

**America's Great Outdoors
Notes from Listening Session**

Location: Los Angeles, CA

Date: July 8, 2010

President Obama launched a national conversation about conservation in America at the White House Conference on the Great Outdoors on April 16, 2010. The President understands that protecting and restoring the lands and waters that we love and reconnecting people to the outdoors must happen at the local level. Therefore, President Obama directed the principal leaders of the Initiative to travel across the country to listen and learn from people directly involved in finding grassroots solutions to conserve our lands, waterways, historical and cultural resources and to reconnect Americans with the Outdoors. The President indicated that the sessions should engage the full range of interested groups, including tribal leaders, farmers and ranchers, sportsmen, community park groups, foresters, youth groups, businesspeople, educators, State and local government, recreation and conservation groups and others. The President placed a special priority on engaging with America's youth. Below are notes from the breakout groups at the Listening Session sorted by Discussion Question. Please feel free to use the ideation tool at <http://ideas.usda.gov/ago/ideas.nsf/> if you would like to share your thoughts.

Discussion Questions

1. What works: Please share your thoughts and ideas on effective strategies for conservation, recreation and reconnecting people to the outdoors.
2. Challenges: What obstacles exist to achieve your goals for conservation, recreation, or reconnecting people to the outdoors?
3. Federal government role: How can the federal government be a more effective partner in helping to achieve conservation, recreation or reconnecting people to the outdoors?
4. What additional tools and resources would help your efforts be even more successful?

Question (1-4)	Organization	Comments
2	Biologist-No organization	Most parks and Recreation areas do not have knowledge of the Insect Biota. Plants and Animals depend on insects this influences the habitat. The Habitat influences land use. A greater understanding of insects is imperative. Invasive Plant removal and control is important in maintain habitats overuse of land destroys habitat and carrying capacity needs to be monitored resulting in promotion of more land to use. In other woods is land is overused you need more land.
2	No organization	Preserve more natural areas, please, within urban environments. Arroyo Seco* area in the Southern Pasadena and La Canada. Please allow for the natural to remain as it is for a refuge for so many. Parks manicured into another category. We need more natural areas to the be preserved desperately. *It does have defined areas set aside for specific type of recreation-golfing, etc, but it has a large swath of natural area that is fairly well connected as well. The Arroyo also has a water filtration system that was a good example of integration

		of varied use, conservation and preservation.
2	Amigos de Los Rios	Amigos de Los Rios is a working nonprofit whose mission is to create a San Gabriel Valley Emerald Necklace. What will make our mission possible is fully supported interagency cooperation and collaboration at the local level, in particular between the Department of Transportation, The Army Corps of Engineers, and the Dept. of the Interior. Additionally, we seek designation of the San Gabriel Mountains and Forest and the Urban River Corridors as protected National Recreation Areas, fully funded, staffed supported and maintained. In order to continue our mission, we request that the Federal Clean Air and CWA funding go directly to the creation of multi-benefit community based green infrastructure. Thank you!
2	No organization	I truly hope we can recognize wild life not only in open spaces out in the wilderness but in the inner city too. Many disasters happened and the last thing that is inventoried or paid attention to is wild life and/or domestic animals. Please look at the grassroots level. I used to be a Director of a beautiful inner City Park that was a dumping ground for illegal sports such as dog fighting and cockfighting. These are issues overlooked. I could name many, but another one is the fact that many cities and our state do tree trimmings at the worst time of the year for the tree and utilities the state and fish and game codes 3503, 3513 and The Migratory Bird Act have all you have to do, because a mother to leave the nest and you have violated the act. Please look at assisting domestic pets-spay/renter's initiative, adopt, educate about animals at shelters. The link between animal abuse and human violence, etc. These are needs to be addressed because it is all connected.
1	No organization	Allow user groups to maintain trails. Contact schools to adopt a trail. Build more trails so it lessens traffic and trail evasion. OHV clubs and Mtn. Bike Boubs can maintain and build trails.
1	No organization	Create funding sources for multi-benefit projects and funding sources for urban parks in low-income urban areas.
3	No organization	Increase and fund urban park programs in the National Park Service. Funding showed prioritize low-income urban areas.
2,5	No organization	Challenges: Inter Office/Agency/National/State fighting each other over land (Competition driven), BLM Land used for drilling (Redrocks, UT), Urban sprawl, \$ the deciding facts over conservation 2) Getting kids involved, use of transportation, used of school programs 3) Take some ideas at TED.COM/Federal Government Role: Stop being a corporate sponsor, Local land trusts and non profits we live here, we will watch over the land/Solar, wind power, No more OIL and GAS Fossil Fuels

