

Committee on Natural Resources
1324 Longworth House Office Building
March 4, 2020 at 10:00 a.m.

Oversight Hearing

*Examining the Department of the Interior's Spending Priorities and the President's Fiscal Year
2021 Budget Proposal*

Questions from Rep. Gallego for Susan Combs, Assistant Secretary of Policy, Management,
and Budget, U.S. Department of Interior

1. Your budget requests \$2.5 billion for the Park Service's main Operations account. That's a \$57 million decrease. Among many other things like visitor services and deferred maintenance, this account pays for law enforcement activities. We know that Interior is already taking law enforcement officers from our understaffed parks and deploying them to the border. Is any of the Park Service's law enforcement funding in the Park Protection account being used to facilitate or on activities related to construction of the President's border wall? If so, how much?
2. Interior requested a more than 50% cut to the Park Service's Construction account. Are any of those funds being used to facilitate or on activities related to construction of the President's border wall on public lands? If so, how much?
3. Interior requested a 10% decrease for BLM's main Management of Lands and Resources account. This account pays for law enforcement and other resource protection activities – for example, protecting priceless areas of places like Bears Ears from vandalism. Are any funds from that Resource Protection and Maintenance account being used to facilitate or on activities related to construction of the President's border wall? If so, how much?
4. Are any funds from the Realty and Ownership Management account being used to facilitate the additional transfer of lands from BLM to the Department of Defense? If so, how much?

5. Interior proposed cutting BLM's Transportation and Facilities Maintenance account by over 25%. Are any of these funds being used to facilitate or on activities related to construction of the President's border wall? If so, how much?

6. To your knowledge, are any other Park Service or BLM funds being used to facilitate or on activities related to construction of the President's border wall? If so, which accounts are they coming from?

7. Your budget requests a 65% cut to the Historic Preservation Fund, including an over 50% cut to Tribal historic preservation. Last year, the National Park Service proposed a rule that would very severely limit State and Tribal input into the Historic preservation process, as well as eliminate the appeals process to the Keeper for potentially eligible properties. Is this proposed budget cut a reflection of NPS's expectation that its proposed rule will significantly reduce the number of properties nominated and listed for Historic Preservation? If not, what was the justification behind this cut?