

**Remarks -- John L. Nau, III
Governor's 2005 Colorado Tourism Conference
Denver, Colorado
Breakfast and General Session:
"Marketing Your Past: The Future of Tourism"
Wednesday, September 21, 2005; 8-9:30 a.m.**

Slide 1: ACHP Logo

Good Morning.

Thank you, Director Vogt [*vote*] for that kind introduction.

It is a pleasure for me to join Elaine Carmichael on the panel this morning to discuss "Marketing Your Past: The Future of Tourism". I've noticed that several of the sessions during this conference emphasize the importance of marketing in developing thriving tourism programs. Like the theme of your conference, we want everyone to be "wild on tourism" – and the best way to do that is through an effective marketing effort.

Slide 2: Mrs. Bush Announcing Effort

Today, I would like to provide you with an overview of Preserve America -- a White House initiative created by President Bush in March 2003. This White House initiative encourages and supports community efforts for the preservation and enjoyment of our priceless cultural and natural heritage.

Mrs. Laura Bush, First Lady of the United States, serves as the honorary chair of the effort. Preserve America is about preservation with a purpose. With multiple purposes, actually, but all based on the foundation of economic development through heritage tourism.

Heritage tourism is one of the primary economic development tools that the *Preserve America* initiative seeks to put to use for the betterment of the nation, its communities and our visitors. In addition to the economic benefits – there are also educational, environmental, social, and cultural benefits.

Slide 3: Preserve America Logo

Through *Preserve America* we gain a greater understanding of the benefits of historic preservation – and we learn that sustainable historic preservation is not a cost for maintaining the past. It is an investment in building the future. Historic preservation and heritage tourism are yoked concepts, naturally pulling the economic engine forward in tandem. You really cannot have one without the other, yet we are only beginning to realize the benefits and create the strategies that these efforts mutually support and sustain.

Preserve America provides us with an opportunity to broadly promote and market products that already exist — great products we drive by every day. The structures are built. The historic events have occurred in these special places. The history has been written by the actions of our predecessors. Now, we must package our products in ways that make it inviting for visitors to experience.

What we must do is build awareness and create the opportunities for people to – as the motto of *Preserve America* states – “Explore and Enjoy Our Heritage.” And as they do, the resources necessary to preserve and sustain historic places become not only available, but help leverage other forms of economic development activity.

The Preserve America initiative consists of several components, and they each have broad and deep impacts across the nation. Among the components are the Preserve America Executive Order directed to federal agencies, annual Preserve America Presidential Awards, the designation of Preserve America communities and, a newly announced program, Preserve America community neighborhoods.

Slide 4: Mrs. Bush and John Nau in Nashville

Last month, I traveled with Mrs. Bush to Nashville, Tennessee to announce this new category within the Preserve America Community program. The Preserve America Community Neighborhood designation provides metropolitan communities with populations of more than 200,000 the opportunity to seek designation for neighborhoods that have a significant commitment and dedication to historic preservation.

Denver is a good example of a large metropolitan area with a number of historic neighborhoods. I would encourage those neighborhoods to apply for the Preserve America Community Neighborhood designation.

And, I am pleased to report that another very recent addition to the Preserve America Community Designation program is funding for the Preserve America Community grants. The President requested funding for these new grants, and Congress approved \$5 million for this purpose for the first time this year.

These matching grants will be made to Preserve America communities and neighborhoods, state historical preservation offices, tribal historic preservation offices, and certified local governments for marketing and strategic planning involving their heritage assets.

Administered by the ACHP and the Department of the Interior, these matching fund grants of \$20,000 to \$100,000 will go on a competitive basis to heritage tourism initiatives, promotion and marketing programs, and interpretive/educational initiatives involving historic resources. An application form and further information will be available in the fall. I encourage you to check our website www.PreserveAmerica.gov – for applications and information.

Let me now spend a few minutes focusing on two components of the *Preserve America* initiative that I believe are great tools for marketing heritage assets -- *Preserve America* community and neighborhood designations and the *Preserve America* Presidential Awards. These two aspects of *Preserve America* provide best practices and models for the product that we want to deliver to heritage tourists. And, participation from Colorado individuals, organizations, and communities in the early stages of *Preserve America* has set a great example for others -- not only here -- but across the nation.

