



Partnership for the National Trails System

222 S. Hamilton #13 Madison, WI 53703 Phone: (608) 249-7870
www.nationaltrailspartnership.org Fax: (608) 257-3513

GARY WERNER, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
STATEMENT TO THE

April 16, 2013

U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS
SUBCOMMITTEE ON INTERIOR, ENVIRONMENT & RELATED AGENCIES

Mr. Chairman and members of the subcommittee:

The Partnership for the National Trails System appreciates your support over the past 19 years, through operations funding and dedicated Challenge Cost Share funds, for the national scenic and historic trails administered by the National Park Service. We also appreciate your increased allocation of funds to support the trails administered and managed by the Forest Service and for the trails in the Bureau of Land Management's National Landscape Conservation System. To continue the progress that you have fostered, the Partnership requests that you provide annual operations funding for each of the 30 national scenic and historic trails for Fiscal Year 2014 through these appropriations:

- **National Park Service: \$16.21 million** for administration of 23 trails and for coordination of the long-distance trails program by the Washington office. **Construction: \$380,000** for the Ice Age Trail and \$200,000 for the Pacific Crest Trail.
- **USDA Forest Service: \$9.096 million** to administer 6 trails and \$1.2 million to manage parts of 16 trails administered by the NPS or BLM. \$1 million for Iditarod Trail construction.
- **Bureau of Land Management: to coordinate its National Trails System Program: \$250,000;** to administer these trails: Iditarod Trail: \$700,000, the Camino Real de Tierra Adentro Trail: \$230,000, the Old Spanish Trail: \$350,000 and to manage portions of 13 trails administered by the Park Service or the Forest Service: \$4 million; \$3,140,000 for operating five National Historic Trail interpretive centers; **Construction: \$300,000** for the Pacific Crest Trail.
- We ask that you appropriate \$4.5 million for the National Park Service Challenge Cost Share Program and continue to direct one-third (\$1,500,000) for national scenic and historic trails or create a separate \$1.5 million National Trails System Challenge Cost Share Program.
- We ask that you add \$500,000 to the Bureau of Land Management's Challenge Cost Share Program and allocate it for the national scenic and historic trails it administers or manages.

We ask that you appropriate \$61,601,508 from the Land and Water Conservation Fund for the acquisition of 119 tracts along seven national scenic and four national historic trails described in the National Trails System Collaborative Landscape Planning proposal and allocate this funding to:

- the Bureau of Land Management: \$5,722,260 million
- the US Fish and Wildlife Service: \$12,660,782 million
- the US Forest Service: \$18,215,866 million
- the National Park Service: \$25,002,600 million.

National Park Service

The \$16.21 million we request for Park Service operations includes increases for some of the trails to continue the progress and new initiatives made possible by the additional funding Congress provided several years ago. Funding for the new Star Spangled Banner and Washington-Rochambeau Trails and \$400,000 for the Park Service to implement planning for the New England Trail is included

We request an **increase of \$626,000** to expand Park Service efforts to protect cultural landscapes at more than 200 sites along the **Santa Fe Trail**, to develop GIS mapping, and to fund public educational outreach programs of the Santa Fe Trail Association. An **increase of \$780,000** for the **Trail of Tears** will enable the Park Service to work with the Trail of Tears Association to develop a GIS to map the Trail's historical and cultural heritage sites to protect them and to develop interpretation of them for visitors. We request an **increase of \$346,000 to \$866,000** for the **Ala Kahakai Trail** to enable the Park Service to work with E Mau Na Ala Hele, the Ala Kahakai Trail Association, and other community organizations to care for resources on the land and with the University of Hawaii to conduct archaeological and cultural landscape studies along this trail.

We request an **increase of \$193,000 to \$1,708,000** for the **Appalachian Trail** to expand the highly successful "Trail to Every Classroom" program of the Appalachian Trail Conservancy. The **\$1,483,000** we request for the **4,200 mile North Country Trail** will enable the Park Service to provide greater support for the regional GIS mapping, trail building, trail management, and training of volunteers led by the North Country Trail Association. The **\$1,389,000** we request for the **Ice Age Trail** includes a **\$535,000 increase** to build partner and citizen capacity for protecting the natural and cultural resources on the Trail and Ice Age Trail lands and to provide NPS with a property manager for NPS-owned lands.

Construction: We request that you appropriate for trail construction projects **\$380,000** for the **Ice Age Trail** and **\$200,000** for the **Pacific Crest Trail** in the national parks crossed by the trail.

