



NATIONAL PARK HOSPITALITY ASSOCIATION

NEWS

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U.S. Representatives Sam Farr and Jon Porter Recognized as Champions for National Parks



Photo from L to R: Rex Maughan, Forever Resorts; Hon. Jon Porter; Hon. Sam Farr; Joe Fassler, NPHA Chairman; Hon. Jim Santini, NPHA Policy Advisor; Derrick Crandall, NPHA Counselor

Washington, D.C. (March 13, 2008) The National Park Hospitality Association (NPHA) recognized U.S. Representatives Sam Farr (D-CA) and Jon Porter (R-NV) as the initial recipients of the *Parks for Tomorrow Award* during the association's annual meeting in Washington, D.C. "Congressmen Farr and Porter are true champions for national parks," said NPHA Chairman Joe Fassler.

Representatives Farr and Porter co-chair the Congressional Travel and Tourism Caucus and have led efforts of that coalition to work in a bipartisan manner to promote the national parks and educate Members of Congress and their staff on the issues that are important to the concessioners. "We are excited about what you do, for our families and our children," Congressman Porter told the concessioners. "There are incredible vacations inside the 50 states where you will meet the most diverse, interesting people," said Congressman Farr. "Concessioners understand this and help make these vacations possible."

Representatives Farr and Porter have been vocal champions of the National Park Service Centennial Challenge Fund proposal, a 10-year, \$2 billion partnership program

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to carry out special projects to benefit the parks. Under the FY08 appropriations, \$24.6 million was awarded to fund some of the 201 certified Centennial projects. "This is about sustaining the beauty and essence of America," said Congressman Farr in the U.S. Capitol at a recent briefing on preparing the parks for the Centennial celebration.

"We can be a voice for you. Engage your partners in the political process," advised Mr. Porter. The Congressman also urged concessioners to invite Members of Congress to see concessions operations, to encourage political activism by urging employees to vote, and finally to continue giving the American people unique, memorable experiences in the national parks.

The National Park Hospitality Association (NPHA) is the national trade association of the businesses that provide lodging, food services, gifts and souvenirs, equipment rentals, transportation and other visitor services in the National Park System. There are more than 600 concessioner operations in the 391 national park units. Today, national park concessioners have 25,000 employees in the parks and provide more than half of all park visitors with goods and services. The \$900 million in annual economic activity produces tens of millions of dollars in resources to care for the parks. Concessioners also assist voluntarily in conducting many park interpretive and environmental protection efforts. Information on park concessioners is at www.parkpartners.org.