



American Recreation Coalition

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

October 2011 Newsletter

In this issue:

- [Recreation.gov Outreach Event to Develop New Partnerships](#)
- [Invitations to be Issued for Partners Outdoors 2012](#)
- [Update: January Summit on National Parks](#)
- [Recreation Community Submits Comments on U.S. Forest Service Native American Sacred Places Draft Report](#)
- [Byways Interests Applaud Six-Month Extension, Urge DOT Implementation](#)
- [ARC Member NPHA Submits Congressional Testimony to Subcommittee on National Parks](#)
- [Obesity May Reach 1 in 2 Adults by 2030 – But Encouraging Physical Activity in the Great Outdoors May Help Fight This Increase](#)
- [1992 Memories Rekindled – And Progress Seen](#)
- [Get Out West Momentum Builds](#)

Recreation.gov Outreach Event to Develop New Partnerships

Recreation leaders and technology vendors will meet in mid-October to discuss the future of www.recreation.gov. The website now allows reservations of campsites at federal recreation areas and makes information about recreation available. Over four years, the number of campsite reservations made through www.recreation.gov has grown by 50 percent and now generates over \$75 million annually in recreation user fees for participating federal agencies. But the website management team sees opportunities for major expansion in what the website can provide the public and businesses in the recreation and tourism fields.

Over 150 federal and private sector representatives will meet in Bethesda, Maryland, October 18 to discuss the future of the website. Representatives from federal agencies including the Forest Service, National Park Service, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and more will be joined by outdoor recreation leaders and technology vendors and exhibitors. The three-day event will help identify strategies for making the website both into a more effective reservation tool and into a better information tool. The event will help the federal team managing www.recreation.gov develop a request for proposal for a successor contract to the current website contract awarded to ActiveNetwork. Bids for the new contract are expected to be sought in 2013.

An update on Recreation.gov will be delivered at Partners Outdoors 2012 in January at Williamsburg, Virginia. More information on the Outreach Event is available [here](#).

[Return to top](#)

Invitations to be Issued for Partners Outdoors 2012

Invitations are going out this month for Partners Outdoors 2012. The conference will take place on January 8-12, 2012, at the Kingsmill Resort and Conference Center in Williamsburg, Virginia, and will focus on funding recreation opportunities on federal lands through fees, partnerships and other innovative strategies.

Invitations will be issued by the sponsoring organizations, including seven federal agencies, the National Association of State Park Directors and the American Recreation Coalition. Attendees hold senior positions in the recreation field or are identified as candidates for such posts.

Partners Outdoors meetings have been held annually since 1992 and have played key roles in defining initiatives ranging from scenic byways to youth outreach programs, National Get Outdoors Day and current federal recreation fee policy. Participation is restricted to 125 persons. For more information about attending the conference, please contact Cathy Ahern at cahern@funoutdoors.com.

[Return to top](#)

Update: January Summit on National Parks

The National Parks Conservation Association, National Park Foundation and National Park Hospitality Association (NPHA) are organizing a first-ever America's Summit on National Parks in Washington, January 24-26, 2012. The Summit will draw nearly 400 leaders from across the nation to meet with Members of Congress, National Park Service (NPS) officials, medical and education community leaders and more.

The Summit will highlight the energies invested over several decades in crafting visions for America's national parks, review the NPS' ***A Call to Action*** and then unite park partners around actions designed to make national parks relevant and valued to all Americans long into the future. Some 40 top NPS officials, including Director Jon Jarvis, will participate in the sessions, and the program will feature a large number of high-profile individuals. The opening reception will be planned and hosted by Guest Services Inc., an active member of NPHA. The Summit's main day dinner will be planned and hosted by Xanterra Parks and Resorts, another active NPHA member. Both will highlight "Healthy Parks, Healthy People, Healthy Food" themes.

Key themes of the Summit include: connecting people to parks, including attracting more visitors to parks; expansion of the role of parks in education; protection of park natural, cultural and historic resources; and boosting organizational excellence within

NPS and its partners. The Summit will play a key role in launching efforts to prepare for the 100th anniversary of the NPS in 2016. Sponsor packages are available, including low-cost poster session opportunities for organizations with visions for programs and activities connected with NPS in its second century. If your organization would like to sponsor the Summit, please contact Derrick Crandall at dcrandall@funoutdoors.com.

The soon-to-be-available Summit website is www.2016parksummit.org and will contain detailed agenda information and registration information. Participation is by invitation only.

[Return to top](#)

Recreation Community Submits Comments on U.S. Forest Service Native American Sacred Places Draft Report

The Forest Service recently sought comments on protection of American Indian "sacred places," outlining a potential strategy that would be a significant expansion beyond current protections for "sacred sites" and the consideration of protection of all cultural and historic sites required under Forest Service planning efforts.

