



American Recreation Coalition

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

July 2010

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Great Outdoors Week 2010 Report



ARC President Derrick Crandall and USDA Under Secretary Harris Sherman serve as celebrity scoopers during Great Outdoors Week ice cream social

Recreation community leaders, allies, friends groups and government agency partners gathered in Washington, D.C. to participate in briefings, events and celebrations of the many significant contributions of the recreation community during Great Outdoors Week 2010 (June 7-12).

Achievements of the Beacon Award winners, accomplishments of the Recreational Trails Program, the third annual National Get Outdoors Day, the need to build the connection between outdoor recreation and healthier Americans (with the help of some of the nation's top physicians), and more were addressed during the week.

Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack served as the

special guest at the June Recreation Exchange luncheon and helped present the American Recreation Coalition's **Legends** Awards to six exemplary federal agency employees.

Great Outdoors Week is coordinated by the American Recreation Coalition (ARC) and includes events co-hosted by more than a dozen federal agencies and national organizations. The week is a key component of Great Outdoors Month, a month-long celebration of outdoor recreation in America that also features **National Trails Day** (June 5), **National Fishing and Boating Week** (June 5-13), **National Get Outdoors Day** (June 12), the **Great American Backyard Campout** (June 26) and for the first time in June, **National Marina Day** (June 12).

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Agriculture Secretary Vilsack discusses AGO Initiative, praises outdoor recreation leaders at June Recreation Exchange



Secretary Vilsack (left) with *Legends* Award Winners

Tom Vilsack, Secretary of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, was the special guest at the June 2010 Recreation Exchange, hosted by the American Recreation Coalition (ARC). Top federal agency representatives and recreation enthusiasts gathered on Agriculture's Whitten Patio to hear the Secretary's remarks about the Obama Administration's America's Great Outdoors (AGO) Initiative and for the presentation of ARC's 2010 *Legends* Awards.

Secretary Vilsack talked about his key role in President Obama's America's Great Outdoors (AGO) Initiative and the First Lady's Let's Move Initiative. The Secretary outlined three key reasons for the launch of the AGO Initiative. First, he said, we need to better connect people to the environment in order to better preserve and protect the environment, adding that we "cannot just take from Mother Nature – we have to give back." Another key factor is economic development tied to the outdoors. He noted that the outdoors is an industry, one of particular importance to rural America, and that outdoor recreation employs 6.5 million Americans. Lastly, the Secretary commended the important role the outdoors can play in improving the health of Americans. He noted that nearly one-third of America's children are obese and spend exponentially more time in front of screens than they do in the outdoors. He also noted that weight is strongly tied to students' self-image and academic success. Addressing the obesity crisis in America will also substantially reduce healthcare costs, he added. The Secretary also praised the National Get Outdoors Day effort, coordinated by the U.S. Forest Service and ARC, and added that you don't need fancy equipment to enjoy the outdoors!

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

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GO-Day 2010 a resounding success

Thousands of outdoor recreation partners teamed up across the country to host events marking the third annual National Get Outdoors Day (GO-Day) at more than 90 locations – the largest number of GO-Day sites to date – introducing thousands of young people and families to healthy, outdoor fun. Participants also received invitations to enjoy more in-depth outdoor recreation experiences throughout the summer at EChO events. Each GO-Day event offered a mix of active areas – where guests could learn to use a fishing pole, put up a tent, climb a rock wall, ride a mountain bike, go geocaching, and more – and information centers where they could learn about nearby opportunities for outdoor recreation. Some sites featured areas that focused on other aspects of healthy living, including sustainability and good nutrition. Many sites also provided photo opportunities with characters like Smokey Bear, Woodsy Owl, and the Blue Goose. The Denver site even had a special visit from the characters from the new Shrek movie! Official GO-Day sites across the nation, from Kingman Island in Washington, D.C. to the Gifford Pinchot National Forest in Vancouver, Washington, welcomed tens of thousands of new faces to the joy and healthy benefits of the great outdoors.

The official GO-Day report will be available soon at: www.funoutdoors.com.

More information on GO-Day is available at: www.nationalgetoutdoorsday.org.

