



THE SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR
WASHINGTON

CITATION

PARTNERS IN CONSERVATION AWARD

OUTDOOR RECREATION BUSINESS PLAN GUIDEBOOK TEAM

In recognition of the Federal and State partnership team which developed an innovative approach for streamlining and simplifying the business plan process for outdoor recreation areas and published the *Outdoor Recreation Business Plan Guidebook* for concession operations, state, city, and county park systems.

Outdoor recreation areas attract tourists and are used by local communities for recreation and family outings. In recent years, the Bureau of Reclamation has recognized the need to encourage better management of these areas to promote responsible use, and ensure optimal value. A need for a business planning tool became evident when Reclamation surveyed its non-Federal recreation partners and summary comments outlined the need to “encourage the use of best recreation business practices,” and to “strengthen the partners’ financial solvency.” In the past, business plans for outdoor recreation areas were generally written by consultants with little input from park managers, who had to implement them. The documents were expensive, complex and not user friendly. Realizing the need for a simple, concise and inexpensive approach to business plans, in the fall of 2006, Reclamation partnered with the Utah State Division of Parks and Recreation to produce such a guidebook. The result of this joint Federal, State and volunteer effort is the *Outdoor Recreation Business Plan Guidebook* that has streamlined the business plan approach for outdoor recreation areas. Park managers now have the tools to write their own business plans in a simple, clear and concise document that is easy to update. It is estimated that each business plan prepared by a consultant in the past, cost \$20,000 or more. Through the partnership efforts of Federal and State recreation professionals, these business plans can now be prepared more quickly and for less than half of the cost. After the *Outdoor Recreation Business Plan Guidebook* was published in July, 2008, the Utah Division of State Parks and Recreation promoted the presentation of the guidebook at the national meeting of the National Association of State Park Directors, providing Reclamation an opportunity to present this innovative and effective tool during a session. Before the meeting was over, 800 copies of the guidebook were requested by the state park directors from around the country for their staff. For the outstanding partnership among Federal, State and volunteer interests in developing the *Outdoor Recreation Business Plan Guidebook*, the Team is granted the Department of the Interior’s Partners in Conservation Award.