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American Recreation Coalition, Outdoor Recreation Industry Roundtable to Unify as *Outdoor Recreation Roundtable*



Recreation Leaders Discuss Creation of Outdoor Recreation Roundtable

Washington, D.C. (February 13, 2018) – Recreation industry leaders announced today the formation of the Outdoor Recreation Roundtable (ORR), a powerful unified entity that will provide a strong voice for outdoor recreation across America. The new organization combines the Outdoor Recreation Industry Roundtable, a coalition of America’s leading outdoor recreation trade associations, which was formed in 2017, and the American Recreation Coalition (ARC), an

organization of recreation interests that has had a significant and positive impact on outdoor recreation for more than three decades.

The newly elected chair and vice chair of ORR spoke about the importance of the new organization and its mission. “Protecting, promoting and enhancing recreational experiences on America’s public lands and waters are core values for those of us who are privileged to work in the outdoor recreation industry,” said Thom Dammrich, ORR chair and president of the National Marine Manufacturers Association. “We not only have the most at stake when it comes to preserving outdoor spaces, we also have the most at stake when it comes to moving policy forward and providing visitor services that meet the needs of the modern outdoor lifestyle.”

“Outdoor recreation is rising in popularity and diversity,” noted ORR Vice Chair Frank Hugelmeyer, president of the RV Industry Association. “Consumer expectations have radically changed while public land and water management have not kept up with their needs. Because of this, industry leaders have searched for new ways to strengthen the collective voice of the outdoor recreation industry to ensure it remains a critical economic engine and growing pastime for all Americans.”



ORR officers (from left): Hughes, Ingrassia, Dammrich, Hugelmeyer and Crandall

Joining Dammrich and Hugelmeyer as ORR officers are Glenn Hughes, president-elect of the American Sportfishing Association, who will serve as secretary, and Phil Ingrassia, president of the RV Dealers Association, who will serve as treasurer.

The transition will be guided by an expanded board of directors chaired by Dammrich. Implementation of programs and activities will be overseen by ORR's new Chief Staff

Officer Derrick Crandall, who had been president of ARC. Expanded communications efforts, supported by new staff resources, will begin by mid-2018. The ORR Board will announce further details as they become available. Most ARC programs will continue uninterrupted, including Great Outdoors Month® and Partners Outdoors, along with regular policy briefings and other communications.

The transition to the new organization began in early 2017, when the clear value of a more unified and focused recreation industry, advocating on behalf of a multi-billion-dollar industry sector, became evident. Together, industry leaders spoke out on the importance of the recreation economy and the basic elements needed to grow this vital economic sector, including: updated infrastructure to support quality experiences; sound and sustainable management of the nation's public lands and waters; responsiveness to changing recreation preferences; and utilization of new technology. The industry delivered another unifying message: Public-private partnerships are essential to reduce the multi-billion-dollar maintenance backlog on public lands and to provide needed recreation facility upgrades.

In October, an unprecedented gathering of outdoor recreation trade association executives explored ways to meet these challenges and reached agreement on the following long-term objectives:

- Achieve recognition that outdoor recreation is a major economic player and that growth of the outdoor recreation economy is a necessary and bipartisan goal;
- Persuade the federal government to embrace a pro-recreation "culture change";
- Increase recreational access to public lands and waters;
- Advocate for sustainable funding and increased usage of public-private partnerships;
- Boost infrastructure modernization and reduce backlogged maintenance to produce better visitor experiences;
- Continue to support responsible conservation efforts; and
- Encourage the next generation's participation in outdoor recreation activities.

The participants concluded that the industry needed to unite even further to form the clear and leading voice for the outdoor recreation industry, setting the stage for the formation of the Outdoor Recreation Roundtable a short three months later.

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