



**WORLD MONUMENTS FUND ANNOUNCES MAJOR GRANT
FROM THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE
FOR WORK IN AYUTTHAYA, THAILAND**

New York, NY, February 5, 2013... World Monuments Fund (WMF) President Bonnie Burnham announced today receipt of a grant of \$131,800 from the United States State Department's Ambassadors Fund for Cultural Preservation and the U.S. Embassy in Bangkok for work at Wat Chaiwatthanaram, a Buddhist temple in the historic city of Ayutthaya, Thailand.

Ms. Burnham stated: "Support from the State Department's Ambassadors Fund will assist the Thai Department of Fine Arts with continuing efforts to protect the site in light of increasingly severe flooding in the region and will advance conservation activities at the temple. In addition to the funds received from the Ambassadors Fund for Cultural Preservation, WMF has secured support from the Robert W. Wilson Challenge to Conserve Our Heritage toward this project that will provide approximately \$330,000 for on-site conservation activities, matching significant commitments from the Thai Government. WMF anticipates that the investment in conservation will have a catalytic effect for generating greater attention to the needs of Ayutthaya's for the benefit of the community and visitors that value and treasure it."

Ayutthaya, Thailand

The historic city of Ayutthaya was the capital of the Kingdom of Ayutthaya and flourished as a major political, cultural, and economic center between the fourteenth and eighteenth centuries. The city was abandoned following destruction by a Burmese army in 1767. Inscribed on the World Heritage List in 1991, in recent decades the archaeological park has faced periodic flooding, including a major inundation in 2011, which has put many of the iconic structures at risk. The Ambassadors Fund and WMF awards support testing, documentation, and conditions surveys at the flood-damaged Wat Chaiwatthanaram—one of the most important monuments of Ayutthaya—and the design of conservation and stabilization plans as well as implementation of priority conservation tasks at the temple. Fieldwork began in December 2012 and is ongoing.

(more)

World Monuments Fund

World Monuments Fund is the leading independent organization devoted to saving the world's most treasured places. Since 1965, working in more than ninety countries, its highly skilled experts have applied effective techniques to preserve important architectural and cultural heritage sites around the globe. Through partnerships with local communities, funders, and governments, WMF inspires an enduring commitment to stewardship for future generations. Headquartered in New York, WMF has offices and affiliates worldwide. wmf.org, twitter.com/worldmonuments, and facebook.com/worldmonuments.

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