



October 2008 Newsletter

National Park Hospitality Association

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NPHA 2008 Park Services Forum Report

The National Park Hospitality Association held its mid-year meeting in Henderson, Nevada, on October 12 - 14 at the Green Valley Ranch Resort Spa & Casino. Nearly 100 concessioners, associate members and allies participated in sessions on changing visitation trends in national parks, new opportunities for outreach and partnerships, and more. Many key National Park Service (NPS) officials participated in the discussions on the challenges facing concessioners and on ways to partner with the NPS on park stewardship and on expanding and enriching national park experiences.

To read the full report on the 2008 Park Services Forum, [click here](#).

Mark your calendars! NPHA Annual Meeting, March 8 - 10, 2009, Washington, D.C.

Interior Assistant Secretary Lyle Laverty promotes partnerships at Park Services Forum

Lyle Laverty, Interior Assistant Secretary for Fish and Wildlife and Parks, was the featured guest speaker at the opening session of the National Park Hospitality Association's 2008 Park Services Forum. Mr. Laverty recommended that concessioners focus on three themes: change, challenges and the future. He stressed the need for partnerships and the importance of concessioners and the National Park Service (NPS) meeting frequently to discuss what is working and what is not. Mr. Laverty introduced an example of how interagency cooperation and innovation are working together to reconnect kids to nature. The brand new "Get Outdoors, It's Yours!" initiative brings together efforts of the NPS, Bureau of Land Management, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Bureau of Indian Affairs, U.S. Geological Survey, Bureau of Reclamation and U.S. Forest Service to "encourage children and their families to spend more time participating in outdoor activities... through educational programs, simple

recreation, and stewardship activities.” He commented that concessions are not merely a regulated business, but a crucial partner of the National Park Service and the American people in the parks. NPHA Chairman Joe Fassler commended Mr. Laverty, saying, “It’s a breath of fresh air to have national leaders who not only understand our barriers, but believe these barriers are solvable.”

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

Visit the “Get Outdoors, It’s Yours!” website at www.getoutdoorsitsyours.gov.

Rex Maughan honored with *Get Outdoors USA! Leadership Award*

The opening session of the Park Services Forum featured a video report on the Outdoor Recreation Village at Superbowl XLII. NPHA Counselor Derrick Crandall presented Forever Resorts Chairman Rex Maughan with the *2008 Get Outdoors USA! National Leadership Award* for his support of the Outdoor Recreation Village, the predecessor for the first annual National Get Outdoors Day. “The Super Bowl Outdoor Recreation Village played a vital role nationally, moving us from bemoaning the problem of indoor, inactive lifestyles to taking action to compete for the hearts and minds of America’s kids,” Mr. Crandall said. “We put a team of great public agencies, great companies and great nonprofits together to tell kids that we have more to offer than any shopping mall, more than any computer game. The financial and staff support that Rex put on the initiative reflected his passion, and energized more than two dozen other organizations. We need more of this!”



L to R: Asst. Secretary Lyle Laverty, John Schoppmann and Rex Maughan of Forever Resorts, and Derrick Crandall

Rep. Jon Porter praises concessioners for contributions to national park visitors, public lands and tourism

The Honorable Jon Porter, U.S. House of Representatives (R-NV), addressed the Park Services Forum and praised concessioner contributions to visitors and public lands, especially in a place like Nevada that “is fortunate enough to be rich in tourist destinations and great National Park Service leadership.” As both a small businessman and a local elected official, Rep. Porter said he learned about the challenges of having to meet a payroll while facing the constraints of government regulations and serving broad public needs. Rep. Porter told concessioners to be active on public policy and in elections, offering ideas and support. And he stressed that contact near election time is especially key. He said, “The people I remember the most are those who knocked on doors for me when it was 100°F outside.” As co-chair of the Congressional Travel and Tourism Caucus, Rep. Porter also added that concessioners need to be active in the tourism industry because travel and tourism, while often overlooked, is one of the largest employers in the country and that role will be important during a period of economic concern. He told the group about Caucus efforts on promotion of the US as a tourism destination internationally, on a visas program and on ensuring that travel is as hassle-free as practical – especially trying to make a visitor’s first experience in the United States a welcoming one. Concessioners can be involved in these efforts, he told the group.

Chief of NPS Concessions conducts roundtable with NPHA members

Park Services Forum participants gathered for a special Roundtable with National Park Concessions Staff. The session featured Jo Pendry, Chief of the NPS Commercial Services Program, and was moderated by Pam Pitts, Vice President of California Parks Companies. Ms. Pendry briefed the group on the upcoming Concessions Management Advisory Board meeting agenda and responded to questions. Ms. Pendry explained the change in her program’s name from Concessions Program to Commercial Services Program. Ms. Pendry also answered questions on topics from rate increases to visitor service expansion.

NPS staff, NPHA members and friends discuss future of concessions at the Park Services Forum

The National Park Hospitality Association's 2008 Park Services Forum included several exciting panel discussions on the future of concession operations in the national parks. *Park Issues in the 21st Century – Trends and Opportunities* and *Forces Shaping the Future of Concessions in the Parks* featured the following special guests: Jon Jarvis, National Park Service (NPS) Pacific West Regional Director; Marti Whitmore, Patton Boggs partner and former Interior and Colorado official; David Vela, NPS Southeast Regional Director; Alan O'Neill, Executive Director of the Outside Las Vegas Foundation; Clay James, Chairman of the NPS Concessions Management Advisory Board; Larry Huttle, Chairman of Airstream, Inc.; Bob Warren, National Chairman of the National Alliance of Gateway Communities; and Casey Hammond, a staff member of the U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Natural Resources.

For full descriptions of these sessions, [click here](#).

NPS Concessions Management Advisory Board meets at Lake Mead

The National Park Service (NPS) Concessions Management Advisory Board met October 15 at the Lake Mead National Recreation Area in Boulder City, Nevada, to discuss several issues of high importance to concessioners. Agenda items included Concession Contracting Status Updates, Regional Chief Reports, Proposed LSI Regulations Update, Gasoline and Diesel Fuel Cost Issues, NPS Evaluation Process Overview, and updates on key NPS initiatives, including the Centennial Challenge, Buy American, VolunTourism and more. Dave Woodside, National Park Hospitality Association (NPHA) board member, presented the results of the Park Services Forum to the board. "NPHA's vision of partnership is to have a chance to express opinions and weigh in on topics when they are being discussed," Mr. Woodside told the board. "We want to be seen as a true partner in the park."

To read the reports on the Concessions Management Advisory Board meeting, [click here](#).

Federal Parks and Recreation Newsletter: Hill doesn't pass NPS Challenge

It had a chance, but a signature Bush administration proposal to dress up the national parks with \$2 billion over the next decade suffered a defeat September 26. Senate leaders included the legislation in an economic stimulus bill (S 3604), but the bill was killed when the leaders were unable to round up the 60 votes needed to defeat a hold. The vote was 52-to-42. The House approved its own version of an economic stimulus bill (HR 7110) September 26 but HR 7110 did not move after that. The House bill also did not include the Park Service Centennial Challenge legislation. *Federal Parks and Recreation* has learned that Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid (D-NV) told Secretary of Interior Dirk Kempthorne October 2 that he is still looking for a vehicle for the Challenge legislation this year.

To read the latest *Federal Parks & Recreation Newsletter* and reports on the appropriations continuing resolution, snowmobile case in Yellowstone and more, go to your member-benefit copy of the *Federal Parks & Recreation Newsletter* on the NPHA website and use your password: **nphaonly** [\[Click here\]](#).

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