

113TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 1834

To establish a bipartisan 21st Century Great Outdoors Commission to assess the use, value, job creation, and economic opportunities associated with the outdoor resources of the public lands and other land and water areas of the United States, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MAY 6, 2013

Mr. GRIJALVA introduced the following bill; which was referred to the
Committee on Natural Resources

A BILL

To establish a bipartisan 21st Century Great Outdoors Commission to assess the use, value, job creation, and economic opportunities associated with the outdoor resources of the public lands and other land and water areas of the United States, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “21st Century Great
5 Outdoors Commission Act”.

1 **SEC. 2. ESTABLISHMENT OF COMMISSION.**

2 There is established in the legislative branch a bipar-
3 tisan 21st Century Great Outdoors Commission to assess
4 the use, value, job creation, and economic opportunities
5 associated with the outdoor resources of the public lands
6 and other land and water areas of the United States, and
7 for other purposes. The outdoor resources of the public
8 lands and other land and water areas of the United States
9 confer enormous benefits on the people of the United
10 States including providing clean water as well as economic
11 benefits.

12 **SEC. 3. FINDINGS.**

13 The Congress finds the following:

14 (1) Current research indicates that changing
15 demographics, impacts of climate change, lack of
16 public access, and funding shortfalls create chal-
17 lenges for land and recreation managers. The re-
18 search also affirms that outdoor resources present
19 opportunities for job creation and economic develop-
20 ment.

21 (2) Outdoor recreation is responsible for more
22 than \$646,000,000,000 in direct consumer spending,
23 generates more than \$80,000,000,000 in Federal,
24 State, and local taxes and supports more than
25 6,100,000 American jobs.

1 (3) Outdoor recreation opportunities are critical
2 to the Nation's 46,800,000 hunters and anglers who
3 generate at least 33,700,000,000 in economic activ-
4 ity nationwide.

5 (4) Outdoor recreation promotes better mental
6 and physical health for children. Research shows
7 that spending time outside enhances fitness and im-
8 proves academic achievement.

9 (5) Therapeutic and adaptive recreation pro-
10 grams provide invaluable benefits to disabled and in-
11 jured veterans. These programs not only aid in phys-
12 ical recovery but also help to address mental health
13 issues, such as post-traumatic stress disorder, and
14 other afflictions suffered by wounded warriors.

15 (6) It has been increasingly clear that land and
16 water available for outdoor recreation also has other
17 benefits to society including the protection of water
18 resources, the conservation of fish and wildlife habi-
19 tat, protection of communities from natural hazards
20 such as flooding and storms, reduction in air pollu-
21 tion and sustaining rural land uses such ranching,
22 farming, and forest management.

23 (7) The 2010 Census reports that four out of
24 five Americans now live in urban or metropolitan
25 areas, making the need for safe and accessible

1 “close-to-home” outdoor recreation opportunities
2 more important than ever.

3 (8) The American people have benefitted from
4 two federally initiated national reviews of outdoor
5 recreation resources in the latter half of the twen-
6 tieth century. The Outdoor Recreation Resources
7 Review Commission, established by legislation and
8 signed by President Eisenhower in 1958, issued its
9 report in 1962, which led to the passage of several
10 landmark conservation and outdoor recreation laws.
11 The President’s Commission on Outdoor Recreation,
12 established by Executive order by President Reagan
13 and Chaired by then Governor Lamar Alexander,
14 issued its report in 1987, the findings of which so-
15 lidified the importance of our Nation’s outdoor
16 recreation laws and further recognized the value of
17 partnerships and cooperation in ensuring outdoor
18 recreation opportunities for all Americans. The 21st
19 Century Great Outdoors Commission established in
20 this Act will build upon this foundation of existing
21 conservation and recreation programs that were cre-
22 ated from the previous commissions and will address
23 recreation and conservation needs in 21st century
24 America. Further, it will help guide policies to help

1 meet the demands for outdoor recreation and con-
2 servation throughout the Nation.

3 (9) The bipartisan Outdoor Resources Review
4 Group, through Resources for the Future, reported
5 on the State of the Great Outdoors in 2009 identi-
6 fying issues with the supply and financing of out-
7 door recreation opportunities.

8 (10) The Obama Administration launched the
9 America's Great Outdoors Initiative to develop a
10 21st century conservation and recreation agenda.
11 The America's Great Outdoors Initiative led to the
12 Federal Interagency Council on Outdoor Recreation,
13 which strives to support and enhance outdoor recre-
14 ation access and opportunities on Federal public
15 lands, waters, and shores.

