

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

Location: Kissimmee, Florida

Date: August 26, 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

- Y1. Where do you go when you are not indoors?
- Y2. What do you do personally to protect the environment?
- Y3. What are some obstacles and challenges that prevent young people from spending time outdoors?
- Y4. What recommendations would you make to President Obama to get more young people engaged in, and connected to, the outdoors?

Discussion Question Y1-Y4	Comment
Y2	Community cleanups, eyes open more
Y4	Use TV or internet to show parks and refuges, what is going on in them and what to do. Use Facebook and Twitter too.
Y3	Homework
Y3	Homework
Y3	Homework
Y3	Homework, Pressure from school
Y1	Open field for soccer
Y4	Outside time in school
Y2	Pick up litter and trash
Y2	Pick up litter and trash
Y1	Recreational sports
Y2	Recycle
Y1	Running, sports
Y1	Sports
Y1	Swimming team
Y3	Technology, homework
Y3	Transportation

Y2	Trash, litter, recycle
Y1	Tries to manage special time to be outside
Y4	Video to show what will happen if we don't start taking care of our environment
Y4	Visual to help guide youths towards stewardship
Y2	Worries about storm run-off
Y2	Worries about water pollution
Y1	Enjoy Wekiva state park with family
Y3	Kids play so many video games at such a young age
Y4	Build more fields for the public not for just school.
Y1	Family bike rides, kayaks, camping and biking
Y3	Studying takes up time but try to study outside.
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Y4	Schools don't put emphasis on outdoors play.
Y1	Cross-country runner, running through woods best experience, seeing deer, enjoying the peacefulness, before it is disturbed.
Y4	Degradation of habitat, trees being taking down, worries about eagles, worries about aquifer.
Y4	Trawlers are dangerous for sea turtles, TEDs are not effective enough.
Y3	The way that society evolves, it's busy.
Y1	Scouting got him interested in outdoors.
Y1	Likes camping
Y3	In this county, there are limited opportunities for camping. It seems like there is lots of open space but it is not used for that.
Y1	Remember being outside at summer camp all day.
Y3	Distractions from technology.
Y3	South Florida, loss of wetlands, pushes agriculture out into wildlife, not so much opportunity to get away from urban sprawl.
Y1	Like to visit Lake West Toho here in Orlando
Y1	Western National Park; Quiet wildlife recreation
Y1	Place where I cannot see other people or life
Y3	Oil Spill
Y3	Aquifer; all air pollution seen and not seen; pesticide in environment and septic/water tank pollution of water
Y3	Can and bottle litter in water; lack of recycling
Y3	Rampant development; air pollution by car; evasive plant; bottled water drinking is excessive
Y3	Climate change; boating hazardous to manatee; strip mining
Y3	Soil erosion
Y3	Cool video games, Xbox
Y3	Too much TV; technology keeps kids indoors
Y3	Traffic pollution/gases; no physical education in school

Y3	Cost to enter park/recreation, not able to bring in items; no access to nature or the beaches
Y3	Air Conditioning (turn 'em off)
Y3	Safety
Y3	More encouragement from family and adults
Y4	More park area to enjoy; developing nature clubs; better information and advertising; learn about local recreation and parks at school environmental class in school
Y4	Restrict development
Y4	Create wetland around the treatment plants; use of wetland to augment
Y4	More volunteers/increase number of student hires; high school or college credit for outdoors contribution)