DEPARTMENT of the INTERIOR

news release

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

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INTERIOR AGENCIES HOST SERIES OF 'SUN DAY' PROGRAMS ON MAY 3

Units of the Department of the Interior will join in the nationwide celebration of "Sun Day" May 3, with a series of programs designed to call attention to the potential use and development of solar energy.

The day's activities will begin with a sunrise program at Acadia National Park's Cadillac Mountain in Maine, the spot where the sun's rays first hit the United States.

In other areas, visitors can hear solar energy experts, see new design and technology in this field, or see a model of an energy efficient house of the future.

"Solar energy offers one of the most potent hopes for helping our country meet its future energy needs," said Interior Secretary Cecil D. Andrus. "As America's principal natural resource agency, the Department has a responsibility to encourage development of solar energy and its use throughout this land."

"The Department has stewardship for most of our country's Federally owned lands. As such, we receive more free energy from the sun than any other agency of government. As Earth celebrates the Sun on May 3, 1978, Interior will continue to plan, operate and maintain its natural resource areas in the most energy-efficient manner--drawing upon renewable energy where possible and appropriate, and applying new developments in energy-efficient technology where these may be effectively used to reduce reliance on non-renewable fuels."

"In natural areas, we are saving fuel and cutting down on pollution simply by "stepping out of the way" and letting the solar-powered systems of Earth manage themselves."

"We also must continue to place increasing emphasis on energy conservation in our planning, operations and maintenance of our facilities and areas, and seek to focus public attention on the need to develop and use energy conservation methods as a vital part of our everyday lives--in homes, in places of work, and on the great lands that we administer."

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(NOTE TO EDITORS: Attached is a partial listing of programs and activities being sponsored by Interior agencies.)

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR "SUN DAY" ACTIVITIES AND PROGRAMS
(PARTIAL LISTING)

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

The National Mall, Washington, D.C.: The 555-foot Washington Monument will become a sun dial May 3. The National Park Service also will demonstrate many of its solar-energized electric vehicles and other devices.

The Sun Day Organization will hold a sunrise ceremony at 5 a.m. at the Lincoln Memorial, followed by speeches at 7:30 a.m. From 11:30 a.m. to 7:30 p.m., there will be kite-flying, music by folk groups, bluegrass and jazz bands, demonstrations of solar technology by various federal agencies and private industry and other events.

Great Falls Park, Va.: The month of May has been designated "Energy Conservation Month" by the park. Exhibits include a 6-foot model of an energy efficient house; a solar furnace and hot water heater display; a hydro-electric audio visual display; "Energy in Your Future II" exhibit of future homes and automobiles; an energy calculator programmed to answer visitor questions about energy conservation; a "Sterling Engine Model," an external combustion engine used in the 19th century now being "rediscovered" by automobile manufacturers; an energy environment simulator, a computer that simulates world conditions in terms of energy demands, resources and environmental effects; and a pioneer solar display with emphasis on heating and cooling.

Acadia National Park, Maine: At Cadillac Mountain, where the continental United States receives the sun's first rays, hikers will climb to the mountain's top for a sunrise program, followed by a concert, speeches and events to depict cultural approaches to the sun.

Golden Gate National Recreation Area, San Francisco: Energy conservation and Sun Day activities are slated throughout the week of April 30-May 6. A "Sun Day" booth, puppet shows, energy conservation demonstrations are among programs, primarily scheduled at the park's Fort Mason area. Free ice cream sundaes on May 3.

William Howard Taft National Historic Site, Cincinnati, Ohio: A city-wide celebration is being coordinated by the "Cincinnati Experience," a nonprofit recycling agency. The park staff plans an exhibit, with others, at the city's Fountain Square. The exhibit will feature NPS areas that use solar or other alternative forms of energy.

Wilson's Creek National Battlefield, Mo.: Solar exhibits on display at the park and May 3, 6 and 7 at a Solar Exhibit at Springfield, Mo. Plans for a new visitor center call for solar panels to be used as backup energy source.

Bighorn Canyon National Recreation Area, Wyo.-Mont.: Students from the Fort Smith (Mont.) School (all 27 of them) will be guests for a nature walk that places emphasis on how all energy is derived from the sun. At the area's Lovell (Wyoming) headquarters and solar energized visitor center, tours will be held on "Sun Day" and expanded to include the rock bed where heat is accumulated and stored to provide the center's energy needs.

Gateway National Recreation Area, N.Y.-N.J.: Special environmental education classes for 15,000 children will feature the importance of solar energy. At Custom House in New York's Battery Park will be a multi-agency and environmental conservation group exhibit with NPS demonstrating how to make a cardboard solar-operated food dryer.

Guilford Courthouse National Military Park, Greensboro, N.C.: Dr. David Clett of A&T State University will present a slide show titled "Premier on Solar Energy." Other films, exhibits and displays will be shown by local colleges and schools, conservation groups and private industry.

