



June 2009 Newsletter

National Park Hospitality Association

www.parkpartners.org

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President Obama proclaims June as Great Outdoors Month, governors join in

June has been officially designated Great Outdoors Month by President Barack Obama and more than 45 of America's governors. The proclamations were sought by a coalition of recreation and conservation organizations involved with special events held during June, including National Trails Day®, National Fishing and Boating Week, National Get Outdoors Day and the Great American Backyard Campout.

President Obama's proclamation states, "The United States is blessed with unparalleled natural beauty. From remote forests to urban parks, these spaces have inspired visitors for generations." It goes on to say, "Exploring the great outdoors can also help improve one's health. These spaces provide countless venues for walking, hiking, running, swimming, and boating, among other activities. Americans can combine the enjoyment of being outside with the exercise we all need to stay healthy."

The proclamation highlights important initiatives of the Administration, noting that it is "working to connect America's youth with our treasured landscapes, which should be viewed as classrooms for environmental education and gateways to careers in natural resources. These efforts will include outreach to those who typically lack representation in, and exposure to, these fields. The Department of the Interior is launching a summer mentoring initiative as part of this effort. This program invites families and friends to teach children about the joys and wonders of the outdoors. My Administration is also increasing the number of youth involved in national service on public lands." The President concludes, "I encourage all Americans to spend more time outside and to participate in the nationwide events marking this occasion."

Again in 2009, most governors also proclaimed June as Great Outdoors Month in their home states. The state proclamations differ in length and emphasis, but most cite volunteerism, environmental stewardship, and outdoor recreation as keys to happier, healthier lifestyles.

To read the full news release with highlights from the 2009 proclamations, [click here](#).

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NPHA members announce special offers during NPS Fee-Free Weekends

Interior Secretary Ken Salazar announced June 2 that the National Park Service (NPS) will offer three fee-free weekends this summer to encourage Americans seeking affordable vacations to visit these national treasures. "During these tough economic times, our national parks provide opportunities for affordable vacations for families," Secretary Salazar said. "I encourage everyone to visit one of our nation's crown jewels this summer and especially to take advantage of the three free-admission weekends." The 147 NPS sites across the country that charge fees for entry will waive these entrance fees during the weekends of June 20-21, July 18-19, and August 15-16, 2009.

Members of the National Park Hospitality Association are also taking important steps to promote the parks by offering special deals during the fee-free weekends. Many park partners, including tour operators, hotels, restaurants, gift shops, and other vendors, will offer additional discounts and special promotions on those dates. More information on the fees and discounts can be found at www.nps.gov/findapark/feefreeparks.htm and at www.parkpartners.org/~feefree2009.

If your concession operation would like to add more offers to the NPHA website, please submit offer details to mmeade@funoutdoors.com.

To read the U.S. Department of the Interior's news release on the announcement, [click here](#).

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October meeting: October 18-21 at Yosemite

NPHA's Park Partners Forum will be at the Tenaya Lodge just outside Yosemite National Park on October 18-21, 2009 (Sunday meeting start, with departure on Wednesday by 10 AM). Top issues on the agenda will be a presentation by the NPHA Marketing Committee, including discussions with important guests sharing our interest in expanding the quantity and quality of park visits, and discussions with NPS leaders on shared goals including "green" operations and preparations for the 100th anniversary of the National Park Service. In addition to sessions at the Tenaya Lodge, we will visit key Yosemite operations including the Ahwahnee Hotel and the Wawona Hotel. While full meeting materials will be sent to you in July, you can reserve your lodging now – a good idea since fall is a lovely and busy time at Tenaya. Rates are \$176 per night, single or double occupancy. Reservations can be made by phone at (800) 635-5807 or online at www.tenayalodge.com, using group code 30F5A3. If you are an NPS employee, please use the code 30F8T8 to receive the federal per diem rate of \$126 per night. The Park Partners Forum will be immediately followed by the NPS Concessions Management Advisory Board Meeting in Yosemite, so please make your travel plans accordingly.

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White House and Interior launch Outdoor Youth Mentoring/Service Program

The U.S. Department of the Interior gathered key recreation and youth service organizations for a meeting June 1 to solicit involvement in a White House Summer Service Initiative – an

Outdoor Youth Mentoring Program. The program intends to provide “youth a positive, personal experience in nature, [where] they will come to understand the threats posed by climate change and will be more able and willing to advocate for clean energy.”

President Obama is expected to ask every adult to share with a youth the joy of America’s public lands and to engage in environmental stewardship. Outdoor Youth Mentoring Program partners are encouraged to set a service goal for June 22 – September 11, and all participants will be invited to share opportunities and experiences through a new White House website, www.serve.gov. The Interior Department is developing an “Outdoor Toolkit” to help respond to the call for mentoring. A major kick-off event to launch the program is currently scheduled for June 25 at Golden Gate National Recreation Area.

Key groups, including the National Wildlife Federation and The Corps Network, have had a hand in shaping the Summer Service Initiative through meetings at the White House and the Corporation for National and Community Service, where the effort is based. Others expected to play an active role in the initiative include the Boy Scouts of America, Girl Scouts of America, National Park Service, No Child Left Inside Coalition, Living Classrooms, Student Conservation Association, YMCA and the American Recreation Coalition. The Interior Department expects high public response and is looking forward to recreation industry support. NPS Director Bob Stanton, who will lead the Interior Office of Youth in Natural Resources, has told NPHA that he looks forward to involving concessioners!

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Dues reminder from NPHA Treasurer

NPHA Treasurer Carol Metzler would like to remind all NPHA members that annual dues for Associate Members were due on May 31, and dues for Regular Members will be due on June 30. If you have not paid, please do so at your earliest convenience!

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Federal Parks and Recreation Newsletter: Commissions close in on final recommendations

Two blue ribbon national commissions on park and recreation policy may be closing in on final recommendations. The Second Century Commission recently met at Great Smoky Mountains National Park to firm up final recommendations. The commission says it will submit the recommendations to Congress and President Obama in September. The other commission, the Outdoor Resources Review Group (ORRG), expects to release its report in early summer.

Visit the Second Century Commission’s website at www.visionfortheparks.org and ORRG’s website at www.rff.org/orrg.

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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- [Go camping to cut vacation costs](#)
- [Teens panic as they're forced to unplug at camp](#)
- [New books list hundreds of volunteer vacation opportunities](#)

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