

**AMERICAN RECREATION COALITION
LEGENDS AWARDS**

Chris Dent

Outdoor Recreation Planner

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Chris Dent has been an Outdoor Recreation Planner for the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) for over 20 years, as well as working for the United States Forest Service in several positions throughout Region 6. Chris has been working at the Oregon/Washington regional office as the Recreation and Rivers Program Lead for the last seven years. He has been instrumental in providing regional recreation and rivers related program leadership and direction for some of the most iconic recreation sites and designated Wild and Scenic Rivers systems throughout the Bureau of Land Management.

Driven by a strong passion for rivers and angling, Chris has enthusiastically worked for years to protect federally managed rivers throughout Oregon and beyond. Chris has worked on rivers at the field level up to the national level and is well respected as a river expert with river users, outfitters, local governments, state and federal agencies and fellow river managers.

When Chris became the River manager of Oregon's Rogue River, he reorganized the staff to put boots on the ground, and successfully implemented partnerships to improve public facilities for both river users and permittees. This resulted in new and improved boat ramps, day use areas, and access for all users. Partnering with the Northwest Youth Corp, Chris reduced the deferred maintenance, and improved the popular Rogue River Trail. Chris also believed in working across agency lines and led a yearly interagency river trip with the U.S. Forest Service who co-manages the Rogue River. With more river rangers and trail patrols, public users and permittees noticed a decrease in trash, higher quality of facilities, and greater access to information on recreation opportunities. Chris also worked with Josephine County to fund a marine Deputy position to improve public safety and create a more family friendly environment. When the Rogue River's permit lottery contract ended, Chris led the formation of team to bring the lottery back in house. Through Chris's leadership, this team created a completely new system in only a few months, and successfully publicized the lottery. This resulted in over 6600 customers served in the first lottery draw, a new record high.

When Chris moved to become the Medford District Recreation Lead, he continued his efforts to partner with youth serving organizations through skills training on public lands. The Student Conservation Association, American Hiking Society, and Northwest Youth Corp were just a few examples. Chris believed in training, and promoting opportunities for young people in the natural resources field.

Chris currently serves as the Oregon State Lead for recreation and Wild and Scenic Rivers. In that role he has engaged with many of the outfitters and guides and their associations, the Oregon State Marine Board, and the Oregon Parks and Recreation Department. Always looking to improve the quality, fairness, and accessibility of public lands, Chris has been instrumental in assisting staff throughout the region in administering permits and permit systems. He is a member of the interagency Wild and Scenic Rivers Evaluation Team, responsible for evaluating the management of Wild and Scenic Rivers to ensure that these congressionally designated rivers are protected and enhanced. Chris has been and continues to be an important voice for rivers, stressing the importance of keeping rivers in good condition for future generations and providing public access for all forms of river based recreation users.

Chris also sits on the national Wild and Scenic River training development team and has brought a wealth of background and knowledge to the table as the team has worked to develop updated national level training curriculum to better educate field staff about the BLM's new Wild and Scenic River management planning policies. He has previously held the position of the national Recreation and Visitor Services Advisory team chair and was responsible with coordinating the national team and interfacing with the Bureau's executive leadership team to move the BLM's recreation program into a new area, one focused on connecting with communities and empowering and developing a new era of recreation professionals.

