



January 2011 Newsletter

National Park Hospitality Association

This newsletter is also available in PDF format on www.parkpartners.org

In this issue:

- [Tom Strickland Departing Interior](#)
- [2010 National Park Visitation Shows Mixed Results](#)
- [Dues Renewal for 2011: Please Self-Calculate and Remit](#)
- [February 15th Deadline for Annual Meeting Registration](#)
- [National Park Service 2011 Fee-Free Days: Send In Your Offers Today](#)
- [Commercial Services Program News](#)
- [First-Ever National Parks Research Summit Draws Strong Attendance](#)
- [2010 Portrait of the American Traveler Survey: National Park Visitor Interest](#)
- [National Park Service Centennial Steering Committee Meets](#)
- [CONPAC Report - 2010 Accomplishments, Future Goals](#)
- [Glacier Guest Donations Help Fund Five Park Projects](#)
- [National Prevention Strategy: Surgeon General Urges Physical Activity Outdoors](#)
- [National Park Service "Healthy Parks, Healthy People" Meeting Set in April](#)
- [The Corporation for Travel Promotion Prepares Message for Pow Wow](#)
- [Vote By January 21st: Help the National Park Foundation Win \\$1 M Grant](#)
- [Marketing Opportunity: National Park Service Heritage Travel Series](#)
- [NPHA Welcomes New Associate Member Starlight Productions](#)
- [News Links](#)
- [Passing of Bob Chandler](#)

Tom Strickland Departing Interior

Tom Strickland, Chief of Staff to Secretary of the Interior Ken Salazar and Interior's Assistant Secretary for Fish and Wildlife and Parks, is leaving the department next month to rejoin the private sector. In the news release on January 10th announcing his departure, Mr. Salazar said, "Tom is a dynamic leader, a nationally-recognized champion for conservation. Time and again, he has delivered results for the Administration and the American people." To read the rest of the news release, [click here](#). Laura Daniel Davis, Deputy Chief of Staff, will become the new Chief of Staff. Ms. Davis was a key staffer for then-Representative Mark Udall and also served under former Interior Secretary Bruce Babbitt. Will Shafroth, the Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for Fish and Wildlife and Parks, will serve as Acting Assistant Secretary.

[Return to top](#)

2010 National Park Visitation Pattern Shows Mixed Results

The near-final NPS figures on park visits during 2010 show both positive and negative results. Visitation at many of the iconic parks increased over 2009. Yet the system overall, despite fee-free weekends, publicity generated by the rebroadcast of the Ken Burns' PBS special and the visit to Yosemite by Oprah and a jump in international visitors to the USA, showed a decline of about 2% in visitations (some 5.8 million fewer visits to a total of about 280 million) and a 2.7% drop in visitor hours. The report also showed a 1.5% drop in concessioner lodging use between 2009 and 2010.

On the plus side, visitation to many of the best-known national parks, most with significant concessioner services, rose in 2010. Key parks with *increases* include:

Yellowstone	+ 10.5%
Yosemite	+ 4.7%
Grand Teton	+ 4%
Grand Canyon	+ 1%
Glen Canyon	+ 8.4%
Acadia	+ 12.4%
Glacier	+ 9.6%

Among the most significant *declines* in units with concessioners were:

Blue Ridge Parkway	- 9%
Golden Gate NRA	- 7.6%
Gateway NRA	- 4%

To see 2010 visitation numbers for all NPS units, [click here](#).

[Return to top](#)

Dues Renewal for 2011: Please Self-Calculate and Remit

Thank you for your membership and continued dedication to the National Park Hospitality Association, your voice in Washington. To expedite dues payments, concessioner members are asked to calculate their company's 2011 dues amount based on its revenue. Please remit fees. A receipt will be provided for your records. Please calculate your amount by using the [Dues Worksheet](#).

Should you require an invoice, please call (202) 682-9530 or email tsimmons@funoutdoors.com.

