

Partners Outdoors 2018

May 30-31, 2018

Background:

The Partners Outdoors program was initiated in 1992 to draw together tomorrow's leaders from federal recreation-providing agencies and the recreation industry to accomplish two goals: (1) to reinforce an awareness of shared customers and interdependence of the public and private sectors and (2) to catalyze partnership-based actions to better serve recreation visitors to public lands. After more than 25 years, these unique annual gatherings have clearly achieved both goals. Major actions have occurred as direct outgrowths of Partners Outdoors meetings, including – to name just a few: the fee-demo program, which led directly to today's recreation fee program and the millions of dollars it generates annually for public-land recreation; the annual **Legends** and **Beacon** awards recognizing outstanding federal agency employees and their innovative approaches to recreation management and services; a new focus on encouraging young people to enjoy healthy fun outdoors; the instigation of National Get Outdoors Day, now expanded to more than 200 sites across the country; the active promotion of partnerships between public land managers and healthcare professionals; and an expanded recognition of Great Outdoors Month®, with all state governors joining the President and now the United States Senate in celebrating the importance of outdoor recreation and proclaiming June as Great Outdoors Month®. In addition, other advances have developed as Partners Outdoors participants have established and maintained contact and shared successes long after the formal sessions have ended.

Program:

Partners Outdoors 2018 will bring partners from the public and private sectors together to unify and focus recreation community efforts on core issues and showcase innovation in thinking and action. Brainstorming, visioning and action will be expected of all participants, and the program will celebrate the start of Great Outdoors Month®. The Washington, D.C., area will once again host the event, scheduled for May 30-31, 2018. The program will be a joint undertaking of private-sector interests, coordinated through the Outdoor Recreation Roundtable, federal agency representatives coordinated through the Federal Recreation Council, and state park agencies coordinated through the National Association of State Park Directors.

The Steering Committee for Partners Outdoors 2018 – drawn from eight federal agencies and the private sector – has developed plans for the two-day program. Day One, which will be held in the auditorium of the U.S. Department of the Interior (1849 C Street, N.W.), will be devoted to **RECx: Great Ideas for the Great Outdoors**, a showcase for great ideas about outdoor recreation presented in brief TED-like talks. The presentations will focus on pitching a new idea or telling a success story that demonstrates how outdoor recreation experiences, opportunities and resources can be improved. Day Two will move to a second venue, the indoor patio at the U.S. Department of Agriculture (1400 Jefferson Drive, S.W.) and will be the **National Outdoor Recreation Summit**. During the Summit's presentations and discussions, representatives of the Administration and the Congress will join recreation and tourism industry executives and key federal and state agency representatives to explore real-world, partnership-based solutions to some of the significant challenges impacting outdoor recreation in the areas of funding and facilities, access and information, and participation.

Participation:

Participation in the entire Partners Outdoors conference is by invitation only and will be restricted to approximately 125 persons. Invitations are extended by sponsoring organizations, including the federal agencies, the National Association of State Park Directors, and the Outdoor Recreation Roundtable. Attendees hold senior management positions in the recreation and resources fields or are identified as candidates for such posts. Senior officials from federal agency partners will be welcome to attend the presentations without registering for the entire conference.

Transportation:

Washington, D.C. is served by three airports: Reagan National Airport (approximately 12-minute drive to the city); Washington Dulles International Airport (approximately 26 miles west of the city); and Baltimore-Washington International Thurgood Marshall Airport (approximately 33 miles east of the city). Additional information about transportation options at the airports is available at <https://www.tripsavvy.com/washington-dc-airports-1040459>.

Accommodations:

There will be no headquarters hotel for Partners Outdoors. Participants from out of town will be responsible for their own accommodations and are encouraged to make arrangements as early as possible. Among the hotels located relatively close to both the U.S. Department of the Interior and the U.S. Department of Agriculture (no more than 1.3 miles from either site) are: Courtyard by Marriott Washington, D.C./Foggy Bottom, 202-296-5700; Hampton Inn Washington, D.C., 202-296-1006; Hilton Garden Inn Washington, D.C., 202-783-7800; Hotel Lombardy, 202-828-2600; J.W. Marriott Hotel Washington, D.C., 202-393-2000; State Plaza Hotel Washington, D.C., 202-861-8200; and Washington Marriott at Metro Center, 202-737-2200.

Tuition/Event Costs:

Each participant will be charged a registration fee of \$250 for all materials and services offered in conjunction with the Partners Outdoors 2018 conference. Fees should be sent to the Outdoor Recreation Roundtable (1200 G Street, N.W., Suite 650, Washington, D.C. 20005) before the conference or may be paid on site at the start of the conference. **No refunds for cancellations will be honored after May 23, 2018.** Checks should be made payable to the Outdoor Recreation Roundtable. Credit card payments may be made via PayPal with the addition of a \$7.50 administrative fee. Contact ORR for additional information.

Planned Outcomes:

- Dynamic and informative presentations for in-person and online participants that will be archived and accessible following the meeting and will include future-focused information regarding key aspects of outdoor recreation experiences.
- The creation of a virtual library of great ideas for enhancing outdoor recreation experiences and resources suitable for adaptation and use by partners nationwide. As the library is further developed, topics to be covered are likely to include: obtaining funding and related resources beyond appropriations; using technology to interpret, educate and entertain in the Great Outdoors; measuring and reacting to visitor experiences; outreach and promotion strategies for the 21st Century; events and special programs as tools for reaching key audiences, including youth.
- Enhanced understanding of the current Administration's plans for outdoor recreation programs and initiatives.

Attire:

Dress during the meetings at Partners Outdoors 2018 will be "business casual."

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