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## PUBLIC SUMMARY

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- Historic preservation is about saving our important heritage places. Preservation benefits Montana – culturally, educationally, functionally, and economically. State Preservation Plans, prepared by the State Historic Preservation Office, serve as a guide for preservation efforts at the state and local level.
- This Plan *PRESERVE MONTANA: The Montana Historic Preservation Plan 2008-2012*, is a revision or update of the previous 2003-2007 Plan. It was developed from feedback, study reviews, and input from interested parties and stakeholders, including the public, historic preservation professionals, government officials, tribal representatives, state and local preservation organizations, avocationalists, and educational specialists.
- Montana has a rich and varied set of heritage properties that represent different themes in Montana history. Over 47,000 historic and pre-contact sites, buildings, structures, and districts have been identified and recorded in the state, with nearly 1,100 of these listed in the National Register of Historic Places. Many more are known or expected to exist as only about 5% of Montana has been inventoried to date. A significant number of Montana's heritage properties are at risk due to such factors as commercial and resource development, urban sprawl, neglect, mismanagement, changing population needs, lack of public awareness, and limited financial resources for preservation.
- Significant issues and challenges face Montana preservation over the next five years. These reflect national, state and local trends and perspectives. Issues include finding ways to: address the availability of necessary financial resources; increase public knowledge and awareness of culture/preservation issues; cope with urban commercial growth and rural decline; and support continued heritage property inventory and information management.
- The vision for historic preservation in our state is that *Montana is a place that knows, respects, and celebrates its heritage, openly encouraging and supporting the preservation of its significant historic, precontact, and traditional cultural properties*. Five goals to guide preservation over the next five years in achieving this vision are to: I. *Educate: Building a foundation for historic preservation through knowledge and awareness*; II. *Celebrate: Promoting preservation with recognition, acknowledgement, and praise*; III. *Locate and Evaluate: Identifying and documenting Montana's significant heritage places worthy of preservation*; IV. *Advocate: Seeking support of preservation through funding, incentives, and protection*; and V. *Collaborate: Working together to preserve Montana's historic, precontact, and traditional cultural properties*.