[Return to top](#)

February 15th Deadline for Annual Meeting Registration

February 15th is the cutoff for regular registration for the National Park Hospitality Association's Annual Meeting, March 14th to 17th. Our meetings will start at the Holiday Inn Capitol*, which is within walking distance of congressional offices. After February 15th, there will be a 25% registration fee increase. The meeting will focus on building a relationship with the new Congress and strengthening our relationship with the U.S. Department of the Interior. The meeting promises to be exciting and valuable! Register now:

- For the registration form, [click here](#).
- For the schedule, [click here](#).
- For hotel reservations, [click here](#) (Code N3M)
- Useful links: [The 112th Congress](#) and [WhoRunsGov.com](#)

A special highlight will be meetings with the American Indian Alaska Native Tourism Association ([AIANTA](#)) and the [Indian Arts and Crafts Board](#) of the U.S. Department of the Interior at the Smithsonian's [National Museum of the American Indian](#). NPHA has established a Coordinating Council for this topic. To read about the plans for expanded

* The AAA 3-Diamond [Holiday Inn Capitol](#) offers a \$259 rate per room, per night, for NPHA attendees. The newly renovated hotel features two restaurants, a Starbucks, a fitness center and pool, garage parking, complimentary high-speed Internet access throughout the hotel, 32" flat screen HDTVs and a 24-hour business center. To make online hotel reservations, [click here](#). Or, please call (202) 479-4000 and use the NPHA group code **N3M**.

cooperation, [click here](#). Contact tsimmons@funoutdoors.com.

Associate members are invited to attend and to sponsor a session or social function to receive added visibility. Space is limited. Respond by February 1st. Costs range from \$1,000 to \$2,500. Please contact NPHA at (202) 682-9530.

[Return to top](#)

National Park Service 2011 Fee-Free Days: Send In Your Offers Today

Fee-Free Days for 2011 have been announced! Please provide NPHA with your Fee-Free 2011 Offers now. Concessioner offers are being posted and publicized by NPHA.

[Announcement from Secretary Salazar](#)

[NPS Fee-Free Website](#)

[NPHA Fee-Free Website](#)

[The National Parks Promotion Council - Gateway Community Offers](#)

[Recent TV media coverage: ABC7News – San Francisco](#) and [Denver CBS4](#)

We need three things to post your offer:

1. Name of the National Park or Area where the offer is being made, including state.

2. Description of the offer (discount if any, who is providing it, where the offer occurs, when it is available, and any restrictions).
3. How to redeem the offer (offer code, website, email, phone number).

Please send your offers to tsimmons@funoutdoors.com or call (202) 682-9530 ext. 204

[Return to top](#)

Commercial Services Program News

Kurt Rausch, Contract Management Team Lead for the National Park Service's Commercial Services Program, has provided the following update:

- **Concession Management Advisory Board (CMAB) Meeting:** Beginning at 9:00 AM, Thursday, March 17th, in Washington, D.C. (Hotel and meeting location to be determined). This meeting immediately follows the NPHA meeting March 14th -17th. Please contact Erica Chavis erica_chavis@nps.gov for further details. To read about the CMAB, [click here](#).
- **Commercial Services Program Division Chief Position Advertised:** Applications for Chief, Commercial Services, National Park Service, are being solicited through February 14, 2011. To read the posting, [click here](#).
- **Service Mark:** The Concessioner Service Mark Project continues to move forward as part of a graphic identity project currently underway for various NPS partners. More news should be available at the March NPHA Annual Meeting.
- **Disposable Water Bottle Initiative:** The NPS will be hosting a meeting of bottled water suppliers to discuss programs that several parks have implemented and others have proposed to prohibit the sale of disposable water bottles in parks as a sustainability practice. Some concerns have been expressed regarding these efforts. The meeting is planned for the week of January 24th. The focus of the meeting will be to outline NPS efforts, collect information on industry concerns, and most importantly, obtain input from industry representatives on ways they can assist the NPS in achieving its sustainability goals in this area. A follow-up meeting with concessioners and cooperating associations is anticipated in early February.
- **Standards, Evaluation and Rate Administration (SERA) Project:** The NPS Concession Management Advisory Board sponsored the third NPS Concessioner SERA Workgroup meeting in late December. The meeting was conducted by teleconference and was the first in a more frequent series of teleconference-format Workgroup meetings. The NPS will use these meetings, expected to be held bi-monthly, to collect information for the SERA project on an ongoing basis. Progress on lodging, food and beverage and retail standards as well as 2011 plans for the Concessioner Review Program and Rate Administration Program updates were discussed. To read about SERA, [click here](#).
- **Prospectuses:** New prospectus opportunities can be found at [NPS Commercial Services](#) web site. To read about regulations and view a sample contract, [click here](#) and for the Contract Development overview, [click here](#).

- **2011 NPS Environmental Achievement Awards:** Fourteen Environmental Achievement Award nominations were received in the Partner category for Concessioner Activities. The nomination packages are currently being evaluated and winners should be selected before the spring. A subset of the NPS winners will be forwarded to the Department of the Interior for consideration for the Departmental Environmental Achievement Awards later this year. To view the 2010 winners, including several NPHA members, [click here](#).