16 (11) The bipartisan Western Governors' Asso-
17 ciation released a report in 2012 identifying chal-
18 lenges and recommending strategies for providing
19 outdoor recreation experiences in the Western
20 United States.

21 (12) It has been over 25 years since the last
22 presidentially directed review of America's conserva-
23 tion and outdoor recreation needs. The people of the
24 United States would benefit from a new federally
25 initiated bipartisan review of American outdoor re-

1 sources and from policy recommendations including
2 how to maximize the economic opportunities associ-
3 ated with changing use patterns, how differing re-
4 gions can access American outdoor resources, and
5 how Federal, State, local, and private interests can
6 address existing challenges.

7 **SEC. 4. DEFINITIONS.**

8 For the purposes of this Act:

9 (1) COMMISSION.—The term “Commission”
10 means the 21st Century Great Outdoors Commis-
11 sion.

12 (2) OUTDOOR RESOURCES.—The term “outdoor
13 resources” means the land and water areas and as-
14 sociated resources of such areas in the United States
15 and its territories and possessions, which provide or
16 may in the future provide opportunities for outdoor
17 recreation and enjoyment.

18 (3) OUTDOOR RECREATION.—The term “out-
19 door recreation” means use of outdoor resources,
20 both developed and undeveloped, in urban, suburban,
21 and rural areas, including backcountry and dis-
22 persed recreation on public lands.

23 **SEC. 5. COMPOSITION OF COMMISSION.**

24 (a) MEMBERSHIP.—

1 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Commission shall be
2 composed of 11 members, appointed not later than
3 60 days after the date of the enactment of this Act,
4 as follows:

5 (A) Two members who shall be appointed
6 by the Speaker of the House of Representatives.

7 (B) One member who shall be appointed
8 by the minority leader of the House of Rep-
9 resentatives.

10 (C) Two members who shall be appointed
11 by the majority leader of the Senate.

12 (D) One member who shall be appointed
13 by the minority leader of the Senate.

14 (E) Five members who shall be appointed
15 by the President from among persons who are
16 broadly representative of the people of the
17 United States, only two of which shall be from
18 the President's political party.

19 (2) TERM.—Each member shall be appointed
20 for the life of the Commission.

21 (3) VACANCY.—A vacancy in the Commission
22 shall not affect its powers and shall be filled in the
23 manner in which the original appointment was
24 made.

25 (b) COMPENSATION.—

1 (1) PER DIEM.—Each member of the Commis-
2 sion may be compensated at an amount not to ex-
3 ceed the daily equivalent of the annual rate of basic
4 pay in effect for a position at level IV of the Execu-
5 tive Schedule under section 5315 of title 5, United
6 States Code, for each day during which that member
7 is engaged in the actual performance of the duties
8 of the Commission.

9 (2) EXPENSES.—While away from their homes
10 or regular places of business in the performance of
11 services for the Commission, members of the Com-
12 mission shall be allowed travel expenses, including
13 per diem in lieu of subsistence, in the same manner
14 as persons employed intermittently in the Govern-
15 ment service are allowed expenses under section
16 5703(b) of title 5, United States Code.

17 (c) MEETINGS; QUORUM; RULES OF PROCEDURE.—

18 (1) INITIAL MEETING.—Not later than 30 days
19 after the date on which all members of the Commis-
20 sion have been appointed, the Commission shall hold
21 its first meeting. At the first meeting, the Commis-
22 sion shall designate a chair.

23 (2) SUBSEQUENT MEETINGS.—Subsequent
24 meetings shall be held at the call of the Chair.

1 (3) QUORUM.—Five members of the Commis-
2 sion shall constitute a quorum, but a lesser number
3 may hold hearings.

4 (4) RULES.—The Commission may establish
5 rules of procedure for the conduct of the Commis-
6 sion’s business, if such rules are not inconsistent
7 with this Act or other applicable law.

8 (d) ADVISORY COUNCIL.—The Commission shall es-
9 tablish an advisory council to assist the Commission in
10 carrying out its duties. The Advisory Council shall consist
11 of the liaison officers involved with the Federal Inter-
12 agency Council on Outdoor Recreation, together with 20
13 additional members appointed by the Commission. The
14 Commission shall consider broad-based geographical and
15 interest representation, including citizens involved with
16 local parks and recreation centers, outdoor recreation at
17 the local, State, and Federal levels, public health, local
18 recreation businesses, hunting and fishing activities, other
19 wildlife interests, land conservation, historic, and cultural
20 preservation, and other natural resource-based activities.