	2	No organization	To throw a wrench into the ideas of open space is that Endangered Species in fact. Wild Birds/mammals/reptiles/are more likely to be found /live/beed/feed in areas where people are not allowed the Forest Service Support a paper finding that more wild species live where people cannot go
	2	Ama District 37	Outdoor recreation must include off highway recreation. My family and I recreate off-road in the deserts of Southern CA. My 3 sons are 3rd generation desert motorcycle riders/racers; much of what they have learned as life lessons. There are currently 4 open areas where we are allowed to hold competitive events, Johnson Valley, @ 189,000 acres is the target area and is being targeted for takeover by 29 Palms Mairn Base. We must have an equal amount of open area provided to replace this cost acreage. 1,000,000 OHV's operate in California. 500,000 in Southern California if we lose areas to operate OHV there will be OHV operation in illegal area, doing damage to sensitive areas.
	2	No organization	Share Wilderness Areas with EVERYONE!! Off-rode, Horses, Bicycles. We have enough Wilderness. No More
1,2,3,4			1) Stop closing land to people who wish to use the trails and roads 2) Less Federal involvement 3) Cutting the Fed. Gov't 4) Tools-Chain Gangs use to work Fed trails and lands.
	2	No organization	Challenge: Retain consistent funding in LWCF and UPAR. Retain a State side funding level with 60% federal and 40% State side. Funding level of \$2B for LWC and \$300M for UPARR
	4	No organization	Prohibition of public funds spent on bottle water: Superfluous administrative cost: Environmentally disastrous: Link Parks and Multi-Benefit Projects (community gardens, water sheds, storm water collection) Federal land sales should have strict environmental regulations and priority should be given to conservation iniatives/buyers.
1,2,3,4		The Wildlands Conservancy	Challenges-support for responsive renewable energy development in the CA desert. It needs to happen on private disturbed lands closer to urban load centers, NOT in the treasured, pristine, untouched public lands in the core of the Mojave Desert. 2) The Federal Gov't needs to take the pressure off the BLM public lands in the CA Desert for renewable energy development by looking at ways to make it easy for cities and counties to have solar/wind development on private disturbed lands solar panels on commercial buildings. 3) Fully fund LWCF and AB811 program funding 4) What working: Private, local, non-profit land trusts. We are able to purchase & protect & then manage large landscape level chunks of land that the federal gov't doesn't have the tools/resources to save. We (TWC) through private donations and grants are able to save critical habitat "islands" between already protected lands National Parks to protect ecological corridors so we don't end with islands of biodiversity and unhealthy ecosystems. Help us to get funding so we can continue our jobs & mission. (ie: UCF

		stakeholders in federal process,
2,3	The Climate Registry	Challenge: Involving DOT and local transit agencies in increasingly the amount of bikeways and their safety in urban areas. The Federal Government could be more effective by changing some of their procurement processes to allow organizations to work with the Federal Government to implement programs (rather than implementing it themselves)
1,2,3	No organization	Engage the individual: sustainable landscape@home/local activities neighborhood parks 2) Redirect current funding away from "old" thinking projects like expanding mass transit, rail systems. Will work to alleviate port traffic our of the LA urban area. Rail the cargo-expand the metro rail for commuters. Look to other urban areas for creative solutions to urban sprawl and public transportation.
1,2,3,4	No organization	No Child Left Behind" in taking away opportunities for children to learn in their classrooms about environmental issues. There needs to be a federal mandate that would require students to have environment/conservation training including hands on, field trips, community service, to visit wild spaces, mountains, beachers, deserts, parks. Environmental Science camps should be a regular part of curriculum, once in elementary once in middle school, once in high school. Working on an environmental project and reporting on it should be requirement for graduation. Children need to be educated because they are going to carry on our passion. 2) Federal Government needs to fully fund the land and water conservation fund. Have a common sense, methodical plan for renewable energy that involves a variety of stakeholders. Plan renewable energy closer to urban centers where it is needed most. Get developers to NOT BUILD or develop - give them incentives to develop urban areas already built-rehab houses empty or up for rent. Fund community gardens, school gardens-kids need to know where their food comes from. More collaboration between grass roots agencies to work together-user friendly websites, kids' sites, that they will want to go to learn about environmental issues. More youth involvement.