[Return to top](#)

First-Ever National Parks Research Summit Draws Strong Attendance

The National Parks Promotion Council (NPPC) held a first-ever Park Visitor Research Summit in Yosemite National Park on January 7 and 8, 2011. Some 70 participants came from the National Park Service, a dozen universities and colleges, concessions companies, park-related businesses, state tourism agencies and nonprofit organizations working with national parks to serve visitors. The meeting was coordinated by the co-chairs of the NPPC Research Committee, Drs. Nina Roberts and Emilyn Sheffield. Substantial support for the meeting was provided by Delaware North Companies, the principal concessioner in Yosemite National Park. The meeting sought to assemble and assimilate available park visitor information, as well as information about non-visitors, and to identify priority visitor research needs. To read the full summary, [click here](#). To review many of the presentations, [click here](#).

[Return to top](#)

2010 Portrait of the American Traveler Survey: National Park Visitor Interest

Ypartnership's Executive Vice President Greg Dunn recently delivered a briefing to park visitor researchers from the 2010 [Portrait of the American Traveler Survey](#). The survey is conducted annually and the data was collected in the first quarter of 2010. Mr. Dunn told the group that the survey focuses on households of \$50,000+ income, and the 2010 survey is based upon just over 2,500 active leisure travelers (at least one leisure trip in the previous year). Of this group, 66% express an interest in visiting a national park. This group is mostly male (56%) and Caucasian (82%, versus 3% African American).

The survey suggested two seemingly contradictory developments. First, the "Great Recession" has permanently altered travel attitudes of many Americans and especially Boomers. They are now more focused on value, and they are waiting longer to commit to travel plans. They use the Internet to be knowledgeable purchasers of leisure travel. The inconsistency? Travelers today are actually happier than they were 10 years ago! Eighty percent of these travelers report that economic adversity has prompted a new focus on priorities. They are proudly cost-conscious – Dunn labeled them as believing that "cheaper is chic-er."

For park-interested travelers, Florida and California are top destinations, and 33% will travel internationally. These same travelers are environmentally conscious, but show very limited willingness to pay for "green travel."

Of the prime park travelers:

- 73% say life has become too complicated.
- Twice as many have an interest in spas as golf.
- 81% report planning a vacation around a “life event” – a birthday or anniversary or wedding or retirement – to create memories.
- National parks rank high as a dream destination (#2, at 66%), because they meet key traveler goals such as “beauty” (84%) and “safe” (82%). On the other hand, a key goal for many travelers is “something new” – and national parks rarely highlight new offerings.

Contact Greg Dunn at greg.dunn@ypartnership.com or call (407) 838-1828.

[Return to top](#)

National Park Service Centennial Steering Committee Meets

The National Park Service Centennial Steering Committee met January 14th in Washington, D.C., and finalized a campaign focus and strategy. Over the next three months, the campaign will be shared in draft with various park interests, including concessioners. The campaign will seek to increase the sense of “ownership” of national parks reflected in awareness, visitation, volunteerism/service, giving and advocacy. Organizations centrally involved include the National Park Foundation, National Parks Conservation Association, Student Conservation Association, NPHA, National Park Friends Alliance and park cooperating associations. While the campaign will seek to expand park visits to reflect America’s diversity, the campaign will also seek to re-enthusiast traditional park visitors and seek out their efforts to reach those not now visiting our national parks. Schools, the military, health interests and other organizations will be invited to partner in the campaign. Although the campaign will be linked to the 2016 Centennial of the National Park Service, it is likely to commence much sooner and to continue long beyond the August 25, 2016, anniversary. The steering committee for the campaign plans a presentation to NPHA members at the March Annual Meeting in Washington. To review the past November newsletter story, [click here](#).

[Return to top](#)

CONPAC Report - 2010 Accomplishments, Future Goals

By Jim Santini, NPHA Advisor

November 2, 2010, certainly brought about changes for the concessions industry in the 112th Congress. There are 87 new Republicans and seven new Democrats in the House of Representatives, and new chairmen at the committee and subcommittee levels for all committees shaping park policies, including Natural Resources and Appropriations. CONPAC efforts in 2010 have put us in a very strong position to capitalize on these changes.

