

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

Location: Salt Lake City, UT

Date: August 3, 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?

Comments	Question (1-4)
Yellowstone	1
Anywhere near water--rivers, lakes.	1
Boys and Girls Club	1
Canyons	1
Hiking	1
Moab	1
Go to mountains for skiing in winter	1
Spiral Jetty at the Great Salt Lake	1
Bear Lake	1
Go different places for different reasons. Wilderness for quiet. City parks for people. Wilderness solitude and city parks.	1
Bike riding	1
Watching soccer games	1
Lay on the lawn and look at the clouds and/or stars	1
Climb Trees	1
River Running	1

Swimming	1
Jackson Lake	1
Escalante	1
Fishing--lake, stream	1
Tubing	1
Going to California. Traveling - going to California to the beach.	1
Riding Bicycle	1
Swings at the park	1
Street festivals, events at the park	1
Ghost town hunting	First Experience Outdoors
Camping with family and friends	First Experience Outdoors
Boating at Willard Bay	First Experience Outdoors
Building huts out in the field behind the house	First Experience Outdoors
Go to mountains, canyon trails. Not developed lands and not big cities	1
Go somewhere when there is no noise, no technology, quiet	1
Fairly close and quiet...away from society	1
Go off trail where it is allowed...hiking alone	1
Bench areas and riparian areas nearby by not more than a few hours away	1
Areas that reminded him of home, but not near a city...from reservation lands	1
Parks	1
Areas close by...little plots of land....little jingle jungles.....away from it all, but close by	1
Look out on horizon and see for miles and miles....undeveloped. Vista views and extended landscapes.	1
Anywhere where he can go and let his dog run	1
Away from motorized vehicles and where it is quiet	1
Yellowstone, waterfalls, big trees	1
Places not filled with pavement or telephone wires	1
Uintah and mountains	1
When young - just the raw outdoors - now it's just being outside in the park or canyon or on the river....just being outside	1
Trees that she could not put her arms around	1
Just being away from humans with no evidence of disturbances. No lasting impressions of man.	1
Like hiking, anything	1

Like canoeing	1
Sport	1
From Logan, like nature, anything outside	1
Live in Hyrum, from Mexico; feel alive when you see trees and mountains	1
Logan. Like learning about the flora and fauna of new regions	1
Logan. Like campfires.	1
Like to hike outside with dogs	1
Bike, ski, hike	1
Bike, ski, kayak	1
Backpacking, dogs - tea	1
Mountains, lakes, trees, sports, fun, water, life, rocks, leaves, soil, birds, wildlife	1
Picnic, camping	1
Never really went outdoors before I joined the youth corps	1
Sailing (Gulf of Mexico), feeling the wind on your face and knowing any moment you can capsizes; see fish jump. Pineview: dirt cliff with swallows	1
Anywhere in the Rocky Mountains, Mount Massive and Mount Obert area. Backpacking, rock-climbing. 4-5 climbs a year. Colorado backcountry.	1
Higher elevation forests, self proficient in the outdoors, working on survival skills. Live more of a healthy lifestyle	1
Hiking, backpacking, trail running. Likes close trails but not overcrowded.	1
Enjoy hiking. Get away from city life	1
Camping, hiking, rock climbing	1
Exploring. I want to explore more, having fun.	What do you want to do more of.
Environmental learning. Learning names of plants and birds. I want to learn the names of plants and birds.	What do you want to do more of.
Cedar Breaks National Monument. Want to teach people. I want to teach people about nature. You talk to your friends and by talking to them you teach them and they appreciate it more.	What do you want to do more of.
Would like more opportunity to go outdoors and do things. I would like more opportunities to go out and get outside. Everyone always goes to movies.	What do you want to do more of.
Camping. Have never been camping. I have never been camping- real camping.	What do you want to do more of.
Need more time to do things.	What do you want to do more of.

