



American Recreation Coalition

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

NEWS

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250 Attend First Recreation Forum in Golden, Colorado

Golden, Colorado (March 1, 2007) - Some 250 leaders from government agencies, the non-profit community and corporations gathered in Golden, Colorado to share ideas and information regarding the roles of public lands and waters in America today and tomorrow. Labeled "Turning Inside Out - Opening New Doors to the Outdoors," the session was the first of five regional recreation forums convened by the American Recreation Coalition (ARC) and the National Forest Foundation and planned by key organizations ranging from the USDA Forest Service to the Colorado Youth Corps Alliance.

The forum included expert speakers, panels and several opportunities for participants to add ideas, suggestions and opinions to a "Great Outdoors Idea Bank." Speakers included Rocky Mountain Regional Forester Rick Cables, Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Colorado Director Sally Wisely, Dr. Louise Chawla of the University of Colorado and Dr. Eric France, Chief of Preventative Medicine for Kaiser-Permanente Colorado Region.

Although many themes emerged during the forum discussions, the challenge of linking youth to the outdoors and the vital role of recreation in reversing a pattern of diminishing physical activity and consequent growing health concerns and costs emerged as key themes.

Derrick Crandall, President of ARC, one of the forum conveners, noted that Colorado was one of the last states where obesity remained below 20% of the population. Extensive public lands in the state managed by multiple federal and state agencies are a part of this positive statistic, he told the group. But even in Colorado, growth in sedentary, indoor leisure pursuits is high. And he noted that Californians had added 360 million pounds of fat over ten years. "The chief problem is not about appearance - it is about the increased

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The diversity of participants was unusual, ranging from representatives of virtually every recreation form to Wild Oats Markets to the National Conference of State Legislatures. costs of healthcare and the decline in quality of life," Mr. Crandall said.

Three break-out sessions focused on increasing outdoor opportunities for urban, diverse and younger populations; exploring effective educational, employment and recreational ways to engage youth in the outdoors; and increasing public awareness of healthy habits, diet choices and physical activity.

Additional forums will be held in Atlanta, Georgia (March 9), Los Angeles, California (March 12), Portland, Oregon (March 15) and Chicago, Illinois (March 22). A National Recreation Forum will be held on April 30 in Washington, DC, where a report of the proceedings of all the forums will be presented to national policy makers. For more information, or to register to attend a forum: www.recreationforums.info.

To read an article about the forum in The Rocky Mountain News:

http://www.rockymountainnews.com/drmn/local/article/0,1299,DRMN_15_5388660,00.html

To read an article about the forum in the Denver Post:

http://www.denverpost.com/newsheadlines/ci_5327777