



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Mount Rushmore
National Memorial

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Mount Rushmore National Memorial News Release

Mount Rushmore to “Turn Out” for Earth Hour 2010

(Keystone, S.D.) Mount Rushmore National Memorial will participate in what is expected to be the largest call for action on climate change in history sponsored by the World Wildlife Fund (WWF). Earth Hour 2010 will take place on Saturday, March 27 from 8:30 pm to 9:30 pm, with many of the nation’s most iconic landmarks dimming their lights for one hour.

Mount Rushmore spokesperson Navnit Singh says, “The World Wildlife Fund previously requested turning off the lights which illuminate the sculpture for one hour on 27 March. The Memorial staff recognized we could do better by not illuminating the Avenue of Flags either. We believe strongly in the message and appreciate the opportunity this participation offers to help us in our efforts to educate the public about climate change.” Earth Hour will also be the Memorial’s opportunity to demonstrate commitment to supporting this outstanding initiative and kickoff implementation of a new conservation lighting schedule. During the summer season, sculpture lighting will remain on for one hour after the end of the evening program and during the off season, sculpture lighting will remain on for one hour after dark. The new schedule will reduce illumination electrical consumption by approximately 60 percent annually.

The initial list of US landmarks taking part in this global climate event includes the Empire State Building, the “Welcome to Fabulous Las Vegas,” Harrah’s Caesar Palace and the MGM Mirage on the Las Vegas Strip and San Francisco’s Golden Gate Bridge. New Earth Hour participants in 2010 will include Montezuma Castle National Monument in Arizona and the Soldiers and Sailors Monument in Indianapolis.

“Earth Hour directly links with Department of Interior and National Park Service priorities,” said Mount Rushmore National Memorial Superintendent Gerard Baker. “Our stewardship mission is to manage this country's most treasured landscapes unimpaired for the enjoyment of future generations. This mission is being challenged particularly by climate change. As stewards of our

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national parks, especially considering the challenges of climate change, we must be visible leaders to demonstrate commitment to energy and water conservation... and to use our parks to teach the public about climate change and the ways citizens can reduce their carbon footprints."

Since its inception three years ago, WWF officials say Earth Hour has become a global phenomenon. Last year, for Earth Hour 2009 nearly one billion people in 4,100 cities in 87 countries on seven continents turned out. In the U.S. alone, 80 million Americans and 318 cities officially voted for action with their light switch. The Memorial shares WWF hopes for participation in all 50 US states, as Americans from every walk of life, in communities large and small, symbolically dim their lights in solidarity for climate action with hundreds of millions of people around the world. WWF officials believe the event will have special significance to Americans in the wake of a US government report from June 2009 which found that every region of the nation is experiencing significant, adverse impacts from climate change including droughts, floods, heat waves and wildfires.



Photo: Mount Rushmore evening illumination

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