Tourism Association, and Washington County Historical Society. The group planned three grant projects that will promote historic Fayetteville and benefit the most community members.

Fort Smith: Grant recipient—Developing a Marketing Plan for Historic Central City Properties: \$46,680—The city of Fort Smith, Belle Grove Historic District Commission, Central Business Improvement District, Fort Smith Regional Chamber of Commerce, Western Arkansas Planning and Development District, Downtown and Belle Grove property owners, University of Arkansas Fort Smith Interpretive History Department, County Assessor’s office, and local private developers and business owners partnered to: 1) inventory and identify all structures in the city’s 42 block Central Business District and 22 block residential Belle Grove National Register Historic District, 2) conduct a feasibility study to determine the most effective uses of vacant and underutilized structures in the two neighborhoods, and 3) develop a marketing plan to promote the two neighborhoods to developers, owners, tourists, and prospective new residents. Recipient of \$40,000 CLG grant to develop a citywide strategic plan for preservation and heritage tourism. In March 2009, the city hosted the largest statewide conference in Arkansas, the Governor’s Conference on Tourism, which attracted thousands of travel professionals to the Preserve America community.

Helena-West Helena: Grant recipient— Marketing and Promoting Historic Helena: \$203,500—Main Street Helena, City of Helena-West Helena Advertising and Promotions Commission, Helena Health Foundation, Phillips County Chamber of Commerce, Southern Financial Partners, Helena Historic District Commission, National Trust for Historic Preservation, City of Helena-West Helena, and the Delta Cultural Center partnered on this project to raise awareness of the historic fabric of the community and in turn aid in the preservation of its historic resources. Recipient of \$30,000 CLG grant to develop a citywide strategic plan for preservation and heritage tourism.

Hot Springs: Recently designated, Preserve America Community Agent facilitated relationship between city staff and Arkansas Department of Parks and Tourism to set up hospitality trainings, a rural tourism assessment, and expanded city and event listings on the Parks and Tourism website: www.arkansas.com.

Little Rock: has five Preserve America road signs throughout the city and has added a heritage tourism component to the city’s website <http://littlerock.org/CityDepartments/PlanningAndDevelopment/subsection.aspx?PageID=114> . The Preserve America Community Agent has developed partnerships to work on a Preserve America grant project in the future. Recipient of \$34,400 CLG grant to develop a citywide strategic plan for preservation and heritage tourism.

North Little Rock: recent designation and grant recipient—Branding the City of North Little Rock National Register Historic Riverfront and Historic Sites—the project is planned and ready to move forward but was awarded a 2009 Round One grant.

Osceola: Grant recipient—Heritage 61, the Cotton Highway: \$100,000—have bought 3 of 50 planned markers. Chamber of Commerce is applicant organization, they have seen other projects come out of this and increased community involvement. Music Heritage Trail is one of them. Now most of the chamber’s projects are connected. Partners: Osceola/South Mississippi County Chamber of Commerce, Osceola Historical District, Osceola Main Street, City of Osceola, Osceola Partners in Progress.

Pocahontas: is expected to be designated soon. Pocahontas is located in Randolph County, it has a number of community groups working together that are prepared to partner for a Preserve America grant.

Randolph County: Bill Carroll, “As far as how Preserve America has helped in my community, both for the City and the County it pointed out to local government that investment in preservation is economic development and they passed resolutions verifying that. It also caused both City and County governments to pass preservation ordinances creating City and County Preservation Commissions that oversee construction in our National Historic Districts and for structures and sites listed on the NRHP.”

Texarkana: recently submitted an application and is expected to be designated soon. Recipient of \$27,500 CLG grant to develop design guidelines for the city’s three locally designated residential historic districts, and \$15,000 to survey and nominate a new National Register residential district.

Tyronza: recently designated, the opportunity for grants has encouraged cooperation with surrounding towns and the Sunken Lands chamber of commerce. Preserve America Community Agent fostered cooperation between stakeholders in Tyronza and the nearby town of Dyess, Arkansas on a Preserve America Community application.

Van Buren: Recipient of \$20,000 CLG grant to develop a citywide strategic plan for preservation and heritage tourism, and \$1,000 to develop review guidelines for Fairview Cemetery.

West Memphis: recently designated, partnerships for a grant project have been developed, Main Street West Memphis has started work on a grant application.

