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The Modern-Day Mather Hike: Healthy Parks Healthy People US
A microgrant opportunity to engage park and health leaders
through inspired hikes in America's national parks

Background: Stephen Mather, the first Director of the National Park Service (NPS), was a visionary and early advocate for the preservation and conservation movements. Starting in 1915, the year before the NPS was created, Mather hosted numerous backcountry trips in current-day national parks (e.g. Sequoia, Yosemite) for politicians, businessmen, journalists, and other opinion makers.¹ These hikes were critical for inspiring influential leaders and congressmen, generating support and funding for the NPS, and for promulgating Mather's vision to the American public.

Healthy Parks Healthy People US: Many parks (national, state, and local) were initially created, not only to preserve landscapes, but also to promote health.² In September 2010, Director Jon Jarvis established the NPS Health Promotion Initiative to rejuvenate and raise awareness for the role of public lands in improving the health of our nation. National parks are model settings to promote physical activity, healthy eating, and mental health, while also demonstrating how human health is interdependent on the health of all species and our environment.³ To inform this initiative, the NPS hosted the Healthy Parks Healthy People (HPHP) US summit on April 5-6, 2011 with 90 invited stakeholders from diverse backgrounds.

Program Objectives:

1. Provide a unique, low-cost forum to further the energy and enthusiasm generated at the HPHP US summit on regional, sub-regional, and local levels.
2. Inspire community leaders in multiple sectors to share common ideals and values and engage in meaningful dialogue about public lands and public health.
3. Challenge community leaders both intellectually and physically.
4. Stimulate the development of innovative, inter-disciplinary demonstration projects.

Program Description: Through a competitive process, 10 microgrants (\$500 each) will be awarded to NPS units for organizing inter-disciplinary modern-day Mather hikes to promote HPHP discussion among community leaders. Hikes should be completed no later than September 30, 2011, include at least one overnight stay, and have no more than 20 total participants. Funds may be used to help defray the costs of food, travel, and/or staff time to organize the event. All awarded NPS units will be recognized on InsideNPS and the HPHP website (http://www.nps.gov/public_health/hp/hphp/news.htm) as inaugural Modern-Day Mather Hike grant recipients and health promotion pioneers.

Deliverables: A final report summarizing the Mather Hike/meeting, including a participant list and all project ideas discussed and next steps, will be due on November

15, 2011. Outstanding and innovative project ideas will be considered for FY12 implementation grants (up to \$5K) from the NPS Office of Public Health.

Submission Guidelines: Interested NPS units should e-mail a brief proposal (no more than 2 pages) and a letter of support from the park superintendent to David Wong by COB, July 1, 2011. The proposal should contain the following elements:

- Name of NPS unit and region
- Hike leader and contact information
- Hike details, including dates, trail names, round-trip distance, and overnight location(s)
- Brief description of what the NPS unit hopes to gain from this meeting (limit 100 words)
- List of organizations committed to participate (include names and titles of specific attendees, if known)
- Amount and source of additional funds, if any

Selection Criteria: Proposals will be reviewed and scored using the following criteria:

- Breadth of organizations committed to participate (4 points)
- Clarity of the proposal (3 points)
- Additional funds secured from partners (3 points)
- Achieving overall diversity among awardees (e.g. park regions and unit designations) (2 points)

Notification: Grant awardees will be notified of selection no later than July 8, 2011.

Funding Source: NPS Office of Public Health

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References

1. National Park Service. Parks and people: Preserving our past for the future. Available at http://www.nps.gov/history/history/online_books/sontag/sontag3.htm.
2. Fisher T. Frederick Law Olmsted and the campaign for public health. Available at <http://places.designobserver.com/entry.html?entry=15619>.
3. American Veterinary Medical Association. One Health: A new professional imperative. Available at http://www.avma.org/onehealth/onehealth_final.pdf.