



CONFLICT BEST PRACTICES

BEST PRACTICES FOR PARKS AND OUTDOOR RECREATION

During the working session on challenges related to conflict, participants generated the following list of best practices:

- Address when issues are small
- Plan for conflict; head it off at the pass
- Start by recognizing there will be differences; disagree respectfully
- Accurate info is key
- Draw conflict out of those that are quiet
- At the beginning it is okay to “act surprised” – creates pause and can allow you to re-group; re-adjusts timing of conflict
- Sometimes sit back and let them cool down
- Take leadership role; seize moment
- Discuss expectations up front
- Set ground rules. Search for common ground
- Use 3rd party
- Only promise what you can do
- Talk and ask questions
- Conflict is not always bad; it can promote change
- Keep group focused on the goal
- Seasonal residents; keep informed
- Deal with internal conflict before external conflict. The outside will see internal conflict.
- Stick to facts; manage/reduce emotion
- Make sure internal policies/restrictions are known
- Shut down if someone gets out of hand; zero tolerance
- Take a break; cool down period
- Don’t take yourself too seriously
- Address conflict quietly in private vs. loudly in public
- Focus on collaboration
- Have a social to head off conflict
- Tell them, “Honey you are right. I am sorry.”
- Venting is therapeutic. You can then move on.