

In Partnership with the USDA Forest Service & the San Juan National Forest

Chimney Rock Press Release

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Chimney Rock Interpretive Association Receives The Governor's Award for Outstanding Community Tourism Initiative

Chimney Rock Interpretive Association (CRIA) is pleased to announce that it has received the 2015 Colorado Governor's Tourism Award for Outstanding Community Tourism Initiative. CRIA received this award in recognition of its excellence in the promotion of tourism in the Southwest region of the state, utilization of partnerships, creativity and innovation in the initiative, and contribution to the local economy. Notably, the timing of this award coincided with the three year anniversary of the designation of Chimney Rock as a National Monument through the Antiquities Act. The designation of the Monument ensures the continual preservation and management of the site for many generations to come.

CRIA is a non-profit 501(c)3 organization that runs the daily operations and interpretive program at Chimney Rock National Monument in partnership with the USDA Forest Service and the San Juan National Forest. CRIA has shown creativity and innovation through its multi-faceted approaches to increasing the number of visitors to Chimney Rock and contributing to the local economy. These approaches include: a signage campaign resulting in two new CDOT signs on Hwy 160; formation of advertising partnerships with other archaeological sites in the region to increase visibility; and collaboration with surrounding communities to mutually expand advertising and marketing to encompass a larger geographic area. As a result of CRIA's marketing initiative, visitation to the Monument has increased nearly 30% through August 2015. This was all possible due to donations and an increase in marketing grants.

There are approximately 80 friendly volunteers who are the heart of CRIA. While there are paid staff members, the volunteers do most of the tasks that make the program work. Financial support for CRIA is derived from tour and program fees, merchandise sales, grants, and generous donations. Since the Monument designation, visitation to Chimney Rock has increased and will continue to do so. CRIA receives no state or federal funding to run the site. Therefore public support is vital for continued programming and site preservation. If you are interested in joining our volunteer team or are able to make a donation, please go to www.chimneyrockco.org.



In photo: The award was presented to CRIA Administrative Director, Danyelle Leentjes (left) and CRIA Marketing Coordinator, Nadia Werby (right) by Al White (center right), Director of the Colorado Tourism Office (CTO) and Christian Knapp, CTO Board Chair at the Colorado Governor's Tourism Conference in Crested Butte, Colorado.

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