



American Recreation Coalition

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

DECEMBER 2015 NEWSLETTER

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GOVERNORS MATT MEAD AND JAY NIXON RECEIVE 2015 SHELDON COLEMAN GREAT OUTDOORS AWARDS

Wyoming Governor Matt Mead and Missouri Governor Jay Nixon have been selected to receive the 2015 Sheldon Coleman Great Outdoors Award – the recreation community's most prestigious award. Governor Mead's award was presented to him at a ceremony in Cheyenne December 9 by leaders of the American Recreation Coalition (ARC) and The Coleman Company. Governor Nixon will receive his award at a ceremony in Jefferson City in January. In addition, plans are underway to honor the Governors in Washington, D.C. during February 2016.

ARC has presented this award since 1989 to an individual whose personal efforts have contributed substantially to enhancing outdoor experiences in America. The award was established in memory of Sheldon Coleman (1901-1988), longtime Chairman of The Coleman Company and a visionary champion of outdoor recreation and conservation. Winners are selected by recreation and conservation leaders from both the private and public sectors.

2015's award is unusual in two ways. Only once before has a Governor received this national

recognition and only once before has the award gone to more than one individual.

“The selection panel for the award had a very rich field of candidates,” said ARC President Derrick Crandall. “Many Members of Congress, Cabinet members and others were deservedly nominated. But reports on the efforts of Governor Nixon and Governor Mead were compelling, showing their passion and vision and their commitment to expanding the enjoyment of outdoor recreation’s benefits while enlisting many partners in their efforts.”



Missouri Governor Jay Nixon he has made state parks, trails and state waterways a high priority. He launched a campaign to encourage every Missourian to walk at least 100 miles on Missouri's trails in 2014, and expanded this effort to encourage paddling at least 100 miles on Missouri's waters in 2015. He created one of the nation's most active summer employment programs for disadvantaged and minority youth. Missouri's State Parks Youth Corps offers 300-hour internships for youth between the ages 17 and 24. Participants gain valuable work experience to prepare for tomorrow's careers while enjoying the beauty and grandeur of the state's parks.

In the fall of 2014, the Governor hosted a successful Governor's Conference on Natural Resources which highlighted partnerships and innovative thinking to sustain the state's legacy of conservation, stewardship and active connections with the outdoors.

Governor Nixon hosted one of the largest and most successful events of Great Outdoors Month 2015, the Capitol Campout and Outdoors Day at, and adjacent to, Missouri's State Capitol in June. The Governor recently announced plans to improve and expand Missouri's state parks, including a major new state park in Shannon County and to build toward a Missouri voter reaffirmation of a unique earmarking of a portion of state sales tax revenues to outdoors programs. Governor Nixon has also worked through the National Governors Association and the Southern Governors Association, which he chairs, to promote enjoyment of the Great Outdoors nationally.

Wyoming Governor Matt Mead has supported Great Outdoors Month throughout his tenure with proclamations and activities. In 2015, he hosted the initial Wyoming Capital Campout which featured the nation's first-ever bilingual Capital Campout - Campamento y Comida en el Parque, designed to reach Wyoming's fast-growing Latino community.



He supported the Wyoming Department of State Parks' 7th annual "Summer Outdoor Slam" at Curt Gowdy State Park on National Get Outdoors Day, offering introductions to a variety of recreational opportunities for children and families.

Governor Mead helped bring increased visibility to Wyoming's outdoor recreation opportunities by leading efforts for the Inaugural Cowboy Tough Adventure Race this year, where challenging mountain biking, trail running, trekking, and water sports adventures were experienced in amazing park settings.

He was selected by his fellow governors to serve as Chairman of the Western Governors Association in 2016 and is continuing that organization's strong advocacy for the health and economic value of recreation tied to the region's public lands and waters.

Governors Mead and Nixon enlisted the assistance of their state parks and tourism departments to produce PSAs urging residents and visitors alike to enjoy their respective states' outdoors. Both PSAs were selected as national award winners for Great Outdoors Month 2015, allowing the Governors to direct special donations to organizations in their states connecting kids and the outdoors.

