



# 2014 Annual Accomplishment Report



The Idaho Recreation and Tourism Initiative (IRTI), created in 1988, is an active and enduring coalition of state and federal agencies and not-for-profit organizations dedicated to providing Idaho citizens and visitors with expanded recreation opportunities.



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(Photo credit: Idaho Excursions. Location: Payette River.)

## The Idaho Recreation and Tourism Initiative

The Idaho Recreation and Tourism Initiative (IRTI), created in 1988, is an enduring coalition of state and federal agencies and not-for-profit organizations dedicated to providing Idaho citizens and visitors with expanded recreation opportunities.

IRTI wants to make it easy for people to come outside and play.

Idaho has a multitude of land management agencies and recreation providers whose roles can be confusing to the public. By working jointly, the coalition is able to provide information and services more effectively. IRTI-related projects are undertaken on a statewide basis, provide information and services at the local level, and benefit both Idahoans and visitors.

The Idaho Recreation/Tourism Initiative Partners (in alphabetical order) are:

- Bureau of Land Management
- Bureau of Reclamation
- Idaho Department of Commerce
- Idaho Department of Fish and Game
- Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation
- Idaho Outfitters and Guides Association
- Idaho Outfitters and Guides Licensing Board
- Idaho Recreation and Park Association
- Idaho RV Campgrounds Association
- Idaho State Department of Agriculture
- Idaho Transportation Department
- National Park Service
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
- U.S. Forest Service
- University of Idaho
- In addition, other public and private entities collaborate on various projects

## Recreation Information and Fulfillment

Idaho Commerce, Tourism is pleased to report to the Idaho Recreation & Tourism Initiative on visitor inquiries from various sources in the past fiscal year. Inquiries are measured in two ways: requests for publication (may request multiple publications per request), and those that are considered a unique visitor to VisitIdaho.org, our primary tourism website.

### Inquiries for Collateral Materials

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The chart below compares the inquiries received for each the past three calendar years:

Visitor Inquiries/Fulfillment by Country				
	Total	United States	Canada	Other Country
CY 2014	68,581	52,210	1,881	14,490
CY 2013	87,488	82,234	2,894	2,360
CY 2012	89,189	84,893	2,243	2,053

The difference between Total Visitors and Unique Visitors is the number of repeat visitors. We have found that visitors make multiple visits when planning their travel to and within Idaho.

VisitIdaho.org Analytics				
	Total Unique Visitors	%Chg	Total Visits	%Chg
CY 2014	898,947	7.57%	1,199,630	12.52%
CY 2013	835,662	7.60%	1,066,108	7.77%
CY 2012	776,622	2.75%	989,263	4.39%

Visitors to VisitIdaho.org increased sharply in CY 2014, with repeat visits increasing a bit faster. Time spent visiting the site also increased after a sharp decrease between 2011 and 2012. Web Statistics

VisitorIdaho.org Visitor Behavior					
Year	Sessions	Users	% Returning Users	Pages/Session	Avg. Session Duration
CY 2014	1,199,630	898,947	25.1%	2.47	2:02 min
CY 2013	1,065,920	835,662	21.6%	2.84	2:31 min
CY 2012	989,452	776,622	21.5%	2.89	2:37 min

The three visitor centers reported their visitors in 2013 as follows:

Cherry Creek (southeast Idaho)	Open May 21 - Sept 13, 2014	18,983
Huetter Visitor Center (north Idaho)	Year-round	11,282
Gateway Visitor Center Southwest	Open May 10 - Sept 1, 2014	75,235

## Awards/Kudos

Idaho Tourism’s advertising campaigns received a number of awards from the Idaho Advertising Federation in 2014:

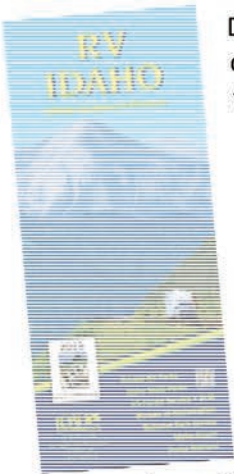
- Gold in Complete Campaign- My ID
- Gold in Magazine Ad- My ID
- Silver in Direct Marketing - Vitamin ID coffee sleeves
- Silver in Interactive- Visitidaho.org/myid
- Silver in Interactive Advertisement- My ID placement with Pandora

## ICORT 2014

The Idaho Conference on Recreation and Tourism (ICORT) brought 155 industry professionals together in Sun Valley to learn, network, and have a great time. \$17,500 was provided by local and national sponsors offset the conference’s expenses.

