



## May 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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### **BP oil spill has pervasive, ongoing impact on Interior operations**

The Gulf of Mexico oil spill has changed Interior operations dramatically and will continue to be a pervasive factor for months. Secretary Salazar, Assistant Secretaries, bureau heads and dozens of other key Interior staff are now stationed in the Gulf region doing facility inventories, preparing for rescue and clean-up operations and manning Incident Command Teams. With no end in sight for the spill and a very large quantity of oil already in the Gulf and likely to eventually reach shore areas, virtually all other Interior efforts are on hold. The White House, Interior and NOAA have done a good job of reaching out to national conservation and recreation organizations, keeping us informed and responding to questions. Daily briefings on the spill and its consequences are available at: [www.deepwaterhorizonresponse.com](http://www.deepwaterhorizonresponse.com).

Well-known NPS staff deployed to the effort in addition to Director Jon Jarvis include Everglades Superintendent Dan Kimball and Science Advisor Gary Machlis. Southeast Regional Director David Vela has also been tasked to the effort - and key officials like National Capital Regional Director Peggy O'Dell are being pulled into headquarters to act on behalf of deployed leadership.

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## **President Obama launches initiative to develop 21st century strategy for America's Great Outdoors**

President Barack Obama held a White House Conference on America's Great Outdoors and signed a Presidential Memorandum on April 16 establishing the America's Great Outdoors Initiative to promote and support innovative community-level efforts to conserve outdoor spaces and to reconnect Americans to the outdoors. The President spoke to leaders representing the conservation, farming, ranching, sporting, recreation, forestry, local park, and academic communities from all 53 states and territories.

The Presidential Memorandum calls on the Secretaries of the Interior and Agriculture, the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), and the Chair of the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) to lead the initiative, in coordination with the Departments of Defense, Commerce, Housing and Urban Development, Health and Human Services, Labor, Transportation, and Education and the Office of Management and Budget. The initiative will support a 21<sup>st</sup> century conservation agenda that builds on successes in communities across the country and will start a national dialogue about conservation that supports the efforts of private citizens and local communities. A crucial part of the new plan will be listening sessions across the nation. Sessions in Florida, Montana and California were planned but are now on hold because of the Gulf oil spill, but these and others should be held later this year. ***NPHA will participate in these listening sessions and will provide information on how to get involved as the sites are announced.***

The Administration is seeking to learn about some creative ways communities are conserving outdoor spaces. They request ideas on the following topics:

- Reconnecting with the Great Outdoors - What are your ideas for helping Americans get outdoors and reconnect with the nation's land, water, wildlife, culture, and history?
- Private Lands Conservation - How can the United States better support the voluntary efforts of farmers, ranchers, and private landowners to conserve their land, water, and wildlife?
- Public Lands Conservation - Which open spaces, watersheds, historic or cultural sites, wildlife habitat, or other public lands are most important to you, and what can be done at the local, state, or federal level to improve their management?

If you would like to contribute an idea, visit: <http://ideas.usda.gov/ago/ideas.nsf>.

To read President Obama's remarks at the conference, the news release on the event, and the official Presidential Memo - A 21st Century Strategy for America's Great Outdoors - visit the America's Great Outdoors website at: [www.doi.gov/americasgreatoutdoors](http://www.doi.gov/americasgreatoutdoors).

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## **Concessioner issues update from NPS Commercial Services**

NPHA recently asked the NPS Commercial Services office to provide a status update for several matters of importance to concessioners, including proposed Director's Order 35B, alternative LSI valuation, training tools, and the NPS-sanctioned unique concessioner mark. Their update follows.

A public comment review panel comprised of five NPS staff representing WASO/Region/Park views will convene the week of June 21. The review panel's recommendations will be incorporated into the draft of DO 35B and then briefed to Senior NPS Management within the following month. No additional information is available at this time. NPS is currently

reviewing the comments and in the process of determining its next steps for alternative LSI valuation plans.

The NPS Evaluation and Pricing Video's editing and production are completed, and the video should be uploaded and available at [http://concessions.nps.gov/tools\\_ept.htm](http://concessions.nps.gov/tools_ept.htm) within the next week. While the upload has been delayed in order to address NPS accessibility regulations – which will require audio captioning to a transcript of the materials to be provided – the section on “History” is currently available.

