



## American Recreation Coalition

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

### JULY 2014 NEWSLETTER

- [Elected Officials Embrace Great Outdoors Month](#)
- [Great Outdoors Month Events Achieve Record Numbers](#)
- [Partners Outdoors 2014 Brings Recreation Community Together](#)
- [2014 Beacon, Legends and Coleman Awards Celebrated at Partners Outdoors](#)
- [First-Ever Great Outdoors Week Day of Service](#)
- [Members of Congress Help Celebrate Trails Awards](#)
- [Gettysburg Gathering Focuses on National Service Opportunities](#)
- [Federal Reports on Visitor Spending in Gateway Communities](#)
- [FLREA Revisions Advance](#)
- [ARC Beacon Award Winners Featured on Local TV News](#)

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### ELECTED OFFICIALS EMBRACE GREAT OUTDOORS MONTH WITH HELP FROM THE COLEMAN COMPANY AND WALMART

Great Outdoors Month 2014 was a huge success, benefitting from great proclamations from the President and all 50 governors. See all the proclamations at [www.greatoutdoorsmonth.org](http://www.greatoutdoorsmonth.org).



*Kansas Gov. Sam Brownback hosts Capital Campout in Topeka*

Great Outdoors Month also picked up two powerful gubernatorial PSAs – by Arkansas Governor Mike Beebe (which can be seen [here](#)) and Idaho Governor Butch Otter (which can be seen [here](#)) -- demonstrating the power of linking state parks and state tourism agencies.

Five events involved governors and urban kids camping out for the first time – in Arkansas, Kansas, Georgia, Colorado and Washington State. The Coleman Company supported these Capital Campouts and ongoing Learn to Camp efforts by providing almost \$200,000 in camping equipment to state park agencies

and related foundations. Walmart highlighted Great Outdoors Month to its entire executive team through special events at stores across the nation, helping reach millions of Americans.

[Return to Top](#)

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## GREAT OUTDOORS MONTH EVENTS ACHIEVE RECORD NUMBERS

Great Outdoors Month featured a record number of National Trails Day®, National Get Outdoors Day and Great American Backyard Campout sites. It also enjoyed the national support of Coleman, Walmart, SC Johnson's OFF!® and others for these activities this year - and all seem to be more committed than ever to future successes.

Nearly 200 GO Day events attracted tens of thousands of Americans who have limited outdoors experiences. By sampling activities ranging from fishing to climbing, kayaking to biking and more and getting basic information about finding great places to go nearby, they learned that time outdoors can deliver improved mental and physical health – and lots of fun! Participants helped create the first GO Day Mosaic – an on-line image built from the many photos they shared from GO Day sites. This year's events enjoyed the highest-ever number of partners, including companies from the healthcare industry, youth organizations and more. National sponsor OFF!® played a key role in this year's events.



*People enjoy the water at Get Outdoors Georgia Day*

A full report on the successes of Great Outdoors Month can be found [here](#).

[Return to Top](#)

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## PARTNERS OUTDOORS 2014 BRINGS RECREATION COMMUNITY TOGETHER IN WASHINGTON, D.C.



*Angelou Ezeilo presents at Partners Outdoors 2014*

Partners Outdoors 2014 was conducted in Washington at the U.S. Department of the Interior, with keynoters like National Park Service Director Jon Jarvis and Vail Resorts' Rick Cables joined by top-notch general session panelists addressing funding recreation in the Great Outdoors, hosting all Americans in their Great Outdoors and working better as partners in the Great Outdoors.

Major portions of the program were live streamed, watched by nearly 1,000 across the nation, and can be seen [here](#). Partners Outdoors participants joined other recreation-community leaders on the rooftop of the Interior Department for the Great Outdoors Week Ice

Cream Social, again sponsored by Unilever Ice Cream.

[Return to Top](#)

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## 2014 BEACON, LEGENDS AND SHELDON COLEMAN GREAT OUTDOORS AWARDS PRESENTED AS PART OF PARTNERS OUTDOORS

Partners Outdoors 2014 featured the annual Beacon Awards for use of technology to aid recreation and recreation program management on day one of the conference. Featured on day two was the winner of this year's prestigious Sheldon Coleman Great Outdoors Award, as well as Legends from federal agencies – wonderful men and women who have done remarkable things to connect Americans to the Great Outdoors.

