



## News from NARRP

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### **The National Association of Recreation Resource Planners**

## **Rally Your Member of Congress to Support Full and Dedicated Funding For LWCF**

Background: The House of Representatives' Natural Resources Committee will soon be holding a hearing on a new energy bill (H.R. 3534) sponsored by Chairman Nick Rahall (D-WV). This legislation includes full and dedicated funding for the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) at the authorized annual level of \$900 million. The bill specifies the allocation of \$450 million to the Federal LWCF program and \$450 million for state and local projects through the Stateside Assistance Program. The support of your Member of Congress is needed to ensure that full and dedicated funding for LWCF remains in this legislation as it progresses.

Action Needed: We need your PROMPT action in urging your Representative to support full and dedicated funding for LWCF. Call the U.S. Capitol Switchboard at 202-224-3121 and ask to be connected to your Representatives office. Ask to speak to the staff person that handles Natural Resources issues and let them know how much you care about LWCF and the special places that it protects such as parks, refuges, trails, cultural and historic places, public lands, and other recreation areas in your community. Tell them that their support is needed to ensure that full and dedicated funding for LWCF is included in energy legislation and that you will be counting on them to help get this provision enacted into law.

Find your representative:

<http://nrpa.informz.net/z/cjUucD9taT00MzE5OTMmcD0xJnU9MTAwMjk0MTYzMCZsaT0xNjExNDI3/index.html>

Call your Member of Congress today at 202-224-3121

To explain why they should support your request, use these key points:

- The LWCF provides critical federal investments in America's natural, cultural, and recreational heritage by acquiring and protecting public lands and developing new recreational facilities in the regional, state, and local parks near where 80% of Americans live.
- The LWCF state assistance program is one of the most successful Federal, State, and Local cooperative conservation partnerships in the history of the Dept. of Interior. LWCF serves a vital national need, the need to get the American public active and healthy, which they can best do by recreating at close-to-home recreation facilities and parks aided by the LWCF State Assistance.
- Explain the value of the LWCF state assistance to your community through past project and identify future LWCF projects in your community. These funds help to develop

sports fields, neighborhood parks, community gathering places, as well as the acquisition of green space for state and local conservation and park purposes.

## ***City Parks' Grand Rebirth*** **Courtesy of: <http://citiwire.net/post/1293/>**

ST. LOUIS — City sponsors were so nervous about the unveiling of their new downtown park this summer that they arranged for an ice cream truck to park at the site on opening day, just to attract passerbys.

They needn't have bothered. Citygarden, just west of the famed Gateway Arch on the Mississippi River, has drawn crowds of people—a cross-section of the city and region's population—from its opening hour onward.

The attractions include a cornucopia of trees, contemporary sculpture, an 180-foot rectangular basin with a six-foot waterfall, a state-of-the-art "spray plaza," a state-of-the-art LED video wall displaying art and movies, plus a high-quality cafe overlooking the combined attractions.

What this new park *doesn't* have are any formal entrances or barriers to separate its manicured paths and quiet spaces from the surrounding city streets. Richard C.D. Fleming, president of the St. Louis Regional Chamber and Growth Association, suggests it's an "intimate version of Millennium Park," the Chicago lakeside extravaganza opened in 2004.

For St. Louis, for years so forsaken its downtown had the feel of a big and mostly empty living room, the public's warm embrace of Citygarden caps a remarkable comeback decade which has seen the center city draw 5,000 residents and more than \$4 billion in new investment.

But there's no single formula for new parks. Just climb up a short flight of stairs to the newly-opened "High Line" park on Manhattan's West Side. You'll find clusters of families and couples strolling, chatting, sipping lemonade and nibbling on waffles or sandwiches along what for years constituted a desolate and weed-choked stretch of abandoned elevated freight railroad track.

Now, from the meandering concrete walkways of this sliver of protected park space in the sky, the visitor catches stunning views of the Hudson, the Statue of Liberty, Midtown and Wall Street skyscrapers, plus amazingly intimate glimpses into the forbidden interiors of nearby apartments, stately townhouses, and offices.

