

## Celebrate National Public Lands Day

**From:** The Honorable Raul M. Grijalva  
**Sent By:** [sarah.gallagher@mail.house.gov](mailto:sarah.gallagher@mail.house.gov)  
**Date:** 9/15/2009

Dear Colleague,

We invite you and your staff to participate in National Public Lands Day (NPLD) -- the largest annual volunteer event to benefit those special places where Americans go for recreation and to enjoy the outdoors. In the spirit of inspiring national and community service, National Public Lands Day provides an opportunity for younger generations to follow in the footsteps of the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC), the "tree army" that exemplified land stewardship from 1933-1942.

Now in its 16th year, National Public Lands Day is the preeminent volunteer-based conservation event for public lands in the United States. This year the event will be held Saturday, September 26, 2009. We expect that 130,000 volunteers will participate at 2,000 public land sites across the nation, completing a projected \$13 million in improvements to public lands in every state. They will plant native vegetation, clean up trash, restore shorelines and wetlands, repair hiking trails, build bridges, remove invasive plants, protect cultural resources and historic sites, improve wildlife habitat and much more.

Each year the event helps fix up famous locations where Americans hike, bike, climb, swim, explore and picnic – for instance, in 2009 volunteer events will take place at Canyons of the Ancients National Monument in Colorado; Allegany State Park in New York; C&O Canal National Historic Park in Maryland; and Yosemite National Park in California.

This year, National Public Lands Day is encouraging volunteers to learn how land and water are interconnected through a vast network of streams, rivers, lakes and other wetlands that traverse America's public and private lands. During NPLD, volunteers can protect our nation's water bodies by monitoring water quality in rivers and lakes, restoring wetlands, preventing stormwater run-off and erosion, cleaning up trash from shorelines and learning techniques to conserve water at home.

The National Environmental Education Foundation, a private, non-profit foundation chartered by the Congress in 1990, coordinates the program in a partnership with eight federal agencies: the Bureau of Land Management, US Fish and Wildlife Service, USDA Forest Service, Bureau of Reclamation, US Army Corps of Engineers, Department of Defense, US Environmental Protection Agency and National Park

Service. Hundreds of state and local public lands also participate along with schools, universities, nature centers, botanical gardens, zoos and aquariums.

Again, we encourage you and members of your staff to volunteer at one of the events, either in the DC area or in your state on September 26, 2009. To find volunteer sites or for more information, please contact Claudia Kessel at (202) 261-6478 or visit the National Public Lands Day website at [www.publiclandsday.org](http://www.publiclandsday.org). We all benefit from public lands. This is our opportunity to give something back.

Sincerely,

/s  
Raúl M. Grijalva

/s  
Vernon J. Ehlers