Ozark Gateway Tourist Council: represents eight counties in north central Arkansas—Fulton, Independence, Izard, Jackson, Lawrence, Randolph, Sharp, Stone. The region currently has two communities—Batesville and Randolph County. Pocahontas is expected to be designated soon. The Preserve America Community Agent is working with stakeholders from all eight counties to apply for Preserve America designation. The Community Agent is also working with the Ozark Gateway Tourist Council to develop scenic drives within the region that will highlight Preserve America Communities. This is in the planning stages; maps will be available in the Council’s visitor’s guide, website: www.ozarkgateway.com, and at tourist and visitor’s centers across the state.

Bob Pest, President Elect; Ozark Gateway Tourist Council: “Preserve America designation and opportunities have really served as a motivational factor in our heritage tourism initiative. I think the fact that eight out of eight counties are working at the same time to achieve status is a clear indication of its value.”

The following information was compiled from responses by Preserve America stakeholders across the state:

Did your Preserve America Grant help you in meeting your state's heritage tourism needs?

Preserve America grants have funded roadside markers, driving tours, walking tours, themed heritage tourism programs (music, cotton, agriculture, automobile industry, civil war, trail of tears). They have been used to hire consultants, artists, web designers, architects, and engineers; in the local community whenever possible.

The Preserve America Community Agent has met with tourism professionals and those in related fields throughout the state to highlight the importance and benefits of heritage tourism and the opportunities available through Preserve America and other programs. This has helped to foster relationships and encourage community members to develop heritage tourism opportunities by assessing their historic resources and seeking Preserve America Community designation.

The outreach staff person also provides essential Preserve America consultation services to both small and large organizations around the state; assisting with community designation applications, grant applications, and project planning for the future.

Has the project/program funded by your Preserve America Grant resulted in economic benefits, such as job creation, increased tourism dollars, economic redevelopment, etc.?

All of the Preserve America grants awarded in Arkansas have focused on sustainable heritage tourism projects and uses of historic assets. They will continue to attract more tourism dollars and economic development within the communities.

The Preserve America Community Agent position in Arkansas was created by a Preserve America grant. This position promotes historic preservation and heritage tourism as economic redevelopment and community revitalization tools that will encourage new programs throughout the state. This is a connection that has not been made in many communities around the United States; the further development of this program could create a nationwide network of professionals to promote Preserve America, and in turn, create jobs and revenue in the heritage tourism field.

Has the project/program been a catalyst for local preservation action, public history education, or related partnerships?

The Preserve America grant program has created partnerships in communities and regions between organizations that may not otherwise have an opportunity or reason to work together. This has increased communication and the opportunity for future projects and partnerships. The Preserve America program as a whole has been a catalyst for local preservation action. The Community Agent has been able to meet with citizens in smaller communities to discuss resources available to help with local preservation action and education. The designation process and the state level benefits that have been developed through the Preserve America Community Agent program in Arkansas have encouraged more local preservation action from communities not yet involved in the Arkansas Main Street or Certified Local Government programs. The Community Agent is a professional historic preservation resource to all communities involved in the program.

Do you see a need for Preserve America funding for your state in the future?

Preserve America grants have been the major incentive for communities to become involved with the Preserve America program and complete projects that do not qualify for funding from other sources. This has encouraged partnerships in communities that would otherwise be unlikely to work together toward the common goal of promoting preservation and heritage tourism. This has also encouraged regional communication and partnerships that will likely lead to larger heritage tourism projects if funding is available.

PRESERVE AMERICA IN ARKANSAS MEETING MAY 16, 2009—ARKANSAS PRESERVATION CONFERENCE

The Preserve America Community Agent hosted a statewide meeting for stakeholders from Preserve America Communities and from communities seeking designation in conjunction with the annual Arkansas Preservation Conference, themed “The Heritage Connection.” At the meeting, representatives from across the state discussed the benefits of becoming a Preserve America Community and how designation and grants have affected each community. The group also discussed the future of the program in Arkansas and ideas to further develop it.