Sanctuary. Getting away from chaotic life. Being in nature is getting back to the basic. For me the great outdoors means sanctuary. Sanctuary from our everyday life- cars, downtown. Being outdoors and in nature is going back to the basic.	What I like about the outdoors/ what I experience
Education. Detail. Confidence. I associate the great outdoors with education. Learning and appreciating.	What I like about the outdoors/ what I experience
She worked in the Moab FO to help implement travel management plans....lots of problems and issues with OHV users. Great experience to see rehabilitation working after it was trashed by OHVs.	2
Pick up trash - garbage that no one picks up	2
Pick up litter.	2
Dana and Marcus of part of environmental club at community college. Started recycling program at school. PSA's on YouTube--SLCC on YouTube.	2
Reduce energy. Recycle. Reuse.	2
Avoid throwing away gum wrappers on the ground. No tolerance for littering. I don't like how people chew gum and just throw it away and don't put it in a wrapper. No tolerance for littering.	2
Recycling at apartment complex. Community contract reduce recycle. Active recycling programs in school and apartments.	2
Get kids outside to partake in education. You can go to public schools and volunteer to do outreach programs. Kids learn outdoors and relate. You can be outside at school and have a lesson and it would be an easy way to educate outside.	2
We can all be leaders. Educate. Open to policy of students and people coming in to help and learn at school. "I can make an impact" attitude. We can all be good leaders, educate and be open of not only students but anyone to help and learn and realize that as an individual has a huge impact. It really adds up.	2
Intern specialist/volunteer coordinator	2
Volunteer for youth and senior services, I get outside a lot working with groups and permittees, sea kayak and skiing	2
Uintah camp, 3 years. Living outdoors is part of my job which I love.	2
Paleontologist; dinosaurs, lab outside, park service, former Park Service; volunteer EMT	2
Grew up skiing in Utah, do hydrology, watershed management	2
Coordinate Utah youth corps	2
Inversions due to cars. Get more people on bikes. More public farms for community farms. Smoking bad air, inversions. I would love to see more community farms.	3

Runoff from pesticides from agriculture that runs into water that affects our wildlife (fish). Emphasis catch and release because fish are being poisoned. There is a lot of runoff from pesticides for example to our fish and downstream	3
Lack of conscientiousness. Took kids to sewer treatment plant. Great eye opener. Landfills. See pollution on the side of the road. But don't pay attention until you see what goes on daily. Bring attention to consequence of each action. Make informed decisions. The biggest problem I've noticed is lack of conscientiousness. People not being aware of how their trash and pollution really goes somewhere and the consequences of our actions. Bringing people's attention to the consequences of their actions on small to large scale.	3
Big city problems are coming to the national lands/parks. Skies are more and more polluted. More light pollution at night. The big city problems are coming to the national lands. You used to go to the parks and see crystal clear beauties. When you go to the national parks and it is there it is sad.	3
Sanctuary. If something is not done eventually. There will be no sanctuary. If something is not done, there will be no sanctuary for us.	3
Air quality. It is the biggest environmental concern in his community (Logan). Air quality- the biggest in our community I would say and it is spreading everywhere else.	3
Mining and drilling in fragile areas. Off-road use in fragile areas. Mining and OHV use in areas and how these impact these rural areas and those resources.	3
Shopping district not close enough to walk. Must drive. Poor city planning. I have to drive far to get places.	3
Dedicated green areas. We need designated green areas. To help keep the air clean.	3
Community gardens.	3
Don't know where to go or to look for information....hard to find trails and camping spots. Not enough online....lack of information	3
What can they do and go when where can they go when they are out in the wild....don't know what they can and can't do.	3
Too much TV and video games	3
Lack of information and education and motivation to go outside - just get out and do stuff!!! It's not boring if you go out and make yourself get involved.	3
Need a role model to take kids out to do things....so important for a role model to take them out and experience other things	3
Need to motivate parents to take kids out and have fun....take a cheap vacation and go camping. Plan activities and vacations outside. Get the kids outside!	3

Parental attitudes make a huge difference. Hispanic parents are often not sure if it is safe to go outside. Kids don't have enough opportunities to go out into the environment and experience the outdoors due to safety issues and fear. Need to spend more time online learning about what kids can do. Need a clearinghouse for Google-ing outdoor activities...need better websites.	3
Need more than just knowing that there is stuff online or being told that there is something out there. Need folks to take kids out and experience the outdoors...interpretive hikes and discussion....makes a lot deeper impression and hits home. Field trips and volunteer interpretive folks to help kids in school.	3
Lack of funding for field trips...can't afford buses to take kids out. Need greater outreach so that teachers know where to go and what to do with Federal Agencies	3
School focus is not on getting kids outside to enjoy the great outdoors - it's to just pass basic tests. The no child left behind does not help this endeavor	3
Biology classes and science classes in school should be more pertinent to the outdoors up close and personal. Need to experience it...physically touch and sense it. More emphasis on little mini ecosystems. Instead of buying text books that don't mean a lot....look at local pamphlets.	3
Environmental problems that are in the community. Negative affects health. The environmental problems we do have in our community prevent me from going outdoors - the air quality.	3
Parent standpoint. Parents are afraid to let their kids to run and play in the outdoors (bogeyman). Fears don't match the facts.	3
Technology. Most people want to be on the computer/TV than being outside. Have time limits. Spending too much time with technology. There needs to be time limits on the internet.	3
Weather. Too hot, too cold.	3
Money. Lack of. Funding issues. Too expensive. Money, too expensive fees and gas money. As a college student, I am not going to pay 25 dollars to go to a National park. A student pass would be nice.	3
Fees. Student year. Money. Lack of. Funding issues. Too expensive. Money, too expensive fees and gas money. As a college student, I am not going to pay 25 dollars to go to a National park. A student pass would be nice.	3
What kind of wildlife/insects are out there. How do I react? The unknown about wildlife- fear of meeting a bear.	3
Jobs. Indoor business--not getting outside enough. Jobs, indoor business, jobs keep us inside.	3
Personal health not allowing you to go outside. Being sick, personal health, injury.	3

