



AIANTA

American Indian Alaska Native
Tourism Association

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American Indians and Route 66 to Launch Landmark Project in New Mexico

*The American Indian Alaska Native Tourism Association with the National Park
Service takes a new look at the old Route 66*

Albuquerque, New Mexico (November 4, 2014) - The American Indian Alaska Native Tourism Association (AIANTA), in partnership with the National Park Service (NPS) proudly presents the launch of the landmark project, "American Indians and Route 66". The project, which is set to add cultural context to the Route 66 story, will launch with a kick-off meeting on November 19, 2014 hosted by the Laguna Pueblo at the Route 66 Casino in New Mexico.

Tribal lands and tribes are located along the entire length of Route 66 from Chicago to California, yet very few tribal connections and stories have been documented to date. AIANTA received a grant from NPS to coordinate this project, which is intended to produce an American Indians and Route 66 Guidebook, sharing the history of tribal homelands and tribes along the route while encouraging tourists to visit these tribal destinations.

"With more than 27 federally recognized tribes along Route 66, we are thrilled that we will finally be able to share these under-told histories connected to the famous highway," said Virginia Salazar-Halfmoon, AIANTA's Public Lands Partnership Coordinator and Route 66 Project Coordinator. "We hope that with this project we can provide tangible connections with Tribes along Route 66 and encourage people to visit and learn about the history and connections of tribal nations along the route."

The project will also include entry of cultural attractions, Indian-owned destinations and accommodations on AIANTA's Indian Country destinations website, which is currently in its development stage.

Lisa Snell, owner and publisher of the *Native American Times* and *Native Oklahoma* magazine has been hired as the travel writer for the project, to research and produce the guidebook - which will dispel the stereotypes of American Indians previously used to attract tourists. The guidebook will provide travelers with educational information about sites of significance and share compelling historic information that will attract travelers to destinations identified by tribes along Route 66.



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To launch this historic project, the kick-off meeting at the Route 66 Casino will include presentations on aspects of tribal histories about Route 66 and from organizations dedicated to preserving the route. The agenda will feature speakers from the National Park Service and the Chicago American Indian Center and representatives from tribes along Route 66 including Seneca-Cayuga Nation, Muscogee Creek, the Cherokee Nation of Oklahoma, Acoma Pueblo, Laguna Pueblo, the Hualapai Tribe, the Navajo Nation, a representative from Hopi Enterprises and more.

About AIANTA

The American Indian Alaska Native Tourism Association (AIANTA) is a 501(c)(3) national nonprofit association of Native American tribes and tribal businesses that was incorporated in 2002 to advance Indian Country tourism. The association is made up of member tribes from six regions: Alaska, Eastern, Midwest, Pacific, Plains and the Southwest. AIANTA's mission is to define, introduce, grow and sustain American Indian and Alaska Native tourism that honors and preserves tribal traditions and values.

The purpose of AIANTA is to provide our constituents with the voice and tools needed to advance tourism while helping tribes, tribal organizations and tribal members create infrastructure and capacity through technical assistance, training and educational resources. AIANTA serves as the liaison between Indian Country, governmental and private entities for the development, growth, and sustenance of Indian Country tourism. By developing and implementing programs and providing economic development opportunities, AIANTA helps tribes build for their future while sustaining and strengthening their cultural legacy.

To learn more, please visit www.aianta.org. For current updates, like us on [Facebook](#) and follow us on Twitter ([@OfficialAIANTA](#)).

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