Ideas and recommendations from this meeting:

- Preserve America Community Agent and local Preserve America partners should strive for increased participation with local convention and visitors’ bureaus and with advertising and promotion commissions
- City officials and local partners should be encouraged to add a Preserve America tagline to email signatures
- Cities as well as other local and regional partners should be encouraged to use the Preserve America logo on their websites
- Preserve America Community Agent should continue to develop relationships with regional tourism associations

APPENDIX 1: CULTURAL AND HERITAGE TOURISM TRENDS

A SNAPSHOT OF CULTURAL & HERITAGE TOURISM

Domestic

Eighty-one percent of the 146.4 million U.S. adults who took a trip of 50 miles or more away from home in the past year can be considered cultural and heritage tourists.

Compared to other travelers, cultural and heritage tourists:

- Spend more: \$623 vs. \$457
- Use a hotel, motel or B&B: 62 percent vs. 55 percent
- Are more likely to spend \$1,000+/-: 19 percent vs. 12 percent
- Travel longer: 5.2 nights vs. 3.4 nights
- Historic/cultural travel volume is up 13 percent from 1996, increasing from 192.4 million person-trips to 216.8 million person-trips in 2002.
- The demographic profile of the cultural heritage travel segment today is younger, wealthier, more educated and more technologically savvy when compared to those surveyed in 1996.
- 35.3 million adults say that a specific arts, cultural or heritage event or activity influenced their choice of destination.

Source: Travel Industry Association of America and Smithsonian Magazine, *The Historic/Cultural Traveler*, 2003 Edition.

International

In 2004, according to the U.S. Department of Commerce, there were over 10.6 million overseas visitors who participated in cultural and heritage tourism activities while within the country. The top five markets interested in cultural and heritage tourism as a share of their total visitors are: United Kingdom, Japan, Germany, France and Australia.

- The average overseas cultural and heritage tourism traveler visits the country for over 19 nights (16 nights for all overseas travelers).
- More than 72 percent are here for leisure/holidays as one of the purposes of their trip (62% for all overseas travelers).
- They are more willing to visit more than one state (41percent) compared to only 30 percent for all overseas visitors.³

HERITAGE TOURSIM IN ARKANSAS

Heritage tourists spend \$890.6 million in Arkansas each year

Heritage tourism supports 21,552 Arkansas jobs yearly

Heritage tourism adds \$318.8 million to the yearly income of Arkansas families

Heritage tourism generates \$73.8 million in state and local tax revenue each year⁴

³ U.S. Department of Commerce and the President's Committee on the Arts and the Humanities, "A Position Paper on Cultural & Heritage Tourism in the United States," <http://www.pcah.gov/pdf/05WhitePaperCultHeritTourism.pdf>.

APPENDIX 2: PRESERVE AMERICA COMPONENTS

Preserve America is a federal initiative that encourages and supports community efforts to preserve and enjoy our priceless cultural and natural heritage. The goals of the program include a greater shared knowledge about the nation's past, strengthened regional identities and local pride, increased local participation in preserving the country's cultural and natural heritage assets, and support for the economic vitality of our communities. Since the program's inception in 2003, the First Lady of the United States has served as the Honorary Chair of Preserve America. Detailed information on all aspects of this initiative can be found at www.preserveamerica.gov. Major components of Preserve America include the following:

Preserve America Presidential Awards Four awards are given annually to organizations, businesses, and government entities for exemplary accomplishments in the sustainable use and preservation of cultural or natural heritage assets; demonstrated commitment to the protection and interpretation of America's cultural or natural heritage assets; and integration of these assets into contemporary community life, combining innovative, creative, and responsible approaches to showcasing historic local resources. The 2008 Preserve America Presidential Awards were presented by First Lady Laura Bush at a White House ceremony on May 12, 2008. The awardees were the African Burial Ground Project, New York; the Corinth and Alcorn County Mississippi Heritage Tourism Initiative, Mississippi; the Lower East Side Tenement Museum, New York; and the Texas Historic Courthouse Preservation Program, Texas. The call for 2009 Preserve America Award nominations ended November 1, 2008. Awards are scheduled to be given in spring or summer 2009.