21 **SEC. 6. DUTIES.**

22 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Commission, in its inquiries,
23 findings, and recommendations, shall recognize that—

24 (1) present and future solutions to problems of
25 outdoor resources and opportunities are responsibil-

1 ities at all levels of government, from local to Fed-
2 eral, and of individuals and private organizations;

3 (2) lands, waters, forest, rangelands, wetlands,
4 wildlife, and such other natural resources serve mul-
5 tiple purposes; and

6 (3) sound planning of resource use for the full
7 future welfare of the Nation must include coordina-
8 tion and integration of multiple uses such as eco-
9 nomic development, energy development, recreation,
10 historic preservation, and conservation.

11 (b) SPECIFIC DUTIES.—The duties of the Commis-
12 sion are as follows:

13 (1) Review and augment existing contemporary
14 research on outdoor resources, including numerous
15 economic studies, and identify areas that have not
16 been thoroughly researched.

17 (2) Use existing research to better determine
18 use patterns, expectations, and resource needs.

19 (3) Conduct detailed case studies of use, chal-
20 lenges, and successes associated with outdoor re-
21 sources in every region of the United States to bet-
22 ter understand regional opportunities and challenges
23 in urban, suburban, and rural areas. The Commis-
24 sion, working with the Advisory Council, shall deter-
25 mine regional boundaries and case study locations.

1 (4) Evaluate existing Federal funding programs
2 to determine how well they can work better to ac-
3 complish more conservation and recreation objec-
4 tives.

5 (5) Evaluate the role that the Federal Govern-
6 ment plays in preserving and enhancing recreational
7 opportunities and associated regional economies vis-
8 à-vis States, localities, and the private sector.

9 (6) Evaluate and identify opportunities, prac-
10 tices, and investment strategies where the conserva-
11 tion of land for outdoor recreation can also serve
12 other needs such as—

13 (A) the responsible and effective reuse of
14 relinquished military property for public benefit;

15 (B) protection of water resources;

16 (C) the conservation of fish and wildlife
17 habitat;

18 (D) providing buffers from natural hazards
19 such as storms and floods; and

20 (E) sustaining traditional uses of rural
21 land such farming, ranching, and forest man-
22 agement.

23 (7) Provide policy recommendations, including
24 recommendations on how to—

1 (A) address key challenges such as climate
2 change;

3 (B) use outdoor resources to improve
4 health;

5 (C) account for the effects of increasing
6 urbanization on outdoor resources and recre-
7 ation;

8 (D) maximize access to recreation for un-
9 derserved communities, including outdoor pro-
10 grams for youth;

11 (E) maximize access to adaptive and thera-
12 peutic recreation programs for disabled and in-
13 jured veterans;

14 (F) use recreation to strengthen regional
15 economies;

16 (G) preserve regional recreation economies;
17 and

18 (H) improve the use of existing funding
19 and programs for conservation and recreation.

20 (c) REPORTS.—

21 (1) INTERIM AND PROGRESS REPORTS.—The
22 Commission, on its own initiative or on request of
23 the President or the Congress, shall prepare interim
24 or progress reports on particular phases of its re-
25 view.

1 (2) FINAL REPORT.—Not later than 18 months
2 after the date on which all members of the Commis-
3 sion have been appointed, the Commission shall
4 present a report of its review and its recommenda-
5 tions to the President, Congress, and State Gov-
6 ernors. The report and recommendations shall—

7 (A) be presented in such form as to make
8 them of maximum value to State, local, and re-
9 gional entities;

10 (B) include recommendations as to means
11 whereby the review may effectively be kept cur-
12 rent in the future; and

13 (C) include recommendations for the near
14 future and for further action in 2020 and 2040.

15 **SEC. 7. POWERS OF THE COMMISSION.**

16 (a) CONTRACTING.—The Commission may, to such
17 extent and in such amounts as are provided in advance
18 in Acts of appropriation, enter into contracts to enable the
19 Commission to discharge its duties under this Act.

20 (b) INFORMATION FROM FEDERAL AGENCIES.—

21 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Commission is author-
22 ized to secure directly from any executive depart-
23 ment, bureau, agency, board, commission, office,
24 independent establishment, or instrumentality of the
25 Federal Government, information, suggestions, esti-

1 mates, and statistics for the purposes of this Act.
2 Each department, bureau, agency, board, commis-
3 sion, office, independent establishment, or instru-
4 mentality shall, to the extent authorized by law, fur-
5 nish such information, suggestions, estimates, and
6 statistics directly to the Commission, upon request
7 made by the chairman, the chairman of any sub-
8 committee created by a majority of the Commission,
9 or any member designated by a majority of the
10 Commission.

