



American Recreation Coalition

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

May 2014 Newsletter

In This Issue:

- [Great Outdoors Month 2014 Kicks Off](#)
 - [Partners Outdoors 2014 Planning Enters Final Stages](#)
 - [OFF! Sponsors Get Outdoors Day](#)
 - [Coleman & Walmart Help Launch Great Outdoors Month](#)
 - [Recent Action on FLREA](#)
 - [NPS Centennial Plans](#)
 - [RentMYTent Makes Camping In National Parks Easy](#)
 - [MAP-21 Discussions Underway](#)
 - [ARC Thanks Congressman Jim Oberstar](#)
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GREAT OUTDOORS MONTH 2014 KICKS OFF IN ARKANSAS

Arkansas Governor Mike Beebe helped kick off Great Outdoors Month 2014 at Pea Ridge National Military Park in Northwest Arkansas this past weekend on May 16 and 17, touting his state and the outdoors in general in a video message – which can be found [here](#).

ARC President Derrick Crandall also helped get things started by appearing on Walmart's Saturday Morning Meeting. Hosted by Walmart CEO Doug McMillon, the broadcast show reaching thousands of employees across the country let Crandall talk about the importance of Great Outdoors Month, and applaud the support from Walmart and Coleman.

The Walmart event coincided with an important demonstration of partners working to connect Americans with the Great Outdoors. Northwest Arkansas Boys and Girls Club kids and Boy Scouts joined representatives from the National Park Service, Coleman, Arkansas Parks and Tourism and other state and federal land management agencies for a campout in the historic Elk Horn Tavern area of Pea Ridge National Military Park. The event featured outdoor games, good food, re-enactor presentations, campfire

songs, stargazing and, of course, s'mores. This campout was one of more than 1,000 ***Kids to Parks Day*** events across the nation. Pictures and more info can be found via Facebook and Instagram – search for Ranger Travis!

A short video report on the campout, and on the Coleman & Walmart efforts for Great Outdoors Month can also be found [here](#).

A news release regarding the kick-off event was also carried nationwide on businesswire.com, and can be found [here](#).

Arkansas is just one of several states to already have proclaimed June 2014 Great Outdoors Month. A full list of received proclamations can be found at the Great Outdoors Month website: greatoutdoorsmonth.org.

Four other states across the country are hosting Capital Campouts during Great Outdoors Month, where Governors and other key officials and sponsors are meeting with youth and families to camp out under the stars in Kansas, Georgia, Colorado and Washington. More information on the individual Campouts can be found at the Great Outdoors Month website: greatoutdoorsmonth.org.

[Return to Top](#)

PARTNERS OUTDOORS 2014 PLANNING ENTERS FINAL STAGES

2014's Partners Outdoors gathering is shaping up to be one of the biggest and best yet. The annual gathering of key recreation community leaders from both the public and private sectors will be held in Washington, D.C. during June – Great Outdoors Month. The session is co-sponsored by the federal agencies managing our national parks, forests, refuges and other public spaces and ARC. From June 9 - 11 – presentations by U.S. Representative Raúl Grijalva, National Park Service Director Jon Jarvis, Vail Resorts Vice President for Natural Resources and Conservation Rick Cables and others will be followed by panel presentations and brainstormer sessions. The sessions will focus on three key challenges:

- Funding Recreation in the Great Outdoors Sustainably;
- Hosting All Americans in Their Great Outdoors; and
- Working Better as Partners Outdoors.

The 2014 Beacon, Coleman, Legends and Coalition for Recreational Trails (CRT) awards will be integrated into the Partners Outdoors 2014 celebrations. The Beacon Award presentations will be held in the evening on June 9th and will be moderated by Assistant Secretary of Commerce and NOAA Deputy Administrator Mark Schaefer. The presentation of the Sheldon Coleman Great Outdoors Award and the Legends Awards

will be held on June 10th and moderated by U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Deputy Director Steve Guertin. The Recreational Trails Program Awards will take place on June 11th, and will be hosted by CRT.

Also committed to key roles at the event are U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Chief of Operations Jim Hannon and U.S. Forest Service Associate Chief Mary Wagner.

Partners Outdoors was first held in 1992 and has led to important actions benefitting the access to the Great Outdoors. Partners Outdoors 2014 will continue that legacy.

Partners Outdoors participants are selected by sponsoring agencies and invited by ARC. Invitations to private sector leaders have been issued by ARC. For more information, see www.funoutdoors.com or contact Cathy Ahern at cahern@funoutdoors.com.

[Return to Top](#)

OFF!® BECOMES NATIONAL PARTNER SPONSOR OF GET OUTDOORS DAY

OFF!® is now a national partner sponsor of National Get Outdoors Day (GO Day), one special day each year when Americans are encouraged to have healthy, active outdoor fun at sites across the nation. This year's GO Day is on June 14th.