Preserve America Communities This program recognizes and designates communities, including neighborhoods in large cities, which protect and celebrate their heritage, use their historic assets for economic development and community revitalization, and encourage people to experience and appreciate local historic resources through education and heritage tourism programs. While serving as Honorary Chair of Preserve America, First Lady Laura Bush designated 736 Preserve America communities in all 50 states and one U.S. territory, including 17 neighborhoods and three tribal communities. Benefits of designation include White House recognition; eligibility to apply for Preserve America Grants; a certificate of recognition; a Preserve America Community road sign; authorization to use the Preserve America logo on signs, flags, banners, and promotional materials; listing in a Web-based Preserve America Community directory; inclusion in national and regional press releases; official notification of designation to state tourism offices and visitors bureaus; and enhanced community visibility and pride. Preserve America Communities are also featured in

⁴ Arkansas Historic Preservation Program, "A Profitable Past: The Economic Impact of Historic Preservation in Arkansas," <http://www.arkansaspreservation.org/pdf/publications/Chapter%203%20Heritage%20Tourism.pdf>.

National Register Travel Itineraries and in “Teaching with Historic Places” curricular material created by the National Park Service. There are quarterly deadlines to apply for designation annually on March 1, June 1, September 1, and December 1. Application forms are available at www.preserveamerica.gov/communities.html.

Preserve America Grants More than \$17 million in matching grants has been awarded to 228 projects through the country since 2006 to support community efforts to demonstrate sustainable uses of their historic and cultural sites, focusing on economic and educational opportunities related to heritage tourism. Grant amounts range from \$20,000 to \$250,000. Funding availability and the next application round for Preserve America Grants has not yet been set. This program complements the Save America’s Treasures grant program, which funds “bricks-and-mortar” projects, by helping local communities develop sustainable resource management strategies and sound business practices for the continued preservation and use of heritage assets. State Historic Preservation Offices, Tribal Historic Preservation Offices, designated Preserve America Communities, and Certified Local Governments that have applied for Preserve America Community designation are eligible to apply for Preserve America Grants. Further information is available at: www.nps.gov/history/hps/hpg/PreserveAmerica.

Preserve America Stewards The newest component of the Preserve America initiative—Preserve America Stewards—honors exemplary volunteer efforts at historic resources around the country. First Lady Laura Bush unveiled the new program at the 2008 Preserve America Presidential Awards ceremony, and the designation of the first 11 Preserve America Stewards was announced on January 16, 2009. The honorees are recognized for stewardship programs that have demonstrated a successful use of volunteer time and commitment in order to help care for our cultural heritage. Government entities (federal, tribal, state, or local), non-profit organizations, and businesses are eligible to apply to have their programs recognized. The application form and further information is available at www.preserveamerica.gov/stewards.html.

Preserve America History Teacher of the Year Award Since 2004, the First Lady has presented the annual Preserve America History Teacher of the Year awards. Mrs. Bush presented the 2008 award on October 24, 2008, to David B. Mitchell of Masconomet Regional High School, Topsfield, Massachusetts, at a ceremony at the Union League Club in New York City. Mitchell was selected from a group of finalists from each state, the District of Columbia, and U.S. territories, who each received \$1,000 and a core archive of history materials for his or her school library. The Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History facilitates this award program.

Educational Outreach Preserve America has worked with the History Channel’s Save Our History initiative to create a teacher’s manual with lesson plans and volunteer ideas that involve students in preserving historic sites in their communities. In addition, Mrs. Bush appeared in three public service announcements on the importance of preserving America’s heritage that first appeared in 2004.

Executive Order 13287: "Preserve America" Signed by the President on March 3, 2003, this Executive

Order complements the Preserve America initiative. The order establishes federal policy to provide leadership in preserving America's heritage by actively advancing the protection, enhancement, and contemporary use of the historic properties owned by the federal government. The order also encourages agencies to seek partnerships with state, tribal, and local governments and the private sector to make more efficient and informed use of these resources for economic development and other recognized public benefits. In addition, it directs the Secretary of Commerce, working with other agencies, to use existing authorities and resources to assist in the development of local and regional heritage tourism programs that are a significant feature of many state and local economies. As required by the order, the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation delivered the first report on implementation of Section 3 to the President on February 15, 2006, and a second report on agency progress in February 2009. See www.preserveamerica.gov for the full 2009 report.