## Idaho Campground Directory

Idaho's popular campground directory, *RV Idaho*, is an annually-updated publication which is unique in the nation because it is not a membership directory, but is a comprehensive, consumer-friendly, informative guide that includes detailed information on almost all public campgrounds, private RV parks, and public dump stations in Idaho. It is the third-most-requested travel publication in Idaho, with only the State Travel Guide and Idaho map receiving more requests. RV IDAHO reaches more campers in Idaho and those traveling to our state than any other publication.



Despite the cost of fuel, RVers continue to travel in record numbers. They have extremely desirable demographics and spending patterns with considerable discretionary income which they spend on their RV lifestyle. A conservative estimate of annual RV-related spending in Idaho would be well in excess of \$200 million.

The mission of the Idaho RV Campgrounds Association (IRVCA) is to develop and implement a sustainable RV-tourism marketing program which creates awareness of Idaho as a great RV destination, promotes Idaho's RV parks/campgrounds to the 30 million RVers on the road today, and increases RV-tourism spending in Idaho each year. Publishing and distributing RV IDAHO is a vital component of this important mission. All 600 private RV parks and public campgrounds share in the benefits of IRVCA's targeted RV tourism programs which bring thousands of new campers to Idaho each year.

Anne Chambers, Executive Director of IRVCA is the project lead. Partners include Idaho Parks & Recreation, US Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management, Bureau of Reclamation, and Idaho Fish & Game.

### 2014 Accomplishments & 2015 Plans

- 90,000 copies of 2014 RV IDAHO were bulk-shipped and distributed free-of-charge to RVers/campers, both in- and out-of-state, at hundreds of tourist information centers, regional tourism offices, Chambers of Commerce, private RV parks, public campgrounds, gas stations, RV-related businesses and consumer recreation, travel and sports shows.
- Another 16,000 copies were direct-mailed to campers who requested Idaho camping information via phone or the internet.
- For campers and RVers who research their travel options online, the searchable campground database information is available on IRVCA's website, [www.rvidaho.org](http://www.rvidaho.org), and Idaho's tourism website, [www.visitidaho.org](http://www.visitidaho.org). A downloadable version of RV IDAHO is available on both websites.
- With the help of many IRTI partners, IRVCA updated the campground database information and published 110,000 copies of 2015 RV IDAHO in October 2014 – which will be distributed to RVers/campers throughout the coming year.



### Free Fishing Day 2014

Free Fishing Day was held on June 14 during 2014. Idahoans around the state participated in fishing clinics and events held at local ponds, lakes and hatcheries. Forty-four separate events were held with a total of nearly 6,000 participants. Children and adults alike learned how to set up a fishing pole, cast, identify fish, learn about angler ethics, clean their catch and even cook their fish. For many adults who may have fished as children, Free Fishing Day is a great way to re-engage with the sport as well as introduce their children to the fun of fishing.

### Watchable Wildlife

The Watchable Wildlife (WW) Committee is an interagency team that to promote wildlife viewing opportunities and an appreciation for wildlife across all land management jurisdictions in Idaho. The WW Committee's goal is to enhance Idahoans' and visitors' respect and understanding of wildlife, its conservation, and outdoor recreation resources through viewing opportunities and community engagement.



The WW Committee works with IDFG's Wildlife Diversity Program to sustain Idaho's fish and wildlife and the habitats upon which they depend, with an emphasis on threatened, endangered, and at-risk species. Projects focus on promoting appreciation for wildlife and their habitats, wildlife-based tourism, and responsible wildlife observation ethics.



In addition to the IRTI partners, the WW Committee includes representatives from Golden Eagle Audubon, Idaho Fish and Game Foundation, and Idaho Power. In past years, the WW Committee produced and published the *Idaho Wildlife Viewing Guide* and *Idaho Birding Trail Guidebook*.

The WW Committee's work is supported by revenue from sales of these books and funding from interagency partners. Deniz Aygen, Watchable Wildlife Program Coordinator for IDFG, is the project lead and WW Committee Chair.

