

1510 W North Loop Blvd #322
Austin, TX 78756

May 8, 2014

Senator David McMurrey, Democrat, Texas
Texas State Capitol Building
Austin, TX

Esteemed Senator McMurrey:

It was a pleasure meeting you for dinner the other night. I am so glad to hear how well Cynthia is doing after surgery. I hope she has a speedy recovery.

This is the report I had mentioned, as I recall your saying it might actually be worth placing on a few fellow Senators' desks even if it is an election year.

The report was commissioned by the AANR (American Association of Nudist Recreation) and provides a feasibility study on whether or not federal land could be designated as "clothing-optional." (That is, as areas where bathers can be with or without clothing in a setting such as a beach.)

Let me know if you have any questions.

Best,

Chris E. Gepp

Encl.: "Feasibility Study for Designating Federal Lands for Public Nude Recreation"

FEASIBILITY STUDY
for
DESIGNATING FEDERAL LANDS for PUBLIC NUDE RECREATION

submitted to
Senator David McMurrey
Austin, Texas

May 8, 2014

by
Chris E. Gepp

This report examines the feasibility of designating federal lands within the United States as "clothing-optional." The current situation and background is analyzed, the requirements laid out, the options compared, and finally conclusions and recommendations made.

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ABSTRACT

Naturism has been around since at least 1778 and has experienced periods of popularity and decline since then. Naturism, though, since World War II has become steadily more popular as lifestyles have changed.

Nude tourism has been on an upward trend, growing to a \$400 million industry, or 10% increase in the last decade. Naturists use clothing-optional areas at resorts and on designated public beaches among the venues for recreation; however, due to unfavorable political climates at the state level, these resorts and beaches are gradually becoming less accessible to naturists. Some naturists resort to "guerrilla naturism" at risk of fines and/or arrest in order to practice their lifestyle.

Naturist destinations have four requirements in order to attract naturists: they must be accessible, safe, legal, and private. Accessibility (how far a naturist must go to access the destination) plays a major role in the success of a location.

The options for nude tourism fall into three areas: private resorts, state land, and federal land. Each area has plusses and minuses that make it more or less amenable to naturist tourism. Private resorts are the most numerous, but vary state by state, and are usually remote. State land, meanwhile, is less numerous, but often closer to city centers, making it more attractive for recreation; however, legal issues continue to plague its use. Finally, federal land is vast, and it offers the promise of privacy and potentially replacing state lands that have been lost.

Comparing these options, it is clear that private resorts still offer the best compromise, but their accessibility makes their sole recommendation difficult. Instead, recommended is both federal land and private resorts use which along with any existing state land, would when combined, more than make up for the loss of state lands.

I. INTRODUCTION

Nude tourism has only increased in the last several decades. Laws protecting this lifestyle, however, have not kept up with this trend, and in fact have eroded the availability of clothing-optional zones.

This report will test the feasibility of designating federal lands as clothing-optional, which would provide additional areas where naturists may continue to enjoy outdoor activities unimpeded by a state's sudden anti-nudity stance .

This report is intended to be read by federal lawmakers with no prior knowledge on this issue.

An overview of what will be covered:

1. Background of naturism and the present situation
2. Requirements of nude recreational areas
3. Options for expanding nude recreation
4. Comparing the above options according to their characteristics
5. Conclusions of what is recommended based on the previous data

Note: "Nude tourism" and "Naturist tourism" will be used interchangeably throughout this report, but should be understood to be synonymous. They both refer to traveling to a vacation locale in order to practice a nudist/naturist lifestyle.

II. BACKGROUND OF NUDE TOURISM

Naturism has been around for some time now. The means with which naturists take part in naturist tourism is often met with challenges, yet still the industry continues to grow.

About Naturism

Naturism, a term first used back in 1778 by Jean Baptiste Luc Planchon, is described by the XIV Congress of the International Naturist Federation as “a lifestyle in harmony with nature, expressed through social nudity, and characterised by self-respect of people with different opinions and of the environment.” [6]

The movement had its high and low periods up until the end of World War II. Since then, though, as leisure patterns and lifestyles changed, interest in naturism has steadily increased [6].

Primary Avenues for Nude Tourism

To take part in nude recreation, naturists typically use campgrounds at private resorts and clothing-optional public beaches.

Signs such as this one are usually posted around the perimeter of a clothing-optional zone:



Figure 1. Nude Beach Sign [11].

Private resorts. The AANR boasts over 260 resorts being available to naturists [14]. These resorts are members-only and are generally in isolated areas, but are available in many (but not all) states. Being isolated ensures privacy, but also makes accessibility difficult. These resorts are

also constantly under threat of closure due to shifting attitudes and a dwindling membership base, in spite of an upward trend in nude tourism [16].

