



## April 2010 Newsletter

National Park Hospitality Association

[www.parkpartners.org](http://www.parkpartners.org)

*This newsletter is also available in PDF format on [www.parkpartners.org](http://www.parkpartners.org)*

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### **NPHA participates in White House Conference on America's Great Outdoors**

The National Park Hospitality Association will participate in the White House Conference kicking off the Obama Administration's America's Great Outdoors initiative. This much-anticipated initiative will launch on April 16 with the White House Conference – led by Nancy Sutley, Chair of the White House Council on Environmental Quality, Ken Salazar, Secretary of the Interior, and Tom Vilsack, Secretary of Agriculture – followed by a series of listening sessions across the country. While the details of the initiative have not been finalized, insiders believe it could include: full funding for the Land and Water Conservation Fund, including the “state side” and various additional landscape conservation efforts; new efforts to connect kids to the outdoors; a plan for revitalization of the National Park Service for its 100th anniversary in 2016; designation of national monuments on Bureau of Land Management lands; an omnibus public lands bill; and more. NPHA is excited that the America's Great Outdoors initiative could easily tie into the First Lady's “Let's Move” campaign to fight childhood obesity, building on the Partners Outdoors 2010 theme of developing the connection between healthy people and healthy parks.

Dates and locations for the America's Great Outdoors listening sessions will be announced on Friday, April 16. Currently, we know sessions are planned for Florida, Montana, Chicago and Los Angeles. Once the list is announced, NPHA will choose 3-4 sessions for strong concessioner participation. More news on those sessions will be available soon. To read the full announcement on the White House Conference, [click here](#).

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## **Concessioners enhance fee-free National Park Week with special offers**

The National Park Service has officially announced that it will waive entrance fees for the national parks during National Park Week, April 17-25, and concessioners are offering value-added enhancements to the fee-free period. Special offers include discounts on earth-friendly organic sportswear, chances to win free return trips, special rates on day-trip packages, vouchers for items purchased at retail shops, and more. To see the complete list of concessioner deals, visit: [www.parkpartners.org/Special-Offers-for-2010.html](http://www.parkpartners.org/Special-Offers-for-2010.html). NPS has also provided a link to concessioner offerings from their website at: [www.nps.gov/npweek](http://www.nps.gov/npweek).

Additional fee-free periods are expected throughout the season. Unlike last year's fee-free weekends – which took place during peak summer weekends – this year's fee-free periods will likely encourage visitation during the shoulder seasons and on off-peak days.

***There is still time to post your fee-free week offers!*** Your participation demonstrates to the National Park Service and to the American public that you are valuable partners in providing quality experiences in the national parks. Please submit your special offers to Mindy Meade at [mmeade@funoutdoors.com](mailto:mmeade@funoutdoors.com) as soon as possible.

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## **Exciting progress for the National Parks Promotion Council**

The National Parks Promotion Council (NPPC) has been very busy since its incorporation at the NPHA Annual meeting! A group of distinguished individuals representing diverse experiences is being nominated for the NPPC Board of Directors. Those who have already agreed to serve on the NPPC board include: Betsy Baumgart, Montana's state tourism director; Kevin Kelly, DNC Parks & Resorts; Audrey Peterman, author and national park advocate; Terry MacRae, Alcatraz and Statue Cruises; Neil Mulholland, National Park Foundation; Gerry Gabrys, Guest Services Inc.; and Derrick Crandall, American Recreation Coalition. The NPPC's initial directors will elect the full board once a complete slate has been assembled.

NPPC is also attracting members to serve on two important committees on research and outreach. Nina S. Roberts, Ph.D. of San Francisco State University and Emilyn Sheffield, Ph.D. of California State University Chico have outlined steps to compiling research topics, defining approaches to research and undertaking studies for NPPC's research committee and will serve as co-chairs. The outreach committee will work on a fundamental piece of NPPC's mission and guide NPPC's promotion efforts. Membership is open to anyone with an interest in assisting the National Park Service in promoting national park visitation and values. A distinguished group of concessioners, park allies, federal and university researchers and scholars from across the nation and others have already agreed to serve on the outreach and research committees. If you would like to join in these important efforts, please contact John Poimiroo at [jpoimiroo@nationalparksonline.org](mailto:jpoimiroo@nationalparksonline.org).

Check out NPPC's new website at [www.nationalparksonline.org](http://www.nationalparksonline.org)!

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## **NPHA to meet with NPS Southeast and National Capital regional directors**

Concessioners will continue meetings with NPS regional directors in the upcoming weeks, talking with National Capital Regional Director Peggy O'Dell on May 13 and with Southeast

Regional Director David Vela on May 17. Discussions will likely focus on concessioner issues, as well as opportunities presented by the America's Great Outdoors Initiative. NPHA has already had three extremely productive sessions with the Intermountain, Northeast and Midwest Regional Directors and their teams. Discussion topics have included improved websites, cooperative efforts to share information with visitors, initiatives to connect all Americans to our parks for generations to come, making park operations outstanding examples of "green" operations, using park visits to encourage healthy lifestyles, facilitating transportation to and within our parks and more.

The meetings were encouraged by the NPHA Board of Directors at the NPHA's Park Partners Forum in Yosemite. NPHA hopes that continued regular meetings will help improve communications and strengthen relationships between NPS regional directors and concessioners.

