



## **AORE Environmental Stewardship Statement**

### **I. Background**

#### A. AORE Mission Statement (from AORE Bylaws)

The mission of the Association is to provide opportunities for professionals and students in the field of outdoor recreation and education to exchange information, promote the preservation and conservation of the natural environment, and address issues common to college, university, community, military, and other not-for-profit outdoor recreation and education programs

#### B. AORE Vision (from 2015-2020 Strategic Plan)

The Association of Outdoor Recreation and Education is the premier Association in the outdoor profession. By bringing together individuals and organizations, AORE contributes to a global community that fosters a culture of professionalism, collaboration and environmental stewardship. Through our Association, we actively engage in and impact the issues and policies that affect our membership and industry.

#### C. Environmental Stewardship Values (excerpts from 2015-2020 Strategic Plan)

1. Education: Through developmental opportunities and experiences, we empower individuals and groups to serve themselves and their communities with programs and services that are relevant and impactful.
3. Stewardship: In all actions, we shepherd and safeguard our environment, our economy, our belongings, our name and each other.
5. Advocacy: We exemplify and encourage healthy access to our natural resources for people of all abilities, backgrounds and cultural identities.

### **II. AORE Environmental Stewardship Statement**

One component of AORE's mission is to promote the preservation and conservation of the natural environment. This component of AORE's mission is both internally and externally focused.

#### A. Internally-Focused Environmental Stewardship

Internally, AORE strives to conduct its programs and operations in an environmentally sensitive way, and encourages its member programs to do likewise. To do this, AORE members as part of their programming

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and education should utilize *Leave No Trace* principles and practices, as well as discuss relevant environmental issues and concerns, both in staff training as well as when in front and back country settings with participants. In addition, AORE members should seek to engage in environmentally-friendly and sustainable practices as it relates to energy use and efficiency, water conservation, transportation, food and supply purchasing and disposal, and carbon offsetting. Environmental and socially responsible purchasing of equipment and gear used for operations should also be practiced. It is also expected AORE members serve as advocates for the environment and sustainable practices outside their respective programs and organizations to facilitate, where appropriate, positive institutional and industry change.

#### B. Externally-Focused Environmental Stewardship

AORE generally supports policies that promote the preservation and conservation of the natural environment. AORE is particularly interested in the protection of public lands and waters where AORE members provide outdoor recreation and education activities.<sup>1</sup> Protecting public lands and waters ensures that these places will continue to be desirable destinations and effective learning and personal development settings for AORE's member programs. In this respect, protected public places are essential to the success of organizations that provide outdoor recreation and education programs.

<sup>1</sup> AORE also advocates for access to federal lands for recreation and education. This work is managed by the AORE Access Committee.

During the remainder of CY2015, AORE's Environmental Stewardship Committee and Board of Directors will consider the adoption of formal policy positions on specific environmental policy issues. Once adopted, these positions will be set forth in future versions of this statement.

ESC and the BOD recognize that externally-focused advocacy on environmental policy issues will inevitably involve activity that is considered "lobbying" under the Internal Revenue Code and the federal Lobbying Disclosure Act. AORE may legally engage in some lobbying activity, but that activity is subject to limits and disclosure requirements. Before expanding its externally-focused advocacy work, AORE will develop the necessary internal infrastructure to engage in these activities in a manner that ensures compliance with federal lobbying limits and disclosure requirements.

At all times, AORE's level of engagement on environmental policy issues will depend upon the availability of staff or volunteer resources to drive this advocacy work.

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