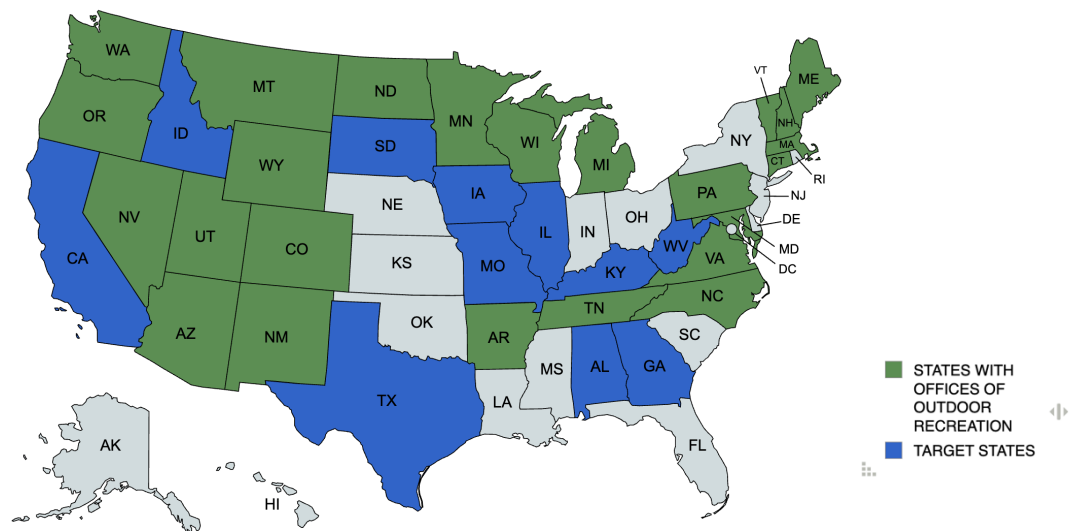


Description

Richard King Mellon Foundation Director Sam Reiman and Program Officer Curan Bonham will be in attendance on Tuesday, June 24th at the Western Governors Association Annual Meeting in Santa Fe, New Mexico. Outdoor Recreation Roundtable Senior Vice President Whitney Potter Schwartz will also be in attendance. This document is intended to prepare for conversations with Governors.

States with Offices of Outdoor Recreation



All Western Governors (* indicates state has created Office of Outdoor Rec)

Alaska Mike Dunleavy  No OREC, concerns over big government/territory issues with state parks	Arizona* Katie Hobbs  Great advocate for outdoor recreation economy ORR Video	California Gavin Newsom  Have been two efforts in the past to establish ORECs in CA. Priorities on biodiversity, 30x30, equitable access	Colorado* Jared Polis  See below	Hawaii Josh Green  No connection to date.
Idaho Brad Little  No OREC, concerns over big government/territory issues with state parks	Kansas Laura Kelly  No connection to date.	Montana* Greg Gianforte  Governor Steve Bullock created office, has been dormant under Gianforte, concerns over big government/Bullock initiative	Nebraska Jim Pillen  No connection to date.	Nevada* Joe Lombardo  Strong Division of Outdoor Recreation and good example of continued momentum from Dem to Rep administration

New Mexico*

Michelle Lujan
Grisham



Strong Outdoor
Recreation Division:
Focus on Equitable
Access, Economic
Development,
Infrastructure,
Marketing and
Entrepreneurship.

North Dakota*

Kelly Armstrong



See below

Oklahoma

Kevin Stitt



No connection to date.

Oregon*

Tina Kotek



Oregon working to
revitalize office of
outdoor rec created by
prior governor Kate
Brown, Kotek not as
plugged in.

South Dakota

Larry Rhoden



No connection to date.

Texas

Greg Abbott



ORR is working with
Texas Outdoor
Recreation Alliance
(TxORA) to stand up
office of outdoor
recreation.

Utah*

Spencer Cox



See below

Washington*

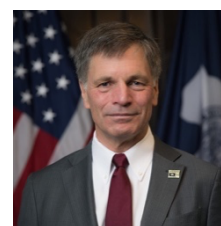
Bob Ferguson



Expressed interest in
connecting with RKMf though
will not be in attendance.