A conceptual design for the unique concessioner mark has been drafted by the NPS Harpers Ferry Center for graphic design support, an analysis of legal and policy considerations has been completed, and a meeting to discuss those considerations is scheduled for the end of May. The meeting will include representatives from the NPS Partnerships Program, Office of the Director, Office of Policy, Office of Communications and the Commercial Services Division. The roll-out of the mark is anticipated by the end of this fiscal year.

NPHA will provide more updates on these important initiative as they become available.

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## **Congressional hearings on increasing park visitation, applauding innovative park leadership**

The U.S. Senate Committee on Commerce, Science & Transportation held a hearing on April 27 titled, “American the Beautiful: Promoting Our National Parks as Travel Destinations.” Committee Chairman Jay Rockefeller (D-WV) acknowledged that park visitors support hotels, restaurants, other small businesses, generating millions in tax revenue, and he expressed interest in how to best promote our national parks, improve visitors’ experiences, collaborate with the private tourism industry, and reach people who may not have considered visiting national parks. Witnesses included filmmaker Ken Burns, Will Shafroth, Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Interior for Fish and Wildlife and Parks, and Diane Shober, Travel and Tourism Director for Wyoming. More information on this hearing, including the webcast, can be found [here](#).

Congressman Raúl Grijalva (D-NM), Chairman of the House Natural Resources Subcommittee on National Parks, Forests and Public Lands, has announced a hearing on May 25 to review the report of The National Parks Second Century Commission. The commission’s report is available at [www.npca.org/commission/pdf/Commission\\_Report.PDF](http://www.npca.org/commission/pdf/Commission_Report.PDF). Although NPHA members met with commission members and staff, the report fails to address the role of concessioners in the future of the national park system. In part because of this, Chairman Grijalva has invited a NPHA representative to testify at the hearing.

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## **Concessioners meet with NPS National Capital, Southeast Regional Directors and leadership teams**

Concessioners continued their meetings with NPS regional directors, meeting with National Capital Regional Director Peggy O’Dell and her team in Washington on May 13 and with Southeast Regional Director David Vela’s team on May 17. The meetings were marked with a sense of common purpose and opportunity. Regional Director O’Dell told the group of concessioners that she was greatly heartened by the discussion, saying that she had never met with the full group of concessioners in the region previously and found the discussions about cooperative efforts to reach out to youth and non-traditional visitors very

encouraging. She asked Deputy Regional Director Lisa Mendelson-Ielmini to work with NPHA members on several follow-up meetings.

The regional meetings have begun with a review of the long-standing partnership between NPS and concessioners followed by a discussion of current key issues, including outreach efforts, funding challenges and the opportunity afforded by the 2016 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the National Park System to give thought to new strategies and relationships. The meetings have also included discussions about the impact of fee-free weekends and the Ken Burns series as well as recent Congressional actions to promote park visitation.

The meetings were made part of the 2010 NPHA workplan by the Board of Directors at the October 2009 Park Partners Forum. Meetings at least annually in each region are planned to help improve communications and strengthen relationships between NPS regional directors and concessioners.

The meetings are open to all concessioners within the regions and are proving to be an effective membership recruitment tool. NPHA gained at least two new members from the National Capital Region meeting!

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## **Igloo announces customization website for concessioners**



In celebration of Great Outdoors Month June 2010, NPHA Preferred Vendor **Igloo Products, Inc.** will help concessioners order customized outdoor products that celebrate the national parks to offer in your stores! Concessioners can order stock Igloo products with a scenic panel and a unique logo highlighting "History, Nature and Fun" in our national parks, or you can choose to further customize products with images depicting a specific park location. NPHA is proud to work with Igloo because of its commitment to U.S. production and environmentally friendly products and operations. The website is set to launch

on June 1, although orders can be placed immediately through our Igloo contact Mark Semlow (713-584-6906 or [msemalow@igloocorp.com](mailto:msemalow@igloocorp.com)). We will provide a link to the easy-order website as soon as it is available!

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## **Pillars of Support: Glacier Park group receives George and Helen Hartzog Award**

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.

The National Park Service and the National Park Foundation honored the recipients of the 2009 George and Helen Hartzog Awards for Outstanding Volunteer Service at a ceremony May 14 in Washington, DC. The Hartzog Volunteer Group Award was given to the Glacier Centennial Program from Glacier National Park in Montana, in which Glacier Park, Inc.

played a major role. To celebrate the park's 100th anniversary, a group of more than 75 volunteers from 43 different organizations planned and implemented a community-driven Centennial Program. The volunteers invested more than 1,000 hours of service and embraced the mission of celebrating the park's rich history and inspiring personal connections. The group coordinated 108 centennial activities with 58 organizations. They also helped 61 local businesses reduce their carbon footprint, developed 184 centennial products with 47 vendors, sponsored an art contest with 113 artists, and produced a book of selected stories with contributions from 240 authors.

