

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Images available upon request

**Former head of the National Park Service, Fran Mainella,
to Chair The Children & Nature Network's Board of Directors**

Longtime nature policy pioneer and former head of the National Park Service, Fran Mainella, took over in January 2014 as Board Chair of The Children & Nature Network (C&NN).



Minneapolis, MN – Feb 6th, 2014 – The Children & Nature Network (C&NN) announced today the election of Fran Mainella as 2014 Chair of the Board of Directors. Bringing decades of experience to the leadership role, Mainella will help guide C&NN as it continues to build and mobilize a nationwide network of parents, educators, and other supporters.

“C&NN is extremely fortunate to have the leadership, experience and perspective that Fran brings to this role,” said

Richard Louv, co-founder and Chair Emeritus of C&NN “This is an exciting time for C&NN. Fran’s guidance, and that of all of the C&NN directors and officers, is critical in helping us develop and implement a strategic agenda for change.”

Fran Mainella served as the 16th Director of the National Park Service from 2001 – 2006. She was the first woman to hold this key position. Prior to heading the National Park Service, Mainella served for twelve years as Director of Florida State Parks. She has also served as executive director of the Florida Recreation and Park Association and as president of both the National Recreation and Park Association and the National Association of State Park Directors. She is currently a Visiting Scholar at Clemson University Department of Parks, Recreation and Tourism Management and the founder and co-chair of the US Play Coalition.

Betsy Townsend, director and co-founder of the Cincinnati Children & Nature Collaborative, will serve as 2014 Vice-Chair and Secretary. C&NN director Keith Wheeler, former Chairman of IUCN’s Commission on Education and Communication, will server as Treasurer.

The full slate of 2014 officers and directors was voted in at the December 2013 board meeting under the direction of outgoing Chair, Howard Frumkin, Dean of the School of Public Health at the University of Washington.

C&NN's 2014 Directors also include Krista Bustamante, Co-Director of Youth Discovery Inc., Ray Rivera Chief Marketing Officer for Democracy.com, and Mohammed Lawal, Mohammed is Principal and CEO of LSE Architects.

To learn more about the 2014 Board and its members, visit <http://www.childrenandnature.org/about/board>

Since its founding in 2006, the Children & Nature Network has been advocating for children, their families and communities to enhance their health and well-being through direct experiences in nature. C&NN's vision is a world in which all children play, learn and grow with nature in their everyday lives. The Children & Nature Network is leading a movement to connect all children, their families and communities to nature through innovative ideas, evidence-based resources and tools, broad-based collaboration and support of grassroots leadership. C&NN provides a wide range of research and user-friendly tools, including those to enhance positive family bonding and access to fun, friendly nature-based activities. For more information, see www.childrenandnature.org.

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