CONPAC contributed a total of \$10,700 directly to federal candidates in 2010, and every one of those receiving support from CONPAC in 2010 will be in the 112th Congress. Moreover, those receiving contributions will be in key positions in 2011-2012. One of

our biggest targets, Rep. Mike Simpson of Idaho, will chair the House Interior Appropriations Subcommittee, while Sen. Mark Udall of Colorado will continue to chair the Senate Parks Subcommittee. We have given to incoming House Parks Subcommittee chair Rob Bishop in past years, and Rep. Raúl Grijalva will likely serve as ranking member of the House Parks Subcommittee. And Rep. Sam Farr of California continues as chair of the Travel and Tourism Caucus. Note that we generated substantial "allied" contributions from NPHA members and staff and associated organizations – sums roughly equal to direct CONPAC contributions to candidates – and made most of our contributions at special events focusing on parks and tourism, not the typical “inside the Beltway” cattle shows. For an overview of how CONPAC used your contributions, and the status of CONPAC contributions in this Congress, [click here](#).

And we are well positioned for 2011. We have more than \$30,000 in CONPAC’s accounts as we begin the year. It is the kind of reserve we can build on in 2011 to meet the enormous communications challenge in the 112th Congress with the new House and Senate members. And, “build,” with your help, is exactly what we intend to do. Our March Annual Meeting will include important CONPAC efforts, including a special salute to our friends on the evening of March 15th at the Capitol Hill home of Julie Hanson. Our Capitol Hill friends have arranged for Tuesday and Wednesday meetings in the Capitol and Longworth buildings, and our Wednesday reception will be in a Capitol Hill venue providing easy access for our Hill friends and a premier vista of the Capitol, the National Museum of the American Indian. *Please stay tuned*. CONPAC will soon ask for your support in 2011.

[Return to top](#)

Glacier Guest Donations Help Fund Five Park Projects

Last year was the 100th anniversary of Glacier National Park, Montana. Local park supporters created the Glacier National Park Fund and launched a five-year park fund-raising effort. Called the [Glacier Centennial Legacy Project](#), the initiative generated \$250,000 last year, a significant achievement. The Guest Donation Program by Glacier Park, Inc., operator of six park hotels including the 214-room Many Glacier Hotel, was a big part of the campaign. Guests donated approximately 20% of the total. The funds are being used for several park-improvement projects including: a new, paved wheelchair trail near the lodge, preservation of a fire lookout, upgraded exhibits at a visitor center, education materials, an enhanced science program and a new wildlife viewing area, now under construction. “This is an extraordinary example of working together and shows how just one dollar a day by our guests can lead to terrific improvements right here in our own national park,” said Cindy Ognjanov, President/General Manager, Glacier Park, Inc. Through the [National Park Service Guest Donation Program](#), guests may donate \$1 or more per overnight, applied to bills at check-out. Contributions benefit the national park in which the lodge or hotel is located. For more park donation results [click here](#).

[Return to top](#)

National Prevention Strategy: Surgeon General Urges Physical Activity Outdoors

Surgeon General Regina Benjamin gave the keynote address at the National Prevention Strategy Stakeholders Conference organized by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) in Washington, D.C. last month. She stated that in order to truly reform health care, we must first prevent illness. She referred to prevention initiatives including the [First Lady's *Let's Move!* program](#) as well as the [President's America's Great Outdoors Initiative](#) which encourage people to get outside and stay active, leading to healthier lifestyles. A council of 17 Cabinet level departments and federal agency heads will develop the [National Prevention Strategy](#) with input by many public and private organizations. NPHA will continue to connect with this HHS initiative and work with the National Park Service, a key agency participant.

[Return to top](#)

National Park Service Plans “Healthy Parks, Healthy People” Meeting in April

The National Park Service Health and Wellness Steering Committee, led by National Park Service Office of Public Health Director Charles Higgins, is now inviting an extraordinarily high-level group of business, government, academic and nonprofit executives to an April 5th - 6th session in San Francisco. Called *Healthy Parks, Healthy People US 2011*, the session is expected to lead to a new coalition of interests that seek to maximize use of parks and open spaces to improve the health of all Americans and reduce healthcare costs. NPS Director Jon Jarvis will chair the meeting and a number of concessions industry representatives will be invited. The NPS Health and Wellness Steering Committee has identified additional priority activities. To read more, [click here](#).