1,2,3,4	Friends of the Pacific Electric Trail 501© 3	<p>Challenges: Getting all of every groups ideas and efforts coordinated (shen possible) and communicated well. The sharing of information is a key! If we can work with toher groups that we didn't know about before, we may help each other solve some of our own challenges. Get the kids outside!!! if they are in school all day, they think (are taught) that it is normal existance. What works? Get kids outside!!! Not only will they enjoy it but they will want to return outside. Getting them out and involved also will create a new generation of concerned active citizens. 3) Federal Government Role: Require cooperation's that have land leases on public land, to give back in a way that benefits the public (in the long term). Repair the damage caused, not take us out for a Latte! 4) Tools: Funding of course!! But getting the funding to each groups pet project isn't feasible so get into the schools to get the kids involved, have them go on field trips and camp outs and "day projects" to work on some of these grass roots organizations. They want to get their hands dirty.</p>
4	No organization	<p>Suggestion: National Park Serve should use volunteers (local) to maintain trails and keep areas open to public. This should be done more often! Advertise! There are plenty of people who would be interested but this needs to be made known (Engage the individual)</p>
3	No organization	<p>Citizenship Classes and Civic Education: The values of nature, not polluting & being a prudent user of resources are not universal values shared by all. Therefore I suggest that in addition to school curricula, adult immigrants should also be educated instead of memorizing the pledge of allegiance, immigrants seeking citizenship should know conservation principles, and more useful and important aspects of citizenship and stewardship</p>
1,2,3,4	No organization	<p>In order to ensure that the connections we help people make to the outdoors are lifelong and life-changing education must be a core component of how we make that connection. Getting youth out to our National Parks as part of residential environmental education programs, such as nature bridge field science programs will build a generating of environmental stewards who will make responsible decisions and take actions to protect and preserve our environment. The connections to nature young people make through residential environmental education programs such as NatureBridge Field Science Programs often light a spark in students the aturn into a lasting love of the outdoors and lifelong stewardship. The Federal Government should work to spur growth of NatureBridge and similar programs to increase the scale of these programs and number of youth that they reach. Invest dollars and resources. The Federal Govt: could be more effective partner by having more flexibility in the kinds of partners it works with and should work to remove obstacles to partnership or growth or partnership for nonprofit organizations. Provide resources to nonprofit partners to allow them to house and educate students</p>

		in national parks.
1,2,3,4	City of LA	Allow the USACE to use credit and funding from different funding sources to be used on the same projects ei: Flood control vs. ecosystem restoration. The USACE prioritizes projects in part on a \$ per acre criteria. Due to the cost of urban development this puts urban projects at a disadvantage compared to projects in areas where land is less available. The USACE typically requires a 35% total match which does not allow the match to be met from another federal funding sources. This local match requirement should be modified to facilitate collaboration between federal agencies. Funding for land acquisition should be available. Increase funding for the Land Water Conservation Fund for urban projects.
	3	Federal Govt: Needs to support new technologies to sustain communities and therefore result in less impacts to nearby open space and water courses. Example: Drinking water from sewer water, potable reclaimed water for local communities means less water drained from sensitive ecosystems. Fed education: policy mandating environmental awareness and literacy for school age students and training for teachers. Federal Govt: needs to continue to seek respect from multicultural leadership groups that may have different perspective of outdoor space and used them as ambassadors use them to open space to their constituents
1,2	Los Angeles Business Council	How can the Feds help??? In CA a landmark environmental legislation, AB 32 & SB375 are in jeopardy of being appeald in November 2010. The senior leadership here today should be more visible in CA and signal to candidates the Administrator support of these initiatives. Support Federal incentives to induce in basin/Urban Solar development to offset out of basin development such as solar feed. Visit website: www.solarfitylad.com to learn about the LA Business Council's campaign to induce urban and in basin solar generation.
	No organization	An accessible tool to consider is Video Voice Mapping that helps young people provide a window into their perspective. For more information contact Jeniffer Lopez.
	No organization	I would like to see public lands remain open for multi use: Mt. Biking, Hiking, Off Highway Vehicle Use, Legal use of vehicle access to back country. Much of the land is being closed at a high rate. I would like to see that what is available today to remain open for future generations. Also that the federal government would not recognize ignore those who enjoy using motorized travel to explore the public lands...