"The recreation community is indebted to these national leaders. They inspire us. They champion the role recreation plays in healthy lifestyles and sustainable, vibrant local economies. They find time for recreation in their busy lives and have united and cheered recreation community leaders in their respective states. They also demonstrate that recreation enjoys the support of the nation's leaders from both political parties and in all regions," said ARC President Crandall.

The 2015 Sheldon Coleman Great Outdoors Award is a golden lantern specially prepared and mounted by The Coleman Company.

Past recipients of the Sheldon Coleman Great Outdoors Award include President George H.W. Bush (1990), National Geographic Society Chairman Gil Grosvenor (1994), U.S. Senators John Breaux (1991), Frank Murkowski (1997), John Chafee (1998) and Lamar Alexander (2013), U.S. Representatives Jim Oberstar (1996), Ralph Regula (2000) and Sam Farr (2014), Transportation Secretaries Norman Mineta (2003) and Rodney Slater (1999), and Secretaries of the Interior Ken Salazar (2011) and Dirk Kempthorne (2008).

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WYOMING GOVERNOR MATT MEAD'S EFFORTS TO CHAMPION OUTDOORS BENEFIT WYOMING NONPROFIT



The Great Outdoors Month™ Partnership recently selected Wyoming Governor Matt Mead's 2015 Public Service Announcement (PSA) promoting healthy, active outdoor fun as one of three national winners. The selection entitled the Governor to designate a nonprofit organization helping to connect America's kids to the outdoors for a donation. At a December 9 gathering in his office, Governor Mead presented the "WY Outside" program with the \$1,000 action grant to support its important work.

In the PSA the Governor praises Wyoming's great public lands and waters and the recreation opportunities they provide to families, saying, "Some of the very best memories I had growing up were with my mom, my dad and brother and sister and when we had the opportunity to be outside somewhere." See the winning PSA [here](#).

Governor Mead and the state of Wyoming are in the forefront of finding new, innovative ways to get children and families outdoors. WY Outside, a coalition of public, private and nonprofit organizations, was officially organized in 2013, during his first term as Governor. Its mission is to encourage children and their families to enjoy the outdoors.



As incoming Chairman of the Western Governors' Association (WGA), Governor Mead is positioned to continue Great Outdoors Month™ 2015's successes into 2016 and beyond. He is committed to making Great Outdoors Month™ 2016 an important part of WGA's agenda through Governor's Campouts, partner events and more.

"Outdoor recreation is part of a healthy lifestyle for kids and adults," said the Governor, "It brings families and friends together and provides memories that last a lifetime. It nourishes the body and soul. I hope everyone, residents and visitors alike, can experience the great outdoors in Wyoming this coming year."

Governor Mead presented the action grant to WY Outside at a ceremony in Cheyenne where he was honored as a 2015 recipient of the prestigious [Sheldon Coleman Great Outdoors Award](#). He is the third winner from Wyoming, joining former U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service Director John Turner (1992) – for whom he interned while in high school – and former U.S. Senator Malcolm Wallop (1996).

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CONCESSIONERS URGE CONGRESSIONAL ACTION TO HELP PARK VISITORS HAVE GREAT EXPERIENCES

National Park Hospitality Association (NPHA) Counselor Derrick Crandall told Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee members at a recent hearing that national park concessioners can and should play a key role in helping the National Park Service (NPS) solve its financial problems. He pointed out that the National Park Service "is capital-strapped and has a well-documented inability to maintain its infrastructure ... to meet visitor needs and expectations. Concessioners have been, are and can be key partners in overcoming these challenges."

The December 8 hearing on an Obama Administration proposal for new authorities for NPS highlighted bipartisan interest in preparing the National Park Service (NPS) for its Centennial in 2016. Mr. Crandall offered forward looking testimony detailing innovative ways concessioners can help the Park Service serve its visitors for the next 100 years. NPS Director Jon Jarvis, National Park Foundation President Will Shafroth and National Parks Conservation Association President Theresa Pierno also testified before nearly a dozen U.S. Senators.

