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Author: Dr. Roger D. Launius
Smithsonian Institution, United States

BALANCING ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND CONSERVATION: PRESERVING HERITAGE
AND TOURISM SITES ON THE MOON AND THE LESSONS OF TERRESTRIAL EXPLOITATION**Abstract**

Cultural relics from Apollo, as well as other wreckage, soft landers, and rovers currently exist on the Moon, undisturbed since their arrival there mostly because no one has returned to the Moon since. That does not mean that no one will do so in the future. Of course, the people and rovers that return might not be American; several nations and multiple commercial ventures have announced long-term desires to exploit the Moon. Early attractive places to visit would be the various lunar landing and crash sites. Since near the turn of the new millennium a consistent drumbeat has been raised by private citizens and some groups to ensure preservation of the lunar locations as historic sites, but nothing as yet has been accomplished through any official organization. With the refusal, at least thus far, to recognize property rights beyond Earth asserting control over these sites remains problematic. Indeed, this was largely an academic debate until 2010 when the Google Lunar X Prize offered a *20millionpursetothe firstteamtolandaroverontheMoon, withanadded5* million if the team could image a lunar landing site. More than 20 teams are currently working toward undertaking this mission. Past experience has demonstrated—especially in pilfering of national treasures such as done by Napoleon in Egypt and by individuals in Antarctica—that absent preservation policy and enforcement relics will be damaged, destroyed, or otherwise compromised. Using the analog of the efforts of the U.S. National Park Service and the UNESCO World Heritage Site as models there are on-going efforts to develop both voluntary “rules of the road” and United Nations policy governing the preservation of heritage sites. This paper explores this difficult theme in historic preservation. It focuses on analogous situations in which there were no rules/policies/laws in place to enforce preservation. Those include the aforementioned Antarctic experience, as well as the disturbance of such sites as the Titanic, the raising of space capsules from the ocean floor, and the wholesale destruction of Native American cultural sites in the 17th-19th centuries. How might those lessons be applied to the Moon? Progress has been made, most notably in the release on July 20, 2011 of “NASA’s Recommendations to Space-Faring Entities: How to Protect and Preserve the Historic and Scientific Value of U.S. Government Lunar Artifacts,” but much remains to be accomplished.