

# Policy Responses for State owned Historic Sites

New Jersey Historic Preservation Conference Donna Ann Harris June 7, 2012

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#### **Funder**

- Funder: Jeffris Heartland Fund of the Midwest Regional Office of the National Trust for Historic Preservation
- Client: Illinois Historic Preservation Agency

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## Learning objectives

- Understand current economic challenges facing state-owned historic sites across the US
- Learn about innovative policy responses by several state governments to steward their historic sites in light of current economic challenges.
- Abbreviated version of presentation at AASLH Sept 2011

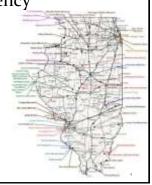
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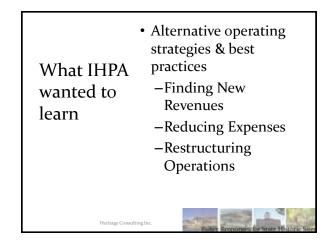


## Illinois Historic Preservation Agency

- Operates 60 historic sites and memorials, ranging in scale from small cottages to 2,000 plus acres of prehistoric mounds.
- 26 Staffed historic sites
- Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library & Museum

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## The issues are national in scope

- 11 Most Endangered by NTHP in 2010
- "Historic Site Stewardship in the 21st Century" conference at Kykuit 2007
- New Solutions for House Museums, Donna Ann Harris 2007
- Articles in *Forum Journal* and *History News* 2007 and 2008



## State policy responses

- A. Expanding Revenue
- B. Restructuring Operations
- C. Reducing Expenses



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## Statewide sponsorship lessons learned

- Historic parks are less interesting to sponsors than traditional parks
- Whole systems vs. individual parks
- Chicago market easy to sell—but there is only one IHPA site there-Pullman
- Partnering with Dept. of Natural Resources may yield better sponsorship success

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## Statewide sponsorships California

- California State Parks & California State Parks Foundation (Nonprofit partner)
- Proud Partners Program
- The California State Parks Donor and Sponsorship Guidelines
- Identify assets to be sponsored
- Role of marketing firms

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## B. Restructuring operations

- Local Partner Agreements
- 2. Privatization



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## 1. Local partnership agreements: Ohio

- Ohio Historical Society administered 59 historic sites in 2007
- 1981-2004, 14 sites were moved to local management
- Budget crisis in 2009
- Today OHS only manages 10 sites







#### 2. Privatization—California

- Definition
- Expanded visitor services
- Strong Market vs. Weak Markets
- Drafting process for privatization offerings

**Business services** 

- Lodging
- Food/beverage
- Retail/gift shops
- Special event rental
- Tour programs
- Special programs (horses, crafts etc.)





## Local partnership agreements: Ohio

- 48 sites are managed by 41 "friends of" organizations
- New local partnerships
- Small financial annual subsidy
- Capital improvements, major maintenance,

security, technical assistance staff, training from the OHS staff.







## Privatization--California

- · Gross receipts leases most common
- Risk/reward to state and concessionaire
- Larger buildings/spaces
- California examples
- Facilities Improvements
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## C. Reducing expenses

- 1. Reduced Operating Hours & Site Closures
- 2. Resident Curators





#### Reduced hours & site closures: PA

- 13 actively managed sites
- 10 more management agreements with nonprofits
- One maintenance staff
- Reduced hours
- · No subvention to managed sites







## 1. Reduced hours & site closures: PA

- 60 sites in 1980s
- Blue ribbon panel, 27 "Placed Properties"
- Planning Our Future: Sustainability Committee Final Report
- 2009 severe budget cuts
- 75 site staff furloughed
- 25 retired









#### Reduced hours & site closures

- · Closures as bargaining tools
- Not politically popular
- Reduced hours in a union environment
- · Closures don't save a lot of money





## 2. Resident curatorship

- Definition
- MD, CT, DE, MA, NY. NJ (legislation)
- What's in it for resident curator
- What's in it for the state
- Best prospects for successful RFP



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#### Resident curator

- · Agreement length
- Restoration plan/schedule
- Tenant pays all restoration costs
- RFP process
- CT Building assessment
- Public access days







#### Contact me!

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