

Resolution #11
Federation of Western Outdoor Clubs

LOADED FIREARMS IN NATIONAL PARKS

Submitted by: Marty Huebner, State Vice President - Idaho

Background: In 2008, the Bush administration overturned a 25-year-old federal rule that severely restricted loaded and concealed firearms in national parks.

Visitors will eventually be able to carry a loaded and concealed firearm into a park or wildlife refuge—but ONLY if the person has a permit for a concealed weapon and ONLY if the state where the park or refuge is located also allows concealed firearms.

To acquire a concealed weapons permit requires submitting an application to local or state police officials. The applicant must pass a satisfactory background check by law enforcement agencies such as the state police or federal agencies, and may include mandatory safety training in the safe use of firearms.

On March 19, 2009, a federal judge ordered a temporary restraining order blocking the implementation of the rule allowing “concealed carry” permit holders to carry loaded and concealed firearms within national parks.

In May 2009, Congress passed a bill (HR 627) that will prohibit the Secretary of the Interior from enacting or enforcing any regulations that restrict possession of firearms in national parks or wildlife refuges, as long as the person complies with laws of the state in which the unit is found (approval in the Senate was achieved by attaching a rider to a bill on credit cards). The bill is consistent with the various related state laws that require a valid permit for concealed firearms.

On May 22, 2009 President Obama signed the bill into law. The law will go into effect February 22, 2010.

The Federation of Western Outdoor Clubs (FWOC) would prefer that only Park personnel would have access to firearms. There are occasions when such personnel have to deal with wild animals or human criminal elements when firearms must be deployed or employed.

Resolution: The Federation of Western Outdoor Clubs opposes any proposal to allow any person other than a Park official to carry a concealed, permitted and loaded firearm in national parks.

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