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COCHISE COUNTY, SOUTHEAST ARIZONA IN GOVERNOR'S CONFERENCE SPOTLIGHT

COCHISE COUNTY, Ariz. (July 18, 2007) – Arizona's tourism officials honored three southeastern Arizona programs at the 27th Annual Governor's Conference on Tourism awards luncheon on July 12. The three southeastern Arizona entities that received awards were in the Cooperative Marketing, Arizona Preservation and Special Events—Rural categories.

Cooperative Marketing: Southeastern Arizona Birding Trail by the Birding Trail Committee

The judges chose this project because partnership organizations demonstrated a tremendous amount of cooperation in working together to promote one of Arizona's great destination drivers. Because of their dedicated efforts, visitation to and interest in the Southeastern Arizona region has increased.

The Birding Trail Committee is composed of federal and state partners, local businesses, conservation groups and individuals interested in promoting birding in Arizona. Together the committee created the Southeastern Arizona Birding Trail that leads visitors to 52 birding sites throughout the Sonoran Desert region.

Special Events – Rural: Border to Border Air Show by the Gadsden Hotel

The Border to Border Air Show was the first event of its kind for Douglas, Arizona. Event organizers from the Gadsden Hotel in Douglas enlisted pilots from across the nation and Canada to perform at the air show. The purpose of the event was to help promote the community of Douglas and bring both Canadian and Mexican tourists to the area.

The judges chose the Air Show as the winner because not only was this event the first of its kind for Douglas, it brought an estimated 8,000 tourists. The event was such a boost to the local community that organizers are looking forward to next year's event.

Arizona Preservation: Bisbee Mining & Historical Museum's Digging In exhibit

Digging In is an interpretive presentation that focuses on Bisbee's copper mining heritage. The exhibit is set in re-created mining environments where visitors get a full sensory experience of Bisbee's mining history and learn about the complex stories of society's demands for copper and how it impacted the history and future of copper mining in Arizona.

The judges chose this as the winner because Digging In is a tremendous example of preserving Arizona's mining history. This exhibit helps educate large numbers of visitors, of all ages, about Bisbee's copper mining story and the effect the copper industry had not only on this town but on the entire state of Arizona.

Located in southeastern Arizona, Cochise County is one of the most culturally, historically and geographically diverse areas in the American Southwest. Its legendary communities—Benson, Bisbee, Douglas, Tombstone, Sierra Vista and Willcox—were strategically located less than a day's journey by stagecoach and are now just a short drive from one another.

For more information about Cochise County, contact the Cochise County Tourism Council at 1-800-862-5273 or visit their website at www.explorecochise.com.