[Return to top](#)

The Corporation for Travel Promotion Prepares Message for *Pow Wow*

The Corporation for Travel Promotion (CTP) has launched its website and is conducting an executive director search. CTP's purpose is to attract more foreign travelers to the U.S. Development of an informational video about the CTP's plans, objectives and progress, which will air at Pow Wow, is underway. President Obama is expected to appear in the video. CTP plans board meetings around the country, creating an opportunity to hear from all sectors of the industry in all regions of the country. Although markets and themes are not yet determined, CTP officials say the program will promote the U.S. as a whole and have indicated that national parks are premier opportunities to showcase the beauty of the country. The CTP was created in March 2010 by the Travel Promotion Act, putting into place a new public-private partnership between the U.S. government and the nation's travel and tourism industry. The private sector is responsible for raising 50% of CTP's budget. Up to \$100 million in federal funding will be available each year, generated by fees on visitors to the U.S. Inbound travelers to the U.S. from visa waiver countries will be charged a \$14 fee (\$10 of which goes to the Travel Promotion Fund, while \$4 goes to Homeland Security) when accessing the Electronic System for Travel Authorization. Travel resulting from the Travel Promotion Act should generate \$4 billion in new visitor spending and 40,000 new jobs. CTP has received \$2.5 million in federal funding to date. CTP's chairman is Stephen Cloobek,

chairman and CEO of Diamond Resorts International in Las Vegas, and its board includes key tourism industry leaders, many familiar with national parks. To read a recent AP story, [click here](#). To read the background, [click here](#).

[Return to top](#)

Vote By January 21st: Help the National Park Foundation Win \$1 M Grant

The National Park Foundation is one of four charities competing in Lowe's Community Giving Campaign. This week, through January 21st, your "click" will cast a vote for the National Park Foundation in the \$1 million Lowe's Community Giving Campaign. Vote daily all this week at www.lowes.com/give or www.facebook.com/lowes. Each of the competing charities is guaranteed \$100,000.

[Return to top](#)

Marketing Opportunity: National Park Service Heritage Travel Series

One hundred and twenty national parks are featured in 51 online and printed travel itineraries prepared by the National Park Service's Heritage Education Services: [Discover Our Shared Heritage](#). Concessioners should be listed if your park is included – but check to be certain and take action if the information is missing or inadequate. *It is a complimentary listing.* The contact for more information is Carol D. Shull, Interim Keeper of the National Register of Historic Places and Chief, Heritage Education Services. Contact her at (202) 354-2234 or Carol_Shull@nps.gov.

[Return to top](#)

NPHA Welcomes New Associate Member Starlight Productions

NPHA welcomes new Associate Member Starlight Productions, Mount Shasta, California. The company offers "earth-friendly promotional products" and eco-hydration programs. Of special interest to concessioners and national parks are the high quality stainless steel water bottles that can be branded with your national park photograph and your environmental message on the neck tag. The company recently helped provide the bottles, signage and a customized filtered-chilled water dispensing machine to support ARAMARK'S desire to reduce the number of plastic water bottles in Denali National Park. The products are BPA and toxin-free, reusable and recyclable. Please contact Kathy Hall directly via email at KHall@StarlightPromo.com or phone (530) 918-9480. To view Starlight's full line of sustainable products, go to www.starlightpromo.com.

[Return to top](#)

News Links

[Blog "Rx: Take Hills not Pills"](#)

[USA Today: Adventures Out of the Ordinary](#)

[Wyoming County Treasurers Oppose State Parks Fee Bill](#)
[Xplore Adventure Series Vehicles Support National Parks](#)
[How Astrobiology Research Ties to Yellowstone National Park: A New Online Guidebook](#)
[Tourism Impact of Montana State Parks Keeps Growing](#)
[AGO IdeaJam: Give Outdoor Champions a New Way to Attract Others to the Outdoors](#)
[New York State Parks Attendance Up by 1 Million](#)

[Return to top](#)

Passing of Bob Chandler

Robert S. (Bob) Chandler, 74, died on December 23rd from multiple myeloma in Bakersfield, California. Bob's 38-year career with the National Park Service began in the National Capital Parks. He later headed the Service's Chicago office when Great Lakes area parks were being added to the National Park System. Mr. Chandler's other contributions include serving as Superintendent at Jefferson National Expansion Memorial (The Arch), Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area, Olympic National Park, Everglades National Park and Grand Canyon National Park. He also served as General Manager of the Presidio of San Francisco. He traveled to Germany, Russia, Poland, Canada, Brazil and Central America as a Park Management Specialist to assist in developing parks. He received the Department of the Interior's two highest awards, for meritorious and distinguished service. Following his retirement in 1996, he served on the Secretary of the Interior's Advisory Board on National Parks, helping to author its seminal report *Rethinking the National Parks for the 21st Century*. He served on the board of the Grand Canyon National Park Foundation and as a senior advisor to the National Park Foundation. NPHA expresses sincere condolences to Mitzi, his wife of 50 years, and his family. A great man has passed through our lives, and we are each enriched indelibly.

[Return to top](#)

For more information or to send questions/comments, please email tsimmons@funoutdoors.com
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