



Alaska Natural Resource Center

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April 24, 2009

Jonathan Aronie
Co-Founder, Entrada Regatta
Entrada Regatta World Headquarters
6604 Tulip Hill Road
Bethesda, MD 20816

Dear Mr. Aronie:

Thank you for calling my attention to the annual Entrada Regatta. I have had a chance to review your admirable website and am duly impressed with the creativity and fervor the ER team has brought to the documentation of its outdoor adventures.

As you know, National Wildlife Federation, the nation's largest grassroots conservation organization, is dedicated to inspiring Americans to protect wildlife for our children's future. National Wildlife Federation recognizes that people who spend time outdoors are more likely to be healthy, happy, and value the natural world, and as a result one of our primary missions is reconnecting families with nature. The ER is an obvious first step in this process. While purists may quibble that ER bylaws specifically exclude most family members, it is my belief that getting the ER participants outside constitutes a type of progress that may eventually carry over into their everyday lives and the lives of their wives, significant others, and children. As Bette Midler has remarked so eloquently: "Just remember, in the winter, far beneath the bitter snow, lies a seed that with the sun's love, in the spring becomes the rose."

On a more provincial note, I was surprised to see that, despite the ample talk of danger and fear in the ER's history, none of the ER trips have taken place in the state with the nation's largest wilderness complex, 17 of North America's 20 highest peaks, 72 million acres of National Wildlife Refuge (84% of the nation's total), 52.9 million acres of National Parks (68% of the nation's total), the nation's two largest national forests (both bigger than New Hampshire), 98% of the nation's brown bears and 6,000 wolves. This is, of course, not to belittle your efforts. I am certain that the ER participants—like Meriwether Lewis, William Clark, and the girl scouts the ER met in Tallulah Gorge—have displayed undaunted courage and endurance in pursuing their continental United States adventures. I congratulate and commend ER on its efforts to get outside and reconnect with nature and urge you to continue your good work and bring the inspiration you gain from the outdoors home to your families and friends.

Sincerely,

Jim Adams
Director, Pacific Region
National Wildlife Federation

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