



NEWS RELEASE

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NATION'S FIRST "GET OUTDOORS, IT'S YOURS!" COMMUNITY EVENT HELD IN SAN ANTONIO ON SATURDAY, JANUARY 10TH

The San Antonio River Authority (SARA) is serving as local sponsor and co-host, along with three Federal land and water management agencies (National Park Service, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service) of the nation's first *Get Outdoors, It's Yours!* community event. The *Get Outdoors, It's Yours!* community event will take place on Saturday, January 10, 2009 at San Antonio Missions National Historical Park, Mission San José, located at 6701 San José Drive from 10:00 a.m. until 2:00 p.m. Admission is free and there will be over 35 participating agencies and organizations providing hands-on learning demonstrations, exhibits, presentations and information related to environmental education and area outdoor activities. The first 1,000 children in attendance will also receive an Explorer Backpack loaded with giveaways; additional free environmental and outdoor giveaways and door prizes will be distributed throughout the day.

"This event, coordinated at the Federal, state and local level, makes it possible for children and their families to spend more time participating in outdoor activities through educational programs, simple recreation and stewardship activities as they learn more about Texas' natural and historic treasures," said Lyle Laverty, U.S. Department of the Interior, Assistant Secretary for Fish and Wildlife and Parks. "Today's children want to get outdoors and explore nature as their parents did and through the efforts of these participating groups, parents and caregivers can feel comfortable letting them have this experience in a safe and welcoming environment here in San Antonio."

Get Outdoors, It's Yours! is a new national campaign focused on getting America's youth outside and engaging with nature. The initiative will raise awareness of the opportunities for America's youth to connect with nature on federal public lands and waterways. Ultimately, the goal of this interagency initiative is to encourage children and their families to spend more time participating in outdoor activities whether through educational programs, simple recreation, and/or stewardship activities.

"The *Get Outdoors, It's Yours!* event is a wonderful opportunity for children and their families to learn about outdoor recreational opportunities in and around San Antonio," said Scott Bentley, Superintendent of San Antonio Missions National Park. "The National Park Service and San Antonio Missions National Historical Park are thrilled in co-hosting this event with the San Antonio River Authority and our other partners who all share a common goal in protecting and promoting the value of the outdoors and all it has to offer to our community."

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The Federal agencies supporting the *Get Outdoors, It's Yours!* program welcome the participation of local agencies and organizations, such as SARA, that have a similar land and water management mission. Assistant Secretary Laverty called upon SARA to be the local sponsor and co-host of the nation's first *Get Outdoors, It's Yours!* community event in recognition of SARA's efforts to promote another Federal project, the Mission Reach Ecosystem Restoration and Recreation Project – which is a U.S. Army Corps of Engineers project in San Antonio.

“The San Antonio River Authority is honored to be the first local co-sponsor of a community event supporting the Federal *Get Outdoors, It's Yours!* initiative,” said San Antonio River Authority General Manager Suzanne Scott. “The Mission Reach project is restoring eight miles of the San Antonio River and this will provide many opportunities for families to get outdoors and enjoy the river as well as learn about environmental stewardship. Holding the *Get Outdoors, It's Yours!* community event in San Antonio will only add to the already amazing list of outdoor activities that South Central Texas and the surrounding area has to offer.”

In support of the *Get Outdoors, It's Yours!* community event, SARA has created a new web page that will serve as the “one-stop” location for a calendar of outdoor activities and environmental education opportunities to be found in the San Antonio and greater South Central Texas region. Participating agencies and organizations will be able to populate the calendar with their own events and activities as a lasting benefit of the January 10th *Get Outdoors, It's Yours!* community event. To view the calendar, please visit <http://getoutdoors.sara-tx.org>.

Los Compadres, the San Antonio Missions National Historical Park friends group, is underwriting a large portion of the January 10th *Get Outdoors, It's Yours!* community event through a generous grant from the AT&T Foundation. Additionally, this event was also made possible by the contribution from the City of San Antonio which provided the showmobile, booth tables and chairs and 100 one-gallon trees as a free giveaway item. The organizers of this event thank each of the participating agencies and organizations, all of whom helped set the standard for other communities to emulate as future *Get Outdoors, It's Yours!* community events are developed across the nation.

There are five other Federal land and water management agencies participating in the *Get Outdoors, It's Yours!* initiative, including the Bureau of Indian Affairs, Bureau of Land Management, Bureau of Reclamation, U.S. Forest Service and U.S. Geological Survey. To learn more about the *Get Outdoors, It's Yours!* initiative, please visit www.getoutdoorsitsyours.gov.