

THE IMPORTANCE OF THE HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL ASSETS OF TUCSON
AND THE SANTA CRUZ VALLEY

A COMMON VISION FOR PRESERVING A UNIQUE HISTORY WHILE SUPPORTING
INCREASED REGIONAL TOURISM

Anza Trail Coalition of AZ
Friends of Tucson's Birthplace
Kino Heritage Society
Los Descendientes del Presidio de Tucson
Santa Cruz Heritage Alliance
Southern Arizona Transportation Museum
Tucson Audubon Society
Tucson Presidio Trust

Honoring, preserving, recreating, interpreting, supporting, promoting, protecting the prehistory and history of southern Arizona is a common theme running through the vision statements, mission statements and goals of the organizations listed above. Given the unique but fragile remainders of our multicultural histories it is no wonder that, in 1999, the voters of Tucson strongly approved the funding for a renaissance of the City of Tucson based largely on the power of its past. That commitment, contained in the voter-approved Proposition 400, now needs to be honored with Rio Nuevo funding returned to the voter approved projects that promote ecotourism and can be completed in a short time frame.

While we are each determined to accomplish our individual organization's goals, we are also committed to a collaborative and cooperative effort to maximize the presentation and celebration of our history. The finished projects will serve present and future generations in bringing economic benefits to the region through cultural, historical, eco- and agri-oriented tourism drawing visitors not only from Arizona, but national and worldwide travelers as well.

We are each part of a necklace of historical and cultural jewels that surround the Tucson area and stretch along the Santa Cruz Valley. These include but are not limited to the following:

Old Tucson Studios 350,000*
Pima Air and Space Museum 200,000
Tucson Museum of Art and Historic Block 191,000
San Xavier Mission 175,000
Arizona Historical Society, Second Street Museum 85,000
Titan Missile Museum 57,000
Tumacácori National Historical Park 48,000
Arizona State Museum 40,000
Old Pueblo Trolley (2003) 26,000
Tubac Presidio State Historic Park 19,000
La Posta Quemada Ranch Museum 10,000
Fort Lowell Museum 6,000
Sosa-Carillo-Frémont House (2003) 6,000

Arizona Historical Society, Downtown Museum 6,000
Postal History Museum 3,000
Pimería Alta Historical Society 3,000

In addition, the following historical and cultural gems lie within or adjacent to the Rio Nuevo District:

Convento site
Mission Garden
Presidio
Sosa-Carillo-Fremont House
Menlo Park Historic District
Warner's Mill
Menlo Park Historic District

The following ecologically significant sites have already established an impressive baseline of tourists, many of whom have been shown to visit historical and cultural sites as well. If Tucson is committed to attract more and bigger conventions, these participants need more and exciting places to visit.

Saguaro National Park (East and West) 3,400,000
Sabino Canyon, Coronado National Forest +1,500,000
Santa Catalina Mountains (except Sabino Canyon), Coronado National Forest +1,500,000
Tucson Mountain Park +1,500,000
Rillito River Park (2003) 587,000
Arizona-Sonora Desert Museum 520,000
Reid Park Zoo 413,000
Madera Canyon, Coronado National Forest (2000) 260,000
Mount Lemmon Ski Valley, Coronado National Forest 221,000
Patagonia Lake State Park 217,000
Tohono Chul Park 169,000
Colossal Cave Mountain Park 165,000
Roy P. Drachman Agua Caliente Park (2003) 135,000
Santa Cruz River Park (2003) 133,000
Catalina State Park 126,000
International Wildlife Museum (2001) 110,000
Tucson Botanical Gardens 98,000
The Nature Conservancy's Patagonia-Sonoita Creek Preserve (average 1998-2000) 17,000
Las Cienegas National Conservation Area (2003) 13,000

* These numbers indicate the number of annual tourist visits (2002)

In summary, one of the treasures of the southern Arizona area, with Tucson as its core, is the wealth of undeveloped and underdeveloped cultural and historical gems associated with its indigenous peoples and its waves of immigrants beginning in the 17th century and continuing into the present. Just as important as the protection and preservation of the ecology of the Sonoran Desert is the honoring, preserving, recreating, interpreting, supporting, promoting, and protecting of the prehistory and

history of Tucson and the Santa Cruz Valley. The voters of Tucson agreed in 1999. The way to act is to responsibly fund those projects that have the greatest potential for economic gains through increased tourism. Priority number one must be to complete the unfinished Mission Garden project which now lies as a visual reminder of unfulfilled promises. It can however be a model of public private partnership and a cornerstone for an eventual completion of Tucson Origins Heritage Park. .

Selected area organizations and their mission statements

Anza Trail Coalition of AZ

An organization devoted to the establishment and interpretation of the Juan Bautista de Anza National Historic Trail in Arizona and a continuing trail in Mexico

Friends of Tucson's Birthplace

Our mission is to preserve, honor, protect, restore and promote the cultural heritage of Tucson's Birthplace at the foot of Sentinel Peak ('A' Mountain).

Kino Heritage Society

The mission of the Kino Heritage Society is to honor the legacy of Padre Kino and support his cause for his canonization.

Los Descendientes del Presidio de Tucson

Los Descendientes del Presidio de Tucson is dedicated to the preservation of the history and culture of Tucson and extending to the entire Pimeria Alta region.

The Pimeria Alta region was defined by a Jesuit priest Father Eusebio Francisco Kino, S.J., to include what today is known as most of Pima, Cochise and Santa Cruz counties in Arizona and the state of Sonora, Mexico...

Santa Cruz Heritage Alliance

Vision: Shaping a future that builds on the cultural traditions, historic places, working landscapes, and natural treasures of Southern Arizona's Santa Cruz Valley.

Mission: To connect people to the cultural, historic and natural treasures of the Santa Cruz Valley through education, preservation and promotion of its unique resources and living traditions.

Southern Arizona Transportation Museum

Located in Tucson's Historic Southern Pacific Railroad Depot at 414 N. Toole Avenue, the free-admission SATM showcases Historic Locomotive #1673 and a wide variety of railroad related interpretative exhibits designed to highlight Southern Arizona history. In addition, the Museum provides an educational lecture series and several free, fun-filled community events celebrating the area's rich heritage.

Tucson Audubon Society

Tucson Audubon Society is dedicated to improving the quality of the environment by providing education, conservation, and recreation programs, as well as environmental leadership and information.

Tucson Presidio Trust

Our mission (is) to guide and aid in the interpretation of the history of the Old Pueblo at the recreated Spanish Fort of Tucson with special emphasis on the Spanish Colonial period through research, education and living history.

Compiled by Friends of Tucson's Birthplace, 2011