



February 2010 Newsletter

National Park Hospitality Association

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Last day to register for NPHA's Annual Meeting!

Today is the last day to register for the National Park Hospitality Association's Annual Meeting without incurring a late fee! Participate in discussions and briefings on the proposed Director's Order 35B on full recovery of utility costs, the SERA process, promotion initiatives, proposed Director's Order 32 on cooperating associations, guns in the parks and much more! Take advantage of critical opportunities for members and allies to discuss the progress that has already been made on these issues and where we can go from here. Meet with top-level agency and Department of the Interior officials and talk with key Members of Congress. Learn about the new National Parks Promotion Council, the work of NPHA's Task Force on Rate Approvals and Standards and the results of the meetings with NPS regional directors. Please plan to attend this important meeting!

**Meeting registrations and payments must be submitted to NPHA
by TODAY, February 16!**

Most meetings will take place at The Ritz-Carlton, Pentagon City. Rooms have been blocked for NPHA members and meeting participants. Please call 703-415-5000 or 800-241-3333 to reserve your room. Use the room block code NPH to receive the special room rate of \$249.00 (Single/Double) plus tax per night. Reservations also can be made online at www.ritzcarlton.com/en/Properties/PentagonCity/Default.htm using the code NPHNPHA.

You must make your room reservations by TODAY, February 16!

NPHA local concessioners operating at Gettysburg National Military Park – Gettysburg Tours, Inc. and ARAMARK Parks & Destinations – have invited all meeting participants on a special excursion to Gettysburg prior to the start of the meeting. Participants will depart from The Ritz-Carlton via bus no later than 8:00am on Sunday, March 7, and will return in time to participate in the 4:30pm NPHA Board of Directors Meeting. Further details on the trip are available [here](#).

You must let us know if you plan to take advantage of this exciting excursion by Wednesday, February 24!

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CONPAC to host special Capitol Hill dinner for top donors

CONPAC – the concessioners’ political action committee – will host a special dinner on Capitol Hill for top donors as part of the Annual Meeting on Tuesday, March 9. The dinner will provide top CONPAC donors with an invaluable opportunity to meet an especially key Member of Congress. Make your qualifying contribution and learn more! To contribute to CONPAC and participate in the dinner, download the CONPAC brochure [here](#) or contact Jim Santini [jdsantini1@verizon.net].

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NPHA meets with NPS regional directors

At the NPHA’s Park Partners Forum in Yosemite, the NPHA Board of Directors strongly endorsed regular meetings between NPS officials and concessioners at the national, regional and local levels, and arranged for regional meetings in advance of the March Annual Meeting in Washington. NPHA has already held two productive meetings and will hold another this week. Concessioners have met with Intermountain Regional Director Mike Snyder and Northeast Regional Director Dennis Reidenbach to discuss 2010 opportunities and challenges for NPS and concessioners. The meetings covered topics such as 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. Concessioners will meet with Midwest Regional Director Ernie Quintana and his team on February 17.

A full report on the meetings with NPS regional directors will be given at the Annual Meeting in March.

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National Parks Promotion Council (NPPC) support grows

Through a series of webinars and appearances at key meetings, NPHA Marketing Chair Terry MacRae, National Parks Promotion Council (NPPC) Interim Executive Director John Poimiroo and NPHA Counselor Derrick Crandall have explained the value of NPPC, an outreach and promotion program, to state tourism directors, gateway community organizations, NPS staff, travel and tourism associations and other key groups. The response is very encouraging. Full details will be provided at the Annual Meeting but plans are set for the organization to be officially launched in Washington in conjunction with the NPHA meeting. Notably, the NPPC effort was described and championed by regional tourism interests in a meeting with NPS Director Jon Jarvis earlier this month – and he voiced support, although he cautioned against expecting NPS funding for the effort. Several funding strategies are being

discussed, including one tied to a promotional campaign for the almost invisible America the Beautiful Pass.

