



American Recreation Coalition

Dedicated to the protection and enhancement of everyone's right to health and happiness through recreation.

December 2009

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Partners Outdoors 2010 continues to grow with more exciting additions!

Participant lists for Partners Outdoors have been submitted from the sponsoring government agencies, and we look forward to welcoming a diverse, enthusiastic group from across the country for discussions on "Connecting People and Parks – To Keep Both Healthy." In addition to a great group of participants, we have recently confirmed a large number of dynamic speakers and presenters. Newly added speakers to the program include: Sam Solomon, President and CEO of The Coleman Company; Christine Fanning, Executive Director of the Outdoor Foundation; Ruth Coleman, Director of California State Parks; Stephen Lockhart, M.D., Ph.D, Chairman of NatureBridge and member of the Second Century Commission; Frank Peterson, President of the Recreational Boating and Fishing Foundation; Nina Roberts, Associate Professor of Recreation, Parks and Tourism at San Francisco State University; Art Hutchinson, Superintendent of Great Sand Dunes National Park and Preserve; and Audrey Peterman, President of Earthwise Productions and popular speaker at the recent Breaking the Color Barrier in the Great American Outdoors Conference and the 2007 Atlanta Recreation Forum.

Partners Outdoors 2010 will take place January 10-13 at Cavallo Point in Sausalito, California. While the meeting is invitation-only, ARC would like to hear from you if you would like to be kept informed or wish to participate.

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Great Outdoors Month, GO Day gain exciting new partner in National Marina Day

Americans celebrating Great Outdoors Month in June 2010 will have another exciting event to enjoy – National Marina Day. The Association of Marina Industries has announced that it

will move its annual event to the second Saturday in June (the same day as National Get Outdoors Day) and take advantage of the strategic partnership offered by becoming part of Great Outdoors Month, which is coordinated by the American Recreation Coalition. Earlier this year, President Obama and 46 state governors joined in issuing proclamations for Great Outdoors Month 2009 and convening various related activities, and that number is expected to grow further in 2010. National Marina Day will now help mark the start of the peak boating season and showcase summer-long opportunities for water fun, even for non-boat owners.

To read the full story, [click here](#).

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ARC participates in White House forum on health benefits of clean energy

The American Recreation Coalition participated in the recent White House briefing on the public health benefits of a clean-energy economy co-convened by Kathleen Sebelius, Secretary of Health and Human Services, and Lisa Jackson, Administrator of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The event brought together public health advocates and community leaders, experts from government agencies and White House officials for a discussion on the lasting public health benefits of a clean-energy economy. Among the guest speakers was long-time ARC friend and September Recreation Exchange speaker Gina McCarthy, EPA's Assistant Administrator for the Office of Air and Radiation and former Commissioner of Environmental Protection for Connecticut. Ms. McCarthy said of her career path, "I've spent a career being the worst bureaucrat I can be, and I've been very good at that." She added, "Now, finally, I'm working for an Administration that tells me to be a bad bureaucrat!" In regards to the need to work towards a clean-energy economy, Ms. McCarthy said now is the time for innovative action. "The challenge is not to think outside the box – that's not hard," she said. "The challenge is to *act* outside the box." And Ms. McCarthy believes a clean-energy economy is possible. She stated, "I reject the choice between breathing clean air and turning the lights on!"

The Administration is committed to building a clean-energy economy, which holds the promise of reducing harmful pollution while creating new jobs, reducing America's dependence on foreign oil, and improving the nation's competitive position in the global economy. As Administration officials noted, a clean-energy economy not only would help cut the greenhouse-gas emissions that threaten the stability and prosperity of our world, but it also would transform how we harness and use energy – helping us reduce soot, smog, and toxic pollution in the air we breathe and the water we drink. ARC expects these goals to be reflected in EPA's interagency projects such as the ED OUT initiative, a pilot program which will connect students from Virginia's Prince William County to the outdoors in June 2010.

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Washington Post highlights physical, mental benefits of outdoors

Many doctors who recognize the health benefits of time spent outdoors are encouraging their patients, by means of formal "park prescriptions," to get outside. A recent *Washington Post* article highlights the efforts of doctors who are giving out prescriptions for time spent in local green spaces or trails along with, or instead of, medications. The doctors who organized the Medical Mile in Little Rock, Arkansas, and the Prescription Trails program in

Santa Fe, New Mexico, have partnered with organizations like the National Park Service and the Centers for Disease Control to show that health benefits can be achieved through means other than a pill. Rick Potts, Chief of the National Park Service's Conservation and Outdoor Recreation Division, offered this key insight in the article: "Science is validating what moms have known for generations: Being outside is good for your health." He added, "I've never known a ranch kid on Ritalin."

To read the full article, [click here](#).

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National Park Service proposes pass through of full utility costs to concessioners

The National Park Service has proposed a new policy of passing through to concessioners in national park units the full capital and operating costs of providing utilities. The proposal is incorporated into a draft Director's Order 35B. According to the National Park Hospitality Association (NPHA), the proposal has serious potential impacts for concessioners and park visitors.

