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 BOARD POLICY INFO ONLY, NO ACTION REQUIRED

AGENDA ITEM
Idaho Park and Recreation Quarterly Meeting
February 2, 2024
McCall, ID 83638

AGENDA ITEM: AMERICA 250

ACTION REQUIRED:

PRESENTER: CHELSEA CHAMBERS

PRESENTATION

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

IDPR was invited by partner agency the Idaho State Historical Society (ISHS) to participate in the American 250 Celebration, which will be held in 2026. There are many ways IDPR can be involved in helping to promote America's 250th birthday but the primary is to help develop a coffee table book with ISHS and the Idaho Heritage Trust entitled *Idaho Places*. This would share info about Idaho's state parks and historic places. It would coincide with a television series or mini-video series with Idaho Public Television (IDPTV).

Chelsea Chambers is working with Alan Minskoff of the IHT and Janet Gallimore and HannaLore Hein of ISHS to get this off the ground. Part of the celebration as a whole was to ask Legislature for \$1,000,000 to be distributed to various agencies for their contributions. IDPR's portion is \$60,000 for the creation, printing, and distribution of the coffee table book. This money would be given to ISHS and then distributed to IDPR (and other agencies).

As of 02/20/2024, JFAC passed ISHS's \$1,000,000 request. It is anticipated to go through the House and the Senate with no issues.

ISHS is asking all partners to ensure their boards are apprised of this information and that they have their full support to move forward with the various proposed A250 projects.

STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS:

This item is for information only.



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Executive Summary

Background: On July 4, 2026, our nation will commemorate the 250th anniversary of the founding of the United States. In 2016, Congress established the [Semi-quincentennial Commission](#) to plan and orchestrate this commemoration. The Congressional America250 Caucus includes Idaho's US Congressman Mike Simpson and US Senator Jim Risch.

Mission: To guide people across Idaho in recognizing, appreciating, and advancing the state's historical significance, natural beauty, agricultural importance, cultural heritage, outdoor recreation opportunities, and economic impact through purposeful and meaningful community engagement.

Vision: To make Idaho's unparalleled history, distinctive attributes, and the invaluable contributions of its residents since time immemorial the foundation on which Idahoans understand their place in this region, the country, and the world.

Values: Heritage Relevance, Education, Respect, Community Resilience, Patriotism, and National Pride.

Why it matters:

- Sharing Idaho stories reveals complexities and introduces new ideas, and intentional civic engagement leads to greater understanding and a sense of belonging.
- Idaho's history provides context to view contemporary challenges, triumphs, and events.
- The commemoration will amplify Idaho's unique attributes and contributions, build pride in our great state and its place in the American story, and strengthen the values that characterize Idaho and its citizenry, including family, community, integrity, self-reliance, and patriotism.

Efficient Structure: The Idaho State Historical Society will lead the America250 commemoration in Idaho, branded as America250 in Idaho: Idaho's Journey, America's Legacy® in partnership with a State Agency Task Force. Membership of the State Agency Task Force includes:

- Idaho Commission on the Arts
- Idaho Commission on Libraries
- Idaho Public Television
- Idaho Department of Education
- Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation
- Idaho Department of Commerce
- Office of the Governor

To ensure statewide reach and impact, these agencies' governor-appointed boards and commissions will serve as a collective Advisory Council and will serve as statewide ambassadors to the initiative.

FY 25 Budget Request: \$1 million is requested for this initiative.

- **ISHS**, \$600,000 for 24 grants of up to \$25,000 for projects that enhance history, culture, literacy, and civic engagement; \$160,000 for a website and communications strategy; \$60,000 for an oral history initiative.
- **IDPR**, \$60,000 for a publication about rural, historic Idaho places, scenic byways, and state parks;
- **IDPTV**, \$60,000 for a documentary to accompany the above publication; \$60,000 for an updated Idaho history series for school-aged children.



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Governor's Recommendation for America250 in Idaho Program and Funding Request

Janet L. Gillmore, Idaho State Historical Society (ISHS) Executive Director
mailto:janet@idaho-statehistorical.org
December 19, 2023

Background

On July 4, 2026, our nation will commemorate the 250th anniversary of the founding of the United States. In 2016, Congress established the U.S. Semi-quincentennial Commission to plan and orchestrate this commemoration. The vision of this initiative is to reflect on our country's collective past, honor the contributions of all Americans, and imagine and craft the future we seek for the next generation. America250 represents a coalition of public and private partners working to create initiatives and programs across our country. The commemoration period began in 2020, culminates on July 4, 2026, and officially concludes in 2027. The Congressional America250 Caucus includes Idaho's US Congressman Mike Simpson and US Senator Jim Risch.

