



THE SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR  
WASHINGTON

ORDER NO. 3339

Subject: Increasing Access to Extended Outdoor Experiences for Under-Resourced Youth

**Sec. 1 Purpose.** The purpose of this Order is to increase access to the outdoors for disadvantaged and under-resourced youth and decrease unnecessary barriers to obtaining permits for, or otherwise accessing, Interior-managed lands and waters for individuals and organizations when they are supporting and engaging disadvantaged and under-resourced youth in experiencing those lands and waters. The Directors of the National Park Service (NPS), U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS), Bureau of Land Management (BLM), and Bureau of Reclamation (BOR) shall take immediate and concrete steps to facilitate access by disadvantaged and under-resourced youth to lands managed by their respective Bureaus.

**Sec. 2 Background.** The President's initiative, "Every Kid in a Park," aims to connect our Nation's youth to America's great outdoors by offering fourth graders free access to Federal lands. Secretary's Order 3332, entitled *Engaging the Next Generation*, dated March 20, 2014, similarly seeks to advance the involvement of young people in playing, learning, serving, and working on our public lands and waters. These are important steps in building the next generation of stewards of our Nation's spectacular natural resources.

The recent death of noted outdoorsman, philanthropist, and conservationist, Douglas W. Walker, however, highlights the need for additional efforts to reduce barriers to accessing public lands in order to provide more opportunities for young people to enjoy, explore, and experience the great outdoors through extended outdoor experiences. Among numerous other charitable activities, one of Douglas W. Walker's passions involved supporting inner-city youth in multi-day outdoor excursions in backcountry and wilderness areas. Without the support of volunteers, outdoor leaders, and their associated organizations, many inner-city youth lack confidence, resources, and knowledge necessary to play, learn, serve, and work on public lands.

Individuals and organizations who bring disadvantaged and under-resourced youth onto public lands have indicated that they continue to face challenges in obtaining and paying for permits for the activities. One obstacle they have identified is that the sponsors may be subject to significant fees, commercial use authorizations, and other administrative requirements when attempting to access Federal lands, often based on a determination that they are conducting a business due to the use of paid guides or charging fees. Other concerns include delays in permit processing, group-size limits, and different permit requirements across the Bureaus.

**Sec. 3 Authorities.** This Order is issued under the authority of Section 2 of Reorganization Plan No. 3 of 1950 (64 Stat. 1262), as amended; the Take Pride in America Act, (16 U.S.C. §§ 4601-4608); the land management authorities of NPS, BLM, FWS; and the Federal Water Project Recreation Act of 1965, P.L. 89-72, as amended, (16 U.S.C. §§ 4601-12 - 4601-21).



**Sec. 4 Implementation.** The Directors of the NPS, FWS, BLM, and BOR shall immediately begin to implement the program by taking steps to decrease barriers to obtaining permits or otherwise accessing lands managed by their respective Bureaus for individuals and organizations when they are engaged in activities subject to this Order. Such steps shall include, but not be limited to:

(a) Instructing local land managers to expedite processing of permits and make process improvements to decrease permitting timelines.

(b) Addressing determinations regarding commercial use authorization or similar requirements by:

(1) To the extent consistent with existing regulations, ensuring that activities subject to this Order are not required to obtain a commercial use or similar authorization; and

(2) To the extent that there are existing regulatory barriers to processing activities subject to this Order as other than commercial activities, taking appropriate action to modify or remove such barriers.

(c) Encouraging the use of available discretion and flexibility, such as increasing group-size limits, and decreasing or waiving fees, to support prompt access.

(d) Exploring alternatives to permitting requirements, such as treating activities subject to this Order in the same manner as the general public use.

(e) Increasing outreach to possible participants with regard to this Order.

(f) Coordinating permitting approaches with the other Bureaus.

**Sec. 5 Activities Subject to this Order.** This Order applies whenever an individual or organization certifies to the respective Bureau that it is seeking to access the Bureau's lands for a group that meets the following criteria:

(a) Program participants are all under 26 years of age;

(b) At least 70 percent of the participants are economically disadvantaged and under-resourced youth and meet one or more of the following elements:

(1) Out-of-school youth

(2) In or aging out of foster care

(3) Limited English proficiency


(4) Homeless or have run away from home

- (5) At risk of leaving secondary school without a diploma
  - (6) A former juvenile offender or at risk of delinquency
  - (7) Youth with disabilities
- (c) Planning an overnight or multi-night recreational and educational excursion; and
- (d) Any paying attendees are funding no more than the trip's direct cost.

**Sec. 6 Planning and Reporting Requirements.** The Assistant Secretary for Fish and Wildlife and Parks, the Assistant Secretary – Land Minerals Management, and the Assistant Secretary – Water and Science shall each submit an Implementation Plan to the Secretary within 60 days of the date of this Order. The plan shall include concrete actions that the NPS, FWS, BLM, and BOR will take to achieve the purpose of this Order, including any proposed regulatory revisions. Thereafter, an annual update shall be submitted describing the progress of the respective Bureaus in meeting the goals of this Order.

**Sec. 7 Limitations.** Nothing in this Order is intended to modify or limit the applicability of existing legal requirements or to prompt any action contrary to statute or regulation.

**Sec. 8 Expiration Date.** This Order is effective immediately. It will remain in effect until its provisions are converted to the Departmental Manual or until it is amended, superseded, or revoked, whichever occurs first. In the absence of any of the foregoing actions, the provisions of this Order will terminate and be considered obsolete on March 1, 2017.

  
Secretary of the Interior

Date: MAR 02 2016