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PHATFO doctors champion health and the outdoors message

Two medical community leaders were in Washington during Great Outdoors Month laying the groundwork for real progress in the initiative to link outdoor recreation to improved health for all Americans. Representatives from Healthy Measures: Physicians for Healthier Americans Through Fun Outdoors (PHATFOs) Dr. Michael Suk, an orthopedic surgeon and former White House Fellow, and Dr. Daphne Miller, a family practitioner, medical school instructor and writer (Oprah book selection and Washington Post columnist), met with top Interior and Agriculture officials, and with the Surgeon General and other top Health and Human Services leaders. They had conversations with Capitol Hill staffers and national healthcare policy gurus and opened the doors to coordination with the Office of Personnel Management on new initiatives using the eight million civilian federal employees and family members as vanguard troops for preventive actions and healthy lifestyles promotion efforts.

Most importantly, the PHATFOs came away with agreement on an important next step: designing a session for the President's America's Great Outdoors Initiative – launched in April at a White House Conference and targeted toward delivery of a report to the President on a 21st Century Great Outdoors Strategy by mid-November – in time to be considered for one or more Presidential initiatives in the FY 2012 budget. The PHATFOs seek not only to revolutionize healthcare by employing the great outdoors for mental and physical well-being but also to find a new paradigm to fund the recreation infrastructure on public lands that supports healthy activities, including trails and more.

Both Interior and Agriculture Department officials expressed real enthusiasm for the idea of a Health and the Great Outdoors Town Hall. A draft for the program has been submitted to the Initiative leadership team – the Secretaries of the Interior and Agriculture, the Chair of the Council on Environmental Quality and the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency. An impressive list of supporters – including ARC, the Institute at the Golden Gate/Golden Gate Parks Conservancy, National Park Hospitality Association, National Wildlife Federation, National Environmental Education Foundation, Sierra Club, Children & Nature Network and more – is already in place, and substantial participation by the outdoor recreation industry is planned. ARC will provide more details soon on how to be involved in the session.

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ARC announces 2010 Beacon Award winners

The 2010 recipients of the American Recreation Coalition's Beacon Awards, which recognize outstanding efforts by federal agencies and partners in harnessing the power of technology to improve public recreation experiences and federal recreation program management, were honored during Great Outdoors Week. Winners of the 2010 Beacon Awards are:

- ▶ **Joya Szalwinski** of the Imperial Sand Dunes Recreation Area, Bureau of Land Management
- ▶ **Craig Glassner** of Golden Gate National Recreation Area, National Park Service
- ▶ **Lake Ouachita Focus Committee**, Partner to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
- ▶ **Andrea VanBeusichem** of the Montezuma National Wildlife Refuge, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
- ▶ **San Dimas Technology and Development Center**, USDA Forest Service

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Coalition for Recreational Trails recognizes 2010 Annual Achievement Award winners at special Capitol Hill event

On June 8, an enthusiastic group of trails supporters gathered for a Congressional star-studded event at the Rayburn House Office Building on Capitol Hill for the Coalition for Recreational Trails (CRT) 12th Annual Achievement Award ceremony. The CRT awards recognize projects showing best use of funds from the Recreational Trails Program (RTP). Since the 1991 creation of the program under ISTEA, 13,000+ trail projects have been aided. RTP utilizes federal taxes collected from non-highway recreation use of fuel and now provides \$85 million annually for state trails programs, typically administered by state park and natural resource agencies. All trail enthusiasts, including those who enjoy motorized and non-motorized recreation activities, benefit from RTP funding. Seven RTP trail projects and programs were recognized, and two states were honored in the additional categories of Outstanding State Trail Program and Outstanding State Recreational Trails Advisory Committee.

The trail projects and programs honored by the CRT and their award categories are:

- ▶ **Agassiz Recreational Trail** (Minnesota) - Construction and Design
- ▶ **Back Country Horsemen of Washington Leave No Trace Program** - Environment and Wildlife Compatibility
- ▶ **Coalition of Recreational Trail Users Educational Trailer** (Minnesota) - Education and Communication
- ▶ **Debsconeag Lakes Wilderness Area** (Maine) - Multiple-Use Management and Corridor Sharing
- ▶ **Hyde Park Heritage Greenway Trail** (New York) - Use of Youth Conservation/Service Corps
- ▶ **Laurel Fork Trail - Holly River State Park** (West Virginia) - Accessibility Enhancement
- ▶ **Rampart Range OHV Development Project** - Phase Three (Colorado) - Maintenance and Rehabilitation
- ▶ **Tennessee** - Outstanding State Recreational Trails Advisory Committee
- ▶ **Vermont** - Outstanding State Trail Program

