



national get outdoors day

What Makes a National Get Outdoors Day Event Successful

Our goal for 2013 is to have over **150 National Get Outdoors Day (GO Day) events attended by over 100,000 people**. What follows is an overview of some of the characteristics of a successful GO Day event. This is not a list of requirements. Few, if any GO Day events will embody all of these characteristics. However, larger and highly attended events will feature more of the aspects described below.

- 1) GO Day events are done as **a partnership effort, involving one hosting partner and a committee of 5 - 20 supporting partners**. Hosting partners can be a federal agency, a state or local agency, a private organization like the Boy Scouts of America, a university or a business, including businesses operating as permittees and concessioners on public lands;
- 2) each event will welcome all who come to learn more about healthy outdoor fun, but will **especially seek to attract segments of the local community that now benefit less from use of public lands and waters, including urban, economically disadvantaged and minority families**;
- 3) each GO Day event will include a **welcome/orientation center to greet the public** as they arrive and to help direct them to appropriate displays and activity centers;
- 4) each GO Day event will have a **mix of information centers and "active fun" sites** – places where guests, and especially kids, can cast, go geocaching, help put up a tent and more;
- 5) each GO Day event will include a place where guests can have **pictures taken with celebrities like Smokey Bear and other interesting attractions**, like eagles and hawks, and a way for those pictures to be transmitted electronically to the individuals and/or their families; and
- 6) each GO Day event will have a **sign-up center for youth to become part of programs and organizations designed to strengthen their connections to the outdoors**. These will include organizations like scouts and Boys and Girls Clubs as well as programs like Web Rangers;
- 7) each GO Day event will **highlight use of the internet to find things to do and places to go** in the Great Outdoors; and
- 8) many GO Day events will have a stage or other area for presentations by partners in the event and VIP visitors.

Beyond this, each event can and should capitalize on the opportunities at and near the hosting site. If the site includes access to water, fishing and boating and water safety should be contemplated. A ski area might offer free up-mountain trips on chairlifts or gondolas. Guided hikes, outdoor cooking demonstrations and more are possible additions.

Organizations expected to participate in most or all GO Day events are:

- ◆ major federal agencies, including the Forest Service, BLM, USACE, NPS, FWS, BOR and EPA;
- ◆ AmeriCorps and Take Pride in America;
- ◆ state park agencies;
- ◆ state fish and wildlife agencies;
- ◆ major youth organizations, including Boys Scouts of America;
- ◆ local park and recreation agencies;
- ◆ major recreation businesses, including manufacturers and retailers; and
- ◆ major recreation enthusiast membership organizations.

The nominating process for GO Day signature sites is now underway. Site selection will consider:

- ◆ Proximity to/easy access from one or more metropolitan areas
- ◆ Capacity to host 500 - 10,000 participants
- ◆ Existing food service, comfort stations and parking facilities
- ◆ Ease of involvement of multiple government and private-sector partners
- ◆ Ability to demonstrate traditional and non-traditional outdoor activities such as bird watching, hiking, fishing, camping and geocaching and to provide information to guests on pursuing those activities in the region.

Led by the USDA Forest Service and the American Recreation Coalition, GO Day 2012 was marked by 138 official sites nationally, involving hundreds of national and local organizations in the natural resources, recreation, healthcare, youth services, and media fields. GO-Day 2012 provided instruction, equipment and opportunities for tens of thousands to enjoy both traditional and new outdoor activities, regardless of previous experience.

For additional information, please go to www.nationalgetoutdoorsday.org or contact Tom Georgevits at the American Recreation Coalition at 202-682-9530.