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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Former National Park Service Director Fran P. Mainella to Speak at ECU**

GREENVILLE, N.C. (December 15, 2009)- Fran P. Mainella, first woman to lead the National Park Service, will deliver the public lecture “Nature Deficit Disorder and Its Implications on Human Well-Being,” in East Carolina University’s Murphy Center at 3:30 p.m. on January 28, 2010.

Appointed by President George W. Bush and confirmed by the senate in 2001, Mainella served as the 16<sup>th</sup> director of the National Park Service. Prior to her nearly six years as the national director, she served twelve years as Florida State Parks director.

Under her leadership, Florida received the Gold Medal Award recognizing excellence in the field of recreation management given jointly by the National Sports Goods Association and the National Recreation and Park Association.

“We are pleased to welcome Fran Mainella to East Carolina University as the keynote speaker in the Ralph Steele Lecture Series. Mainella’s contributions to the national park system have encouraged active lifestyles through volunteerism and local partnerships. Her influence has brought linkage between active living and the environment,” said Dr. Glen Gilbert, dean of the College of Health and Human Performance.

Among her numerous awards and honors, Mainella received the Sheldon Coleman Great Outdoors Award in 2002 presented by the American Recreation Coalition. In 2006 she was awarded the William Penn Mott, Jr. Award for Excellence by the National Society for Park Resources and in 2007 she received the Pugsley Award, the highest award given by the American Academy for Park and Recreation Administration.

She is currently a visiting scholar at Clemson University in the Department of Parks, Recreation and Tourism Management. Mainella holds a bachelor’s degree from the University of Connecticut, a master’s degree, and an honorary doctorate from Central Connecticut State College.

Individuals requesting accommodations under the American with Disabilities Act (ADA) should call 252-737-1016 (voice/TTY) at least 48 hours prior to the event.

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