## **2013 ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

The WW Committee did these things in 2014:

- Facilitated, expanded, and participated in the "Bird by Bird" program.
- Participated in the Hagerman Birding Festival, BioBlitz, and International Migratory Bird Day.
- Developed a new Boise-to-Stanley State Highway 21 Wildlife Viewing Guide in partnership with the Boise National Forest.
- Attended the Association of Fish & Wildlife Agencies- Wildlife Viewing and Nature Tourism workshop in St. Louis, Missouri. Gave a 20-minute presentation about the "Bird by Bird" program."
- Coordinated several citizen science projects.
- Worked collaboratively on inter-agency projects involving wildlife viewing opportunities.
- Published and edited *Windows to Wildlife* newsletter (4x a year).
- Distributed the remaining Idaho Birding Trail signs statewide.
- Promoted the Idaho Birding Trail.

## **2015 PLANS**

- Emphasize programs, events, and publicity for wildlife viewing opportunities.
- Encourage public involvement and collaboration through citizen science.
- Continue collaboration on statewide projects involving wildlife viewing opportunities and conservation education efforts.
- Begin to develop a wildflower viewing guidebook for Idaho.

## Be Outside Idaho

Be Outside Idaho was pleased to help support Bekah Spille as a delegate to the Natural Leaders Legacy Camp in Shepherdstown, WV. The camp is sponsored by the Children and Nature Network.



## Unplug and Be Outside

### Background

Children spend an average of 30 hours a week “plugged in” to the television (TV), video games, computers, phones and tablets. By the time the average person reaches the age of 70, he or she will have spent the equivalent of 7 to 10 years watching television. Too much screen time is associated with many negative consequences. For example, children who spend excess amounts of time in front the screen are more likely to be overweight. The more time children spend being sedentary indoors, the less time they spend being physically active which impacts their physical, mental and social wellness. It is critical that Idaho begin to seek out innovative ways to reverse the trend of increasing childhood obesity and chronic disease.

### Unplug and Be Outside

This weeklong event took place in the Treasure Valley April 19 – 26 and in Idaho Falls May 3 – 10. The event encouraged Idaho families to reduce screen time and get active through pre-scheduled free or reduced cost events in their area. These activities exposed families to the wonderful resources available in the community.

### Activities

Each city offered activities in their area. Boise had 13 activities, Meridian had 58 activities, Nampa had 23 activities. Several activities were also offered in Star, Kuna, Emmett and Caldwell. Idaho Falls hosted 19 events throughout their week.

#### *Saturday, April 19*

- **Earth Day Celebration:** Boise Watershed Environmental Center
- **Learn to Skate:** Idaho Ice World
- **On Ice Free Hockey Session:** Idaho Ice world
- **Geocaching Scavenger Hunt:** Sierra Trading Post
- **Tennis 101 Clinic:** Heritage Middle School Tennis Courts
- **Free Range Balls:** Ridgecrest & Centennial Golf Course
- **Earth Day Work Day:** Deer Flat National Wildlife Refuge Visitor Center
- **Take me Fishing Trailer:** Wilson Pond
- **Free Greens Fees:** Ridgecrest Golf Club

#### *Sunday, April 20*

- **Geocaching Scavenger Hunt:** Sierra Trading Post

#### *Monday, April 21*

- **School Walking Challenge:** Whitney Elementary School

- **Dance, Cheer and Tumble:** Meridian Community Center
- **Homeschool Class—Nature Up Close:** Meridian Library Silverstone Branch
- **Soccer Clinic:** Settlers park
- **Wildflowers, Trees and Photography:** Sierra Trading Post
- **Nature Photo Scavenger Hunt:** Deer Flat National Refuge Visitor Center
- **Introduction to Birds and Birding:** Deer Flat National Refuge Visitor Center
- **Traveling Playground:** Nampa Parks & Rec, Lions Park & Liberty Park