Wyoming*

Mark Gordon



See below

Background for RKMf Meetings

Colorado Governor Jared Polis 	Meeting Date/Time: 6/24, 2:30 PM TBD Location Contact: Olivia Neece (970)-620-2204 OREC Director: Conor Hall (ORR Member)	- Colorado Governor John Hickenlooper (preceding Polis) established the Colorado Outdoor Recreation Industry Office in Colorado’s Office of Economic Development and International Trade in 2015. - Polis is generally less personally passionate about outdoor recreation than was hit but has warmed up to the importance of Colorado’s outdoor recreation economy and has been an advocate for the Outside Summit and Festival (just wrapped up its second year) - Polis was on hand recently to launch Colorado’s Outdoor Strategy to advance coordination, tools and funding to align, prioritize and implement strategic actions on the landscape for conservation, outdoor recreation and climate resilience. Goals below: - Connect people to outdoor experiences and opportunities. - Protect, conserve, and restore aquatic and terrestrial biodiversity and functioning ecosystems. - Keep agricultural lands in production. - Meet or grow demand for outdoor recreation. - Identify the highest priorities on the landscape for both conservation and outdoor recreation. - Support healthy economies, including outdoor recreation-based economies. - Connect Tribal and Indigenous people to lands and waters and protect their cultural resources. - Protect and enhance the resilience of lands, waters, communities, and outdoor recreation amenities to climate change, drought, and wildfire. - Sustain community character and ways of life. - Colorado’s legislature established a bipartisan Outdoor Recreation Caucus this Spring—the largest caucus in the state. - Have personally heard Polis make negative comments about the hunt/fish community—I think he sees them as politically conservative and a thorn in his
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		side generally but particularly about gun rights. - ORR Video feat Gov. Polis
North Dakota Governor Kelly Armstrong 	Meeting Date/Time: 6/24, TBD Location Contact: Aaron Weber OREC Director: Cole Garman	- North Dakota Governor Doug Burgum (preceding Armstrong) established the North Dakota Office of Outdoor Recreation in 2024, two days after attending ORR's National Outdoor Recreation Executive Forum. - Governor Armstrong is personally passionate about the outdoors. "I always say we're not the best at anything, but we're the best at everything," Armstrong said, referring to North Dakota's abundance of outdoors opportunities. "There's still not a lot of places that you can go shoot a limit of pheasant, grouse, partridge, mallards, geese, whitetail, mule deer – all of the above. You can do it 100 miles from the governor's residence." - I don't know that he is much aware of the Office of Outdoor Recreation or sees it as a component of his strategic plan. North Dakota's State Parks Director recently called it an "Initiative" versus "Office" in a private call (though it is listed online as an office) I think to quell concerns that it was representative of overly expansive government. - North Dakota has more private land than other Western states. From recent article: - Considering only about 9% of North Dakota land is public land, support from private landowners is crucial to the future of hunting and access in the state, he said. - That's why he signed the bill. All the "habitat in the world" doesn't mean much without access to private land, Armstrong said. The legislation sunsets in 2029. - "We don't have outdoor heritage if we don't have buy-in from landowners because we don't have a lot of federal land, we don't have a lot of state land," Armstrong said. - Office of Outdoor Recreation purpose: - To ensure comprehensive planning and execution of successful policies, strategies and initiatives to maximize the impact of outdoor recreation in North Dakota.

		- Greatly enhance the planning process and quality for the Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) - Coordinate and communicate grant and other programs individual agencies offer to build and expand outdoor recreation to ensure the most efficient and effective outcomes. - Better engage the private sector in all aspects of planning and execution of outdoor recreation strategy and initiatives. - Research and identify outdoor recreation trends and gaps in North Dakota's outdoor offerings. - Advocate and support state, local, and private investments in outdoor recreation offerings and infrastructure to align with North Dakota's (SCORP). - Educate the public on environmental stewardship and lessening the recreational impact on North Dakota's natural resources and how stewardship and conservation can have a positive economic impact.
Utah Governor Spencer Cox 	Meeting Date/Time: “Given the number of cabinet secretaries and diplomats at this meeting, it looks like we can't make a sidebar work, but we'd love to say hello at one of the receptions Sunday, Monday, or Tuesday evenings.” Contact: Gordon Larsen (202) 577-6355 Olivia Hoge OREC Director: Jason Curry (ORR Member)	- Utah Governor Gary Herbert (preceding Cox) established the Utah Office of Outdoor Recreation (now the Utah Division of Outdoor Recreation) in 2013. - Governor Cox is personally passionate about getting outdoors with his family. - Utah's “Mighty 5” national parks are a large part of its national identity and a driver of significant visitation and tourism. - Utah's gateway communities have been strained by overtourism and visitation leading to programs like the Utah State University Gateway and Natural Amenity Region (G.N.A.R.) Initiative to share best practices for economic development. - Governor Cox has been vocal about growing Utah's outdoor recreation economy and its link to his administration's strategic economic development priorities (see video below). - Utah has spearheaded (and significantly funded) a campaign to transfer federal lands to the state. The U.S. Supreme Court declined to hear the State's lawsuit in January, but Utah intends to continue

		its effort. In their words “Current policy deprives Utah of sovereignty, including access, use and land management for recreation, infrastructure, fire mitigation and conservation.” - ORR Video feat Gov. Cox
Wyoming Governor Mark Gordon 	Meeting Date/Time: “Governor Gordon is looking forward to connecting with you at the receptions and dinner.” Contact: Kate Barlow 1-307-630-1905 OREC Director: Mark Tesoro (ORR Member)	Relevant Background: - Wyoming Governor Matt Mead (preceding Gordon) established the Wyoming Office of Outdoor Recreation in Wyoming State Parks in 2017. - Gordon is a sportsman who enjoys hunting, fishing, mountain climbing, and horseback riding. - Wyoming’s legislature recently established (and the Governor signed) a law to create the Wyoming Outdoor Recreation and Tourism Trust Fund to provide \$6 million every two years for outdoor recreation infrastructure, planning, and access. - Wyoming’s Office of Outdoor Recreation also has awarded grants through its Wyoming Outdoor Grants Program—distributing more than \$20M and generating more than \$36M in economic activity across the state. - Governor Gordon believes that climate change is real and impacting the state’s natural resources and economy. - Gordon pledged to make Wyoming net-negative in CO2 emissions in his 2021 State of the State Address and made “Decarbonizing the West” his 2024 Chair Initiative at WGA. - Gordon believes in an “all-of-the-above” energy policy including wind, coal, natural gas, and nuclear. He intends to achieve net-negativity through the large-scale use of carbon capture. - Wyoming has a contentious relationship with the Bureau of Land Management due to the finalized Rock Springs Resource Management Plan, which state leaders assert overlooked public input and will harm the state’s energy sector. - ORR Video feat. Gov. Gordon