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Sent: 12/21/2017 6:47:23 PM
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CC: Gordon, Stephen [/o=ExchangeLabs/ou=Exchange Administrative Group (FYDIBOHF23SPDLT)/cn=Recipients/cn=7c8fb4d82bff4eec98f5c5d00a47f554-Gordon, Ste]; Brennan, Thomas [/o=ExchangeLabs/ou=Exchange Administrative Group (FYDIBOHF23SPDLT)/cn=Recipients/cn=78caa4c8d91743c887c1bb5dc8cdb369-Thomas Brennan]; Carlos Alcazar [calcazar@cultureoneworld.com]; Kevin Butt (TMNA) [kevin.butt@toyota.com]
Subject: Following up our November 27th meeting

Dear Tate,

My senior team here at NEEF and I have taken some time to reflect on the conversation Carlos, Kevin and I had with you. We have identified some areas where we see potential synergies with the priorities you shared with us. On behalf of Carlos, Kevin and the NEEF senior team I offer ideas here as starting points for what I hope will be future conversations with Tom, you and others you would designate.

Rx for Outdoor Activity: NEEF began this program in 2010 to draw attention to the value time outside, especially in nature, can offer to address health problems young children are facing due to sedentary lifestyles and poor nutrition. Science has demonstrated that time in nature reduces stress and can help children who face the added challenges associated with ADD or ADHD. In addition, just spending more time exploring the outdoors and playing in the outdoors can counter childhood obesity and Type 2 diabetes. NEEF has created a training program for health care practitioners to introduce them to the health benefits time outdoors offers. We call the participants who complete the course “nature champions”. We have worked primarily with pediatricians. Perhaps we could meet with staff in EPA’s Office of Children’s Health Protection (OCHP) to discuss ways this training course could be offered via all EPA Regions. Currently our **Rx** program has focused on children, but there is more and more evidence that time in nature is good for anyone young or old. Twenty minutes in nature reduces the stress hormone, cortisol, and we believe this could apply to veterans suffering from PTSD. For example, we are in conversations with Harley Davidson regarding how we might introduce more bikers to the benefits of making time to stop and enjoy our public lands as part of a ride. A large percent of Harley riders are veterans. Perhaps we could explore how to expand Rx for Outdoor Activity to include adults and work with EPA to partner with DOI and US Forest Service as an effort to address significant public health issues while spending time enjoying the benefits of nature on our public lands.

Engaging the public every day: To achieve NEEF’s vision that by 2022 300 million Americans actively use environmental knowledge to ensure the well-being of the earth and its people, NEEF partners with large affinity groups trusted and looked up to by their members.. We shared with you our work with the National Basketball Association (NBA) to encourage millions of basketball fans to implement energy efficiency actions that can help families save money, improve the quality of their lives and help the environment. NEEF is now identifying new audiences beyond the sports community. When we met I mentioned our interest in engaging homeowners through the National Association of Realtors and National Association of Homebuilders. There are 75.6 million homeowners in the USA. You raised issues of importance to EPA such as food waste and soil erosion as well as water management. We believe that these issues can be addressed through a focus on the homeowner. NEEF has a range of environmental education approaches that could be adapted to this audience in partnership with the Real Estate Agents Association and Association of Homebuilders. Whether buying a home, building a new home or maintaining a home, homeowners need to think about landscaping to prevent soil erosion and stormwater runoff, disposal of waste and energy efficiency. Native species gardens, pollinator gardens and vegetable gardens are all good options as is weatherizing one’s home. A reminder on basic recycling, composting etc. is also relevant to homeownership. Location of a home near public green spaces for recreation ranging from picnicking to fishing is part of choosing a home. There are many possibilities for this focus that we think could overlap with your priorities. On food waste in particular, EPA’s website is full of useful resources: We could promote this EPA link during NEEF’s National Environmental Education Week April 23-29, 2018 :

https://www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2017-12/documents/guide_to_conducting_student_food_waste_audit_-_nov_20_2017.pdf

The work with homeowners would most likely cross over into many EPA Offices, but we could work with Tom in OEE as the point person. We would be very grateful for any introductions you could make for NEEF to the Associations of Realtors and of Homebuilders.

Extreme weather resilience grants: This is a concept in development. NEEF runs a strong competitive grants program and we have some private sector funds available to us now that we want to program as restoration/resilience grants for areas hardest hit by hurricanes, flooding or fires. Our focus is on public lands- federal, state or city. We are currently in the fact finding stage interviewing federal agencies about where their public lands were hit the hardest. We are also consulting with colleagues on which resilience actions could leverage the greatest impact. All of these grants would have a community environmental education focus so people living closest to these public lands could learn about resiliency and even apply similar actions on their own properties and in their neighborhoods. EPA input to this initiative would be most welcome.

Tate, I hope these ideas resonate with you as relevant to your goals. I feel I have barely scratched the surface on potential collaboration. Teens are another audience of special focus for us after completing our teen survey indicating 80% of teens prefer being indoors because that is where their technology is. We are also eager to target anglers convinced that fishing is a sport that appeals to people of all backgrounds and economic means. It may even be a great draw for teens to get back outside again. I will stop here, however, before introducing even more ideas ☺ and wait for your thoughts on the above.

I should add that some of these programs are funded and can be carried out "on budget" while others will require us to fundraise before we can initiate them. We can discuss such details once you have had time to react to the preliminary thinking shared here.

Thank you again for taking time to meet and we look forward to future collaboration. I will be on vacation for the week between Christmas and New Year's Day but checking e-mail from time to time. I wish you and your family the best during this holiday season and hope to talk with you again in January.

Warm wishes, Diane



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