State Historical Societies across our country are leading in organizing America250 initiatives in their respective states. As of July 2023, thirty-six have created state America250 commissions or equivalent leadership groups, and three are in the process of creating a state leadership structure. To imagine how this commemorative opportunity would resonate with and benefit Idahoans, the ISHS, in the fall of 2022, convened state agency stakeholders, including the Idaho Commission on the Arts, Idaho Department of Commerce, Idaho Department of Education, Idaho Commission on Libraries, Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation, and Idaho Public Television. This team agreed to collaborate and create a recommendation for Governor Little on how Idaho could champion this significant, historic milestone. Work included a review of past Idaho Commemorations for their impact and reach, discussion of approved and funded agency initiatives that could align with the America250 vision, brainstorming of new legacy initiatives that could connect and serve our state in meaningful ways, creation of a cost-effective and streamlined structure maximizing existing resources, and design of an America/Idaho250 brand and communications plan.



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Program Statement and Objectives

Mission: To guide people across Idaho in recognizing, appreciating, and advancing the state's historical significance, natural beauty, agricultural importance, cultural heritage, outdoor recreation opportunities, and economic impact through purposeful and meaningful community engagement.

Vision: To make Idaho's unparalleled history, distinctive attributes, and the invaluable contributions of its residents since time immemorial the foundation on which Idahoans understand their place in the world.

Values: The following values reflect the core principles and ethics of the America250 in Idaho commemoration, and the State Agency Task Force shall use these values to guide the conceptualization, development, and execution of the commemoration.

Heritage Reverence:

Honoring and amplifying the historical significance, natural beauty, and cultural heritage that define Idaho's unique identity within the broader American story.

Education:

Fostering opportunities for learning, providing educational resources, and encouraging engagement with history to promote a deeper understanding of the past.

Respect:

Honoring the perspectives, experiences, and contributions of individuals and communities throughout Idaho history, promoting respect for differing viewpoints.

Community Resilience:

Highlighting stories of perseverance, self-reliance, and community resilience in Idaho's history, displaying how these values have contributed to the state's progress and success.

Patriotism and National Pride:

Fostering a deep sense of patriotism and pride in Idaho's and America's history, values, and achievements, emphasizing the state's contributions to history

Focus Areas:

Historical Significance

Idaho's rich and diverse history should be celebrated during this milestone anniversary. From the Native American tribes that inhabited the region for centuries to the intrepid explorers and pioneers who settled the area to agricultural and ranching entrepreneurs to world leadership in technology,



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Idaho's history is intertwined with the story of America's growth. Highlighting Idaho's historical milestones would deepen our understanding of the challenges and triumphs that shaped our nation.

Natural Beauty

Idaho boasts some of the most breathtaking landscapes in the United States. From the majestic peaks of the Rocky Mountains to the stunning beauty of Shoshone Falls to the remarkable abundance of our alpine lakes, Idaho's natural wonders captivate visitors and residents alike. Celebrating Idaho during America's 250th anniversary would highlight the state's remarkable scenery and raise awareness about preserving our nation's natural heritage.

Agricultural Importance

Idaho plays a vital role in America's agricultural sector. Although Idaho has trademarked the Grown in Idaho® Potato and is one of the leading potato producers in the country, contributing significantly to the nation's food supply, the state's agricultural products span multiple industries. Commodities such as wheat, barley, sugar beets, hops, onions, beef, sheep, wine, and other crops make substantial contributions to the nation's economy. Recognizing Idaho's agricultural significance during the 250th anniversary would acknowledge the state's role in feeding America.

Cultural and Ethnic Diversity

Idaho's cultural landscape is a testament to the diversity that defines America. The state has long been home to Native American tribes, descendants of European immigrants, and Hispanic, Basque, African American, and Asian American people. By celebrating Idaho and its people, we celebrate the contributions of these diverse communities, fostering a sense of inclusivity and appreciation for the mosaic of cultures that make America strong.

Outdoor Recreation

Idaho is an outdoor enthusiast's paradise. Whether hiking through pristine wilderness areas, fishing in crystal-clear rivers, or skiing down world-class slopes, Idaho offers many recreational opportunities. Honoring Idaho during the 250th anniversary would encourage people to explore and appreciate the state's vast outdoor playground, promoting an active and healthy lifestyle.