*Tuesday, April 22*

- **Preschool Open Gym:** Fort Boise Community Center
- **Jump, Jive, Boogie Woogie:** Meridian Community Center
- **Brick Club:** Meridian Library Cherry Lane Branch
- **Children’s Movement and Theatre:** ACE Leadership
- **Martial Arts for Families:** Meridian Community Center
- **Tennis 101:** Heritage Middle School Tennis Courts
- **Basics of Survival and Fire Starting:** Sierra Trading Post
- **Family Zumba Fun:** ACE Leadership
- **Nature Photo Scavenger Hunt:** Deer Flat National Refuge Visitor Center
- **Park Bingo:** Lions Park

*Wednesday, April 23*

- **Story Trail Adventure:** Foothills Learning Center
- **Owls and Guided Bird Walk:** Foothills Learning Center
- **Take Me Fishing Trailer:** Idaho Fish & Game
- **Geocaching Scavenger Hunt:** Sierra Trading Post
- **Jump, Jive, Boogie Woogie:** Meridian Community Center
- **BookVentures:** Meridian Library Cherry Lane Branch
- **Karate:** ACE Leadership
- **Soccer Clinic:** Settler’s Park
- **Paddle Boarding:** Sierra Trading Post
- **Family Yoga:** Centennial Park
- **Nature Photo Scavenger Hunt:** Deer Flat National Refuge Visitor Center
- **Guided Nature Walk:** Wilson Pathway
- **Traveling Playground:** Lakeview Park
- **Be the Bird:** Deer Flat National Refuge Visitor Center

*Thursday, April 24*

- **Preschool Open Gym:** Fort Boise Community Center
- **Geocaching Scavenger Hunt:** Sierra Trading Post
- **Creative Dramatics Workshop:** Kleiner Park Amphitheatre
- **Outdoor Storytime:** Kleiner Park
- **Theatre Workshop for Homeschool:** Kleiner Park Amphitheatre
- **Take Me Fishing Trailer:** Idaho Fish & Game
- **Youth Dance:** Ponderosa Elementary School
- **Fundamentals of Flag Football with i9 Sports:** Tully Park
- **Intro to Local Hikes:** Sierra Trading Post
- **Karate:** ACE Leadership
- **Family Zumba:** ACE Leadership
- **Nature Photo Scavenger Hunt:** Deer Flat National Refuge Visitor Center
- **Traveling Playground:** Indian Creek Park
- **Pathway Scavenger Hunt:** Maplewood Park

*Friday, April 25*

- **Concert with Steve Weeks:** Boise Library
- **Geocaching Scavenger Hunt:** Sierra Trading Post
- **Motions Dance Studio:** ACE Leadership
- **Pre K Discovery Day:** Meridian Library Cherry Lane Branch
- **Tales to Tails:** Meridian Library Silverstone Branch
- **Concert with Steve Weeks:** Meridian Parks & Rec
- **Zombie Survival:** Sierra Trading Post
- **Nature Photo Scavenger Hunt:** Deer Flat National Refuge Visitor Center
- **Traveling Playground:** South Fork Park
- **Bye, Bye Birdie:** Deer Flat National Refuge Visitor Center

*Saturday, April 26*

- **Healthy Kids Day:** Treasure Valley Family YMCA
- **Earth Fest:** MK Nature Center
- **Karate:** ACE Leadership
- **Art-venture Outdoors:** ACE Leadership
- **Outdoor activities and Family Camping Expo:** Sierra Trading Post
- **Dance, Cheer & Tumble:** ACE Leadership
- **Fun to be Fit Festival:** Meridian High School
- **Kids Golf Clinic:** Lakeview Golf Club
- **Free Range Balls:** Ridgecrest & Centennial Golf Course
- **Be Active! Be Healthy! UnPlug:** Nampa Rec Center
- **Water Education Day:** Nampa Stormwater Division
- **Free Green Fees:** Ridgecrest Golf Club

## Earned Media & Advertisement

### *Earned Media*

- [Idaho Statesman](#) – “Our View: Make sure your kids get time outdoors”
- [Idaho Statesman](#) – “Five things you should do this weekend in Boise”
- [Idaho Press Tribune](#) – “Unplug & Be Outside Week encourages families to get active”
- [KTVB](#) – “Mayor Bieter challenges kids to walk to school”
- [Meridian Press](#) – “Turn off the electronic doodads and get outside: Take part in fun activities beginning Saturday”
- [Boise Weekly](#) – “Unplug and Be Outside, Idaho”
- [Boise Area Activities Family Blog](#) – “Unplug and Be Outside, Idaho!”
- [Idaho Press Tribune](#) – “Volunteers complete service projects at wildlife refuge”
- [Emmett Messenger Index](#) – “Unplug and Be Outside”
- [Idaho Falls Magazine](#) – “Unplug & Be Outside Week”

