

Conference To Highlight Recreation, Parks and Trails In Idaho, Montana and Wyoming

If you recreate in the great outdoors or take part in organized recreation programs and want to learn about the latest trends and issues, don't miss the Tri-State Recreation, Parks, and Trails Conference October 6 - 9 in West Yellowstone, Montana. The Holiday Inn West Yellowstone serves as the venue for this conference that will attract professionals, advocates, volunteers and businesses.

Two exceptional full-day workshops will bookend the conference. On October 6, a regional Getting Children Outside workshop will kick off the conference. With changing lifestyles and advancements in technology, fewer children enjoy and learn from dispersed outdoor activities. The workshop will address nature deficit disorder, data collected in the region, current issues, trends and initiatives. Jack Shea, Executive Director of Teton Science Schools, the workshop's keynote speaker, will convey the importance of connecting people, nature, place and education. A Rails-To-Trails Workshop on October 9 will address how to work with railroad companies, the process of preserving proposed rights-of-way for public use, sources of information on railroad abandonments, funding alternatives and congressional action on livable communities. National experts from the Rails-To-Trails Conservancy will conduct this workshop!

State park directors from Montana, Idaho and Wyoming keynote the conference. Other noted speakers include Janna Rankin, Vice Chair of the National Recreation and Parks Association and Nancy Noonan, a noted health and wellness motivational speaker from Boulder Colorado.

Confirmed sessions include best practices in recreation resource planning, playground design, accessibility standards, collegiate outdoor adventure programs, vandalism prevention and cooperative law enforcement, bicycle and OHV safety education, safe routes to schools, share the road programs, travel planning and many others. Exhibitors will be on hand displaying the latest technology and trends in park and recreation equipment and services.

In addition to a host of additional topics, on October 8 everyone will have an opportunity to enjoy and learn from the great outdoors. Field trips include a visit to Yellowstone National Park and Gallatin National Forest maintenance facilities, a bicycle tour of the Rendezvous Area, an interpretive tour of the Quake Lake visitor center, and a tour of West Yellowstone's community center and trail maintenance facilities.

To register for the conference go to www.mtrpa.info/conference.php. Register early because after August 31, the registration fee increases by 20%. To reserve lodging at the reduced conference rate at the Holiday Inn West Yellowstone, call 406-646-7365 by September 14 and tell them you are with the Recreation, Parks and Trails Conference. For questions or more information contact Bob Walker at 406-933-5326, email mttrails@bresnan.net or Beth Shumate at 406-444-4585, email bshumate@mt.gov.