Economic Impact

Idaho's economy plays a significant role in America's overall prosperity. The state's industries, including agriculture, manufacturing, technology, and tourism, contribute to job creation and economic growth. By celebrating Idaho during America's 250th anniversary, we can highlight the state's economic impact, attracting investment and its potential for continued business development.



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Recommended Strategy and Approach

ISHS recommends the following infrastructure to execute the America250 Commemoration between 2024 and 2027 to ensure the proper organization and management of resources and stakeholders to execute the projects, events, and activities outlined. The strategy embedded in this infrastructure reflects a conservative approach to resource allocation.

Infrastructure Summary:

The State Agency Task Force represents all key state agency stakeholders. The ISHS shall coordinate the work of this task force on a bi-monthly cadence in alignment with the group's charter. The Task Force has defined two project paths for the events, projects, and activities of the America250 Commemoration for marketing and branding purposes. It has set criteria for legacy projects and existing projects to filter into one of these two pathways as nestled under America250 Commission Pillars.

The Advisory Council represents seven state agencies across the state. The individuals represented in this council shall act in an advocacy and consultation capacity for all America250 projects, events, and activities and provide input, consultation, and, when appropriate, approval of individual projects, events, and activities at the agency level, in alignment with the council's charter, and their role as Trustees or Commissioners. The ISHS Executive Director and Chair of the A250 Task Force will be responsible for developing Task Force Reports which individual agency directors will deliver to all Boards and Commissions within the Advisory Council regularly and in alignment with event, project, and activity needs.



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State Agency Task Force

State Agency Internal A250 Working Groups

(ISHS, Parks & Rec, Libraries, Arts, Commerce, Education, IDPTV)

Advisory Council

Liasion Committees

Boards and Commissions of Key Stakeholder Agencies

Public Engagement and Communications Subcommittee

Tribal Nations Liasion Subcommittee

Other (TBD as needed)

Other (TBD as needed)



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AMERICA250 COMMISSION PILLARS

INVITE

- America250 will invite all Americans to commemorate 250 years, the longest stretch of any continuous democracy in the world.

INVOLVE

- For this commemoration, we are committed to involving as many Americans as possible from every background and community.

IMAGINE

- There's no more powerful resource in the world than imagination, and America250 aims to tap into every American's hopes, dreams, and ideas to honor our past 250 years and shape our next 250.

INSPIRE

- We want to activate and unleash the American spirit so that our descendants can look back on us 250 years from now and see the effects that we made on the course of our nation at this critical moment in our history.

New Legacy Projects Budget Proposal

The following budget request represents new projects. These are not currently funded through key state agency stakeholder budgets or other initiatives, including but not limited to the Governor's "Leading Idaho" Initiative or the Governor's Emergency Education Relief Money. These projects are listed in order of priority.

Lead Agency	Project Description	Date	Funding
ISHS	<i>History Grants</i> These grants fund capital projects that enhance history, culture, literacy, records management and preservation practices, economic development, the arts, and civic dialogue. ISHS offers grants via two rounds, one each fiscal year, with twelve recipients eligible for up to \$25,000 each round.	FY 2024-2025 FY 2025-2026	\$600,000.00
ISHS	<i>America250 Website, Digital Marketing, and Public Relations (PR)</i> The America250 website serves as the online digital hub for the America250 Commemoration and a singular source of information for all state agency stakeholder projects and legacy projects, including grant opportunities. A robust digital marketing campaign will	FY 2025-2027	\$160,000



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	aim to create consistent and statewide messaging throughout the commemoration. A comprehensive strategic PR plan will encompass both paid and earned media engagement.		
Idaho Parks and Rec	<i>"Idaho Places" book</i> A book about rural Idaho towns will highlight historic places, scenic byways, and state parks.	FY 2025	\$60,000.00 Book
Idaho Public Television	<i>"Idaho Places" (working title) broadcast, online and social media content</i> A multi-platform video series based upon the similarly named book that highlights historic places, scenic byways and state parks in Idaho.	FY 2025	\$60,000.00 Multi-platform Video Project
Idaho Public Television	<i>Idaho History Series for School Aged Children</i> A redesigned multi-platform educational resource that updates a well-used series from the 1990s and aligns with the newly released supplemental curriculum from the State Department of Education, resources about the State of Idaho from ISHS, and the themes of the America250 initiative.	FY 2026	\$60,000.00 Multi-platform Video Project
ISHS	<i>Statewide Oral History Initiative</i> Access for unlimited users from across the state to capture the stories of all Idahoans using TheirStory® oral history software. ISHS and relevant partners shall approve users and oral history projects.	FY 2025-2026	\$30,000.00
		FY 2026-2027	\$30,000.00
Total Legacy Project Cost			\$1,000,000.00

