



[www.SierraNevadaGeotourism.org](http://www.SierraNevadaGeotourism.org)

## Sierra Nevada Geotourism Project FAQs

### What is geotourism?

Geotourism is tourism that sustains or enhances the geographic character of a place - its environment, culture, aesthetics, heritage, and the well-being of its residents. Geotourism encompasses a range of niches including adventure and nature based travel, eco- and agri-tourism, cultural and heritage travel.

### What is the Sierra Nevada Geotourism project?

Project partners and residents of the Sierra Nevada are working together to create a National Geographic map that features geotouristic assets and attracts as well as encourages sustainable tourism. The Geotourism Project seeks to celebrate the Sierra Nevada as a world-class destination, while contributing to its economic health and promoting long-term stewardship of the region.

### What are examples of geotouristic destinations that might be featured on the map?

Geotouristic assets are authentic and distinctive to the region and sustain or enhance the geographic character of the Sierra Nevada. Examples include local restaurants and shops, historic hotels, museums, local artists, hiking trails, festivals and events, volunteer and recreational opportunities. To view assets that have been selected in the first phase region and/or to submit a nomination, go to [www.sierranevadageotourism.org](http://www.sierranevadageotourism.org).



Photo Courtesy of County of Inyo, Dean Pennala

### Who is involved?

**Locals are involved** - This project is unique because local people identify and nominate the assets that are mapped through an interactive and open process within the community. Then the Geocouncil reviews and selects the nominations.

**The Geocouncil is involved** - To represent the broad Sierra Nevada, this project is forming a Sierra Nevada Wide Geocouncil as well as Regional Geocouncils from each of the four phase regions. The Geocouncils are comprised of members that represent the geographical and sectoral diversity (arts, public lands, government, non-profits, businesses, historians, tribes, heritage and preservation) of the region. The role of the Sierra Nevada Wide Geocouncil is to guide the overall vision of the project, sustain the project into the future, and encourage long-term stewardship of the region's natural, historic and cultural assets. Each Regional Geocouncil will encourage community participation in the nomination process, work to ensure nominations reflect the diversity of the region, and select the nominations for final review by National Geographic.

**Project management is involved** - The project management partners manage the project's implementation throughout region. They are the Sierra Nevada Conservancy, Sierra Business Council, and the National Geographic Society.

**Project partners are involved** - Project partners are also pivotal in contributing to the success of the project, as they greatly aid with outreach efforts and asset mapping. Project partners include a



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variety of land management agencies, non-profits and other entities with an interest in the project. About 30 project partners worked together in the first phase area of the project. We are constantly building our project partners; organizations that are in support of the geotourism project are encouraged to become a project partner or endorser, please email [sierrageotourism@sbcouncil.org](mailto:sierrageotourism@sbcouncil.org).

How is the project funded?

This project has received funding from the Sierra Nevada Conservancy and the Morgan Family Foundation, as well as the Federal Highway Administration Awards for Scenic Byways. We continue to conduct fundraising efforts.



Photo Courtesy of Charles Phillips

Why is geotourism important and what are some benefits of the project?

The benefits to the geotourism project include:

- Attracts and builds travelers who are more resource conscious, concerned with local conservation and sustainability
- Highlights assets that make up the fabric of the region and that are frequently overlooked, distributing the tourism impact
- Increased reach by co-branding with National Geographic
- The ability to support and grow niche businesses in a community
- Travelers gain an authentic experience, connecting them to the land and locals, ideally instilling a desire to take care of the region
- Jobs are created

What are the phase areas and the timeline?

The Sierra Nevada is a vast 400-mile long region with thousands of unique assets. The Sierra Nevada Geotourism Project is implementing the project in four geographic phase regions. The nomination period for the four phases is as follows:

**Phase 1, August - October 2009: Yosemite Gateways and Scenic Byways**

-Includes all or portions of Amador, Calaveras, Tuolumne, Mariposa, Madera, Alpine, Mono, Inyo, El Dorado counties

**Phase 2, June - August 2010: Tahoe Emigrant Corridor**

-Includes all or portions of Nevada, Placer, El Dorado, Washoe, Douglas, Carson City counties

**Phase 3, November 2010 - January 2011: Northern Region**

-Includes all or portions of Sierra, Yuba, Butte, Plumas, Tehama, Shasta, Lassen, Modoc, Siskiyou counties

**Phase 4, April 2011 - June 2011: Southern Region**

-Includes all or portions of Madera, Fresno, Tulare, Kern counties



Are there plans for a printed map as well as an online map?

In addition to the online map, National Geographic will develop and distribute a poster-sized printed MapGuide using content submitted to the website. The timeline for the development of the printed MapGuide is yet to be determined.

**Go to [www.SierraNevadaGeotourism.org](http://www.SierraNevadaGeotourism.org) to view the current map and add your nomination!**