

Draft Remarks for Sustainable Tourism Summit in Knoxville, Tennessee
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Thank you _____ for that kind introduction.

It is a pleasure to be here with you today, to talk about the tremendous opportunity presented to us by the concept of sustainability – as well as the challenges this concept presents. This is a major issue of our times. The imperative for historic preservation is simple. Sustainable historic preservation is not a cost for protecting the past, it is a wise investment in the future.

The Advisory Council on Historic Preservation has supported a belief in sustainability by focusing on historic preservation and heritage tourism. Both are essential components of sustainable tourism. Historic preservation protects and celebrates the cultural resources that define us. Historic preservation and heritage tourism allow us to find ways that we can use history to enrich our communities and our lives both today and for the future.

Sustainable tourism certainly includes heritage tourism and historic preservation. If nothing has been saved and preserved, nothing can be sustained. Preservation has always been critical to those of us who believe history is important. It is becoming increasingly important now, because heritage tourism is among the fastest growing and most desirable segments of travel. People are seeking authentic experiences involving natural and historic places and cultures.

Sustainable tourism, in its fullest sense, is about retaining what matters to us – as a town, a region, a community and as a nation.

I am delighted to be among persons representing organizations and efforts that have helped us to preserve such a rich nation. I thank the organizers and sponsors and participants of this Summit for realizing how important it is to proactively cooperate and stimulate sustainable tourism and bringing us together for that purpose.

Sustainability was precisely why the Preserve America Initiative came into being. It has long been obvious that it is not enough just to save something. The important question is... once something has been saved, what can you do to sustain it? "And how will it sustain you?" Both questions are inherent to historic preservation.

It was just over five years ago that Executive Order 13287, Preserve America, was signed by President George W. Bush on March 3, 2003. That order applies to federal agencies. It requires them to inventory and report upon the condition of their historic resources and, as much as possible, share them with their neighboring communities and the American public. The order established federal policy in preserving America's heritage by actively advancing the protection, enhancement and contemporary use of historic properties owned by the federal government. That order also encourages agencies to seek partnerships with state, tribal and local governments, and the private sector.

On the same March day in 2003, Mrs. Laura Bush, First Lady of the United States and Honorary Chair of Preserve America, announced companion components of the initiative, which originally included the Preserve America Community and Preserve America Presidential Award programs. The effort has added Preserve America Grants and a History Teacher of the Year effort since

that time. These are essentially parallel efforts to recognize, support, and encourage local and private preservation work outside the federal government.

On January 15, 2004, the first eight Preserve America Communities were announced in the East Room of the White House. Today there are 608 designated communities in all 50 states and in overseas territories. These are self-identifying communities that have met criteria demonstrating that they are committed to preservation as a core value for their economic development activities and community life. Among the seven Preserve America communities in Tennessee are Blount County.

There are 19 North Carolina Preserve America Communities. One of them, Asheville, is -- like Blount County -- a gateway to Great Smoky Mountains National Park. You can find out much more about all these communities at www.preserveamerica.gov.

The initiative added Preserve America Grants beginning in 2006. These matching grants complement the pre-existing Save America's Treasures grants by providing funding not for bricks and mortar preservation but for planning, marketing, and educational components that use heritage resources and share them with the wider world.

In 2006, two of the initial Preserve America Grants went to projects in the Volunteer State.

Franklin received funds toward its **Heritage Tourism and Wayfaring Project**. Also successful in its grant quest was a project called **Jonesborough: An American Front Porch**, that involved developing and implementing an interpretive plan to promote the various historic and cultural assets of Jonesborough.

Last year, a project in the Old North State called **Discovering Downtown: Preserving and Promoting Gastonia's Heritage**, was a successful applicant. The grant will help produce a marketing campaign to promote the North Carolina community as a cultural and heritage tourism destination, through wayfinding signs, a walking tour brochure, an updated Web site, and multimedia education and heritage information.

We have just announced the recipients for the first round of the 2008 Preserve America Grants. I am pleased to note that two of them are for projects in North Carolina or Tennessee. The North Carolina grantee announced earlier this month was \$150,000 for **Culturally Connecting America's Hometown: Fayetteville/Cumberland County Wayfinding Initiative**. This grant is to plan, design, and implement a complete wayfinding signage system throughout Fayetteville/Cumberland County, with emphasis on historical and cultural resources.

Another \$150,000 grant just went to a project called **Birth of a City: The History of Oak Ridge, Tennessee**. This grant will help collate the historic record of a city approaching its 50th anniversary as an incorporated city, but one that began earlier as a government secret project site. Funds will help complete an inventory of existing records, files and historic materials, conducting oral history interviews with key city officials and community leaders; developing an interpretive exhibit on Oak Ridge's history; and creating educational materials for curricular and scholarly use.

I would like to use this opportunity to note that the Department of Energy is working closely with the National Park Service and other partners, including the ACHP, with funding and a legislated request from Congress to determine how to tell the story of the Manhattan Project. That top-secret World War II project created Oak Ridge, but the story was written across the face of

America, from the urban enclaves of Chicago to the deserts of the southwest and the banks of the Columbia River in Washington. The historic remnants of the Manhattan Project are key components to understanding a key, frantic four year segment of the nation's larger history.

I would also like to note that the National Park Service is approaching its 100-year anniversary in 2016. We talk about sustainability and realize its importance increasingly today, but the concept outdates even the NPS. It is somewhat incredible to realize that 40 national parks and monuments were created before there was a suitable entity to manage and protect them. That of course included the world's first national park, Yellowstone, which was actually protected from overuse when General Philip Sheridan sent in the U.S. Army in the 19th century to prevent it from being exploited.

The 1916 enabling legislation created the NPS states that "the Service thus established shall promote and regulate the use of federal areas known as national parks, monuments and reservations . . . by such means and measures as conform to the fundamental purpose of the said parks, monuments and reservations, which purpose is to conserve the scenery and the natural and historic objects and the wild life therein and to provide for the enjoyment of the same in such manner and by such means as will leave them unimpaired for the enjoyment of future generations."

Clearly, the urge to preserve and sustain long preceded the creation of a system to accomplish those ends. We meet today in Knoxville to continue that conversation, grateful to those who long ago initiated it but knowing that it will continue far beyond our times.

We know that millions of people and thousands of organizations participate in this effort.

In May 2004, the first four Preserve America Presidential Awards were announced and the winners honored at the White House. One of the first winners was the Blue Ridge Heritage Initiative, a model of sustainable tourism using the heritage resources of this area of Tennessee, North Carolina, Virginia and Georgia. The Blue Ridge Heritage Initiative is absolutely a template for other efforts. It transcends political boundaries and focuses on many heritages, from American Indians to agricultural and musical cultures, and helps people find their own personal authentic experience of these things and places inherent to this special region.

We all know that federal agencies work best when they work in partnership with other governments, tribes, businesses and organizations. You can find out how to participate in some key sustainable heritage tourism projects, become a Preserve America Community, identify a worthy project or program for a presidential award, or look for financial aid at www.preserveamerica.gov. The key to sustainability of any kind is the same ... become aware and get involved.

Clearly, those here are already on the right road to the future. Let us know how we can help.

I'd like to thank you for the opportunity to be here with you today, and now I would like to introduce the Secretary of the U.S. Department of the Interior, Dirk Kempthorne.