Many concessions are in remote locations where utility costs are high and demand for water, electricity and other services is limited. If full utility costs are imposed, NPHA is concerned that costs of services ranging from overnight accommodations to meals to groceries and souvenirs could rise – in some cases dramatically. Although the proposed policy suggests that NPS would normally permit the new and higher costs to be passed through to the public, price sensitivity and weak demand – especially in remote park areas – might instead make the increased costs a burden on concessioners. Concessioners also note that they have little influence on key decisions regarding utility investments in parks and are at a disadvantage on utility costs when compared to visitor facilities operating outside parks, where public agencies providing utilities typically receive federal grants and subsidies for water treatment plants and other utilities. Comments are due by January 4, 2010. A copy of the proposed policy is available at: www.nps.gov/policy/DO-35Bdraft.htm.

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Forest Service proposes changes in camping discounts for seniors, disabled

The U.S. Forest Service has proposed changes in the discounts on campsite charges for holders of Senior and Access Passes and Golden Age and Golden Access Passports, available to seniors (62 and over) and those with disabilities, after lengthy discussions with key recreation organizations and with concessioners and permittees operating Forest Service campgrounds. The proposed directives, which could be used to modify existing agreements and would guide future permits, would reduce public confusion and unpredictable business situations for companies that now manage a large majority of the overnight stays at Forest Service developed campgrounds.

Beginning in the 1960s, seniors and the disabled qualified for reduced charges for entry into federal recreation areas and overnight camping. At that time, almost all campgrounds were operated by federal agencies, and all receipts were treated as general receipts and deposited in the U.S. Treasury. However, most services provided by businesses operating on federal lands – including ski areas on national forests and concessioners in national parks – were not expected or required to provide discounted rates. Major policy changes – including increased reliance on campground concessioners and recreation site fee retention,

authorized by the Fee Demonstration program in 1996 and incorporated into FLREA – were not reflected in Forest Service national policy on discounts, leading to inconsistency in discount policies among national forests and public complaints. There was also concern that the steep discounts for seniors complicated agency efforts to encourage visits by families with children, who don't qualify for discounts and might sometimes find all available campsites reserved by those receiving 50% discounts.

The Forest Service proposal would establish a general policy of 10% discounts to holders of Senior and Access Passes and Golden Age and Golden Access Passports and comparable, FLREA-based passes at concessioner-operated campgrounds, but would also allow concessioners to offer higher discounts. Comments are due by February 1, 2010. To review the proposal, [click here](#).

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Kids' Outdoor Bill of Rights promotes unique Colorado outdoor experiences

Colorado joins the ranks of states that are putting outdoor experiences for their youngest constituents on their state agendas by creating the Colorado Kids' Outdoor Bill of Rights. However, Colorado has put a few unique twists on their list. In addition to enjoying popular activities from other state's Bills of Rights such as camping out under the stars and following a trail, Colorado wants its children to visit a working ranch or farm, enjoy the view from the top of a mountain, and plant a seed for other Colorado kids to enjoy in the future. The Colorado Kids' Outdoor Bill of Rights was developed by the Office of Lt. Governor Barbara O'Brien with the help of kids from across the state. Expect to see more states creating their own Children's Outdoor Bill of Rights in 2010!

To see the full Colorado Kids' Outdoor Bill of Rights, [click here](#).

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Strong Michigan RV show a positive sign of industry's recovery, attitude

The Michigan Association of Recreation Vehicles & Campgrounds (MARVAC) successfully wrapped up the 20th Annual Fall Detroit Camper & RV Show in Novi, Michigan, with a 40 percent increase in attendance, making the show the best attended Fall Detroit Camper & RV Show since 2003. Dealers noted a significant amount of first-time visitors who showed interest in everything, including diesel-pusher motorhomes. Campground representatives in attendance reported that a surprising number of visitors made reservations for next season. The parts and accessories section also received an abundance of traffic, with special interest in new satellite and Internet reception products.

MARVAC Director Bill Sheffer was encouraged by the upbeat mood of visitors. "It's been a difficult economic year, especially in Michigan, and to see the number of potential buyers and camping enthusiasts at this year's show helps bring the whole industry's attitude up a level."

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Corporation for National and Community Service an invaluable partner in service efforts

The Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) has released its FY09 Annual Fiscal Report – a summary of the Corporation’s performance and financial conditions in relation to its mission and goals. The agency reports that, with its help, national service programs are meeting critical needs across America, delivering essential services in communities hard hit by the recession. Following the passage of the American Reinvestment and Recovery Act, CNCS moved swiftly to award \$154 million to grantees across the nation. As a result, nearly 14,000 additional AmeriCorps and VISTA members are engaged in service directly related to improving the social and economic conditions worsened by the economic downturn.

Last year, CNCS awarded \$700 million in grants and engaged 5.5 million Americans in service across the country, the highest levels in the agency’s history. CNCS and its programs were reauthorized – for the first time since 1993 – when Congress passed the Edward M. Kennedy Serve America Act in March 2009. The legislation expands the mission and operation of CNCS and takes steps to further strengthen the management capacity of the agency to ensure it can support the expansion while maintaining excellence in service. Before the end of the year, Congress is expected to pass a FY10 appropriations bill that will include funding for CNCS.

To learn more about the Corporation for National and Community Service, [click here](#).

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For more information or to address questions/comments, please email: mmeade@funoutdoors.com

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