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LHC Launches “Untold Stories of the Borderland” to Preserve Latinx Legacies Across the Southwest

With less than 1% of historic sites reflecting Latinx heritage, this two-week road trip brings visibility to stories left off the map.

[AUSTIN, TX – May 7, 2025] — Latinos in Heritage Conservation, the national leader in the preservation of Latinx heritage, is launching a two-week initiative this May, during National Preservation Month, to document, reclaim, and celebrate the cultural landscapes of the U.S.–Mexico borderlands. Through community-driven research and storytelling, ***Untold Stories of the Borderland*** will spotlight sites threatened by erasure and border policy, centering Latinx voices and the enduring ties between people and place across Arizona, New Mexico, and Texas.

From **May 16 to May 29**, LHC’s team of historians, documentarians, and cultural workers will travel to:

- *Phoenix, Tucson, and Nogales (Arizona)*
- *Albuquerque (New Mexico)*
- *El Paso, Socorro, Marfa, and Valentine (Texas)*

The road trip supports four of LHC’s key initiatives: the **Abuelas Project**, the **Latinx Preservation Toolkit**, the **Endangered Latinx Landmarks Program** and the **Nuestra Herencia Grants Program**. Each site visit will center local voices, combining research and storytelling to create accessible preservation resources like digital StoryMaps, oral history exhibits, and serve as case studies in LHC’s newest edition of the Latinx Preservation Toolkit.

“This road trip is about going where the data points us, to communities that have been excluded from preservation for too long. If only 0.65% of recognized historic sites reflect Latinx heritage, then we have work to do, and it starts on the ground, listening,” said **Sehila Mota Casper**, Executive Director of Latinos in Heritage Conservation.

Preserving Memory in One of America’s Oldest Cultural Corridors

The U.S.–Mexico borderlands are among the oldest continuously inhabited and culturally layered regions in North America, shaped by centuries of Indigenous, Mexican, and Latinx life. Yet their contributions remain widely under-recognized: of nearly 99,000 sites on the National Register of Historic Places, only 0.65% reflect Latinx heritage — and between 2014 and 2025, just 7% of federal preservation funding supported Latinx projects, according to LHC’s Equity Study.

“In every border town, there are people quietly doing the work of preservation—painting murals, telling stories, holding space,” said **Asami Robledo-Allen Yamamoto**, Director of Education, Outreach, Communications & Marketing at LHC. “We’re showing up to stand beside them, to document their work, and to help carry it into the broader preservation movement.”

In each city, LHC will connect with **local preservationists, community elders, and cultural organizers** to document living histories and support efforts to protect Latinx landmarks. In El Paso, for example, the team will spotlight **Duranguito**, the city’s first barrio and a longtime site of resistance. Residents there successfully mobilized to defend their neighborhood from demolition. From mural walks to beautification projects led by matriarchs like *Toñita*, these stories reflect the intergenerational power of place.

Media and Public Engagement

The journey will be shared in real time through LHC's social media platforms and community channels. A dedicated page at **www.latinoheritage.us/theborderlands** will feature stories, interviews, and visual content captured during the trip. Journalists and media professionals interested in interviews, photographs, or meeting the team during a stop are encouraged to reach out for access and coordination.

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