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National Park Service proposes new LSI treatment

In a February 1, 2010, *Federal Register* notice, the National Park Service proposed "Alternative Valuation for Leasehold Surrender Interest in the Signal Mountain Lodge and Leeks Marina," but further indicated that the proposal, which would depreciate Leasehold Surrender Interest (LSI), is likely to be applied to other significant contracts issued under Public Law 105-391. [Click here](#) for a copy of the proposal. NPHA will host a conference call to discuss this proposal during the week of February 22. Comments are due to NPS by March 3, but NPHA anticipates requesting an extension of the comment period so that the issue can be discussed with NPS staff during the Annual Meeting and raised as a concern to the Concessions Management Advisory Board, which will meet March 9 and 10.

If you would like to participate in the conference call, please contact us.

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Grand Canyon decision benefits concessioners

A recent decision regarding the Grand Canyon supports the National Park Service's management plans in regards to concessioner policies. Filed February 1, 2010, in the case of River Runners for Wilderness v. Martin (No. 08-15112), the decision states that the plaintiffs failed to establish that NPS acted arbitrarily and capriciously in adopting its 2006 Management Plan, which was contrary to an earlier plan to phase out motorized transportation on the Colorado River. The court ruled in favor of NPS, citing that the agency had considered the non-motorized alternatives, but that they did not meet the agency's objective of providing "a diverse range of quality recreational opportunities for visitors to experience and understand the environmental interrelationships, resources, and values of Grand Canyon National Park," because eliminating motorized transportation on the river would significantly reduce the numbers of people able to visit the park.

In regards to the Grand Canyon decision, Bill Horn of Birch, Horton, Bittner & Cherot said, "It's a pretty good antidote to Judge Sullivan's awful September 2008 ruling on Yellowstone in which he declared the NPS Management Policies are enforceable by environmental plaintiffs and forced on NPS an interpretation of those Policies advanced by the plaintiffs over the objections of the agency." Jon Simon of Van Ness Feldman, P.C. – an NPHA Associate Member – wrote, "There's a lot of good in the decision, in my view, in terms of the binding nature of management policies (although, of course, the 2001 management policies at issue have since been replaced, and the NPS was more explicit in the 2006 management policies about them not being intended to be binding), NPS discretion in concessions management and management planning generally, and on other issues. We're certainly happy."

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Partners Outdoors 2010 "Connects People and Parks – To Keep Both Healthy"

Partners Outdoors 2010 was an extraordinary success, uniting more than 140 partners in both the public and private sectors in Sausalito, California, to share innovative ideas, useful resources, and best practices to address this year's meeting topic: Connecting People and

Parks – To Keep Both Healthy. This year’s conference placed a major emphasis on improving both the mental and physical health of Americans through visits to our public lands. A particularly important addition to this conference was the heavy involvement of physicians and representatives from the medical field, who shared their enthusiasm for making the outdoors a remedy for improving the health of all Americans.

Your help is needed to keep the enthusiasm and exchange of ideas begun at Partners Outdoors active through the use of a new blog: www.partnersoutdoors.typepad.com. Presentations, background materials and videos of key sessions are on the blog – including highlights from our medical experts at the opening session and the distinguished outdoor recreation leaders at the closing session. Partners Outdoors participants and nonparticipants are invited to review the content, leave comments on the Idea Space page, and share news about the Partners Outdoors 2010 conversations and actions. Watch the exciting ideas generated at Partners Outdoors grow!

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Pillars of Support: ARAMARK’s Mesa Verde restaurant receives prestigious “Award of Culinary Excellence”

NPHA is proud to highlight concessioners' contributions to parks and cooperation with the National Park Service. NPHA members provide contributions of goods, services and labor for the benefit of the American public and the national parks in parks across the nation. NPHA shares stories of concessioner achievements to underscore the partnership between NPHA members and the National Park Service, protecting parks and serving visitors.



ARAMARK’s Metate Room Restaurant, located in the Far View Lodge at Mesa Verde National Park, has received the American Culinary Federation Colorado Chefs Association’s “Award of Culinary Excellence.” Metate Room Restaurant is one of six winners and *the only restaurant located within a national park* to receive the award. The culinary excellence awards are based on a variety of criteria, including menu selection, creativity, presentation, taste and the restaurant’s support of local Colorado cuisine. The award highlighted Metate Room Restaurant’s involvement with “Colorado Proud,” a program created by the Colorado Department of Agriculture to promote Colorado food and agricultural products. This past summer, Executive Chef Brian Puett competed in the Colorado State Fair cook-off as a part of the program.