*If you would like to participate in either of the upcoming meetings, please contact [mmeade@funoutdoors.com](mailto:mmeade@funoutdoors.com). These meetings are not limited to NPHA members, so please share the news with other local concessioners in your area!*

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## **NPHA welcomes new members Ortega Family Enterprises, Dry Tortugas National Park Ferry and Food Services of America!**

The National Park Hospitality Association is delighted to welcome new regular members Ortega Family Enterprises and Dry Tortugas National Park Ferry and new associate member Food Services of America. **Ortega Family Enterprises** specializes in the retail and hospitality industries and operates retail stores, NPS concessions, restaurants and hotels. They conduct business as owner-operators as well as consulting managers with specialized business ventures throughout the American Southwest and California. Ortega Family Enterprises takes great care to be progressive stewards of the environment while "thinking green" in all business operations. Learn more about Ortega Family Enterprises at [www.ortegafamilyenterprises.com](http://www.ortegafamilyenterprises.com).

**Dry Tortugas National Park Ferry** operates The Yankee Freedom II, the fastest, largest and most state-of-the-art vessel ferrying passengers to Dry Tortugas National Park, one of the top Key West attractions. En route to Dry Tortugas National Park, their onboard naturalist gives visitors an orientation about the area and the national park's surroundings. Dry Tortugas National Park Ferry is part of the Yankee Fleet, with vessels located in Key West, Florida, and Gloucester, Massachusetts. More information about Dry Tortugas National Park Ferry is available at [www.yankeefreedom.com](http://www.yankeefreedom.com).

**Food Services of America** is the nation's sixth largest broadline foodservice distributor, serving customers in 15 western and mid-western states from nine regional distribution centers. These distribution centers are fully integrated with the latest smart technology to provide efficient operations and effective service to the end user. The company has long-standing relationships within its communities and regions, and customers include independent and chain restaurants, schools, hospitals, hotels, cruise lines and government foodservice operations – anywhere people dine away from home! Learn more about Food Services of America at [www.fsafood.com](http://www.fsafood.com).

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## **2016 Committee of park allies to meet**

National park allies will meet on April 22 in Washington, D.C. to convene an organizational committee for a campaign leading up to the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the National Park Service in 2016. Representatives from the National Park Hospitality Association, National Park Foundation, National Parks Conservation Association, friends groups and others will meet to discuss opportunities for the parks presented by the upcoming centennial. NPHA is hopeful that the renewed interest in centennial efforts will build on the momentum begun by the previous administration with added energy from the White House Conference on America's Great Outdoors.

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## **Federal Register Notice asks for comments on NPS information collection**

The National Park Service has issued a Federal Register Notice asking for comments on the information collection process concerning information concessioners may be asked to provide NPS. The Commercial Services staff has provided NPHA with the following explanatory information on the request for comments.

The comments are requested in two areas: the granting of a preferential right to renew a concession contract; and the construction of capital improvements by concessioners. The notice asks for comments on the availability of data, frequency of collection, the clarity of instructions and record keeping, disclosure, or reporting format (if any), and on the data elements to be recorded, disclosed or reported. For example, should a concessioner appeal a preferential right determination, they have to submit information to NPS defining their rationale, and this notice asks concessioners to comment on the burden they experience in submitting that information to NPS.

Concessioners may comment on the practicality of the information being gathered (for example, do you think this information is necessary), the accuracy of the burden hour estimate (time it takes to prepare and submit an appeal or capital improvement documents for private industry), ways to enhance the quality, utility and clarity of the information to be collected (suggestions to streamline the process), and ways to minimize the burden to respondents, including use of automated information collection techniques or other forms of information technology (ways to make it easier for private entities to respond).

For further information, contact Jo Pendry, Chief of the NPS Commercial Services Program, by email at [jo\\_pendry@nps.gov](mailto:jo_pendry@nps.gov), by phone at 202-513-7156, or via fax at 202-371-2090.

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## **Mark your calendars! NPHA Park Partners Forum: October 17-20 in Naples, Florida**

The National Park Hospitality Association will hold its annual Park Partners Forum on October 17-20 at the Doubletree Guest Suites (a Guest Services property), Naples, Florida. We will be sending out registration materials early in the summer, but be sure to mark your calendars now and plan to attend this important gathering!

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## **Federal Parks and Recreation Newsletter: Rumors – no appropriations bill**

Given an election year and political gridlock in the Senate, the odds that fiscal year 2011 domestic appropriations bills will move by themselves this year are long. More than likely, Congress will pass an omnibus appropriations bill after the November 2 elections to keep park and recreation programs in money in fiscal 2011. Whether or not that omnibus includes new individual appropriations bills – Interior, Energy and Water, Transportation, Agriculture – remains to be seen. Congress may be forced to simply extend fiscal year 2010 levels, an eventuality that would benefit almost all park and recreation programs because the fiscal year 2011 Obama administration budget request recommends substantial reductions for most programs, given inflation and other factors.

To read the rest of this story, learn about progress of key legislation and more, go to your member-benefit copy of the Federal Parks & Recreation Newsletter on the NPHA website and use your password: nphaonly [\[Click here\]](#).

***Federal Parks & Recreation Newsletter – a free service for NPHA members – provides biweekly, up-to-date information on park and outdoor recreation policy developments***

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### **News**

- [National parks will star in latest quarter redesign](#)
- [National park, YMCA to offer pedometers to half marathon spectators](#)
- [Geocaching.com publishes one-millionth active hidden treasure](#)

For more information or to send questions/comments, please email: [mmeade@funoutdoors.com](mailto:mmeade@funoutdoors.com)

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National Park Hospitality Association  
1225 New York Avenue, N.W., Suite 450  
Washington, D.C. 20005  
202-682-9530 Fax: 202-682-9529  
[www.parkpartners.org](http://www.parkpartners.org)

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