Preserve America Summit A Preserve America Summit to recognize the 40th anniversary of the National Historic Preservation Act and consider the future of the national preservation program was convened in 2006 and hosted by the First Lady. A Youth Summit met in conjunction with the larger conference and has provided a model for subsequent youth gatherings and projects (notably in Colorado). A series of 13 important recommendations emerging from the Summit to improve the operation and effectiveness of historic preservation efforts nationwide were adopted by the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation and are now being implemented by federal agencies in cooperation with non-federal partners.

The Advisory Council on Historic Preservation and the Department of the Interior have the primary responsibility for carrying out the elements of the program. The chairman of the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation and the Secretary of the Interior co-chair the Preserve America Steering Committee to guide implementation of the program. It includes representatives of the First Lady's office; the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation; the Departments of Agriculture, Commerce, Defense, Education, Housing and Urban Development, Interior, and Transportation; the General Services Administration; the Institute of Museum and Library Services; the National Endowment for the Humanities; the President's Council on Environmental Quality; and the President's Committee on the Arts and the Humanities. For more information about Preserve America, visit www.preserveamerica.gov.

Updated May 11, 2009⁵

⁵ Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, "The Preserve America Initiative," <http://www.preserveamerica.gov/overview.html>.

PRESS RELEASE FROM ACHP

Omnibus Public Land Management Act Becomes Law, Authorizes Facets of Preserve America and Save America's Treasures

President Barack Obama signed the Omnibus Public Land Management Act of 2009 on March 30, 2009 at the White House. The law includes the text of the Preserve America and Save America's Treasures Act, formerly H.R. 3981/S.2262 in the previous 110th Congress, which permanently authorizes both programs.

The Preserve America Program which involves the ACHP in a key coordinating role is defined in the law to include (1) the Preserve America grant program within the Department of the Interior; (2) the recognition programs administered by the ACHP; and (3) the related efforts of federal agencies, working in partnership with state, tribal, and local governments and the private sector, to support and promote the preservation of historic resources. Up to \$25 million per year is also authorized to carry out the program (funds must be appropriated each year through the budget process).

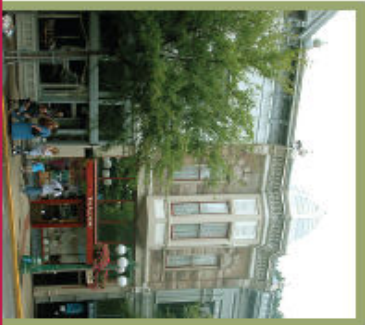
In addition to details about the Preserve America grants, the law codifies the designation of Preserve America Communities as one of the entities eligible to apply for grants. It gives the ACHP the responsibility to establish any necessary guidelines for the designation process in consultation with the Secretary of the Interior. The ACHP is also specifically directed to establish an expedited process for Preserve America Community designation for Certified Local Governments that are established under the National Historic Preservation Act.

Posted April 1, 2009⁶

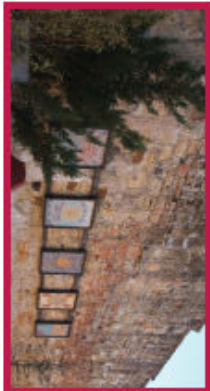
⁶ Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, "Omnibus Public Land Management Act Becomes Law, Authorizes Facets of Preserve America and Save America's Treasures," Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, <http://216.3.143.83/news090330.html>.

PRESERVE AMERICA GRANT OPPORTUNITIES

All Preserve America communities are eligible for grants. Funding can be used for research and documentation, education and interpretation, planning, marketing, or training projects in a community. Grants range from \$20,000 to \$250,000 and require a dollar for dollar cash or in kind non federal match. Since 2006, Arkansas's Preserve America communities have been awarded over \$1million.



