



American Recreation Coalition

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

NEWS

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President, Governors Tout Economic Benefits of Great Outdoors in Proclamations

Washington, D.C. – The President and nearly every governor have declared June 2012 as Great Outdoors Month. Proclamations began in the 1990's and have now become traditions although the messages have varied. The proclamations are unique, but certain themes are pervasive and in 2012, the economic importance of recreation is the key emerging theme.

President Obama also highlighted the importance of outdoor recreation in his proclamation of Great Outdoors Month, saying:

“Protecting our environment is not only a duty to our children; it is an economic imperative. Visitors to our public lands contribute billions of dollars to local economies, and I am committed to supporting this engine of growth. As part of our National Travel and Tourism Strategy, my Administration is working to increase visits to our national parks and scenic places. This initiative will help support small businesses and drive job growth across our country.”

A politically and geographically diverse group of governors used their Great Outdoors Month proclamations as an opportunity to emphasize the role outdoor recreation plays in supporting jobs and the economy. Fifteen governors stressed that outdoor recreation and the great outdoors are vital to the economic well-being of their states. Governor Rick Snyder (R-MI) noted, “Making efforts to be active outdoors boosts economic growth in our state.” Governor John Hickenlooper (D-CO) wrote, “Outdoor recreation is a vital and sustainable pillar of Colorado’s economy and a powerful magnet for attracting visitors from across North America and the world.” And Governor Bob McDonnell (R-VA) noted the role of the Outdoor Recreation Subgroup of his Governor’s Commission on Jobs and Economic Development as being “tasked with finding ways to promote and enhance our outdoor recreation and tourism inventory.”

President, Governors Tout Economic Benefits of Great Outdoors Add One

Governors who cited the role outdoor recreation plays in supporting the economy are: Sean Parnell (R-AK), Jan Brewer (R-AZ), John Hickenlooper (D-CO), Nathan Deal (R-GA), Steve Beshear (D-KY), Rick Snyder (R-MI), Brian Sandoval (R-NV), Bev Perdue (D-NC), John Kasich (R-OH), John Kitzhaber (D-OR), Tom Corbett (R-PA), Lincoln Chafee (I-RI), Nikki Haley (R-SC), Peter Shumlin (D-VT), and Bob McDonnell (R-VA).

More than 40 proclamations emphasize the role outdoor recreation plays in mental and physical health. Support for conservation efforts is referenced in 37 of the documents, and the importance of the outdoors for kids and families is mentioned in 22. Volunteerism is praised in 19 – and virtually all urge people to go out and enjoy the Great Outdoors!

The Great Outdoors Month proclamations were requested by leading national recreation organizations, many of whom sponsor key recreation-related events and activities during the month. These events include: National Trails Day®, National Fishing and Boating Week, the Great American Backyard Campout, Welcome to the Water on National Marina Day, Great Outdoors Week, and National Get Outdoors Day.

Copies of the proclamations can be viewed and downloaded at www.funoutdoors.com.

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About the American Recreation Coalition

AMERICAN RECREATION COALITION — is a nonprofit, Washington-based federation founded in 1979. The association provides a unified voice for recreation interests to ensure their full and active participation in government policy-making on issues such as public land management. ARC membership consists of more than 100 organizations, including national and regional associations and corporations that represent a major share of the \$645 billion a year recreation/leisure industry and enthusiast groups representing millions of recreationists. Since its inception, ARC has sought to catalyze public-private partnerships to enhance and protect outdoor recreation opportunities and resources. ARC conducts research, organizes national conferences, and disseminates information through a variety of means, including its Web site www.funoutdoors.com. ARC plays a leading role in several key coalitions and organizations, including the Coalition for Recreational Trails, Scenic Byways Coalition and Coalition for Recreation in the National Forests. ARC also supports and promotes the WOW - Wonderful Outdoor World outreach to urban children and was instrumental in the re-launch of Take Pride in America. ARC was also instrumental in launching National Get Outdoors Day, a national effort dedicated to helping children enjoy healthy, active outdoor lives.