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## National Trails Intermountain Region News Release

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### National Trails Intermountain Region Participates in Public Workshops Along Historic Route 66

Santa Fe, N.M.: A series of public workshops along historic Route 66 has been successfully completed. These workshops represent an unprecedented and important moment in Route 66 history in which hundreds of people who live, work, and care for the road were brought together to discuss its future. The workshops began on July 21, 2015 in Springfield, Illinois, and included meetings in Springfield, Missouri; Oklahoma City, Oklahoma; Amarillo, Texas; Albuquerque, New Mexico; Flagstaff, Arizona; and San Bernardino, California.

Over 300 people from state, county and municipal governments, legislative offices, nonprofit organizations, tourism offices, small businesses, and others attended a series of workshops to discuss the development of a national framework for collaboration along Route 66 and to consider the future of National Park Service involvement. The enthusiastic participation at the workshops is testimony to the ever-growing recognition of Route 66 as a vital part of American history, and its relevance to the identity, memory, economy, and quality of life in its communities and states today.

The workshops were sparked by a grass roots initiative in November 2013, when the World Monuments Fund convened a strategic roundtable. The effort brought stakeholders together to discuss the results of an economic impact study focused on Route 66 preservation and heritage tourism. At the roundtable, it was determined that with the impending sunset of the National Park Service's Route 66 Corridor Preservation Program, the formation of a national framework for collaboration was desired to carry on the objectives of the program. A steering committee was formed that developed recommendations for a new organizational structure called Route 66: The Road Ahead Initiative that includes plans for a representative elected board, and committees that will promote preservation, tourism, advocacy, economic development, and education. Included in the recommendations was the proposal to permanently designate Route 66 as a national historic trail.

The feedback given during the workshops is now being compiled into a report by the Route 66: The Road Ahead Steering Committee. When completed, a report that includes final recommendations and next steps for moving forward will be distributed to the public.

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The success of the workshops offers more than a glimpse of what is possible when we all work together in the best interest of the road and its communities. To learn more about the outcome of the workshops, and the Route 66: The Road Ahead Initiative, read a press release from Steering Committee Chairman Bill Thomas, and visit the Route 66: The Road Ahead informational website.

[www.nps.gov](http://www.nps.gov)

*About the National Park Service. More than 20,000 National Park Service employees care for America's 401 national parks and work with communities across the nation to help preserve local history and create close-to-home recreational opportunities. Learn more at [www.nps.gov](http://www.nps.gov).*

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