	3 The Wildlands Conservancy	Please help students and families reach us (nature preserves). As an environmental educator in 20 years I have noticed a steady loss of both environmental literacy outdoor skills. Schools do not have the funds for transportation and often they cannot take the time to participate in field study programs due to testing and other educational mandates. I encourage a Govt. emphasis on the funds for environmental education and funds for field trips.
1,2,3	No organization	NPSservice: Fund Urban Park Program, Prioritize low-income areas, land water conservation fund and increase funding for urban projects, school gardens and community gardens. NEPA/CEQA are required allow CEQA to suffice for 2 reports, as CEQA is the more stringent and includes NEPA requirements. Interagency Strategy Coordinate EPA, HUD, USDA, Task Force in LA
1.2.3.4	Amigos De Los Rios	We need a national resourced Area designated to include the San Gabriel Mountains URBAN River Corridors. To achieve this, I strongly believe that the Emerald Necklace will be able to transform the densely gray and urbanized San Gabriel Valley Region into a vibrant green landscape. The Interconnectivity of parks and trails have the ability to improve communities and will give residents greater accessibility to local and regional resources. Here are the many benefits the Emerald Necklace can bring to the San Gabriel Valley: it will bring green infrastructure jobs to local communities (water resource protection, urban forestry, sustainable landscaping careers) Emerald Necklace can be a valuable public asset it serves as a public park space and many youth adolescents in the San Gabriel Valley, It will help expand and preserve natural habitats and wildlife, It will also establish a more efficient transportation corridor for humans and native animals. Connecting with the San Gabriel Mtns. to the beach via natural and urbanized waterways. We have the following support: 25 cities, 3 HOAs, 3 school districts, 1 environmental group, 1 trail group, 1 state conservancy group and 1 county board of supervisors
2,4	Treepeople	In the LA Region, Water is among the most critical issues-Both Water supply and water quality. A century of misguided Development decisions exacerbate flooding and water pollution while conveying a precious supply to the ocean unused. What has been working in the LA Area is the slow but steady move toward multi-benefit capital improvement projects that capture water (both rainfall and dry weather rainoff) close to the site where it falls and either allows it to be absorbed into the ground to replenish local aquifers, or stored in cisterns or rain barrels for later use. These projects are best conducted through public-private partnerships between Government Agencies and local entities including NGOs and business. There are excellent examples of these projects in LA, including LA's newest green street-Elmer Avenue in Sun Valley. In order to make such projects status NGO we need Federal funding and mandates for

