

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

Location: Anadarko, OK; Riverside, CA; Salem, OR; Tuba City, AZ

Date: September 24, 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. 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 Summary

**Riverside**

Group 1

- 1) Stop pollution and defacing national monuments
  - a. Cleanup trash
  - b. Stop killing animals
- 2) Teach youth to survive outdoors- make them more involved in old ways – teach past hunting and fishing techniques, teepee building and archery, to get them back to their roots and preserve their culture
- 3) Get youth more involved in their community
  - a. Drinking and drugs inhibit outdoor recreation on reservations and youth who want to get outside are made fun of. Adults need to get the message that they need to set better examples for the young people on reservations.

Group 2

- 1) BIE schools should allow fieldtrips and outdoor sports, bass fishing and archery competitions
- 2) Organizations and groups in school systems should have mentoring programs built into high schools to teach environment awareness, urban basketball leagues and give students 1 on 1 attention

Group 3

- 1) Alcohol control- main problem on reservations. Wants to reinstate 18<sup>th</sup> amendment to ban alcohol which scares youth and drives them into their homes so they cannot participate in outside activities
- 2) Security- need agreement between tribal sovereignty and the city and state governments- 2 tribal members were shot this week because security does not do its job and so young people do not feel safe outside
- 3) Need more activities like big brother and big sister programs- some teens need help getting through their problems – need spiritual and emotional health and guidance

Group 4

- 1) More activities to keep apache lands beautiful and healthy
- 2) Motivation- tribal games like horseback riding, archery and tug a war

- 3) Cut out pollution and plastic bottles- picking up trash because we have to drink same water we are polluting and breathe same air we are polluting

**Greyhills**

- 1) Environmental science in curriculum and teaching the relevance of culture
- 2) Formation of youth federation to discuss these topics

**Sherman**

- 1) Turn power off on Saturdays for 2 hours
- 2) Vans to places for safe outdoor recreation
- 3) Incorporate adults and youth into programs- things families can do together

**Chemawa**

- 1) Create space for youth in the workforce
- 2) Student programs on environment
- 3) Fishing and hunting are fun and should be used more

Comments on Elk Net- great experience and first time we have used it, program is great to be able to speak to other students from other schools