



## U.S. Department of the Interior Office of Intergovernmental and External Affairs

### Message from Gail Adams, Director OIEA

Last month was great for tourism in the United States. Four months after the rollout of the National Travel and Tourism Strategy, the White House released a progress report from the Departments of State and Homeland Security that outlines the activities underway to meet the President's goal of boosting the travel and tourism industry in the United States. In January President Obama issued an Executive Order on travel and tourism that directed federal agencies to aggressively expand the nation's ability to attract and welcome visitors, while maintaining the highest standards of security.

The U.S. tourism and travel industry is a substantial contributor to the nation's economy and employment, contributing \$1.4 trillion in economic activity and 7.5 million jobs in 2011. The travel and tourism industry projects that more than 1 million American jobs could be created over the next decade if the U.S. increased its share of the international travel market.

According to the U.S. Department of Commerce, international travel resulted in \$153 billion in U.S. exports in 2011, an 8.1 percent increase from 2010, and is the nation's largest service export industry. This positive trend has continued throughout 2012 with international tourists spending \$13.7 billion in the United States in July 2012 alone, up \$350 million or 3 percent from the same month the previous year, and travel and tourism-related exports increasing, on average, more than \$1.1 billion a month during the first seven months of 2012. According to the travel industry and Bureau of Economic Analysis, international travel is particularly important as overseas or "long-haul" travelers spend on average \$4,000 per visit, which in turn supports and leads to additional travel and tourism-related jobs.

The Department of the Interior and Secretary Salazar are committed to doing our part in increasing travel to and within the United States for economic benefit of large gateway communities and smaller more rural areas alike. Tourism is the one industry that can touch all areas and all segments of our nation. The United States has it all, and DOI encourages international and domestic travelers to experience the wealth of natural and cultural and historical resources managed by the Department and other federal agencies such as the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Agency (NOAA), the US Forest Service and US Corps of Engineers. From our national parks and national forests to our wildlife refuges, marine sanctuaries and tribal lands, there is so much for visitors to enjoy and appreciate.

Tourism is critical to many state and local economies and this is true from some tribes as well. I had the honor of attending the 14th Annual American Indian Alaska Native Tourism (AIANTA) conference in beautiful Montana, co-hosted by the Apsáalooke (Crow) Nation. AIANTA's mission is to define, introduce, grow and sustain American Indian and Alaska Native tourism that honors and sustains tribal traditions and values. The conference is designed to share knowledge, experience and best practices from both tribal and non-tribal tourism experts and programs from across the country.

This was a monumental year for the organization as we celebrated the signing of the first Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between AIANTA and Secretary Salazar, the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), the Bureau of Land Management, the Bureau of Reclamation, the Fish and Wildlife Service, and the National Park Service.

Crow Tribe Chairman, Cedric Black Eagle hosted an exclusive tour of the Crow Buffalo Pasture where we viewed tribal buffalo herds just as these majestic creatures once roamed the Great Plains. We also took a journey through time when we visited Plenty Coups State Park, home of the last traditionally recognized Chief of the Apsáalooke people, Chief Plenty Coups (Aleek-chea-ahoosh), which means "many achievements." The park is home to a museum dedicated to introducing visitors to life of the Apsáalooke people. At the park, we experienced true Crow culture through stories, games, traditions and food!

At the heart of the reservation, known as the "Tipi Capitol of the World," is the world famous Little Bighorn Battlefield. Participants toured the Indian Memorial honoring those warriors who defended their way of life and the monument and National Cemetery where General George A. Custer and his men were defeated and buried the day after the battle. Attendees also visited the Reno-Benteng Defense site where the famous battle began June 25, 1876.

Travel and tourism works when done responsibly. So let's support our natural, cultural, and historical treasures by visiting them. Have a great month!

— Gail Adams

### News Highlights

September 12: [AMERICA'S GREAT OUTDOORS: Salazar, Ashe Announce More than \\$29 Million to Expand Refuge System, Conserve Wetlands](#)

September 14: [AMERICA'S GREAT OUTDOORS: Salazar Establishes 558th National Wildlife Refuge Unit in Colorado's Sangre de Cristo Mountains](#)

September 21: [President Obama Signs Proclamation Designating Chimney Rock as a National Monument](#)

[Salazar Applauds President's Intent to Nominate of Vincent G. Logan as the Special Trustee for American Indians](#)

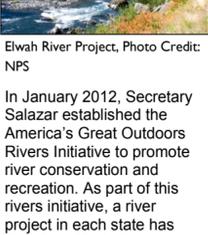
[September 22: Salazar Applauds Senate Confirmation of Kevin Washburn as Interior's Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs](#)