“ARAMARK’s chefs are known for creating regional dishes that incorporate sustainable cuisine and organic ingredients, and Metate Room Restaurant and Chef Puett are shining examples of that commitment,” said Judith Swain, Director of Sales and Marketing of ARAMARK at Mesa Verde. “On behalf of ARAMARK Parks and Destinations and Metate Room Restaurant, it is an honor to receive this prestigious award that encourages and recognizes chefs who incorporate sustainable and locally-grown ingredients in their menus,” said Executive Chef Puett. Congratulations, ARAMARK, and keep up the great work!

Share information about your positive role in our parks with Mindy Meade at mmeade@funoutdoors.com.

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\$2.7 Billion proposed for FY2011 NPS Budget

The President's Fiscal Year 2011 budget for the National Park Service requests \$2.7 billion and increases investments in park operations by \$35.3 million. The budget underscores cost containment, program consolidation and management efficiencies to meet federal fiscal realities, yet provides the resources necessary to effectively carry out NPS' mission.

The budget includes \$50.9 million in NPS increases as part of the Interior Secretary Salazar's Treasured Landscapes initiative to support operations on public lands that enhance the visitor experience, promote ecosystem restoration, support species recovery and protect habitat, and facilitate cultural resource preservation and conservation. The increases are offset by reductions resulting from management efficiencies. In addition, the proposal includes \$5.8 million for Secretary of the Interior Ken Salazar's Youth in Natural Resources Initiative that augments NPS efforts to use national parks to introduce young people to nature, engage them in the stewardship of parks, and offer experiences that could lead to a career in conservation or land management. The money would fund youth education and employment programs at 19 park units, benefitting 27 parks.

More detailed information is in the FY 2011 Interior Budget in Brief, which is available online at: www.doi.gov/budget.

To read the full news release, [click here](#).

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"Ask Washington" answers your concessions questions

NPHA encourages members to submit questions to the Washington office with answers to be published in our monthly newsletters. Please submit your "Ask Washington" questions to mmeade@funoutdoors.com or call 202-682-9530.

"Will the National Park Service hold a superintendents' training session in 2010? If so, will there be slots available for concessioners to participate?"

Yes, the National Park Service will be hosting a Concessions Management Training for Superintendents in May 2010. Unfortunately, NPS does not anticipate being able to include concessioners as trainees. However, as in years past, they will be extending an offer to concessioners to participate in a Concessioner Roundtable. The date and time for the roundtable have not yet been determined, but we will be sure to alert concessioners as soon as this information becomes available.

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Federal Parks and Recreation Newsletter: Obama requests \$116 million increase for regular Land and Water Conservation Fund

As part of its Treasured Landscapes initiative, the Obama Administration asked last week for a substantial increase in spending in Fiscal Year 2011 for the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF). All told, the Administration recommended \$619 million for the program, although not all the money would go to the traditional state and federal sides of LWCF. The budget, released February 1, would appropriate \$384 million for federal land acquisition, compared to a FY 2010 appropriation of \$265.3 million, and \$50 million for state grants, compared to a FY 2010 appropriation of \$40 million. As for the broader Treasured Landscapes program, the Administration budget also recommends a stepped-up program to restore failing ecosystems, such as the Everglades.

"We must fully fund this great legacy (LWCF)," Secretary of the Interior Ken Salazar said February 1 at an Interior Department ceremony announcing the FY 2011 budget. "President Obama's budget includes \$619 million for LWCF. This is a 27 percent increase over 2010. And the 2010 budget was a 38 percent increase over 2009. We are well on our way to achieving a fundamental goal for this department. We hope to reach – and will reach – the \$900 million dollar mark by 2014."

But to reach that goal for LWCF, the Administration may have to make deep cuts in other programs. Indeed, in the FY 2011 budget the Obama administration called for an overall freeze on discretionary domestic spending. That translated into roughly flat federal land management agency budgets that would actually decrease if and when agencies had to eat fixed costs.

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

- [First Lady Michelle Obama: "Let's Move" and work on childhood obesity](#)
- [Teachers can apply to spend summer as a park ranger](#)

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

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