The Forest Service submitted its Draft Report to the Secretary on Indian Sacred Sites in July 2011. Report development has been underway for well over a year, but public involvement has not been sought until July. A letter prepared by the National Ski Areas Association and signed by more than 15 major recreation organizations including ARC was submitted to the U.S. Forest Service this week expressing concerns over the report and its recommendations. The letter recommended that the agency:

- 1) maintain the previous reasoned and workable approach to Sacred Sites and abandon the overly broad and subjective definition of "Sacred Places";
- 2) fully evaluate the implications of the "co-management" concept raised in the Draft Report, outlining a plan to allow the agency to enter partnership agreements that would appear to delegate key decision-making authority to Tribes; and
- 3) engage in a new process of formulating recommendations in conjunction with an inclusive and transparent public process.

The recreation community certainly supports the efforts of American Indians and Alaska Natives to protect sacred sites on Forest System lands. However, the Draft Report's recommendations could limit the ability of national forests to provide current and expanded recreation opportunities of all types. The potential for limitation of recreation on large portions of national forests is significant, and recreation interests could be rendered virtual bystanders in the proposed protection development proceedings.

A final report is scheduled to be submitted to U.S. Department of Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack this coming winter.

[Click here](#) to view the letter submitted to the Forest Service. Please contact Derrick Crandall at dcrandall@funoutdoors.com with any questions.

[Return to top](#)

Byways Interests Applaud Six-Month Extension, Urge DOT Implementation

Congress recently extended SAFTEA-LU for six months at current spending levels, which was good news for many recreation programs including the National Scenic Byways Program (NSBP). NSBP has three important components: (1) a national designation program for National Scenic Byways and All-American Roads; (2) a small but important grant program which provides support for innovative efforts to plan and protect byways corridors and tell the byways stories; and (3) a technical assistance program operated through the America's Byways Resource Center in Duluth, Minnesota. Key national byways supporters are now writing to Congress applauding extension of the full byways program and to Secretary of Transportation Ray LaHood, urging the Secretary to implement Congressional direction.

The Secretary is a solid byways supporter, but the March 2011 surface transportation program extension inserted a new discretionary provision that allowed his department to impound certain program funding and redirect it to several "apportioned" highway programs. And in July, DOT informed the byways community that it had done just that with Fiscal Year 2011 funding for the America's Byways Resource Center. Because of that action, the Duluth operations are now preparing to shut down, dealing a serious blow to the byways efforts.

ARC has investigated the DOT decision and has concluded that the decision on cutting off byways funds was made at the staff level within DOT, and that the process generated no documentation that the cut-off met the Congressional requirement that the Secretary conclude that the objectives of the program – providing technical assistance to some 150 byways organizations and 46 states – had been fulfilled with Fiscal Year 2010 and prior funds.

ARC President Derrick Crandall recently had the chance to discuss with the Secretary his involvement in several Illinois byways – and found the Secretary to be enthusiastic about byways and their benefits – including economic benefits to communities along byways. ARC and AAA are leading the letter-writing efforts and are planning follow-up meetings on Capitol Hill and at DOT. The message is simple: the technical assistance program is vital to the success of the overall byways program and is certainly not complete. For more on this story, and to be active on promoting continuation of the very successful byways program, contact Derrick Crandall at dcrandall@funoutdoors.com.

[Return to top](#)

ARC Member NPHA Submits Congressional Testimony to Subcommittee on National Parks

The National Park Hospitality Association (NPHA) submitted testimony last week to the United States Senate's Subcommittee on National Parks, which held a hearing to review the National Park Service's recently released ***A Call to Action: Preparing for a Second Century of Stewardship and Engagement***.

NPHA used the testimony to praise ***A Call to Action*** and the NPS' commitment to partnerships, creativity and flexibility. NPHA also submitted strategies to improve park visitation experiences, including national park campground enhancements, improvements in partnership-based actions between park concessioners and NPS, and expansion and re-energizing of guest donation programs. NPHA noted that its suggestions would add revenues or reduce NPS costs by an estimated \$500 million between now and the agency's 100th anniversary in 2016.

To see the news release on the testimony, [click here](#).

[Return to top](#)

We Need More Elected Officials Like This!

Assemblyman Joseph S. Saladino of New York State hosted the Sixth Annual Marine and Outdoor Recreation Expo in Jones Beach, New York on October 2. The event was free and featured activities like kayaking, fly-fishing lessons, snapper fishing and more.

"[The Expo] is a great way for families to partake in a fun experience to learn about the environment, renewable energies and outdoor recreation," said Saladino.

We couldn't agree more! To read an article on the Expo, [click here](#).

