

ORAL REPORT: "Feasibility Study for Designating Federal Lands For Public Nude Recreation"

Context

Purpose: The purpose of this report is to provide a brief background of naturism, the ways in which it is undertaken recreationally, the current challenges it faces, and, finally, options for coping with these challenges.

Situation and Audience: With the feasibility report now complete, the AANR is dispatching representatives (including myself) to make the rounds and get the word out regarding the findings of this report and to increase awareness, all in preparation for lobbying federal lawmakers. Invited are various public officials, including federal lawmakers, and members of the AANR, as well as other prominent advocates for nudism.

List of Visuals:

1. "AANR Logo" - a graphic of the AANR's logo
2. "Naturism Defined" - Text showing the definition of naturism
3. "Nude Beach Sign" - A photograph of a clothing-optional sign
4. "Arrested" - A graphic of handcuffed wrists
5. "Nude Tourism Popularity Increase Graph" - A graph showing the increase
6. "Federal Land Use" - A map of the United States highlighting the land under federal authority
7. "Private Resorts" - A map of the United States highlighting AANR-affiliated resorts
8. "State Lands" - A map of the United States highlighting clothing-optional state public beaches
9. "How to Be Successful as a Nudist Destination" - Text showing the four characteristics- safety, legality, accessibility, and privacy
10. "Final Recommendation: Combine Them All!" - Text stating the same content along with a combined map of the three individual maps above

Script

Hello, and thank you all for coming. And as this is not a clothing-optional venue, I'm glad you've all decided to wear clothes today.

Today I am going to be discussing nudism as it relates to outdoor recreation, its challenges,

and the potential options available for its continued enjoyment in the future.

My name is Chris Gepp, and I recently authored a report for the AANR analyzing the feasibility of designating federal land as clothing-optional. My first exposure, so to speak, to nudism was back during my senior year at The University of Texas at Austin in which I studied an on-line nudist community and reported on and analyzed the community's social behaviors. I also am a screenwriter and yoga teacher.

(Slide: "AANR Logo")

The AANR, or the American Association for Nude Recreation, as you may or may not know, is a prominent nudist organization in the United States, divided up into seven different regions across North America. It has been an avid defender of nudists' rights since its founding in 1931.

The AANR is affiliated with around 260 nudist resorts and has successfully lobbied for designating various public beaches and other public lands in North America as clothing-optional.

(Slide: "Naturism Defined")

Naturism as a term was first coined back in 1778 by Jean Baptiste Luc Planchon and is described as a "a lifestyle in harmony with nature, expressed through social nudity, and characterised by self-respect of people with different opinions and of the environment." Its practice has steadily increased since the end of World War II. The AANR estimates the nude tourism industry has now grown to \$500 million annually.

What are some of the ways naturists participate in nude tourism, you may wonder.

Naturists primarily have two options - two *legal* options, that is - for being nude outdoors: private resorts and public beaches. Private resorts tend to be secluded and hard-to-get-to, but offer a rich assortment of indoor and outdoor activities.

(Slide: "Nude Beach Sign")

Public beaches, on the other hand, might be reachable by public transportation, such as Haulover Beach in Miami, Florida or Gunnison Beach in New Jersey, opening them to a wider demographic and, thus, greater usage.

While there certainly have been successes towards naturists' rights, there have also been – and continue to be – significant challenges and set-backs.

(Slide: "Arrested")

When the political climate changes, so too does the enforcement of public indecency laws, which, as written, tend to sexualize naturism and punish naturists through arrests, fines, and imprisonment.

Since 1979 California with its long coastline has been known as a state quite receptive to naturism. In 2008, though, this all began to change thanks to prevailing political winds. Authorities there suddenly began cracking down on naturists, enforcing long-ignored anti-nudity laws, as happened in San Onofre State Beach in Orange County.

(Slide: "Nude Tourism Popularity Increase Graph")

In spite of this, though, naturist tourism continues its rise in popularity: between 2009 and 2010 alone, nude beach use increased from 31% to 48%, according to the travel website TripAdvisor.

Let's talk a bit about the options we are considering.

Shrinking state land availability is primarily what drives interest now in the possible use of federal land.

(Slide: "Federal Land Use")

Federal land holds a great opportunity for naturists, as approximately 565 million acres of coasts, forests, and backcountry are currently under federal authority. Formally designating this land as clothing-optional would add significant habitat and legitimize naturism as a age-old pastime not subject to the whims of state and local authorities.

(Slide: "Private Resorts")

As you can see, private resorts currently are fairly well-spread across the U.S., though there are still many states without nudist resorts.

(Slide: "State Lands")

Meanwhile, state lands split along political lines very noticeably from this map. Between state lands and private resorts, residents of many states are essentially out of luck without federal land as an option.

(Slide: "How to Be Successful as a Nudist Destination")

In this study, from the success of the Haulover and Gunnison beaches mentioned earlier, these two locations share characteristics – safety, legality, accessibility, and privacy – that are in large part responsible for their endurance as nudist destinations.

Safety comes primarily from the existence of other nudists in the vicinity, which creates an atmosphere that does not tolerate sexuality or other threats in a nudist zone. And naturists are more apt to use a clothing-optional zone if indeed there is a reasonable chance that they will be free from legal implications. When these zones are accessible by a wider demographic, their potential use goes up, resulting in an economic boon to the overall area. Finally, when privacy is available new nudists might be attracted, further enriching the activity.

(Slide: "Final Recommendation: Combine Them All!")

The results of our study found that private resorts still had the best features overall, though their relative lack of accessibility recommends combining all three options as the ultimate solution.

Finding places amenable to nude recreation remains a challenge for the naturist tourist. Whether it is a new law enacted or an old law newly enforced, the closure of a long-standing resort or the increase in the cost of gasoline for that long drive to the next closest resort, in its current state the simple practice of naturism is far from easy. Despite this, interest only increases and locations that show tolerance experience clear economic benefits. Federal land would provide a highly suitable habitat for this historic activity.

If you'd like to read the full report, please refer to the *Feasibility Study for Designating Federal Lands For Public Nude Recreation* on the AANR website for further information.

I appreciate your time today.