September 24: [Obama Administration Announces 38 Million-Acre Oil and Gas Lease Sale in the Central Gulf of Mexico](#)

September 25: [Administration Announces NPR-A Oil & Gas Lease Sale in November](#)

September 30, 2012

### AMERICA'S GREAT OUTDOORS: Elwha River Project, Washington



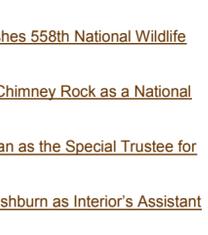
Elwha River Project, Photo Credit: NPS

In January 2012, Secretary Salazar established the America's Great Outdoors Rivers Initiative to promote river conservation and recreation. As part of this rivers initiative, a river project in each state has been identified.

In Washington state, the Elwha River Restoration Project is the largest fish passage project in U.S. history. This project will re-open more than 70 miles of pristine spawning and rearing habitat for five species of Pacific salmon. Salmon populations are predicted to swell from 3,000 to nearly 400,000 as all 5 species of Pacific salmon return to one of the Pacific North-west's most productive salmon streams. The return of salmon to this ecosystem will bring marine derived nutrients to the watershed, restoring a vital food source for human and animal communities alike.

This project is a partnership between several agencies, and the following non-federal partners: Lower Elwha Klallam Tribe, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, Western Washington University, University of Washington, and the City of Port Angeles.

To find out more about this project, please contact: Chris Eng, Fish and Wildlife Biologist, Branch of Habitat Restoration, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service at [chris\\_eng@fws.gov](mailto:chris_eng@fws.gov).



Gail Adams with Crow Tribe Chief Cedric Black Eagle at the 2012 AIANTA Conference in Billings, MT.

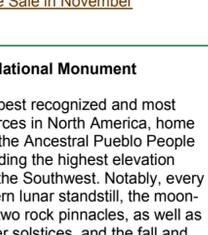
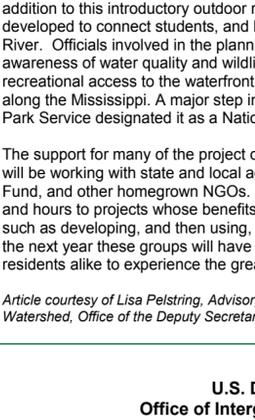


Photo Credits: Vicki Dixon, OIEA



### Highlight: Chimney Rock National Monument

Chimney Rock is one of the best recognized and most unique archaeological resources in North America, home to hundreds of ruins built by the Ancestral Pueblo people about 1,000 years ago, including the highest elevation ceremonial "great house" in the Southwest. Notably, every 18.6 years, during the northern lunar standstill, the moonrise is aligned with the sites two rock pinnacles, as well as during the summer and winter solstices, and the fall and spring equinoxes.

Photo Credit: Ben Milakofsky, DOI White House Liaison

### DOI Urban Initiatives: Mississippi National River and Recreation Area National Water Trail

Saint Paul and Minneapolis, Minnesota are at the heart of an effort to connect city kids to outdoor recreation. An innovative National Park Service program on the Mississippi River is on track to reconnect 10,000 local public school students with one of the world's great rivers this year through an introductory canoe experience focused on building appreciation for the natural and cultural world.

The initiative, called the Urban Wilderness Canoe Adventures (UWCA), seeks to provide canoeing experiences within the Mississippi National River & Recreation Area for locals. In addition to this introductory outdoor recreation experience, new curriculum-based learning will be developed to connect students, and by association their families and friends, to the Mississippi River. Officials involved in the planning believe that such workshops and opportunities will raise awareness of water quality and wildlife habitat issues. Another major focus will be on improving recreational access to the waterfront for urban residents by providing a new network of trails along the Mississippi. A major step in this direction was taken on May 23rd when the National Park Service designated it as a National Water Trail.

The support for many of the project components will come from the National Park Service, which will be working with state and local agencies as well as Wilderness Inquiry, the Mississippi River Fund, and other hometown NGOs. Each will be contributing hundreds of thousands of dollars and hours to projects whose benefits will begin to be seen as they implement program objectives such as developing, and then using, the new curriculum to introduce students to the river. Within the next year these groups will have created a new setting for schoolchildren and urban residents alike to experience the great outdoors in the middle of the Twin Cities.

Article courtesy of Lisa Pelstring, Advisor, Urban Environmental Issues and the Anacostia Watershed, Office of the Deputy Secretary.

### U.S. Department of the Interior Office of Intergovernmental and External Affairs

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