		mult-benefit projects.
2	OHV user	Include all recreational users in this agenda. Wilderness designations don't do this. They exclude many uses. Windmill farm destroyed wonderland, D.C. More damage in a year then what OHV could do in a lifetime. This Farm was for the use of the City of LaVerne.
3	National Trail Coordinator	Public trail use has fallen off. Please preserve the historic hiking/equestrian trails without any vehicular users. "Multi-use" concept of stuffing all users on the same trail has had a negative effect on trail use. When wheeled vehicles are added to trails, traditional uses abandon the trails due to safety and guilty life issues. Bikes and ORVs need their own separate areas. Mountain Biking is an extreme sport and does not belong on trails with slower moving traditional users.
3	No organization	For future listening sessions, I think it would be very important to spend less time on introductions and the move and more time on dialogue. It was very frustrating to me that most of the time was spent on repeating comments that had nothing to do with discussing concert problem solutions. I would like to see greater emphasis on attention to and incentive for not only community parks but also community gardens. I feel like gardens really address the intersection of environmental and racial concerns. Community garden not only help support cleaner air, soil, and water in Urban Areas, they also support food security and community security. In general an education and policy it truly needs to be a greater emphasis on the interconnectedness of racial concerns and environmental conservations.
1	No organization	The San Gabriel "Emerald Necklace" is park and trail network that provides multiple benefits we provide green open space, green job opportunities, and community outreach. The Emerald necklace needs to be fully supported by all the departments: Army Corps of Engineers, Transportation and the Interior we have faced many obstacles with funding and government department of the interior and our projects are eligible the obstacle we face are when we move into Army corps territory, our projects are halted. We need inter-agency cooperation's in order to make these multi beneficial projects. We provide not only Green open usable space in urban environments training, increased public healing, education and conservation we celebrate local natural and cultural history. Creating community investment which will allow successful urban parks and trails

	Pasadena Heritage	As secretary of the Interior Ken Salazar mentioned early this afternoon, "Historic Preservation" is part of telling America's story and getting people into the great outdoors". We need to embrace our national as well as our historic and cultural resources as part of this initiative. A big challenge to conserving our historic and cultural resources is the lack of full funding of the national historic preservation fund, which is the sister fund to the land and water conservation fund this gentleman in the audience just mentioned. The Federal govt can more effective by fully funding the historic preservation fund and increasing the capacity of local agencies to preserve and protect our historic sites through technical assistance and federal incentives
3	Community Hiking club	Please allow more funding for outdoor education for children. Currently grant shave been hard to come by in California. I know first lad Michelle Obama has made it her goal to decrease childhood obesity. In Santa Clarita, CA our local Community Hiking Club has included inner-city children who have never seen some of our local parks. We could solve obesity nationwide & also address the lack of our youth deciding to focus on science & math academics. Encourage the youth to be excited about nature & treasure the landscape, wildlife, and surrounding beauties. Also, I know we need to all come together. I personally would love to be a park ranger with CA State Parks; however the money has been funding projects of OHV use. Please allocate funding to interpretive programs with all parks. There are many parks you visit where there is no soul in sight to answer visitor questions. Please allow people to have an opportunity to share our knowledge to the next generation and families. Thank you for your support.
	Community Hiking club	Dear Ken Salazar, Last year I was provided the opportunity work seasonal as a nation park service employee with Craters of the Moon NP. I enjoyed that experience and I became a further advocated of how important our National Parks are. Unfortunately, it has been very difficult to continue working for NPS or other agencies which fall under the Department of Interior. It appears more opportunities are required to allow me to share my talents and continue for me to discover how great is to work with Federal Governments. I heard there would continue focus on the catastrophic Gulf Coast. I have been attempting to contact Fish and Wildlife Refuge areas that need intern mounting. I am passionate about preserving our great outdoors. If you could provide me with a point of contact. I would be willing to be of assistance to the people in Gulf. I am available in the long term. This situation will be here for a long while.

