

# Historic Resources Inventory

Protecting Our Heritage by Preparing for the Unexpected

March 2008

## STATUS

The FY2009 Administration budget proposes \$2 million for inventory development.

## REQUEST

\$5 million for competitive grants to States to conduct new field work in areas of high risk for natural disaster and to digitize paper record.

## BACKGROUND

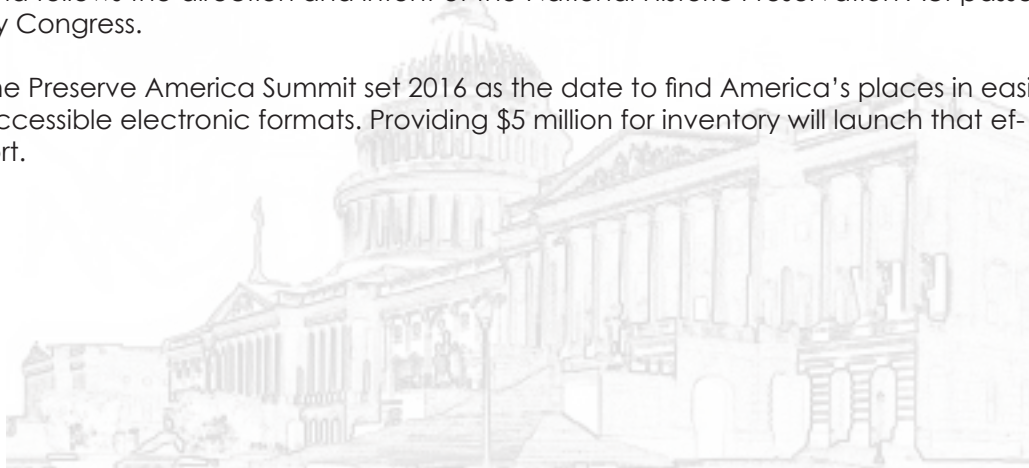
Where are America's historic places? After 40 years of the national preservation program we, as a Nation, still don't know. Efforts to increase investment in survey and inventory were made by Congress, state and local governments, and the private sector, however, the First Lady's Preserve America Summit Report (2007) is what served as the catalyst to prompt the National Park Service (NPS) to act. While the Administration has made a first step with a \$2 million request for FY09, preservationists need \$5 million, which when matched, becomes a \$10 million investment in inventory improvements.

The request is twofold. 1) Many parts of America have not been surveyed for historic sites and limited funding has led to a patchwork of identified sites. An inventory of data on historic sites is essential for federal project review (Section 106) and for a foundation of every preservation activity, e. g., National Register. 2) Existing paper records need to be converted to electronic formats (data bases, GIS). This will allow for remote and immediate electronic access to the information.

Recent natural disasters have exposed the adverse consequences of the void in historic resources information. In the Gulf, in 2005 aid to victims and FEMA responses were delayed because digitized historic site locations were not available. The NPS detailed staff to do after the fact digitization of the location of historic places. The result of the work—on line access to maps of historic sites—led to a dramatic reduction in project review, from weeks to hours.

The recently released National Academy of Public Administration's analysis of the national preservation program recommends increased leadership from the NPS (including monetary support). Teaming with State Historic Preservation Officers on the development of a national historic resources survey shows improved NPS leadership and follows the direction and intent of the National Historic Preservation Act passed by Congress.

The Preserve America Summit set 2016 as the date to find America's places in easily accessible electronic formats. Providing \$5 million for inventory will launch that effort.



## FOR MORE INFORMATION

### National Conference of State Historic Preservation Officers

444 N. Capitol NW STE 342

Washington, DC 20001

tel: 202-624-5465

[www.ncshpo.org](http://www.ncshpo.org)

### Preservation Action

401 F Street NW STE 324

Washington, DC 20001

tel: 202-637-7873

[www.preservationaction.org](http://www.preservationaction.org)

### National Trust for Historic Preservation

1785 Massachusetts Ave NW

Washington, DC 20036

tel: 202-588-6000

[www.nationaltrust.org](http://www.nationaltrust.org)

### National Alliance of Preservation Commissions

325 South Lumpkin Street

Founders Garden House

Athens, GA 30602

tel: 706-542-4731

[www.uga.edu/nacp](http://www.uga.edu/nacp)