Or check auto-happy, sprawling Houston. Two-term Mayor Bill White has made parks a top priority. Lead example: Discovery Green, 12 once-industrial acres on the east side of downtown. Among Discovery Green's features: a shaded walkway featuring 100-year-old oak trees, thematic gardens with native Texas plants, birds and butterflies, fountains and spacious green lawns, a model boat basin, a children's stage, WiFi everywhere, and two restaurants. Plus lots of people watching.

Indeed, if there were ever a bonanza decade for America's parks, this is surely it. Add stunning new parks in Boston, Atlanta, Cincinnati, Denver and Santa Fe, plus the success of conservancies in revamping great old parks in such cities as Pittsburgh, Brooklyn and San Francisco.

And by good fortune, there's a skilled chronicler tracking and analyzing the wave—Peter Harnik, parks expert for the Trust for Public Land and author of a soon-to-be published Island Press book on today's parks phenomenon.

For almost a half century, Harnik notes, the reigning American park model was Disneyland—“corporate, programmed, extravagant, rural, flawless and electrifying.” City parks “began grinding down relentlessly everywhere” as people realized “the park experience could be sanitized, social classes could be segregated.”

So why the big turnaround now? Partly it's the “wow” in the new city parks—fascinating gardens, theaters, concerts, fountains, ice skating. That's why, says Harnik, the 2004 opening of the Millennium Park in Chicago had the biggest impact on the American parkland scene since New York's great Central Park opened in 1873.

But Harnik insists there's more to the revival—that we're seeing a revival of factors “ignored in the din of massive suburbanization and sprawl—human scale, walkability, efficiency, and respect for ecological principles and democratic ideals.” Or put another way, we're reawakening to parks' ultimate value: “an interplay—a conversation—between people and nature.”

And as if that's not enough, new and revived parks bring massive associated benefits. The parks embellish cities' reputations and become “must see” destinations for tourists. And they turn into meeting places not just for city residents, but magnets for visitors from across their metro areas.

It's true, new parks can be tremendously expensive. Millennium Park's pricetag—borne jointly by the city of Chicago and private donors—was close to a half billion dollars.

But, insists Harnik, parks make huge financial sense. Property values close to new park locations rise vigorously—a development recognized soon after Central Park's opening in the 19th century and now an established factor of urban economics.

But there's more. Citizens get free recreation and services. Tourism booms. And government gains by parks' stormwater management, air pollution control, cooling of the urban “heat island” effect, and contributions by volunteers. Harnik added all those up for Philadelphia's park system, ranging from the city's massive Fairmount Park and Independence National Historical Park to neighborhood gardens. The total, he calculated: \$1.9 billion a year. Mayor Michael Nutter concurred: “A well-run, properly funded and focused park system is priceless.”

## **The National Parks: America's Best Idea by Ken Burns**

**Coming to PBS September 27, 2009**

Filmed over the course of more than six years at some of nature's most spectacular locales — from Acadia to Yosemite, Yellowstone to the Grand Canyon, the Everglades of Florida to the Gates of the Arctic in Alaska — The National Parks: America's Best Idea is nonetheless a story of people: people from every conceivable background — rich and poor; famous and unknown; soldiers and scientists; natives and newcomers; idealists, artists and entrepreneurs; people who were willing to devote themselves to saving some precious portion of the land they loved, and in

doing so reminded their fellow citizens of the full meaning of democracy. It is a story full of struggle and conflict, high ideals and crass opportunism, stirring adventure and enduring inspiration - set against the most breathtaking backdrops imaginable.

For more information: <http://www.pbs.org/nationalparks/>

## **'Eco photo tours' offered in October, Martin parks officials say**

MARTIN COUNTY — The Martin County Parks and Recreation Department is launching a new environmentally focused outdoor recreation program for all ages.

Veteran photographer, Kevin Boldenow is leading the newest eco-style adventure throughout Martin County's most beautiful landscapes. The "eco photo tours" will be a series of photography instruction at different locations throughout Martin County for both novice and experienced photographers, county officials said in a news release.

Boldenow and the parks department are launching the first series of tours in October. They plan to continue a schedule throughout the year.

"We are continually searching for eco-friendly and environmentally focused activities. Martin County has several unique, naturally pristine landscapes that are perfect venues for active citizens to discover rural, untouched areas. Many citizens don't realize what is here in their back yards," said Richard Blankenship, director of the Parks and Recreation Department, in the news release.