Mr. Crandall explained to the large and bipartisan group of Senators participating in the hearing that most of the National Park System's iconic lodges were built and have been maintained with private dollars. These expenditures, he told the panel, "don't require offsets, don't use taxpayer dollars, don't add to the nation's deficit." He added that "concessioners can be a significant player in reducing NPS' deferred maintenance backlog now facing American taxpayers with a few changes." He offered several ideas including encouraging and rewarding concessioner excellence, appropriate use of Leaseholder Surrender Interest (LSI), lengthening of concessioner contracts, flexibility in meeting contemporary visitor wants and needs, increases in operating times and seasons, and expanding visitor services in many NPS units that are currently largely invisible to the public.

Mr. Crandall praised NPS for using the Centennial to invite all Americans to their national parks through the Find Your Park campaign, Every Kid in a Park initiative and more. "But this invitation is just a first step. We need to be prepared to deliver great experiences in these great places. And that takes money and staff and facilities. This is the challenge of the Centennial and beyond, and where we need the help of the Congress."

NPHA's full testimony – including a letter advocating for a new source of funding through the federal gas tax called "Penny for Parks" – can be read and downloaded [here](#). The hearing was livestreamed and can be watched [here](#).

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RECREATION COMMUNITY SCORES VICTORY WITH ROADS BILL

The recreation community earned a big victory December 4 when President Obama signed legislation that should provide a modest increase in park and recreation transportation spending over the next five years. The legislation renamed the Transportation Alternatives Program – which finances several park and recreation programs – the Surface Transportation Block Grant Program and set aside \$835 million for it in this fiscal year and the next. In the future, it will receive \$850 million per year. The law also ensures that the Recreational Trails Program will continue to receive a guaranteed \$85 million per year.

A second provision of the law sets aside \$335 million in fiscal 2016 for federal land roads, with \$268 million of that going to the National Park Service (NPS). The federal lands allocation would increase to \$375 million with the NPS share rising to \$300 million in fiscal 2020.

The bill also establishes a separate \$250 million Federal Lands Access Program for major roads projects linked to federal lands beginning in fiscal 2016. The program would grow to \$270 million in fiscal 2020.

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RECREATION COMMUNITY CAN SHARE PARK EVENTS AND EXPERIENCES VIA FIND YOUR PARK

The National Park Service is encouraging the recreation community to help people get outdoors by contributing content to www.findyourpark.com. Organizations can share information about exciting events and experiences by logging into www.nextcenturyforparks.org, clicking on

[“Tools”](#) and scrolling to “Find Your Park Experiences and Events.” The experience submission form can be found [here](#), and the event submission form can be found [here](#). Submissions will be reviewed before they are published.

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ARC TO HOST ISSUES BRIEFING IN MARCH OF 2016

ARC’s Board of Directors will meet in Washington, DC, and discuss topics ranging from Great Outdoors Month plans to strategies for reaching candidates for key federal and state office in the November 2016 elections with information and policy suggestions. In conjunction with this meeting, ARC will host a Recreation Issues Forum and one of four Recreation Exchanges planned for 2016. Put a hold on March 8 and stay tuned for more information soon!

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NATIONAL AND STATE PARK VISITATION INCREASES IN 2015

A core strength of outdoor recreation in America is the lure of America’s public lands and waters covering nearly one third of the nation’s surface. As these infographics show, more and more Americans are taking advantage of the outdoor opportunities public lands provide, and national and state park attendance reflects that with significant increases.





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PARTNERS OUTDOORS 2016 PLANNING MOVES FORWARD

Planning for Partners Outdoors 2016 is in full swing. This year's gathering – taking place June 1 and 2 – will reaffirm the recreation community's continuing commitment to provide the public with exceptional outdoor recreation experiences today and tomorrow.