Slide 5 : Mrs. Bush at Jan. 15, 2003 PA Community Designation

In 2004, when Mrs. Bush launched the Preserve America community designation program in the East Room of the White House -- one of the first eight *Preserve America* communities named was Steamboat Springs -- a pioneer for Colorado tourism. You attract many tourists interested in the great outdoors. Indeed, the draw of recreational and natural resources positions you well for growth in heritage tourism. The designation of Steamboat Springs was part of a larger effort to promote heritage tourism in northwest Colorado. Since January 2004, you have added Fort Collins, Georgetown, Greeley, Pueblo, and Silverton – they are all now *Preserve America* communities.

Being designated a Preserve America community not only provides enhanced community visibility and pride but also a forum to join other communities in developing heritage tourism programs. And now they can apply for the Preserve America grants.

The *Preserve America* Presidential Awards were first presented in 2004. Each year, two honorees are selected in each of two categories: **Heritage Tourism**, for projects that exemplify efforts that demonstrate commitment to the protection and interpretation of America's cultural or natural heritage assets;

and **Private Preservation**, for outstanding privately funded historic preservation projects that are funded privately or through public-private partnerships and that support the Administration's *Preserve America* initiative objectives.

Slide 6 : Kings with POTUS and Mrs. Bush in Oval Office

Among the first four award winners were Mary and Don King, of Ouray. They saved the historic Beaumont Hotel after it had been abandoned for 34 years. It was an incredible individual effort.

While their award is for private preservation, you can see that heritage tourism in Ouray and Colorado benefits greatly from their effort. So did the National Historic District that forms the core of Ouray. Now, the Kings didn't get a Federal grant to do this. They did it themselves.

Most historic preservation successes, and heritage tourism partnership efforts, grow from the grassroots up. The initiative and the drive are local – then they evolve into more when you find or create partnerships that make the whole more than the sum of its parts. Another powerful example from the 2004 Presidential Awards heritage tourism category is The Blue Ridge Heritage Initiative.

Slide 7: POTUS and Mrs. Bush Blue Ridge Heritage Initiative

The Blue Ridge Heritage Initiative is a bundling of grassroots efforts pulled together by wonderfully creative partnerships. It is noteworthy, because of its geographic and cultural reach. A collaborative effort of such diverse groups as the North Carolina Arts Council, the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians, and HandMade in America, it bridges parts of four states – Georgia, North Carolina, Tennessee, and Virginia.

The Blue Ridge Heritage Initiative promotes four groups of heritage tourism trails. They are Blue Ridge Music, Cherokee Heritage, Craft Heritage, and Farms, Gardens and Countryside. There are guides for each of these trails. Please take note, it's pretty easy to plug a local business based on heritage of almost any sort into one of these four categories.

Slide 8: Preserve America logo

These examples demonstrate the importance and impact of a coordinated effort. My hope is that Colorado will take its many wonderful heritage assets and develop coordinated efforts for heritage tourists. Today's Americans, and our visitors from around the world, want to experience authentic places of our collective heritage.

What state is better situated than Colorado, already richly blessed by adventure and natural tourism, to benefit from the coming boom in heritage tourism?

Your growing emphasis on heritage tourism is a natural extension to your existing tourism market. Organizationally, Colorado has strength in the Office of Economic Development and International Trade with Brian Vogt as director – many states do not have such a structural focus. This structure supported with adequate staff is the right foundation.

Colorado has marvelous iconic places, like Mesa Verde National Park that is celebrating its centennial next year. And travelers interested in Mesa Verde should also know about the Crow Canyon Archeological Center, the Ute Mountain Tribal Park, the remote mining towns and structures involved in the Red Mountain Project.

The overall category of tourism itself is a growth industry. According to recent research from the Travel Industry Association of America and reported in the “Historic/Cultural Traveler, 2003 Edition, -- history/cultural tourism has grown 13 percent since 1996, which was twice the rate of growth of overall travel. But that growth was only a fraction of what we are poised to experience in the near future.

