

National Get Outdoors Day Update

Overview:

Building on the success of *More Kids in the Woods* and other important efforts to connect Americans – and especially children – with nature and active lifestyles, the Forest Service and the American Recreation Coalition have agreed to lead an inclusive, nation-wide effort. National Get Outdoors Day focuses on a single day when people are inspired and motivated to *get outdoors* – with federal, state and local agencies, key enthusiast organizations and recreation businesses making the outdoor experience fun.

The first National Get Outdoors Day will be on June 14th and will emphasize reaching new and first time visitors to public lands. By offering diverse activities and opportunities, this national effort will broaden appreciation for and interest in the great outdoors – and awareness of its benefits. Plans are for the day to continue on the second Saturday of each subsequent June.

Objectives:

- Further efforts to connect nature and kids – fighting Nature Deficit Disorder and combating serious health threats
- Create special interpretive opportunities and use new technologies to appeal to youth and non-traditional users
- Highlight the benefits of outdoor activities, and the action the agencies are taking to address alarming health trends resulting from physical inactivity
- Have so much fun that “first timers” are eager to come back for more!

Planning Approach:

A national coordinating team will offer consistent information and support for locally planned events. The team will provide links to partners, resources for recruitment and coordinated communications including a website, www.getoutdoorsusa.org, where details about the event will be posted. Anyone interested in joining the national coordinating team is encouraged to email or call: Caroline Mica, cmica@funoutdoors.com, 202-682-9530, for further information.

Key organizations have already accepted an invitation to serve on a steering committee for this national day and will employ existing campaigns, efforts and websites to promote the day's opportunities:

- *Boy Scouts of America*
- *The Coleman Company*
- *Discover Boating*
- *Good Sam Club*
- *Go RVing*
- *International Mountain Bicycling Association*
- *National Association of State Park Directors*
- *National Forest Foundation*
- *National Park Hospitality Association*
- *National Park Service*
- *National Ski Areas Association*
- *National Wildlife Federation and many more!*

National Get Outdoors Day sites will be selected using the following criteria:

- ▶ Proximity to/easy access from one or more metropolitan areas
- ▶ Capacity to host 2,000 -10,000 participants
- ▶ Existing food service, comfort stations and parking facilities
- ▶ Ease of involvement of multiple government and private-sector partners
- ▶ Ability to demonstrate outdoor activities such as bird watching, hiking, fishing, camping and to provide information on pursuing those activities
- ▶ Capability to highlight traditional and non-traditional outdoor activities

Current 2008 National Get Outdoors Day site candidates include: Snowbird Ski and Summer Resort (Utah); Callville Bay Marina (Nevada); Mountain High Resort (California); the Boy Scouts of America's Camp William Snyder in Haymarket, Virginia; and State parks in Pennsylvania and Connecticut.

Get Outdoors USA! is a national movement dedicated to helping children live healthy, active outdoor lives. Through outdoor activity children receive benefits of mind, body and spirit and are able to experience the national treasures that belong to all Americans. The American Recreation Coalition launched Get Outdoors USA! in April 2007. More information about the organization is available at www.getoutdoorsusa.org.