2016 will feature a new format, with two full days of discussion centered on new and innovative ideas for connecting people with their Great Outdoors. Leading members of the outdoor recreation community — public and private sector alike — as well as allied groups from the healthcare and travel/tourism communities will come together to explore future needs and opportunities as we move into a new Presidential administration.

Day One will feature a series of brief, TED-like talks. This format — dubbed "RECx" — will serve as a showcase for great ideas about outdoor recreation, and will include broad participation by diverse groups. Presentations will be livestreamed as well as integrated into social media channels of participating organizations.

Day Two — the Outdoor Recreation Leadership Summit — will feature leading members of the Administration celebrating successful programs (Find Your Park, America's Great Outdoors, Every Kid in a Park, Let's Move! Outside and more). The Summit will focus on a strategic plan for building on those successes and positioning recreation for continued progress in 2017 and beyond.

Partners Outdoors 2016 will also feature the presentation of the American Recreation Coalition's Legends and Beacon Awards. The Legends Awards recognize extraordinary

individual efforts from each major recreation-related agency that have expanded and enhanced recreational opportunities, connecting people – especially children – and the outdoors, through public/private partnerships, or have increased participation in outdoor recreation and links to the outdoors through innovative programs based upon public/private partnerships. The Beacon Awards recognize experimentation with and use of new technologies and alternative communications channels to enhance the experiences of visitors, especially young people and “non-traditional” visitors, and improve recreation program management.

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FICOR UNDERGOES NAME CHANGE

The Federal Interagency Council on Outdoor Recreation is getting a new name. The group of federal agencies that manage America’s public lands and waters will now be known as the **Federal Recreation Council**. The purpose of the Federal Recreation Council is to support and enhance outdoor recreation access and opportunities on public lands, waters and shores. Their goal is to promote better coordination and collaboration among federal agencies responsible for outdoor recreation. The Federal Recreation Council is comprised of the Bureau of Land Management, Bureau of Reclamation, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, National Park Service, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service and U.S. Forest Service.

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JOIN US IN 2016!

Help ARC launch another great new year of promoting pro-active outdoor recreation programs and initiatives by signing on as an ARC member in 2016. Enhance policy makers’ awareness and support for outdoor recreation as a significant social and economic benefit. Support the improvement of outdoor recreation experiences and services on our public lands and waters. Expand Great Outdoors Month activities, including Governor’s Campouts and the celebration of GO Day all across the country. Make the Outdoor Leadership Summit at Partners Outdoors 2016 a game changer for outdoor recreation for the next decade. Help ARC make a difference for outdoor recreation!

ARC has several different membership categories available to recreation-related organizations. A quick look at the ARC membership information [here](#) will help you decide how you can support ARC’s exciting programs in 2016 and beyond. [Download and send in your application today!](#)

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NATIONAL PARK SERVICE CENTENNIAL COIN DESIGNS UNVEILED

Designs for commemorative coins honoring the National Park Service (NPS) Centennial were unveiled November 20 during a ceremony at the Department of the Interior. NPS Director Jonathan B. Jarvis and National Park Foundation (NPF) President and Chief Executive Officer Will Shafroth joined Treasurer of the United States Rosie Rios for the unveiling.

“Heads or tails, this Centennial commemorative coin helps to honor the National Park Service’s first century of service to protect, preserve, and share some of our nation’s greatest natural



resources, culture and history,” said Jarvis. “The coins will be a fun centennial collectible, and the proceeds will contribute to our second century of service to the American people.”

Pricing for the National Park Service Commemorative Coins will include surcharges — \$35 for each gold coin, \$10 for each silver coin, and \$5 for each half-dollar clad coin — which are authorized to be paid to the NPF. The funds are to be used for projects that help preserve and protect resources under the stewardship of the NPS and promote public enjoyment and appreciation of these resources.

“When fully realized, the potential impact derived from the commemorative coin sales will be tremendous,” said Shafroth. “The funds will improve trails, introduce more young people to the parks, and connect our citizens to the history and culture of our nation.”

See the coin designs [here](#).

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

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