Rock Creek Park, Washington, D.C.: A "Sun Festival" is slated from noon to 7 p.m., May 7, featuring solar displays, films, a jogging marathon, Indian dancing and music. Natural foods will be on sale for a minimal price.

Kennesaw Mountain National Battlefield, Ga.: Local citizens will climb the 1800-foot mountain at sunrise. Throughout the day, the park will demonstrate how solar energy devices can be installed in homes.

Cape Hatteras National Seashore, N.C.: The Sandcastle, a small beach cottage now used for environmental education programs, is site of several solar energy devices. A new wind generator will be activated May 3 to provide power for the lights. Inside are a solar water heater, a solar cooker, a solar kiln and a solar still that desalts ocean water for drinking.

Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area, Pa.-N.J.: The Delaware Valley Conservation Association, the Delaware Valley Sun Day Committee and the National Park Service will hold a bike tour of the Valley.

Pictured Rocks National Lakeshore, Mich.: Alternate energy sources for development is the subject of a public conference at park headquarters.

BUREAU OF MINES

Solar research: Completed laboratory research on improved solar panel, featuring new "sandwich" panel designed to turn more of the sun's rays into heat for making steam. No actual solar heating has been conducted with the new panels, and more work remains to be done to improve efficiency even more and to determine their life span under working conditions. However, the metalurgical research that has been done will contribute to the body of knowledge on this subject and could further state-of-the-art application.

U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

National Fisheries Center, Leetown, West Virginia

The National Fisheries Center, one of the most sophisticated fishery laboratories in the world, is famed as a center for the study of fish diseases.

A solar energy system is now being installed on the roof of the Leetown center. Reflectors covering 9700 square feet will track the sun, reflecting the sun's rays to black chrome pipes filled with heat-collecting fluid. If the weather is cloudy or stormy, the reflectors rotate face-down to prevent rain and snow from collecting on the surface.

The heat-collecting fluid will be stored in tanks totalling 15,000 gallons. The stored solar energy will provide from 40 to 60 percent of the center's need for domestic heat, hot water, and cooling, and will also be used to temper the water used for the fish.

New London National Fish Hatchery, Minnesota

About $100,000 has been budgeted for a solar energy system that is expected to provide about 45 percent of New London Hatchery's need for heat. The solar energy will be used to heat offices that have already been constructed and a new visitor center now in the design stage. The visitor center will include the Hubert Humphrey Library, an auditorium, and an aquarium.

San Francisco Bay National Wildlife Refuge, California

A wind monitoring device has been installed at San Francisco Bay NWR to see if the winds at the headquarters site are sufficient for installation of a wind energy project. In addition, ERDA has granted $33,000 for a solar energy project for the environmental education center, now in the design stage.

Horicon National Wildlife Refuge, Wisconsin

A $13,000 contract has been granted to the University of Wisconsin to study the feasibility of using wind energy at Horicon. Energy experts are also being consulted to study the possibilities of alternative energy sources for Horicon.

Cabeza Prieta National Wildlife Refuge, Arizona

The Fish and Wildlife Service is now soliciting bids for the construction of a headquarters facility at Cabeza Prieta that will include active and passive solar energy. An air-to-air solar energy system will be used to heat two residences, and a water-to-air system will be used to heat and cool the refuge office and visitor buildings. Passive solar energy techniques will include extra wall and ceiling insulation, orientation of the buildings, and construction of earth berms around the buildings.

Agassiz National Wildlife Refuge, Minnesota

A solar energy system is being planned for the visitor and office buildings, maintenance area, and residences. The residences may have wood furnaces which have both solar and electrical backups.

Tamarac National Wildlife Refuge, Minnesota

Solar energy possibilities are also being studied at Tamarac for the visitor center and offices. Wood-burning furnaces with solar and electrical backup may also go in here.

Aransas National Wildlife Refuge, Texas

Solar energy is being studied for the Aransas refuge, famed winter home of the endangered whooping crane, but is not yet funded.

HERITAGE CONSERVATION AND RECREATION SERVICE

Woodrow Wilson House, Washington, D.C.: Cosponsoring slide/talk presentation on "Architectural Preservation and Trends in Solar Application."

Regional activities: Twenty-five mile "Energy Ride," tour of solar and energy conservation exhibits and events. Atlanta.

Regional awards program to recognize outstanding examples of recreation planning based on energy conservation.

Regional workshop on parks and recreation, emphasizing energy conservation.

BUREAU OF RECLAMATION

Desalinization: Reclamation is obligated by treaty and law to build a plant near the Mexican border to reduce salinity in the Colorado River. Plant will require a great deal of energy, and Reclamation plans to build a 200 megawatt solar powertower near Yuma, Arizona, to produce electric energy and process heat.

Windmills: Reclamation is also proposing 49 wind turbines near Medicine Bow, Wyoming, which could add 98 megawatts of installed electric capacity. This wind energy would be integrated into the Bureau's hydro system and make more efficient use of winter and spring runoff by holding it back for use in increased peaking capacity.

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