U.S. Representatives Jim Oberstar (D-MN), Nick Rahall (D-WV) and Tom Petri (R-WI) – all members of the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee (Rep. Oberstar is the Chairman; Rep. Rahall chairs the House Natural Resources Committee) and long-time champions of the RTP – were special guests at the awards presentation. The Congressmen praised the health benefits of trails and the importance of RTP funding to trail creation and maintenance. Congressman Petri commented that adequate funding for trails is certainly in society's interest, because "we will pay the consequences one way or another," referring to the costs of not connecting Americans with the outdoors, including rising healthcare costs due to sedentary lifestyles. Chairman Oberstar expressed confidence in the future relevancy of trails, citing that more bikes were sold than automobiles last year. Beth Osborne, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Transportation Policy for the U.S. Department of Transportation, closed the event, praising the dedication and achievement of the award winners, and the contributions of the RTP to enhancing livability, a key interest of the Transportation Department.

For details on the winning projects and to find more information on the RTP, [click here](#).

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ARC salutes 2010 *Legends* Award winners

The American Recreation Coalition (ARC) presented its 2010 ***Legends*** Awards to six federal managers in recognition of their outstanding work to improve outdoor recreation experiences and opportunities for the American people. The awards were presented on June 10 during Great Outdoors Week – ARC’s celebration of the value and importance of outdoor recreation. Initiated by ARC in 1991, the ***Legends*** Award program calls on federal land management agencies to each nominate an individual whose extraordinary personal efforts have made a real difference in enhancing outdoor recreation programs and resources. The 2010 ***Legends*** Award recipients represented the Bureau of Land Management, Federal Highway Administration, National Park Service, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the USDA Forest Service.

Winners of the 2010 ***Legends*** Awards are: **William Boggs**, Bureau of Land Management; **Robert Morris**, Federal Highway Administration; **Dan B. Kimball**, National Park Service; **James E. Lynch**, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers; **Nancy Haugen**, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; and **Floyd Allen Thompson III**, USDA Forest Service.

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ED OUT pilot declared great success, national expansion efforts underway

ED OUT, an exciting new partnership to get students outdoors during the last weeks of the school year, kicked off Great Outdoors Week 2010 by taking more than 500 students out for a day of outdoor education and fun. Led by Prince William County Schools’ (PWCS) dynamic superintendent, Dr. Steven Walts, the county teamed up with ARC and more than a dozen federal and state agencies and nonprofit organizations to stage a day of experiential learning and fun in a pilot effort planned to expand to include nearly all of the 80,000 students in the system in 2011.

Students in 4th and 7th grade from PWCS – Virginia’s second largest school system – rotated through learning stations and activities during the day, just as they would during most school days. But the difference was that the instruction was provided by adjunct faculty drawn from NASA and the Forest Service, BLM and the National Wildlife Federation and many more. Science, art and history were presented in ways that tied to the coming year’s curriculum – and a new website (www.edout.us) provided even more information on how summer could be used to combine fun and getting a head start on the next academic year. From learning about light spectrums and wetland mitigation projects to drawing entries for the Junior Duck Stamp Contest and learning about the music of nature, the students were attentive and very engaged. Healthy lunches – with carrots and fruit and juice – provided energy while special water bottles and ample refill opportunities kept the action going even on a hot day with temperatures in the 90’s. The day wrapped with a mass swearing in of Junior Forest Rangers followed by fruit popsicles – and lots of smiles. Expansion of ED OUT to other school districts across the nation is now underway. Dr. Walts, who participated in most of the day, told the event partners that the day had overcome the challenges of making the final days of the school year quality learning time and proved to the students that great fun and adventure can be found beyond electronic screens – where studies now show American youth spend, on average, 7.5 hours daily.

To learn more about this exciting initiative, visit www.edout.us.

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News

- [Take Me Fishing™ launches "Boat Ramps" App](#)
- [F as in Fat: How obesity threatens America's future 2010](#)
- [Six ways that play can help solve childhood obesity](#)
- [New iPhone application lists 9,500 campgrounds](#)

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