Budget Justification

The America250 in Idaho Program includes the above-described proposed new legacy projects. In addition to these components, key state agency stakeholders¹ have identified projects, events, and activities that align with the themes and objectives of the America250 Commemoration that have already been funded through prior appropriations or private funds. These projects will collectively

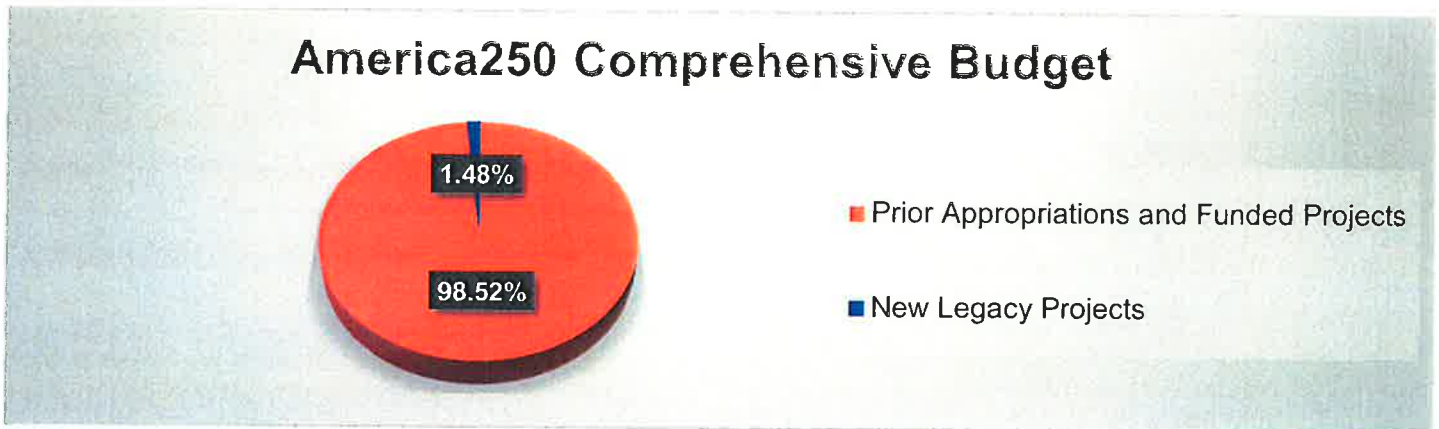
¹ The key state agency stakeholders and members of the State Agency Task Force include the Idaho State Historical Society, Commission on Arts, Commission on Libraries, Idaho Public Television, Department of Education, Department of Parks and Recreation, and the Department of Commerce.



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deliver a robust, statewide, coherent commemoration for the state of Idaho and will rise to the occasion of this once-in-a-generation historic milestone.

The comprehensive budget for the America250 Commemoration reflects dollars appropriated through other initiatives and state agency budgets. The dollars previously allocated for America250-related projects, events, and activities equates to more than \$65 million, or more than 98% of the proposed America250 budget. The total new money requested, totaling \$1,000,000, will be managed, and allocated across three state agencies—ISHS, Idaho Public Television, and Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation—equating to just over 1.4% of the comprehensive budget request.



Existing Key State Agency Stakeholder Approved and Funded Projects

The state agency stakeholders have identified the following existing and approved projects for branding under the America250 in Idaho Commemoration.



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Idaho State Historical Society

- Interpretation
 - Idaho State Museum Exhibition, We The People
 - Old Idaho Penitentiary, Merci Train Car 75th Anniversary
- Events, Celebrations, & Programs
 - 25th Anniversary Esto Perpetua Awards Ceremony
- Facilities
 - Collections and Archives Stewardship Facility
 - Old Idaho Penitentiary Reimagining
- Publications
 - Republication of 1976 Saints & Oddfellows: a Bicentennial Sampler of Idaho Architecture

Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation

- Rehabilitation and Renovations
 - Heyburn State Park - Rocky Point Lodge Rehabilitation and ADA Improvements
 - Thousand Springs State Park - Billingsley Creek Campground and Building Stabilization
 - Land of the Yankee Fork State Park - Bayhorse Structural Evaluation and Stabilization
 - Farragut State Park - Structural Evaluation and Stabilization and New Construction
 - Eagle Island State Park - Building Stabilization
 - Ashton-Tetonia Trail-Surface Improvement and Historic Bridge Evaluation and Stabilization
- Land Acquisition
 - Castle Rocks State Parks/City of Rocks National Reserve - Sheridan Acquisition
 - Land of the Yankee Fork State Park - Challis Hot Springs Campground

