



Get Outdoors, It's Yours! A Pledge of Cooperation

The way children understand and experience their natural world has changed radically over the past several decades. As children spend more time inside on the computer, playing video games, or watching television, they are spending less time outdoors. Their physical contact and intimacy with the natural outdoors has diminished greatly. Their inability to connect with nature is now recognized as a national issue of concern that is impacting their sense of stewardship for the earth and their psychological and physical health.

As the stewards of much of America's public outdoor spaces, our agencies are in a unique position to help address this issue of national concern. We recognize that our individual agencies have long histories and expertise in working to engage our children and families with the natural world. We also recognize that by working together, and with other partners, we can more effectively expand and promote public outdoor opportunities such as recreation, conservation education, and volunteerism, by providing the landscape for children to discover and witness the wonder of nature. In so doing, we can help reconnect our youth and families with the land in such a way as to create a new generation of stewards with a public service ethic; improve the mental and physical health of our nation; reduce the cost of health care; increase awareness of the important role nature and science play in our lives; strengthen America's workforce; and ensure the perpetuation of the resources entrusted to our care. Therefore, we pledge to work together under applicable legal authorities and within available appropriations to ensure that our agencies are individually and collectively:

Communicating, cooperating, and collaborating to deliver a world class public education campaign targeted towards our Nation's children and their families to better inform them about our collective efforts to help them learn, grow, and become healthier while recreating, enjoying leisure activities, and working as volunteer stewards on the Nation's public lands and waters;

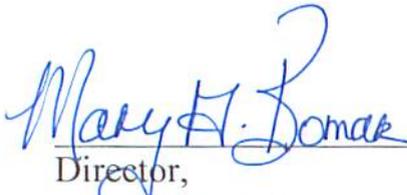
Promoting and expanding opportunities for America's children and families to engage in natural and cultural history and environmental education; outdoor recreation such as boating, biking, hunting, fishing, hiking, and wildlife observation; and stewardship activities on public lands and waters;

Joining with State and local government agencies to expand and create new partnerships for increasing the public's appreciation and use of their public outdoor spaces;

Expanding our network of partnerships within the government and with non-governmental organizations, such as corporate, non-profit, and educational groups to assist in creating a sustainable long term initiative to connect children and families with the outdoors; and

Sharing information on, knowledge of and best practices associated with the development and provision of programs that link children and their families with their natural environment.

Signed:



Director,
National Park Service

8/12/08

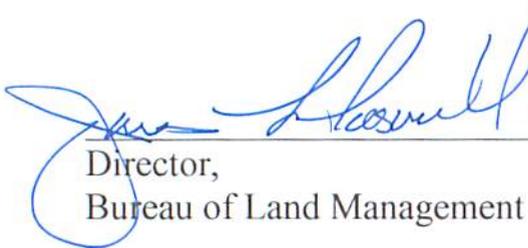
Date



Chief,
U.S. Forest Service

8/21/08

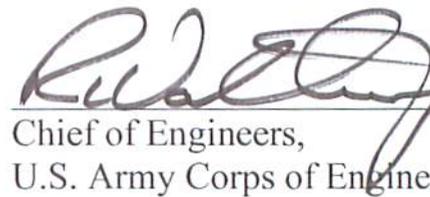
Date



Director,
Bureau of Land Management

8/12/08

Date



Chief of Engineers,
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

8/25/08

Date



Director,
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

8/15/08

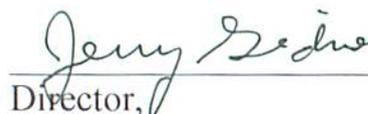
Date



Commissioner,
Bureau of Reclamation

8/21/08

Date



Director,
Bureau of Indian Affairs

8/8/08

Date



Director,
U.S. Geological Survey

8-19-08

Date