



## 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 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 been involved in supporting and promoting Preserve America. Detailed information on all aspects of this initiative can be found at [www.preserveamerica.gov](http://www.preserveamerica.gov). Major components of Preserve America include the following:

### Preserve America Presidential Awards

Up to four awards are given annually to organizations, businesses, or 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. For a full list of winners and photographs visit [www.preserveamerica.gov/presidentialaward](http://www.preserveamerica.gov/presidentialaward).

### 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. To date, 843 Preserve America communities have been designated in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and two U.S. territories, including 19 neighborhoods and five tribal communities.



*Jonesborough, Tennessee, became a Preserve America Community in August 2005 and showcases its history as the oldest town in the state.*

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 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 and more information are available at [www.preserveamerica.gov/communities.html](http://www.preserveamerica.gov/communities.html).

### Preserve America Grants

More than \$20 million in matching grants has been awarded to 259 projects throughout 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 \$15,000 to \$250,000.

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 pending congressional appropriations. Further information is available at [www.nps.gov/history/hps/hpg/PreserveAmerica](http://www.nps.gov/history/hps/hpg/PreserveAmerica).



*Volunteers of the Chimney Rock Interpretive Association, a Preserve America Steward, work to help bring the past to life.*

### **Preserve America Stewards**

The newest component of the Preserve America initiative—Preserve America Stewards—honors exemplary volunteer efforts at historic resources around the country. There currently are 21 Preserve America Stewards, including eight designated by First Lady Michelle Obama on February 3, 2010. 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](http://www.preserveamerica.gov/stewards.html).

### **Preserve America History Teacher of the Year Award**

Since 2004, the Preserve America History Teacher of the Year Award has been presented annually. Co-sponsors The Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History and HISTORY™ presented the 2009 award on December 16, 2009, to Tim Bailey, a fifth grade teacher at Escalante Elementary School in Salt Lake City, Utah, at a ceremony at the School Without Walls in Washington, D.C. Bailey 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 created and administers this program.

### **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](http://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 then- First Lady Laura Bush. 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.

**Educational Outreach**

Preserve America worked with the History Channel's Save Our History initiative to create a teacher's manual with lesson plans and ideas that involve students in preserving historic sites in their communities. Download the free manual at <http://www.history.com/content/saveourhistory/education-resources>.

**Program Management**

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. The steering committee includes representatives of 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](http://www.preserveamerica.gov).

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