The Legends and Coleman awards event was held in the Top of the Hill Ballroom at the Reserve Officers Association on Capitol Hill. U.S. Representative Sam Farr (D-CA) was honored with the 2014 Sheldon Coleman Great Outdoors Award for his efforts on scenic byways, on Brand USA, on overall tourism advocacy and as the champion of the nation's newest national park – Pinnacles National Park.

All Legends Awards winners inspired us with their commitment and energy to connecting us to the outdoors. One of the Legends brought twin daughters who opened the event with the national anthem. He was also lauded by his Member of Congress, who spoke about the award on the House floor.



*Shawnee National Forest wins 2014 Beacon Award*

The 2014 Sheldon Coleman Great Outdoors Award is an original work entitled “Eagle Woman” created by Darrell Norman, a Blackfeet artist from Montana.

[Return to Top](#)

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## CORPS NETWORK HOSTS FIRST-EVER GREAT OUTDOORS WEEK DAY OF SERVICE



*1st ever Great Outdoors Week Day of Service on the National Mall*

More than 100 people gathered at the FDR Memorial on the National Mall for the Inaugural Great Outdoors Week Day of Service event – planned by The Corps Network. Well over 100 conservation corps members and volunteers worked with National Park Service staff, were fed by Guest Services Inc., and were transported to worksites aboard Old Town Trolleys provided by Historic Tours of America. The Great Outdoors Week Day of Service will expand in future years, inviting all Americans and especially youth to undertake service projects in the Great Outdoors. A video recapping the event is available [here](#).

[Return to top](#)

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## MEMBERS OF CONGRESS HELP CELEBRATE TRAILS SUCCESSES

A dozen Members of Congress helped celebrate the continuing successes of the Recreational Trails Program (RTP) during Great Outdoors Week. Since 1993, the RTP has underwritten more than 20,000 projects to improve trails experiences for all and to unify our trails community, producing a remarkable political coalition.

The celebration was dedicated to former Congressman Jim Oberstar – a long-time champion of the RTP – who passed away in May of this year.

Ten trails projects were honored by the Coalition for Recreational Trails (CRT) at the event in the Rayburn House Office Building on June 11. The projects were located in Michigan, Nebraska, New Mexico, New Hampshire, Pennsylvania, Missouri, Idaho, Louisiana and Alaska. Two of the Recreational Trails Program's Congressional champions who are leaving Congress were also honored at the event.

Since its inception, U.S. Representative Tom Petri (R-WI) has been a champion of the Recreational Trails Program. His steady support for RTP has ensured the program's continuation. To celebrate this visionary dedication to the RTP, the CRT has renamed all its awards, beginning with 2014, in his honor as the Tom Petri Annual Achievement Awards.



*Rep. Tom Petri honored at 2014 CRT Awards*

U.S. Representative Mike Michaud (D-ME) joined Rep. Petri in providing strong Congressional support for the RTP in recent years. Together, they led efforts to demonstrate bipartisan support for the program, most notably through a letter signed by 74 Members of Congress, an action that played a key role in ensuring that the program was reauthorized under MAP-21. In recognition of his significant contributions to the protection and enhancement of RTP, Rep. Michaud was presented with a Lifetime Leadership Award by the CRT.

A searchable database of RTP-funded projects is at [www.recreationaltrailsinfo.org](http://www.recreationaltrailsinfo.org).

[Return to Top](#)

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## GETTYSBURG GATHERING FOCUSES ON NATIONAL SERVICE OPPORTUNITIES

Great Outdoors Month included a gathering in Gettysburg hosted by the Franklin Project of the Aspen Institute focusing on reconstituting the national service legacy of the Civilian Conservation Corps through the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Conservation Service Corps – and key national park concessioner Delaware North Companies was invited to share a report on its pilot effort in Shenandoah National Park, working with the National Trust for Historic Preservation and The Corps Network. Called H.O.P.E. – Hands-On Preservation Experience – the very successful pilot in Shenandoah will be the model for Delaware North's \$3+ million commitment to hiring American youth and returning veterans to work on restoring historic structures in parks over the next 18 months.