Challenge Cost Share programs are one of the most effective and efficient ways for Federal agencies to accomplish a wide array of projects for public benefit while also sustaining partnerships involving countless private citizens in doing public service work. We request that you **robustly fund the Park Service, Bureau of Land Management, and Fish and Wildlife Service Challenge Cost Share programs** and appropriate **\$4.5 million in Challenge Cost Share** funding to the **Park Service** for FY14 as a wise investment of public money that will generate public benefits many times greater than its sum. We ask you to **continue to direct one-third of the \$4.5 million** for the **national scenic and historic trails** to continue the steady progress toward making these trails fully available for public enjoyment. We suggest, as an alternative to the annual allocating of funds from the Regular Challenge Cost Share program, that you create a separate **National Trails System Challenge Cost Share** program with **\$1.5 million** funding.

USDA - Forest Service

We ask you to appropriate **\$9.096 million** as a separate budgetary item specifically for the Arizona, Continental Divide, Florida, Pacific Crest, and Pacific Northwest National Scenic Trails and the Nez Perce National Historic Trail within the over-all appropriation for **Capital Improvements and Maintenance for Trails**. Recognizing the on-the-ground management responsibility the **Forest Service** has for **1024 miles** of the Appalachian Trail, more than **650 miles** of the North Country Trail, and sections of the Ice Age, Anza, Caminos Real de Tierra Adentro and de Tejas, Lewis & Clark, California, Iditarod, Mormon Pioneer, Old Spanish, Oregon, Overmountain Victory, Pony Express, Trail of Tears and Santa Fe Trails, we ask you to appropriate **\$1.2 million** specifically for these trails.

The Partnership's request of **\$9.096 million** includes **\$2.5 million** to enable the Forest Service and Florida Trail Association to continue trail maintenance, to control invasive species, do ecosystem restoration, and otherwise manage **4,625 acres** of new **Florida Trail** land. The **\$9.096 million** request also includes **\$2 million** for the **Pacific Crest Trail**, **\$2.2 million** for the **Continental Divide Trail**, **\$1 million** for the **Pacific Northwest Trail**, **\$826,000** for the **Nez Perce Trail**, and **\$570,000** for the **Arizona Trail**. Some of the additional funds requested will enable the Forest Service to develop Comprehensive Management Plans for the latter three trails. We also request **\$1 million** of **additional funding** for construction of sections of the **Iditarod Trail**.

Bureau of Land Management

Although considerably more money is needed to fully administer the **National Landscape Conservation System** and protect its resources, we support the **\$69.549 million** in **base funding** for the System the Administration requested for FY 2013. We ask that you appropriate as **new permanent base funding** **\$250,000 for National Trails System Program Coordination**, **\$700,000 for the Iditarod Trail**, **\$230,000 for El Camino Real de Tierra Adentro Trail**, **\$350,000 for the Old Spanish Trail**, and **\$4,000,000 for the Bureau of Land Management to manage 3,756 miles of thirteen other national scenic and historic trails**. For trail maintenance we request **\$300,000 for the Pacific Crest Trail** and **\$50,000 for the Nez Perce Trail**; and request **\$3,140,000 to operate five historic trails interpretive centers**.

We ask you to provide **\$19 million** for the Bureau's **Challenge Cost Share** program and to direct **\$500,000** for National Trails System projects as you have done with the Park Service's CCS program.

To promote greater management transparency and accountability for the National Trails and the whole **National Landscape Conservation System**, we urge you to request expenditure and accomplishment reports for each of the NLCS Units for FY13 and to direct the Bureau to include unit-level allocations within **major sub-activities** for each of the scenic and historic trails, and wild and scenic rivers -- as the Bureau has done for the monuments and conservation areas -- within a **new activity account** for the National Landscape Conservation System in FY14. The Bureau's lack of a unified budget account for National Trails prevents the agency from efficiently planning, implementing, reporting, and taking advantage of cost-saving and leveraging partnerships and volunteer contributions for every activity related to these national resources.

