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Designations Raise Preserve America Communities to 814, Stewards to 21

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Mrs. Michelle Obama, First Lady of the United States, has designated 19 additional Preserve America Communities and eight Preserve America Stewards.

The Preserve America program seeks to actively involve Americans in preserving America's heritage and increasing the positive economic, educational, environmental, and cultural benefits of preservation to their communities.

The 19 community designations bring to 814 the total number of designations since the program's inception in 2003. Designated Preserve America Communities use the Preserve America logo and the Internet to increase their visibility as a heritage tourism destination, boosting visitation and thereby benefiting their local economies. Research has shown that heritage tourists stay longer and spend more than other types of tourists. Designation also demonstrates to potential partners that these communities have a leadership commitment to their heritage, as well as the necessary infrastructure, to turn historic resources into economic assets through adaptive reuse for contemporary purposes.

The eight recent stewardship designations bring the national total of recognized volunteer efforts under Preserve America to 21. Designated programs provide individual volunteers with opportunities to contribute in direct and tangible ways to the preservation, protection, and promotion of historic resources.

The 19 newest Preserve America Communities are the following:

American Samoa
Arizona – Peoria
Arkansas – Camden
Georgia – Douglasville
Idaho – Hailey
Indiana – La Porte
Iowa – Adams County
Kansas – Lawrence
Maine – Biddeford
Michigan – Boyne County
Montana – Big Horn County
North Carolina – Boone
Oklahoma – Muskogee
Oregon – Oregon City
Pennsylvania – Pottstown

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South Carolina – Greenville County, McCormick
South Dakota – Pierre
Texas – Walker County

A noteworthy addition is American Samoa, the first U.S. territory designated in its entirety. American Samoa originally applied for designation prior to the tsunami that hit the island territory in 2009, and the Governor of American Samoa has emphasized the importance of Samoan culture and heritage tourism in the post disaster recovery effort.

The eight most recent stewardship designations are the following:

Arizona – Kaibab Vermillion Cliffs Heritage Alliance, Flagstaff
Hawaii – The Friends of Iolani Palace, Honolulu
Illinois – Pleasant Home Foundation, Oak Park
Maine – Maine Maritime Museum, Bath
Massachusetts – Thacher Island Association, Cape Ann
Nevada – Public Lands Institute, University of Las Vegas
New York – Museum at Eldridge Street, New York City
Pennsylvania – Pennsylvania German Cultural Center, Kutztown

Designated Preserve America Communities are now located in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and two U.S. territories. The Preserve America program seeks to better fulfill the goals of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 through renewed emphasis in involving Americans in local activities that preserve and appropriately utilize heritage assets through partnerships with federal agencies, state governments, local governments, schools, preservation organizations, and the private sector. For more information see www.preserveamerica.gov.

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