NPS Deputy Director Mickey Fearn congratulated the recipients and recognized the contributions made by all park volunteers. "Volunteers increase the energy of the National Park Service and allow us to continue to do what needs to be done, including all things that could not be done without them." Congratulations to Glacier Park, Inc. and its partners!

For more information on the 2010 Hartzog Awards, [click here](#).

Share information about your positive role in our parks with Mindy Meade at [mmeade@funoutdoors.com](mailto:mmeade@funoutdoors.com).

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## **NPS Environmental Achievement Award deadline extended to May 28**

The deadline for submitting a National Park Service Environmental Achievement Award nomination has been extended to May 28, as the original due date (May 14) coincides with other important deadlines.

NPS presents Environmental Achievement Awards to teams (NPS units, groups of NPS employees, or a combination of NPS and non-NPS personnel) and partners (concessioners, contractors, and cooperating associations) who demonstrate exceptional accomplishments toward the overall goal of preservation and protection of the resources under NPS's stewardship. Specifically, the award recognizes outstanding achievements in the implementation of Executive Order 13423, Strengthening Federal Environmental, Energy, and Transportation Management and Executive Order 13514, Federal Leadership in Environmental, Energy, and Economic Performance.

Nominations must be in electronic format. Go to <http://pfmdcf1.nps.gov/EMP/eea> to submit an online nomination. For organizations without access to the NPS Intranet, electronic submissions should be submitted on CD and sent via express mail to the following address: Fred Sturniolo, National Park Service, 1201 Eye Street, NW (2420), Washington, D.C. 20005

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

Be sure to save the dates for this year's Park Partners Forum – October 17-20 at the Doubletree Guest Suites (a Guest Services property), Naples, Florida. Building on the successes of the 2009 Park Partners Forum in Yosemite National Park, our plans include vendor displays, educational breakout sessions, excursions to see our local partners at work, general sessions with high profile guests and a focus on increasing our partnerships among other critical park partners to build visitation to our national parks.

Registration materials will be available through the newsletter later in the summer.

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## **Federal Parks and Recreation Newsletter: Health/physical activity eyed for Outdoors Initiative**

It's more than six months before President Obama's cabinet will submit policy recommendations on the America's Great Outdoors Initiative. But already a number of widely divergent groups are talking up the importance of activity in the great outdoors to the country's health. And those groups will almost certainly seek help from the Obama initiative.

An alliance of doctors, recreationists and conservationists called "Healthy Measures: Trailhead to Better Lives" is attempting to link outdoor activities to health. The alliance is supporting pilot projects that offer cost savings and rewards to people with chronic illnesses or unhealthy habits. Recreationists are also hopeful that the "Healthy Measures" message can be transmitted to federal employees. The key figure there is Office of Personnel Management Director John Berry, who has a long history with outdoor recreation. Among other positions, he was a member of the Outdoor Resources Review Group, a blue-ribbon commission that recommended last year a major overhaul of the nation's outdoor policies. Those initiatives will not by themselves provide the big money needed to make park and recreation areas available to all Americans. That has such outdoor policy veterans as Derrick Crandall, President of the American Recreation Coalition, pondering new sources of appropriations.

Mr. Crandall said the existing Senate and House Interior Appropriations Subcommittees are not positioned to provide money for activities related to health and outdoor activities. However, the Labor, Health and Human Services Subcommittee is, and it is allocating billions of dollars from a new health care law, he said. "We always look to the parks budget for help, but it doesn't have jurisdiction over preventive medicine," said Mr. Crandall, who also serves as counselor to the National Park Hospitality Association. "The Interior subcommittee emphasizes operations and maintenance of federal land. However, the Health and Human Service subcommittee does have jurisdiction over preventive medicine spending. If we want to put together some business, we'd better turn to the Labor and Health and Human Service subcommittee."

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**

- [Save the date: U.S. Travel Association's Marketing Outlook Forum, October 26-27](#)
- [Salazar joins Postmaster General Potter to celebrate America's Great Outdoors](#)
- [President and First Lady drop in for a visit to Blue Ridge Parkway](#)
- [5 Minutes daily "green" exercise boosts mental health](#)

- [Kids' TV time linked to school woes, bad habits](#)
- [Ex-military leaders: Young adults "too fat to fight"](#)

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