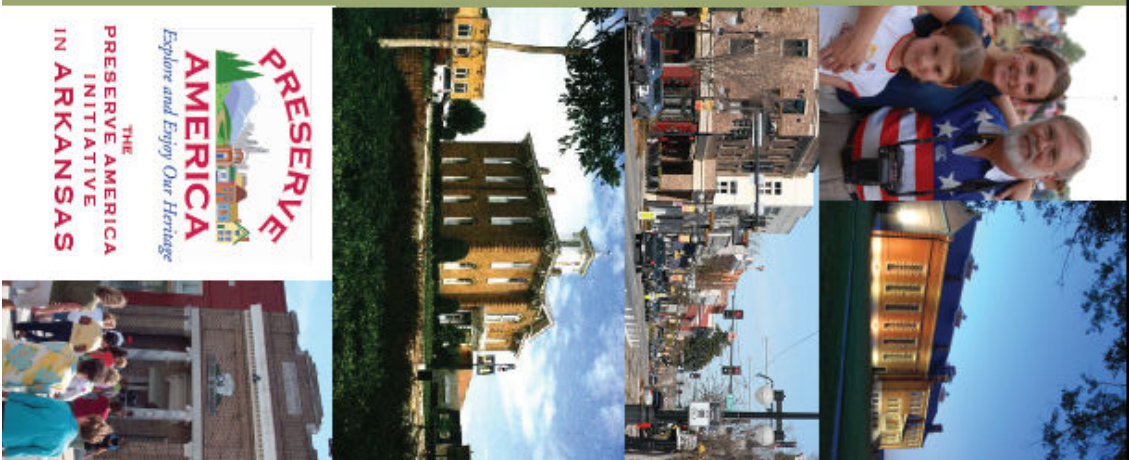
FOR MORE INFORMATION ON BECOMING A PRESERVE AMERICA COMMUNITY:



The federal Preserve America website describes the initiative and provides downloadable applications, resolutions, and grant information. There is also a directory of Preserve America Communities and information about grant-funded projects.
www.preserveamerica.gov

The Historic Preservation Alliance of Arkansas is the only statewide nonprofit organization focused on preserving Arkansas's architectural and cultural resources. The Alliance's website provides more information about the Preserve America initiative in Arkansas.
www.preservearkansas.org

The Arkansas Historic Preservation Program is the Department of Arkansas Heritage agency responsible for identifying, evaluating, registering and preserving cultural resources. Other agencies are the Arkansas Arts Council, the Delta Cultural Center, the Old State House Museum, the Mosaic Templars Cultural Center, the Arkansas Natural Heritage Commission and the Historic Arkansas Museum.
www.arkansaspreservation.org



PRESERVE AMERICA
 Explore and Enjoy Our Heritage
 THE PRESERVE AMERICA INITIATIVE IN ARKANSAS

WHAT IS PRESERVE AMERICA?



A federal program that encourages and supports community efforts to preserve and enjoy our priceless cultural and natural heritage. The Preserve America Initiative aims to develop:

- Greater shared knowledge about the nation's past
- Strengthened regional identities and local pride
- Increased local participation in preserving the country's cultural and natural heritage assets
- Support for the economic vitality of our communities

HOW DOES PRESERVE AMERICA HELP ARKANSAS?

The Preserve America program in Arkansas is a partnership between the federal Preserve America Initiative, the Historic Preservation Alliance of Arkansas, the Arkansas Historic Preservation Program, and the Arkansas Department of Parks and Tourism. A Preserve America Community Agent works with cities, towns, and counties throughout the state to achieve Preserve America Community status. The agent then helps those communities develop sustainable uses of their historic and cultural sites and cultivate economic and educational opportunities related to heritage tourism.



WHAT ARE PRESERVE AMERICA COMMUNITIES?

Communities that protect and celebrate their heritage, use their historic assets for economic development and community revitalization, and encourage people to experience and appreciate local historic resources through education and heritage tourism programs. Community designation is honorary and is administered by the federal Advisory Council on Historic Preservation. To become Preserve America community, a municipality or county must meet three general criteria:

- The community has recently supported a historic or cultural preservation project
- The governing body of the community has adopted a resolution indicating its commitment to the preservation of its heritage assets
- The community meets criteria specified in three broad categories:
 - o Discovering heritage through historic places
 - o Protecting historic resources
 - o Promoting historic assets



WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF BECOMING A PRESERVE AMERICA COMMUNITY?



- White House recognition
- Eligibility for Preserve America grants
- Enhanced community visibility and pride, including Preserve America Community road signs
- Inclusion in a statewide and national network of preservationists
- Listing in a Web-based Preserve America Community directory
- Extended services from the Arkansas Department of Parks and Tourism, including a free assessment of your community's heritage resources and a hospitality training
- An ongoing partnership with the Arkansas Historic Preservation Program and the Historic Preservation Alliance of Arkansas, including unlimited consultation from the Preserve America Community Agent and assistance with Preserve America grant preparation