Public beaches. In addition, there are several public beaches within the United States that remain clothing-optional due to a strong grassroots effort to maintain them. These public beaches seem to benefit as well from locations that are very accessible and the political region in which they are situated.

Challenges to Nude Tourism

Social naturism is a challenging activity to undertake for most. One cannot simply go to a nearby park and decide to sunbathe nude. Depending on where a person lives, the nearest nude-friendly area might require a day (or more) of travel, making the activity available only to those with the means and time.

Some naturists attempt what is known as “guerrilla naturism” and attempt to treat undesignated areas as clothing-optional, which may only lead to a warning, but could also subject him or her to fines and/or imprisonment [17].

Popularity of Nude Tourism

Despite the difficulties involved, though, based on several data points it is clear that nude tourism is only trending *upward*. The AANR reports that Haulover Beach, a clothing-optional beach located in Miami, Florida, nestled in the city a few steps from the main road and surrounded by hotels and high-rises, has seen parking revenues jump 445% during the period from 1991 to 2004, and the bulk of this revenue has come from the clothing-optional section [9].

A Gallup poll conducted in 1983 and then again in 2000 also shows an increased acceptance of nude sunbathing and more experience with skinny-dipping [6]. And according to TripAdvisor, just in the period between 2009 and 2010, nude beach use leapt from 31% to 48% [9]. Finally, the AANR estimates that the nude tourism industry has grown to \$500 million annually [15].

Given the obvious interest in nude tourism, the local and state laws now being enforced in force seem grossly out-of-pace with the times or the pulse of the nation.

III. REQUIREMENTS FOR SUCCESSFUL NUDE TOURISM

Public beaches such as Gunnison in New Jersey and the aforementioned Haulover in Florida both provide models of what is required for the success of a clothing-optional area.

The issues of safety, legality, accessibility, and privacy all play a role in nude tourism achieving success.

Safety

Both of these beaches have clear rules of conduct. Not only that, but the nudist community is hyper-vigilant of offensive behavior given the sensitive environment and is intolerant of any deviations whatsoever.

It is truly this level of group-based oversight that maintains the order and comfortability necessary for such an environment.

Legality

Freedom from persecution. Laws must be in line with the naturist philosophy of maintaining a respectful, non-sexualized environment.

Current state and local laws are written with religious overtones, using such loaded speech as "indecent" and "lewdness," whose definitions change according to who might be in charge. However, having laws scoped more specifically with a naturist philosophy will still provide a safe environment while upholding the rights of the nudist.

Accessibility

Both of these beaches are located within major city centers and thus draw a wide range of ages, demographics, ethnicities, et cetera, just as regular beaches would.

This characteristic, more than any other, might explain these two locations' longevity.

Privacy

Especially for newer nudists, privacy is a must. The compromise to privacy, though, is always safety. Simply put, when others are around a group can be formed. The larger the group, the less likely there are to be threats from outside or within.

IV. OPTIONS FOR NUDE RECREATION

Currently, three different options exist for nudist tourists: private resorts, state land, or federal land.

Private Resorts

Private resorts account for the primary means of taking part in safe, legal, nude recreation. These resorts are primarily member-based, vary in cost, but offer privacy and usually a plethora of indoor and outdoor activities. They tend to be very isolated and vary from state to state in availability.

As this map shows, there are several states in which *no* clothing-optional resort is nearby:



Figure 2. AANR Resorts [14].

State Land

On state land where clothing-optional areas do exist, the threat of being arrested for “indecent exposure” is nearly always a concern.

The dispersion of state land marked as clothing-optional is considerably less than that of private resorts and generally breaks along political lines:



Figure 3. State Land Use [12].

Federal Land

The amount of federal land potentially available to outdoor recreation is vast. As it happens, a recent petition asking the White House to allocate more land to nudist recreation highlighted that the National Park Service, Bureau of Land Management, and the U.S. Forest Service currently manage more than 536 million acres of forests, countryside, and coastline [10].

As this graphic shows, the largest swath of federal land clusters mostly in the Western United States:

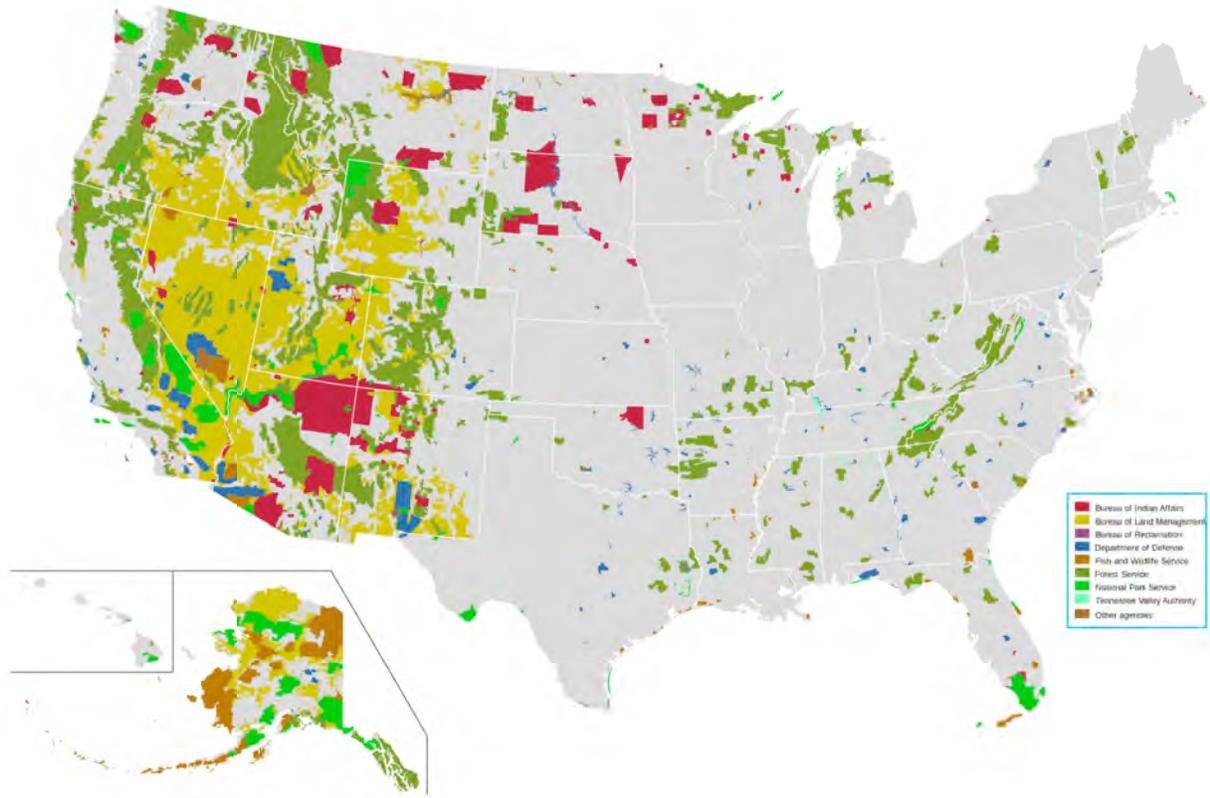


Figure 4. Federal Land Use [12].

V. COMPARISON OF OPTIONS

Private resorts, state land, and federal land each possess characteristics that make them both suitable and less suitable to nudist recreation. Usually one characteristic determines another.

The following categories are used to evaluate each option:

- *Accessibility*: How easy to reach is this area? Is it reachable within a city or is it remote and requires car or plane travel? (As mentioned back in *Section III*, having this characteristic is key to the longevity and reliability of a recreational environment.)
- *Safety*: Is this area inviting to nudists? This is often a function of how remote the location is and whether there might be issues of legality. If a place is isolated, there will be a smaller group of nudists, which is a factor in safety.
- *Privacy*: How private is the area? Remote areas tend to be private, while areas within a city will not be. And while privacy isn't required by every nudist, it is certainly a factor for many.
- *Legality*: How likely are there to be legal issues if this area is used for nude recreation?

Table 1. Land Use Characteristics [13].				
	Accessibility	Safety	Privacy	Legality
<i>Private Resorts</i>	Remote	Good	High	Yes
<i>State/Local</i>	Local	Good	Low	Uncertain
<i>Federal</i>	Remote	Fair	High	Yes

Table 1: Land Use Characteristics

From this table it is clear that while private resorts still offer the most characteristics, they edge out federal areas only slightly due to their relative lack of accessibility.

If both federal lands and private resorts existed simultaneously as nudist options for tourism, it would likely be a game-changer, though, as the key feature - *Accessibility* - would only be increased as a result.

Finally, lost state land may well become available again in the future to naturists depending on political will, further benefiting nude tourism.

VI. CONCLUSION

This report provided a feasibility study of designating federal land as clothing-optional.

While nude tourism is up, access to nudist locations is in jeopardy because of state land lost due to local anti-nudity laws and the whims of state governments.

In terms of evaluating federal land as a possible substitute for state land, at issue was preserving the key features of current successful naturist locations: safety, privacy, and legal rights.

Compared were three different options: private resorts, state land, and federal land and how suitable they were for nudist recreation. All three had some degree of suitability for naturist tourism, as well as some obvious issues.

VII. RECOMMENDATION

Designating some or the whole of federal lands as clothing-optional would indeed improve the nudist tourist's stock as federal lands could actually serve to replace what was lost when state governments suddenly have changes-of-heart towards existing anti-nudity laws and the continual erosion of nudist recreational habitat might thereby be stemmed.

Therefore, this report concludes that federal lands in combination with existing state and private resorts would go far in advancing the goals of naturist tourism.

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