### *Partnership Promotion*

- Flyers and calendars about the event were distributed to every student in public schools in the Boise, Meridian and Nampa school districts
- [City of Boise](#) – Promotion on city website
- Promotion through community newsletters controlled by Parks & Recreations Departments in Boise, Meridian, Nampa and Kuna
- [Be Outside, Idaho](#) – Promotion on Be Outside website and social media pages
- [City of Star](#) – Promotion on city website
- [City of Idaho Falls](#) – Promotion on City Website
- [FitOne, St. Luke's](#) – Promotion through FitOne website, St. Luke's blog and social media pages

### *Paid Advertisements*

- Promoted posts through Facebook were successful this year as they targeted families with children who showed interests in family activities, lived in the Treasure Valley and Idaho Falls.

### **Number of Children**

An average of 64 kids attended an activity (range 17 – 200). Approximately 1,252 children attended Unplug and Be Outside events. Partners reported positive feedback related to the activities and the number of children in attendance.

### **Passport Cards**

Children who participated in three or more events were eligible to enter a drawing to win fun prizes. One hundred fifty-three postcards were mailed back in. On these cards, Children answered a yes/no question identifying if they reduced their screen time during Unplug and Be Outside week. Of the 153 cards, 100 percent of children answered yes.

Of the post cards sent in:

- 45 – Boise (29%)
- 3 – Eagle (1%)
- 52 – Idaho Falls (34%)
- 3 – Iona (1%)
- 39 – Meridian (25%)
- 7 – Nampa (4%)
- 2 – Rigby (~1%)

### Winners



Participants who attended three events or more were eligible to send in a “passport card” with their contact information for the chance to win a prize. Three winners were selected—two from the Treasure Valley and one from the Idaho Falls Area. Participant passports were randomly drawn. The prizes included backpacks filled with outdoor

gear to keep children enjoying the outdoors—jump ropes, water bottles, sunscreen, t-shirts, etc. One winner, Deema Swidan and her family were extremely thankful for the opportunity to participate and sent in thank you photos showing Deema with her prizes.

### Website Hits

Promotion for the website began in early March and ran through early May. During that time period, there were 3,731 unique visitors to the site and a total of 10,816 hits to the website—including 867 in a single day. Including this high number of visitors, the site was widespread around the world with visitors from more than 20 different countries.

After landing on the home page, the most viewed page was the Idaho Falls events calendar. Referral sites from partners—most especially regional Parks and Recreations departments—were the strongest source of traffic.

## OHV Travel Management



After an insight that many riders around Idaho don't realize that it is the law for kids under the age of 18 to wear helmets while riding ATVs, we created the Ride Tomorrow campaign. The campaign is centered around educating the public on the law and encourage adults to be good examples and wear a helmet themselves.

The summer and fall campaigns included:

- RideTomorrow.org microsite
- A hero :30 video that portrays a father and son riding together with the pay off "either way you are setting an example".
- Live read and spot radio
- Paid Pre-roll with the campaign video on YouTube
- Targeted online banner ads
- Facebook advertising
- PR outreach and blog
- Giveaways: An ATV in the summer and custom helmets in the fall



We provided several incentives to encourage people to wear helmets.

1. Riders can take a pledge to wear a helmet on [ridetomorrow.org](http://ridetomorrow.org) and will be entered into our ATV sweepstakes in the fall. In the spring, riders would enter to win 1 of 5 custom designed helmets by a local artist.
2. We have a printable 10% discount coupon for helmet purchases through participating dealers statewide.
3. Parents can sign up their kids for a free education course offered by the Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation.
4. There also are free online safety courses available through IDPR that culminate with an OHV field test with an instructor.

Campaign Results:

- Website sessions (June-Dec): 9,680
- Campaign video on YouTube total views: 106,152
- Entries for ATV: 1,389
- Entries for custom helmets: 2,546
- Total Facebook impressions: 500,182, 1.36% CTR
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*The custom helmets given away were designed by local artists.*