Obesity May Reach 1 in 2 Adults by 2030 – But Encouraging Physical Activity in the Great Outdoors Can Help Fight This Increase

A study published this summer by the scientific journal *The Lancet* shows that obesity trends in the United States and the United Kingdom are on the rise – and are driving up healthcare costs. Based on data from the past 20 years, researchers projected an alarming view of what our country might look like by 2030. Obesity could increase among male adults from a 32% rate in 2007 to 50%, and might reach 52% in adult women, up from 35%. The increase in obesity would likely cause increases in diabetes, cancer, coronary heart disease and osteoarthritis – all of which reduce a person's lifespan and increase medical costs.

Healthier eating habits and more exercise could combat this rise. According to the

study, if the overall U.S. Body Mass Index (BMI) dropped by just 1% – instead of continuing to climb – it could prevent some two million cases of diabetes, between 73,000 and 127,000 cases of cancer, and 1.4 to 1.7 million cases of heart disease. And that's where organizations like ARC can step in to help.

On June 11, ARC partnered with the U.S. Forest Service and over 500 other organizations nationwide – including the First Lady's Let's Move! Initiative – to develop [National Get Outdoors Day](#). Over 45,000 children and adults at 150 sites across the country explored ways to get outside and have fun. And next year's event on June 9, 2012 will be even better!

Encouraging Americans to get outdoors and get active on our public lands could go a long way towards solving the obesity crisis. A Forest Service research report estimates that 290 billion calories are burned each year by the nearly 200 million recreation visits to national forests – to ski and hike and fish and camp and boat and more. How about this as a visual: 290 billion calories worth of french fries placed end to end could reach the moon and back, twice!

The four-part study is available from *The Lancet* [here](#). To see the summary of the study's paper on the health and economic burden of obesity, [click here](#). An article reporting on the survey is available [here](#). The Forest Service research report is [here](#).

[Return to top](#)

1992 Memories Rekindled – And Progress Seen

The Giant Sequoia National Monument in central California has a new active “friends” group, the Giant Sequoia National Monument Association. Among the leaders of the organization are National Forest Recreation Association (NFRA) Vice President Eric Mart and NFRA Executive Director Marily Reese. Mr. Mart asked ARC President Derrick Crandall to speak to the association board and annual meeting in Porterville this week, noting that the meeting would include a variety of people who helped make President George H.W. Bush's 1992 visit to the area and its resulting special protection of the “Grove of the 100 Giants” so successful.

Everyone had a wonderful time recalling the trip with Sequoia National Forest personnel, active and retired, who remain dedicated to protecting the Giant Sequoias and encouraging visitors to see these remarkable trees. In addition to the trees, President Bush visited the Pyles Boys Camp during the trip. The Pyles Camp is a wonderful and enduring effort to help rechannel urban southern California youth hand-picked by local sheriffs after some criminal activity. Their stories, told to the President during an outdoors lunch on boulders, brought tears to the President's eyes – and the memories brought back tears again, 19 years later.

During more than three hours of brainstorming and discussions, Mr. Crandall helped identify successful efforts by other “friends” groups that could be added to efforts already underway, including an annual monument partners summit and a successful

docent tour of the 100 Giants Grove. Ideas ranged from apps and sponsored Wi-Fi access in the monument to events and auctions, from days when free professional photographs would be offered to a guest donation program in the monument's campgrounds and nearby gateway communities.

[Return to top](#)

Get Out West Momentum Builds

Washington State Governor Chris Gregoire is the current Chairman of the Western Governors Association (WGA), an active, Denver-based organization linking 19 governors. She is using her leadership to establish an on-going effort to help Western states use the region's Great Outdoors as an economic stimulant. Her initiative is called Get Out West, and she is uniting federal and state recreation area agencies, state and federal tourism interests, and the recreation community in the campaign. Her vision is clear – recreation connected to the West's Great Outdoors can be a powerful economic stimulant for the region, generating jobs with little or no new investment.

The Governor has insisted that her Get Out West efforts be inclusive and broad – and she is recruiting wilderness and motorized recreation interests alike. A broad and capable advisory group has been named and includes ARC. Meetings of the advisory group by phone and with the Governor in Seattle are generating excitement and linking together other efforts, including Great Outdoors Month and National Get Outdoors Day. And the Governor also plans to push hard to cut red tape that is hampering recreation partnerships in the region.

Get Out West will be featured at the WGA meeting in Palm Springs, California, in December and at WGA's June 2012 meeting in Washington State. Copies of the Get Out West overview, strategy document and list of advisors are available [here](#).

[Return to top](#)

*For more information or to address questions/comments, please email:
jmitchell@funoutdoors.com. To unsubscribe,
please send an email to jmitchell@funoutdoors.com with the Subject "Unsubscribe."*

American Recreation Coalition
1225 New York Avenue, N.W., Suite 450, Washington, D.C. 20005
Phone: 202-682-9530 Fax: 202-682-9529 www.funoutdoors.com