"There are rural parks and trails right around the corner like Halpatiokee Regional Park, Barley Barber Swamp, Allapattah Flats and Phipps Park that create perfect opportunities to experience and photograph nature and Florida wildlife," he said.

Release your inner Tarzan or Trapper Nelson; join the Martin County Parks and Recreation Department for Eco Photo Tours across rustic Martin County. Tours begin at 8 a.m. and end at 10 a.m. The cost is \$25 per person per tour.

For more information or to register for the Eco Photo Tours, call 772-221-1418.

## **New Report from The Outdoor Foundation and Coleman Examines Camping Trends in the U.S.**

Boulder, Colorado, September 2nd, 2009 — As budget-minded Americans return in droves to the outdoors this summer, The Outdoor Foundation®, in partnership with The Coleman Company, Inc., today released the Special Report on Camping – a new research report detailing important information and trends on car, backyard and RV campers in the U.S. Among other findings, the report reveals a sizable 7.4 percent increase in car and backyard camping in 2008.

"In today's economy, people are returning to simpler lifestyles – the 'less is more' ethic," said Christine Fanning, executive director of The Outdoor Foundation. "Reservations for campsites and sales for camping gear are up. Camping provides fun, affordable opportunities for families

to enjoy time together."

The Special Report on Camping uses the latest participation data collected annually by The Outdoor Foundation to present detailed information on participation by gender, age, ethnicity, income, education and geographic region – critical information needed by businesses, communities and non-profits working to connect Americans with the outdoors.

As Americans enjoy camping trips in backyards, state lands and our national parks this summer, camping plays an important role in helping Americans rediscover the outdoors. As the Special Report on Camping reveals, camping is an important gateway to increased participation in outdoor activities and a healthy active lifestyle. Research shows that a large majority of camping participants take part in multiple outdoor activities – over 84 percent of campers.

### **Key Findings:**

#### **Camping Participation**

- 33.7 million Americans ages 6 and older participated in car and backyard camping in 2008 – an increase of 7.4%.
- 16.5 million Americans participated in RV camping in 2008 – up from 16.2 million in 2007.
- Camping participants made more than 597 million outings in 2008, averaging 14 camping days per participant.
- More than 84% of camping participants participate in multiple outdoor activities.

#### **Demographics**

- 56% of all campers are male and 43% female.
- The 25 to 44 age group makes up more than one-third of the total number of campers (34.5%). The over 45 age group is a close second at 29%.
- The Pacific region (OR, WA, CA) is home to the most camping participants in 2008 (18.9%), while East North Central (NC, SC, VA, MD, WV, GA, FL) was second in number of participants (16.9%).
- Most campers have a household income between \$50,000 and \$74,999 (24.7%) or \$100,000+ (24.9%), while 35% of campers are in the 2 lowest income brackets below \$50,000.

#### **Campgrounds and Activities**

- Car, backyard and RV campers enjoy hiking and swimming while camping significantly more often than other activities.
- 73% of car and backyard campers and 70% of RV campers choose public campgrounds at least once each year. 29% of car and backyard campers and 51% of RV campers choose private campgrounds at least once each year.

#### **Motivations and Barriers**

- Friends and parents are the most influential in introducing campers to outdoor activities.
- Fun and relaxation are the top two reasons cited by campers for participation in outdoor activities.
- A lack of time is the number one reason camping participants don't get out more often. A lack of interest and a lack of money for equipment are also reasons.

The Special Report on Camping is based on extended analysis of unreleased data collected for the Outdoor Recreation Participation Report, produced annually by The Outdoor Foundation. The report uses the responses of over 40,000 Americans ages six and older captured in an on-line survey covering 114 different activities. The survey is the largest of its type examining

participation in sports and outdoor activities.

The 2009 Outdoor Recreation Participation Report, which will include high-level 2008 participation data and trend analysis for 40 outdoor sports, will be released by The Outdoor Foundation mid September and will detail the quality and extent of participation in outdoor recreation among all Americans age 6+, with a special focus on youth and diverse groups.

To download a copy of the Special Report on Camping visit <http://www.outdoorfoundation.org/research>.