



American Recreation Coalition

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

41 Members of Congress Tell FS Chief: Recreation is Key Factor in Planning

Despite a lame duck session, something big has been accomplished on Capitol Hill. ARC's efforts on the Forest Service Planning Rule over the past several months culminated in a letter signed by 41 Members of Congress and sent to Forest Service Chief Tom Tidwell November 19th.

The effort was led by U.S. Representative Kevin McCarthy (R-CA), the new Majority Whip. "It stresses the importance of recreation and access in national forest planning – a very helpful message as the rule undergoes its final clearance in the Administration," according to ARC President Derrick Crandall. "Kevin McCarthy is an enthusiastic new recreation champion and his personal support is very important," he added. Efforts to achieve a parallel Senate letter are underway as well.

The new projected release date for the draft planning rule is mid-to-late January 2011. ARC has been told by multiple sources that the draft rule reflects our concerns and counsel. During a recent meeting, Robert Bonnie, Senior Advisor to the USDA Secretary for the Environment and Climate, told ARC that the rule "will be received with substantial enthusiasm by the recreation community." Mr. Crandall will meet with Chief Tidwell on December 10th to discuss the status of the rule.

Please circulate the URLs below to your networks along with a suggestion that we all thank Representatives Kevin McCarthy and Mike Simpson for their leadership on the Planning Rule issue. Both Members highlighted the Congressional letter to the Chief on their official websites and had some very, very positive things to say about recreation on national forests. Several sources say that their letter is prompting discussion inside the FS and USDA.

[Link to Rep. Kevin McCarthy's website](#)

[Link to Rep. Mike Simpson's website](#)

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