Land and Water Conservation Fund

The Partnership requests that you provide the authorized **\$900 million** for the **Land & Water Conservation Fund** and within this amount **\$61,601,508** for the **National Trails System Collaborative Landscape Planning** proposal to acquire 119 tracts along the 11 national scenic and historic trails detailed here:

Bureau of Land Management: \$5,722,260 million | 19 tracts | 3,687 acres

Nez Perce and Lewis and Clark National Historic Trails (ID, MT): \$1,630,000 to protect natural and archaeological resources along two historic trails at Cow Island, Cow Creek, and Lolo Creek;
Pacific Crest National Scenic Trail (OR, CA): \$4,092,260 for trail and resource protection within the Cascade Siskiyou National Monument, San Geronio Wilderness, and Whitewater Area of Critical Environmental Concern;

US Fish and Wildlife Service: \$12,660,782 million | 8 tracts | 3,433 acres

Appalachian National Scenic Trail (PA): \$4,300,000 for watershed, viewshed, and globally rare habitat protection along Kittatinny Ridge in the Delaware Water Gap of Cherry Valley National Wildlife Refuge;

El Camino Real de Tierra Adentro National Historic Trail (NM): \$6,860,782 for resource protection and acquisition of water rights for Middle Rio Grande National Wildlife Refuge, the southwest's first urban national wildlife refuge;

Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail (WA): \$1,500,000 for protection of an intact historic setting representing what the Corps of Discovery saw and experienced, and improved protection of a threatened habitat type;

US Forest Service: \$18,215,866 million | 70 tracts | 5,203 acres

Appalachian National Scenic Trail (NC, TN, VA): \$5,450,000 to protect priority viewsheds and unique, quality high-elevation ecosystems in the Pisgah, Cherokee, and George Washington National Forests;

Continental Divide National Scenic Trail (CO): \$199,300 to provide trail connectivity, conserve alpine landscapes, and protect watersheds critical to Denver's water supply;

Florida National Scenic Trail (FL): \$1,776,675 to protect the remaining three miles of gaps along the 70-miles Suwannee River section and complete resource protection for critical habitat, including riparian lands;

Pacific Crest National Scenic Trail (CA, OR, WA): \$10,789,891 for trail and resource protection along the crest of the Cascades and Sierras, and the Transverse Desert Ranges from the edge of the Anza-Borrego Desert in southern CA to the Okanogan-Wenatchee National Forest in northern Washington;

National Park Service: \$25,002,600 million | 22 tracts | 5,349 acres

Ala Kahakai National Historic Trail (HI): \$4,250,000 to protect 59 acres along the Kona Coast with numerous historical and archaeological sites and a section of the Ala Kahakai National Historic Trail;

Appalachian National Scenic Trail (PA, VT): \$3,700,000 for watershed, viewshed, and globally rare habitat protection along Kittatinny Ridge in the Delaware Water Gap of Cherry Valley National Wildlife Refuge and for an inholding in the Green Mountain National Forest;

Continental Divide National Scenic Trail (NM): \$5,300,000 to re-route the CDNST off of roads onto lands that will afford spectacular views of an access to nationally significant volcanic landscapes in El Malpais National Monument;

Ice Age National Scenic Trail (WI): \$3,780,000 for protection of a continuous corridor for hikers, wildlife, and management along the Eau Claire River, at the edge of the Driftless Area and within the renowned Kettle Moraine;

New England National Scenic Trail (CT, MA): \$4,000,000 for trail and resource protection on two key parcels that provide campsites for hiker, connections to two community centers and contiguous open space corridor;

Nez Perce National Historic Trail (OR, MT): \$1,210,000 to preserve trail and archaeological sites at the Bloody Gulch of Big Hole National Battlefield and at Old Joseph Minam State Park;

North Country National Scenic Trail (PA, WI): \$2,762,600 for key trail connections between Moraine State Park and McConnell's Mill State Park in western Pennsylvania, and along the Lake Superior shoreline in Wisconsin;

The Partnership strongly supports the new "**National Rivers and Trails Initiative**" funding line included in the **National Park Service** Budget for FY 2013 as a first step to providing consistent annual funding to acquire the land needed to complete Congressionally authorized trails. We urge you to provide considerably more than the \$4 million requested by the Administration for FY 2013 since the Park Service LWCF funding requests above total more than \$25 million.

Private Sector Support for the National Trails System

Public-spirited partnerships between private citizens and public agencies have been a hallmark of the National Trails System since its inception. These partnerships create the enduring strength of the Trails System and the trail communities that sustain it by combining the local, grass-roots energy and responsiveness of volunteers with the responsible continuity of public agencies. **They also provide private financial support for public projects, often resulting in a greater than equal match of funds.**

The private trail organizations' commitment to the success of these trail-sustaining partnerships grows even as Congress' support for the trails has grown. In **2012 the trail organizations fostered 1,185,375 hours** – an **increase of 2.4%** over 2011 - of documented volunteer labor valued at **\$26,244,202** to help sustain the national scenic and historic trails. The organizations also raised **private sector contributions of \$7,565,777** to benefit the trails.