Support. Portability issues. Opportunities that you need people for (rock climbing). Find other people that are interested in what you are doing. Community interaction. Support, there are lots of opportunities but you need people to go with, to find other people that are interested in what you are doing.	3
Boating - water levels have dropped. Water has become less clear and declined in health. Oil pops out underneath boats. Zebra mussels. Seen a good response to zebra mussels. Water levels dropping and water becoming dirty - less clear. I notice boats with oil leaking out and things need to be done about it. The mussels issue could be expanded upon to teach people about more issues.	3
Littering. Our freeways are always littered and trash floating around.	3
Must have a level of respect when going outdoors. Not making footprints. Clean up after yourself. There is a level of respect that is needed when you are outdoors. Leaving things as they are, not leaving footprints.	3
Where do you put your investments? There are so many different activities to do.	3
Create more outdoor jobs. Utah Conservation Corps part of the new deal the President started. Jobs work.	4
Grant from Golden Spike National Monument provides jobs for kids under 18. Grants get kids working in the outdoors, experiencing the outdoors. Make more money available to national parks and then they can provide more jobs to kids, which gets them used to the outdoors and gives them an experience.	4
Identify projects for schools to do. Give opportunities for schools to encourage activities outdoors.	4
Encourage more organizations like clubs to help the environment.	4
Create community grants/resources for development of outreach for other people. They could be used for cleanup projects, service projects with schools to clean up parks- provide service while learning through schools.	4
Clean up projects in school--parks, trails, etc. Service learning in high school.	4
Expanding the Junior Ranger programs.	4
More money into grants. Soft money, grant money doesn't work. Hard budgets so groups will remain. It's been proven that soft money doesn't work. Hard budgets. Encourage/create 'Bike Libraries'.	4
Integrate outdoors into education. Integrate outdoors and education.	4
Mandatory involvement in schools. Have a mandatory involvement K-12.	4
Many schools are eliminating recess- that takes away outdoors.	4
Integrating curriculum.	4
Make more programs. National parks could start programs. More programs and activities in parks like street festivals.	4

Top three priorities: School projects (service learning). More funding (grants).	4
Community based involvement and funding. Education based service. National park development of community jobs.	4
support outdoor recreation and education groups.....poorer kids need tax breaks or funding support to help them buy fishing and camping equipment.	4
Create a naturalists "bus" to travel to schools and let them experience a mini outdoors...or travel to outdoor places. Need an educator/naturalist to help them learn.	4
Influence - turn thoughts into actions. Especially in grade schools. Advertise the outdoors to the youth.	4
Leave no Trace will teach free classes - get in touch with local outdoor educator to teach a class on the principals of this strategy. This is under-utilized because folks don't know it's there. Teach about preserving the outdoors...interpretive walks and education. Fund youth corps...especially Americorps	4
Support multiethnic and bilingual youth corps....excellent way to teach each other about the preservation and conservative culture.	4
The experience of Americorps has taught many to go to school and focus on what is important in life. Motivation, education, experience....pushed her to move forward and want a college education.	4
Add an environmental education component at all levels of education from preschool on up through high school so that there is a connection to the land with reason and rationale for why they are doing it.	4
Have a volunteer program.....interactive webpage to get mentors to join kids on hikes and do interpretive and mentoring experiences.	4
Updating Federal and State webpages for local information so that kids can actually find information. Use technology to advertise the outdoors.	4
Federal Agencies helping volunteers through support....scout days, field trips, maps, etc. Partnering of agencies to support kids/youth other than just funding.	4
Encourage positive role models to influence and teach.	4
Need more environmental education; and natural history --> No child left inside	4
More outdoor education in the schools including more funded field programs, better paid teachers	4
Show that there are opportunities for careers in the outdoors, and support programs like the Utah Conservation Corps - Bilingual Youth Corps that develop skills, make connections, learn about natural resources, and get paid	4
Developing environmental stewardship through community service, and volunteering	4
Not allow video games	4
Local activities need to be advertised more with modern day social media and	4



different means.	
Make better signs	4
Education programs to teach youth about conservation and how to be environmentally friendly.	4
Play soccer	4
You're taking valuable skills away due to funding. Cutbacks.	4
Scholarships for the future plus hands on experience. Look at curriculum and education opportunities that are out there.	4
Pass laws regarding how much property can be developed.	4