11 (2) RECEIPT, HANDLING, STORAGE, AND DIS-
12 SEMINATION.—Information shall only be received,
13 handled, stored, and disseminated by members of
14 the Commission and its staff consistent with all ap-
15 plicable statutes, regulations, and Executive orders.

16 (c) ASSISTANCE FROM FEDERAL AGENCIES.—

17 (1) GENERAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION.—
18 The Administrator of General Services shall provide
19 to the Commission, on a reimbursable basis, admin-
20 istrative support and other services for the perform-
21 ance of the Commission's functions.

22 (2) OTHER DEPARTMENTS AND AGENCIES.—In
23 addition to assistance under paragraph (1), depart-
24 ments and agencies of the United States may pro-
25 vide to the Commission such services, funds, facili-

1 ties, staff, and other support services as they deter-
2 mine advisable and as may be authorized by law.

3 (d) GIFTS.—The Commission may accept, use, and
4 dispose of gifts or donations of services or property.

5 (e) POSTAL SERVICES.—The Commission may use
6 the United States mails in the same manner and under
7 the same conditions as departments and agencies of the
8 United States.

9 **SEC. 8. STAFF.**

10 (a) IN GENERAL.—

11 (1) COMPENSATION.—The chairman, in accord-
12 ance with rules agreed upon by the Commission,
13 may appoint and fix the compensation of a staff di-
14 rector and such other personnel as may be necessary
15 to enable the Commission to carry out its functions,
16 without regard to the provisions of title 5, United
17 States Code, governing appointments in the competi-
18 tive service, and without regard to the provisions of
19 chapter 51 and subchapter III of chapter 53 of such
20 title relating to classification and General Schedule
21 pay rates, except that no rate of pay fixed under this
22 subsection may exceed the equivalent of that payable
23 for a position at level V of the Executive Schedule
24 under section 5316 of title 5, United States Code.

25 (2) PERSONNEL AS FEDERAL EMPLOYEES.—

1 (A) IN GENERAL.—The executive director
2 and any personnel of the Commission who are
3 employees shall be employees under section
4 2105 of title 5, United States Code, for pur-
5 poses of chapters 63, 81, 83, 84, 85, 87, 89,
6 and 90 of that title.

7 (B) MEMBERS OF COMMISSION.—Subpara-
8 graph (A) shall not be construed to apply to
9 members of the Commission.

10 (b) DETAILEES.—Any Federal Government employee
11 may be detailed to the Commission without reimbursement
12 from the Commission, and such detailee shall retain the
13 rights, status, and privileges of his or her regular employ-
14 ment without interruption.

15 (c) EXPERT AND CONSULTANT SERVICES.—The
16 Commission is authorized to procure the services of ex-
17 perts and consultants in accordance with section 3109 of
18 title 5, United States Code, but at rates not to exceed the
19 daily rate paid a person occupying a position at level IV
20 of the Executive Schedule under section 5315 of title 5,
21 United States Code.

22 (d) VOLUNTEER SERVICES.—Notwithstanding sec-
23 tion 1342 of title 31, United States Code, the Commission
24 may accept and use voluntary and uncompensated services
25 as the Commission determines necessary.

1 **SEC. 9. NONAPPLICABILITY OF FEDERAL ADVISORY COM-**
2 **MITTEE ACT.**

3 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Federal Advisory Committee
4 Act (5 U.S.C. App.) shall not apply to the Commission.

5 (b) PUBLIC MEETINGS AND RELEASE OF PUBLIC
6 VERSIONS OF REPORTS.—The Commission shall—

7 (1) hold public hearings and meetings to the ex-
8 tent appropriate; and

9 (2) release public versions of the reports re-
10 quired under section 6(c).

11 (c) PUBLIC HEARINGS.—Any public hearings of the
12 Commission shall be conducted in a manner consistent
13 with the protection of information provided to or developed
14 for or by the Commission as required by any applicable
15 statute, regulation, or Executive order.

16 **SEC. 10. TERMINATION OF COMMISSION.**

17 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Commission, and all the au-
18 thorities of this Act, shall terminate 60 days after the date
19 on which the final report is submitted under section 6(c).

20 (b) ADMINISTRATIVE ACTIVITIES BEFORE TERMI-
21 NATION.—The Commission may use the 60-day period re-
22 ferred to in subsection (a) for the purpose of concluding
23 its activities, including providing testimony to committees
24 of Congress concerning its reports and disseminating the
25 final report.

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