Four in ten heritage tourists are members of the boomer generation, which is rapidly approaching retirement age with more time and resources to enjoy travel.

Heritage travelers, whether boomers or from other generations, stay longer and spend more than other categories of travelers (Bed Taxes). They are more flexible. A majority tends to plan their trip within 30 days of actually taking it. The TIA report notes that four in 10 of these travelers actually extend their visits specifically for additional, initially unplanned, cultural/historical activities. That means when they run into something that interests them; they like the product and they enjoyed a good visitor experience and they have the time and resources to extend their trips to satisfy their curiosity.

Today, heritage tourists account for only 38 percent of overnight pleasure travelers to Colorado, according to the Longwoods International study prepared for the Colorado Tourism Office. And, your resident population accounted for 25 percent of all leisure trips within the state in 2003, but only 18 percent of the heritage trips.

Yet, you attract lots of tourists already who can bundle their heritage interests with other passions.

You have a wonderful opportunity to bundle a ride on the Durango and Silverton Railroad with some hunting or golfing. This is marketing.

Slide 9: POTUS and Mrs. Bush in Rose Garden

When talking about how the Colorado economy can benefit from heritage travelers, the success we have accomplished in my home state – Texas -- comes to mind. I also have the great privilege of serving as the Chairman of the Texas Historical Commission. The Texas Historical Commission is the state agency for historic preservation. One of our many exciting programs is the Texas Heritage Trails Program – a 2005 Preserve America Presidential Award winner in the heritage tourism category. The trails program capitalizes on the economic impact of heritage tourism by providing technical, educational and financial assistance to committed communities. This support helps community leaders and volunteers promote and enhance their heritage tourism attractions by integrating them into trails. Texas has seven active trails including the Forest, Independence, Lakes, Brazos, Plains, Mountain and Tropical Trails. By using trail maps and integrating the sites they enjoyed an 18-22% increase in visitation in year one.

The program is an economic engine generating close to \$90 million in additional spending and hundreds of jobs.

Since the program's inception in 1998, the THC has provided more than \$1.2 million in direct financial assistance through its regional program and partnership grants.

But the beauty of this effort is that it simply bundles and markets local attractions with our iconic attractions, such as the Alamo. People may come to see the Alamo and we hope they hear about Fort McKavett and will want to stay and experience it. There are brochures available here at the conference if you would like additional information on the program.

Heritage tourism is the fastest growing segment of the \$40.5 billion tourism industry in Texas. The program covers 221 Texas counties and serves as an economic engine generating more heritage tourism dollars for our great state. It increases visibility and brings more visitors to historic and cultural attractions. Nationally, annual revenues from heritage tourism are expected to exceed \$200 billion. Again it is all about marketing – the Product (Nation, State and Community). Our job is to create a delivery system -- on a national basis that is Preserve America -- Colorado is participating in this effort. And, our target for success – The Boomers.

Your challenge is to make sure that potential heritage tourists interested in America's history know what you have to offer – for example if a visitor to Denver has an interest in World War II –

while they are here enjoying one of the best preserved downtowns in America, if they stop into a travel office or check their laptop – they need to learn about the site of this Japanese interment camp and other nearby heritage interests. They may stay an extra day or two to experience them. And they will eat in your restaurants and stop in your antique stores and stay in your historic hotels.

Slide 10: PA logo and ACHP logo

In closing, let me just say that through initiatives like *Preserve America*, we can continue to encourage states, regions and communities to join together to showcase the many treasures that illustrate the rich history of our great nation. Let us remember that historic preservation is the key to unlocking the economic engine of heritage tourism.

I commend you for recognizing, and acting upon, the importance of heritage tourism and preservation as keys to Colorado's future success in tourism. Information on Preserve America is available in hard copy here at the conference. Or you can visit the Preserve America website at www.preserveamerica.gov.

Thank you for inviting me to join you today. Now, I would be happy to take any questions you might have.

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