State Agency Collaborative Projects

- Historic Highway Markers Project
 - Partners: ISHS, ITD, Idaho Department of Commerce: Division of Tourism



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Idaho Commission on the Arts

- Programming
 - Arts Therapies
 - Rural Programming
 - Apprenticeships
 - Place-keeping
- Grants
 - Quarterly Grants
 - Artist Fellowships
 - Arts Education Project Grants
 - Grants Supporting Public Programs in the Arts
- Digital Content
 - Video Profiles of Award-Winning Artist, Artisans, and Communities of Practice

Idaho Department of Commerce

- Web Portals
 - Travel Corps For All
 - Historic Scenic Byways
- Heritage Tourism
 - Heritage Tourism App and Website

Idaho Public Television

- Public Programming
 - *Idaho Experience*
 - *Outdoor Idaho*
- Event Coverage
 - Idaho State Capitol Programs

Idaho Department of Education

- Curriculum
 - 8th-12th Grades "Story of America" Supplemental Content



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Idaho Commission on Libraries

- Family History
 - History Harvest Project
- Reading Program
 - Idaho Family Reading Week

Action Plan and Milestones

ISHS recommends the following action plan to begin the implantation of the outlined infrastructure and coordination and organization of stakeholders to ensure a successful execution of the America250 Commemoration in Idaho.

Executive Action

- Governor Little will proclaim the ISHS as the lead agency responsible for coordinating and overseeing the America250 Commemoration in Idaho in coordination, and establishes the A250 State Agency Task Force.
 - January 2024
- Governor Little creates the America250 Advisory Council to include the Boards and Commissions of member agencies the America250 Task Force.
- Launch of America250 in Idaho Commemoration for partners in planning and during the State of the State Address.
 - January 2024
- Following the State of the State Address, America250 Commemoration will kick-off for the public.
 - January 2026

Legislative Action

- Draft and pass a Concurrent Resolution to establish a time for planning and preparing the America250 Commemoration in Idaho during the 2024 legislative session.
 - October 2023 prepare; January 2024 pass
- Draft and pass a Concurrent Resolution for the public declaring 2026 the 250th anniversary of the American Revolution and a historic milestone to celebrate the founding of the nation.
 - October 2025 prepare; January 2026 pass



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America250 Metrics for Success

To monitor and report on the impact of the America250 in Idaho Commemoration, ISHS encourages participating agencies to track metrics for success. Agencies should monitor America250 in Idaho campaign reach and engagement metrics, such as website traffic, program attendance, legacy project engagement, social media impressions, and click-through rates, to assess overall visibility and audience response. Additionally, the America250 in Idaho website will provide a range of metrics that will support engagement throughout the campaign. Furthermore, ISHS will delve into qualitative metrics, such as customer feedback and sentiment analysis, to gauge the campaign's influence on brand perception and customer satisfaction. By utilizing these varied metrics, we can comprehensively evaluate the success of our marketing efforts and make data-driven decisions to optimize future commemorations and statewide initiatives.

Social Media Engagement

Tracking social media analytics relating to America250 in Idaho is essential for understanding the performance and impact of the campaign. By monitoring metrics such as follower growth, engagement rates, and post reach, we can gauge the effectiveness of the content strategy and in general interest in America250 in Idaho over time.

Web Traffic

ISHS encourages participating agencies to track America250 in Idaho links and content on their respective websites. The official America250 in Idaho website will serve as the main data point for web engagement throughout the campaign, and ISHS staff will monitor this site.

America250 in Idaho Event Attendance

ISHS encourages participating agencies to track event attendance relating to America250 in Idaho programming throughout the campaign.

Legacy Project Engagement Metrics

Participating agencies must collectively track and monitor legacy project initiatives, including funds provided, geographic reach, project scopes, and application/engagement numbers.

America250 in Idaho Know/Be/Feel Public Survey Q4 2026

The ISHS, in collaboration with participating agencies, will create a feedback survey to measure the impact, emotional investment, and educational value of the America250 in Idaho campaign.

With the investment of all key state agency stakeholders that the state will be positioned to record the impact and influence of America250 in the Idaho Commemoration. All supporting campaign metrics shall be completed and compiled by the second quarter of FY 28. The ISHS will develop the final report to share with all partner networks and the Office of the Governor. ISHS will also collect all relevant records related to the execution of the America250 Commemoration and will house them as a collection at the Idaho State Archive in perpetuity.