National Get Outdoors Day offers activities for every age and skill level, from campouts to hiking and climbing and fishing and much more. For a list of locations and advice on celebrating GO Day on your own, visit nationalgetoutdoorsday.org, and share your adventures online using #KeepsBugsOFF, #TheOutdoorsMissesYou and #GODay.

OFF!® has provided trusted products and effective protection to families and individuals for more than 50 years and will help thousands find fun outdoors at GO Day events across the nation through sponsored events and by offering long-lasting protection from mosquitoes, including those that may carry the West Nile Virus. OFF!® will also help support presentations by park rangers, youth organizations, guides and more at top GO Day events. OFF!® shares the belief of GO Day founding organizations Forest Service and American Recreation Coalition that our legacy of national parks and forests, refuges and other special places deserves to be enjoyed by all Americans and will help make GO Day become a special invitation to those who need help putting outdoors fun into their lives!

OFF!® is also a national partner in Great Outdoors Month. Proclaimed by the President and every governor, Great Outdoors Month features National Get Outdoors Day and other exciting ways to have fun outdoors. Among the other activities during the month are American Hiking Society's National Trails Day®, National Fishing and Boating Week, National Marina Day and the Great American Backyard Campout. These events

plus key discovery zones like www.recreation.gov can put fresh air in your lungs and a smile on your face. For more information, go to www.greatoutdoorsmonth.org.

[Return to Top](#)

COLEMAN COMPANY & WALMART ARE KEY PARTNERS IN LAUNCHING GREAT OUTDOORS MONTH

To ensure that outdoor memories are made easy, National Great Outdoors Month Founding Partner The Coleman Company, Inc. is “setting up camp” at Walmart stores across the United States. For seven weeks, Coleman’s “Ranger Days” Tour will feature Coleman rangers, joined by representatives from state and federal land management agencies highlighting America’s vast outdoor recreation resources. Scouts will lead campsite demos and not-for-profit partners will share “how to” and “where to” information.

A short video report on the Coleman and Walmart efforts can be found [here](#).

“Coleman is proud to sponsor National Great Outdoors Month. Believing in something means being fully committed and Coleman believes in protecting and promoting America’s outdoor resources. Whether you are camping, hiking, paddling, cycling, fishing or tailgating, being in the outdoors is invigorating. America’s great outdoors have so much to offer and Coleman has everything to help you get there,” remarked Dave Allen, President, Coleman U.S.

[Return to Top](#)

RECENT ACTION ON FLREA

The U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Natural Resources continues to work on revisions to the Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act following a hearing in March which underscored both broad support for the authority to charge and retain recreation fees at federal sites and for key changes to make the fee program more transparent, convenient and efficient. Congressional action is important. Although recreation program appropriations are stable for the short term, longer term funding prospects are challenging and needed investments in trails, campgrounds and other visitor facilities are likely to be unmet without fees and other supplementary revenues.

Federal courts are also addressing implementation of FLREA, especially by the Forest Service. In late March, a United States District Court for D.C. judge ruled that Forest Service concessioners aren’t subject to the same fee restrictions as the agency itself, and they don’t have to honor passes such as the Northwest Forest Pass. Then, on April

28, a U.S. District Court Judge in California ruled that the Forest Service has been improperly requiring visitors to buy the Adventure Pass for entering any part of the San Bernardino National Forest, ordering the Forest Service to stop charging visitors if they don't use any of the improved facilities such as toilets or picnic tables. The court decisions illustrate to Members of Congress, their staff and agencies the connection between fees and other partnership-related strategies, including concessions.

Federal recreation fees have been guided by actions taken in conjunction with appropriations measures since the 1960's, including Fee Demo in 1996 and FLREA in 2004. ARC anticipates that revisions to FLREA will be introduced this summer and approved by the House Natural Resources Committee but then incorporated into the legislation providing appropriations for federal agencies in FY15, which begins October 1, 2014.

[Return to Top](#)

NPS CENTENNIAL ACTIONS

The National Park Service and the National Park Foundation continue to work on plans for a major new Centennial Campaign themed as FIND YOUR PARK and a series of Centennial events, a handful of which will be deemed "signature" events – including the 2016 Tournament of Roses Parade. Centennial activities will rely on non-federal partners since costs are anticipated in the tens of millions of dollars. Enlisting these partners is prompting some new thinking by agency leaders, including a willingness to allow a modification of the traditional NPS arrowhead to be more widely used – somewhat parallel to the way the Olympic rings are used by sponsors and partners. A key meeting of the NPS Centennial Advisory Committee will occur in Washington on June 11 and 12.