[Return to Top](#)

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## FEDERAL REPORTS ON VISITOR SPENDING IN GATEWAY COMMUNITIES

Two recent reports highlight the importance of visitor spending at and near federal sites. National Park Service Director Jon Jarvis recently released a report on national and unit-by-unit park visitors spending concluding that park visitors contributed \$26.5 billion to the nation's economy and supported almost 240,000 jobs in 2013.

"The big picture of national parks and their importance to the economy is clear," Jarvis said. "Every tax dollar invested in the National Park Service returns \$10 to the U.S. Economy because of visitor spending in gateway communities near the 401 parks of the National Park System."

National park visitation for 2013 declined by 3.2 percent compared to 2012. According to the report, the 16-day government shutdown last October accounted for most of the decline. National parks in the Northeast, closed for Hurricane Sandy-related repairs, were the other significant brake on visitation. Visitor spending for 2013 was down by 1 percent. The number of jobs supported by visitor spending was off by 2.1 percent, and the overall effect on the U.S. economy was 1 percent lower than the previous year due to adjustments for inflation.



*Kids learn to kayak on Carlyle Lake in Illinois*

Jarvis said visitation so far this year indicated a rebound from 2013 and he expects a steady increase as excitement grows in advance of the 2016 centennial of the National Park Service.

The Federal Interagency Council on Outdoor Recreation (FICOR) also released a new report on visitor spending linked to areas managed by the council's seven federal agencies for 2012. FICOR's report concluded that the agencies hosted 938 million visitors who spent \$51 billion and supported 880,000 jobs in gateway communities.

The NPS report is here: [http://www.nature.nps.gov/socialscience/docs/NPSVSE2013\\_final\\_nrss.pdf](http://www.nature.nps.gov/socialscience/docs/NPSVSE2013_final_nrss.pdf).

FICOR's report is here:

<http://www.funoutdoors.com/files/FICOR%20Report%20on%20Jobs%20and%20Income.pdf>

[Return to Top](#)

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## FLREA REVISIONS ADVANCE

The U.S. House of Representatives Natural Resource Committee is expected to take action on recreation-fee legislation that would revise and extend the Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act (FLREA) at its meeting on July 30, after postponing it at their July 16 meeting. The measure would continue to authorize federal land managers to charge entrance fees, allow agencies to retain fee revenues locally for services and facilities, include the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in the program and would establish a transparent process for the public to participate in project decisions. Some issues remain in discussion, including cost and age limits for senior passes and how

concessioners treat pass-related discounts. Some \$300 million in federal agency recreation program funding is at stake.

The House has conducted two hearings on recreation fees and has documented broad support for fee programs that are transparent and which support services and facilities linked to the fee sites. Another action underway in the House is a one-year extension of the existing law as part of the Interior and Related Agencies appropriations measure for FY2015.

[Return to Top](#)

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## ARC BEACON AWARD WINNERS FEATURED ON LOCAL TV NEWS

The project #TakeOnPocono, honored with a 2014 Beacon Award by ARC in June, was recently featured on local TV news.

WNEP-TV, the local ABC affiliate for the Scranton-Wilkes-Barre market in Pennsylvania, featured the partnership between the Pocono Mountains Visitors Bureau and the National Park Service in its broadcasts on July 17.

The partnership project encourages people to take photos at the Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area and share them with the hashtag online. Tagged photos are automatically featured on the Pocono Mountains Visitors Bureau's website and each contributor becomes eligible to win weekly prizes and a grand prize.

The initiative has been a great success, and has been submitted for consideration to the 2016 National Park Service Centennial Planning Team as a sustainable initiative involving integration of social media technology, cost effective promotion, partnering with a non-profit organization, intra-agency sharing and significant visitor engagement.

The full story and video can be found at <http://wnep.com/2014/07/17/pocono-social-media-campaign-picture-perfect/>.

[Return to Top](#)

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*#TakeOnPocono wins 2014 Beacon Award*