



Chairman Ken Calvert

*Subcommittee on the Interior, Environment, and Related
Agencies, House Committee on Appropriations*

National Park Service FY 2015 Budget Hearing

April 3, 2014

Opening Statement As Prepared

The Committee will come to order.

Director Jarvis, I want to thank you and your colleagues for being with us today to discuss the important work of the National Park Service and your priorities for fiscal year 2015. It's nice to see our friends, Bruce Sheaffer, and a member of our subcommittee family, Grace Stephens, with you today.

As you know, our subcommittee worked very hard to restore funding to a number of critical areas within the Park Service budget in the enacted fiscal year 2014 appropriations bill. We were particularly focused on reversing some of the detrimental effects of sequestration on the operations accounts. I'm pleased that we were ultimately able to restore funding to fiscal year 2012 levels. We fully intend to follow the regular order process this year and have a funding bill enacted for fiscal year 2015.

Overall, the proposed funding level in your fiscal year 2015 budget request is \$2.6 billion, which is \$55 million above the FY14 enacted level. The largest increase—about \$40 million in discretionary funding—is proposed for efforts relating to the Centennial of the National Park Service. We look forward to hearing in some detail the Service's plans for celebrating its 100th anniversary and the role Park Service partners and the private sector will play in this effort. One proposal related to the Centennial worth noting is the revival of the Bush-era Centennial Challenge, a concept which proposes to leverage \$10 million in Federal dollars with private sector dollars through a one-to-one matching of funds.

Ironically, the largest funding increases proposed for the Park Service—well over \$1 billion—is through proposed changes in mandatory programs outside of the jurisdiction of this subcommittee. It appears that the vast majority of the Administration's request to address the deferred maintenance backlog and to fund a larger piece of the Centennial requires legislation by the authorizing committees of jurisdiction—not the Appropriations Committee.

Another issue addressed in the budget request is the authority the Park Service uses under the Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act (FLREA) to levy entrance fees. This authority, which is set to expire at the end of this calendar year, is critical to providing revenue to our national parks. It's also important to the Forest Service and other Department of the Interior land management bureaus. We hope you'll shed some light today on the importance of this authority to your overall mission, and make a strong case for why this authority should be extended.

Like a number of my colleagues on the subcommittee, I look forward to seeing the remaining scaffolding on the Washington Monument come down in the coming weeks and having this famous landmark reopen to the public. This subcommittee is very proud to have played a role in providing \$7.5 million of the \$15 million required to repair the damage from the earthquake several years ago—with the remaining funding provided by philanthropist David Rubenstein. Members of the subcommittee and our staff look forward to visiting the Washington Monument when it reopens in mid-May.

Director Jarvis, we look forward to hearing from you on these and other issues but first, let me yield to my friend from Virginia, Mr. Moran, for any opening remarks—and inspiring quotes—he'd like to share with us this morning.

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