Centennial-related activities by other organizations are also being unveiled. The National Geographic Society, which was actively involved in the creation of the National Park Service in 1916, will devote a great deal of its magazine and broadcast focus to national parks beginning mid-2015. And Brand USA's IMAX film honoring the Centennial of the National Park Service will commence filming this summer, with the expected release in late 2015. The release will be accompanied with major promotion campaigns aimed at boosting visitation to the USA in key markets.

[Return to Top](#)

RENTMYTENT PROGRAM MAKES CAMPING IN NATIONAL PARKS EASY

One of the best ways to enjoy the wonder of a national park is by staying at a national

park campground. Hundreds of campgrounds and thousands of campsites are available at national parks, and overnight fees are remarkably inexpensive. Experiencing the majesty of America's great outdoors is now easier than ever with the new RentMYTent program.

The RentMYTent program allows you to reserve a campsite AND a top quality tent and camping package for use in key parks. All you have to provide is a sleeping bag or bedroll! Like renting a car for a trip or ski equipment at a ski resort, RentMYTent is perfect for the 80% of Americans who live in urban areas and who might not have enough room to store bulky camping equipment, but want to try a park adventure. Worries about space constraints, additional baggage fees and time spent setting up and taking down equipment are a thing of the past, leaving you more time to spend enjoying the scenery and activities.

The tents and camping items are products of the Coleman Company, a proud name in outdoor equipment for over 100 years. Set-up, maintenance, cleaning and packing up are done by one of the National Park Service's close partners, a concessioner committed to making your stay fun and easy.

Among the possible sites for RentMYTent pilot services are: Shenandoah National Park, Denali National Park, Badlands National Park, Bryce Canyon National Park and Mammoth Cave National Park.

More information is available at www.rentmytent.org. RentMyTent will soon be part of www.recreation.gov and the websites of participating concessioners.

[Return to Top](#)

MAP-21 DISCUSSIONS UNDERWAY

MAP-21 – the legislation authorizing and funding the nation's surface transportation program – is now slated to expire on September 30, 2014. The Administration has proposed a four-year, \$300+ billion successor labeled The GROW AMERICA Act. Senate transportation leaders have now introduced a six-year extension and modification of MAP-21, and House transportation leaders plan to introduce a third alternative within the next month.

The Administration's and the Senate's proposals would leave many key programs of interest to the recreation community, including the Recreational Trails Program and

funding for roads on federal lands, largely unchanged. While pleased that these programs are good prospects for retention, ARC President Derrick Crandall expressed concern that challenges created by MAP-21 for the trails program are not addressed in either bill and the virtual freeze in funding for six years for recreation-related programs would mean a serious decline in program capabilities.

Neither of the MAP-21 successors proposed to raise federal fuel tax rates – frozen at 18.3 cents per gallon for more than 20 years. This means that funding federal surface transportation programs at current or expanded levels would abandon the “user pay” model which has been used for federal transportation programs for more than 50 years. Various tax reforms are suggested as the source of needed funding – at least \$15 billion per year. But any new revenues from tax reform will find other champions for other uses.

For more information on GROW AMERICA visit: <http://www.dot.gov/grow-america>

For more information on the Senate MAP-21 reauthorization proposal visit: http://www.epw.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?FuseAction=Files.View&FileStore_id=567bd0cb-43f8-4623-85cb-94a26e584182

[Return to Top](#)

OUR THANKS TO JIM OBERSTAR

One of the nation’s leading experts on transportation matters and former Chairman of the U.S. House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee died unexpectedly on May 3, 2014. The Honorable Jim Oberstar served in the U.S. House of Representatives from his election in 1974 to early 2011. He was a key architect of federal transportation policies for roads, air travel, public transit – and scenic byways and trails. Appreciation for his mark on transportation was expressed at services in the Washington, D.C., area by two U.S. Senators, a former House colleague, former U.S. Transportation Secretary Norm Mineta and others.

Chairman Oberstar began his Washington career as a Congressional staffer at the committee he later chaired, and his knowledge of transportation was unequaled. His personal mark on recreation-related transportation programs was also unequaled. He was the Godfather of the National Scenic Byways Program, which for years had its technical support team in Duluth, Minnesota, in his Congressional District. But he also created the Safe Routes to Schools Program and was the unchallenged leader on

bike/ped/recreation trails. A remarkable man with interests in foreign languages and cultures, he became an accomplished bicyclist. He was also a proud and involved father and grandfather, a mentor to many and a cherished friend. Thank you, Jim Oberstar, for being a visionary and an agent of change in national policies. You will be missed and long remembered.

[Return to Top](#)

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

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