

Putting “**GREAT**” Back in America’s Great Outdoors

EMBRACING THE OUTDOORS AS A POWERFUL ECONOMIC DRIVER

Outdoor recreation in America generates 6.1 million direct American jobs, contributes \$646 billion per year to the economy and attracts nearly 20 million foreign visitors seeking a world class experience unrivaled anywhere on earth.

Federal lands cover 30% of the nation’s surface. These lands offer opportunities for awe-inspiring experiences, but dated infrastructure and limited access are barriers to realizing this potential.

Theodore Roosevelt championed time outdoors with words and actions. Yet today, we see a declining percentage of Americans embracing outdoor-recreation rich lifestyles on federally-managed lands. The nation needs a strategy to modernize, expand and sustain the infrastructure and access visitors expect.



PARTNERSHIPS ARE THE SOLUTION

Federal land managers’ ability to provide quality experiences is handicapped by the burden of \$20 billion in deferred maintenance. America’s outdoor recreation industry stands ready to help put “Great” Back in America’s Great Outdoors through common sense policy changes modeled after proven public-private partnerships successes such as world-class ski areas on National Forests, iconic lodges in National Parks and marinas that are gateways to U.S. Army Corps of Engineers lakes.

TAKING ACTION

The Outdoor Recreation Industry Roundtable has identified 5 initial steps to create jobs by improving the quality of outdoor experiences on federal lands.



1 Fast track the implementation of the Outdoor Recreation Jobs and Economic Impact Act (P.L. 114-249) by requiring federal agencies to complete implementation by the end of Fiscal Year 2017 and institutionalize the use of this information into federal agency decision making.

2 Prioritize federal agency budgets on recreation-related infrastructure improvement, because outdoor recreation is the largest driver of economic activity on federal lands.

3 Establish public-private partnerships as an entrepreneurial mechanism for addressing deferred maintenance and world class facilities for world class locations. Bring focus to inaccessible and undeveloped areas and areas near population centers.

4 Achieve better balance in decisions involving recreation and conservation. Quality outdoor recreation enjoyment and conservation of America’s natural resources are not mutually exclusive efforts. Congress mandated this in 1916 when it created the National Park Service. The Administration must champion policies that support conservation, recreation and economic development in equal measure.

5 Develop and deploy a digital information strategy for outdoor recreation on federal lands. Americans need current and accurate information about where to go for the experiences they seek, which they are then eager to share digitally in real time. Federal land managers must embrace, not resist, modernization to keep the shared legacy of our Great Outdoors relevant and to capitalize on free, real-time, communications sharing how enjoyable outdoor recreation on federal lands can be.