	2	No organization	Restoration of water ways, forest damaged by fire and human damage. In restoration concerned of the wildlife is important. Ex. Keeping or providing, corridors for the wildlife. Educating the children and adults to the importance and enjoy the great outdoors. State Parks have been closing due to lack of funds work with States to keep these parks open. Work with organizations such as local conservation groups, to build projects. Develop a cops similar to the CCC that can help restore and maintain our parks and forests plus provide jobs. Build our solar panels and wind turbines closer to where the energy is used. Help local governments in the development of capture of water run-off
	3	No organization	Hunters and Anglers have historically passed on their love of the outdoors to their children and others-However today they find more and more restrictions on the areas where they may hunt and fish. We need to make public lands public-Open them up to multiple use. Lack of access is primary reason hunters and anglers stop participating in these traditional sports. We need to provide grea or access to public land. Hunting and Angling grounds have many programs to connect people to the Great Outdoors. The San Diego Chapter of the Safari club hosts youth hunts interested youth hunt for the fun time each year. Continue to fund numerous conservation programs through one of our fundraising.
	1	No organization	Why not have urban naturalist guides like the naturalists in national parks to tell about the urban environmental history and cultural? Why are people allowed to carry guns in the National Parks? To kill animals? To kill people? Grizzly bears should not have been delisted form endangered species list. After study in glacier they were deemed not in danger-well all that would be necessary is one or two years with low berry crop or climate change and how likely is that? What can be done to prevent Arial gunning of wolves? Is that a state right to allow that or could the Federal Government step in and make a law against it? I believe it was allowed in the are just outside Yellowstone or in Utah and Alaska.
	2	No organization	Wild and Scenic Rivers Act-It was wonderful to har about the Federal Government's commitment to protect our rivers in today's presentation and look forward to seeing more WSRs designated her in the Eastern San Gabriel Mtns, So Cal, Cal and the rest of the US! It's a great tool and we need more designations! Thank you!
	3	No organization	Trash in Our Parks is a huge issue. We need more Park Rangers and Volunteers
	2	No organization- Environmental Educator	Environmental Educator less and less Environmental literacy, no transportation for the kids and Nature works-Help get kids out to parks.
1,2,3		Retired Engineer	Work with NGOs, Land Water Conservation Plan we are very interested in what Mr. Salazar is proposing on funding programs. How do we improve effectiveness of fund program.

		How do we increase ceiling of program fund. Message to Fed Reps: Failure to look at local success stories, Humbolt County resident, phone call to BLM-CA Office to know about successful stories OHV Community, Road decommissioning-not exclude OHV Community.
2	OHV member	Why has it been excluded off AGO Video? OHV activities? Don't exclude OHV include all recreational groups. Windmills took over our Valley (City of LaVerne) they took our beautiful areas for what? Energy Source? Is that Green?
2,3	Bicyclist-LA Bike Coalition	Bicycles: Green transportation: Benefits of cycling are enormous. Healthy, less consumption of oil. Reallocate space for bikes in LA. Not taking away but sharing roads with Bikes. Increase 3% for Transportation bill to extend bike trails. Provisions to include bikes, give space, National complete Street Policy.
2,3	Landscape Architect	Scale of Parks: Redefine Park system. Fund Non Point Source for Urban Park system. Developers should incorporate Parks, maintenance of parks is an issue. Maintenance for parks.
2,3		Solar Desert issue: Build Coalition, wilderness, recreational groups-S2921 provides to stake holders. Heritage of story telling, use websites to disburse.
2,3	Landscape Architect	Landscape Architect: JPA-Joint Power Authority, we have in CA. A way to facilitate Government. JPA can't access funding, compromise the mission. Don put transportation in the open bill spaces-Empowerment zone % of land used for kind of open space. Need to expand, bike pads, bike paths, usage of combining trails not a good idea.
2,3	UC San Diego Teacher	Global Action Research-Pro: Huge grant awarded to address water pollution to UCSD. We must look at watersheds. I am coordinating a bike ride from Vancouver, Canada to Tijuana to promote sustainability ideas and connections. Watershed Urban Research! Go with it!
2,3		High Desert multiple use-Drove to be part of this listening session process. Others have not forgotten, should not be forgotten -OHV/Wilderness/Equestrian users. Motorized sports, local astronomy club need access. Land Management-over 25 years. Now they want a Solar Plant for Ridge Crest? Don't Want It!!! Will use too much water to provide energy for LA! When does it stop!!
2	not available	Wilderness back country not being maintained for Families
2	not available	Gulf of Mexico? BP Oil Spill? Where is Salazar? That is one of our American Great Outdoors? Clean it Up!
2	not available	Clean up? Where can I go to volunteer, I want to help?
1	not available	Supporting Education to get kids out to the LA River. We need to connect with the communities. More funding for children's program and to focus more community issues.
1	not available	LA supply of Water: A century of misguidance-regular funding and mandates

