

**STATEMENT OF JONATHAN B. JARVIS, DIRECTOR, NATIONAL PARK SERVICE,
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, BEFORE THE SUBCOMMITTEE ON
INTERIOR, ENVIRONMENT, AND RELATED AGENCIES OF THE HOUSE
APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE CONCERNING THE FISCAL YEAR 2015 BUDGET
REQUEST FOR THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE**

April 3, 2014

Mr. Chairman and members of the subcommittee, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today at this hearing on the 2015 President's budget request for the National Park Service (NPS).

NPS Centennial

In 2015, the NPS will stand at the doorstep of its 100th anniversary. America has changed dramatically since the birth of the NPS in 1916. Our reach now extends beyond traditionally isolated natural wonders and exemplary examples of our cultural heritage; to urban centers, across rural landscapes, deep within oceans, and across night skies. The NPS' signature Centennial plan, *A Call to Action*, represents our recommitment to the exemplary stewardship and public enjoyment of our national parks, calling upon NPS employees and partners to commit to 39 actions that advance the Service toward a shared vision for strengthening our parks through 2016 and into our second century. The 2015 budget supports *A Call to Action* as the guiding strategy for creating a more relevant Service for the next century. In addition to *A Call to Action*, the NPS, in partnership with the National Park Foundation, is preparing to launch a marketing

campaign to engage another generation and a new audience in the life-enhancing and sometimes life-changing experiences to be had at national parks. Centennial planning is already underway across the country, and soon, national signature projects will be chosen that provide opportunities for partners at both the national and local levels to engage with the goals of the Centennial and provide opportunities for broad audience participation in and with the NPS. The 2015 budget includes a strategic set of increases to prepare the Service to enter into its next 100 years.

2015 Budget Summary

The 2015 budget supports continued stewardship of the Nation's most cherished resources. The NPS will continue to carry on its stewardship of these resources of national significance and to provide enriching experiences and enjoyment for all visitors.

Sustaining funding for park operations is a key component of the budget. We recognize the value the 401 national parks and NPS community assistance programs provide all Americans – as places of introspection and recreation, and as economic engines that create jobs and help our gateway communities thrive. A new economic impact report was recently released showing that in 2012 the more than 282 million national park visitors spent \$14.7 billion in local gateway communities, generating \$26.8 billion in output and supporting nearly 243,000 jobs. According to the report, every dollar invested by American taxpayers in the NPS returns \$10 to the U.S. economy. The President's budget will ensure that national parks continue to serve the visitors who come every year to relax and recreate in America's great outdoors and learn about the people and places that make up America's story.

The 2015 President's budget request proposes total discretionary appropriations of \$2.6 billion for the NPS. This is a net increase of \$55.1 million above 2014 enacted discretionary appropriations. The request fully funds \$16.6 million in fixed costs and includes a net program increase of \$38.5 million. The budget proposes targeted increases totaling \$52.2 million to fund essential programs and emerging operational needs. Reflecting the President's call for fiscal discipline and sustainability, the budget also includes \$13.7 million in reductions in external programs, heritage partnership programs, and land acquisition inholdings and grants.

The request includes an estimated \$1.0 billion in mandatory appropriations, a net increase of \$608.6 million. The funds would reduce the deferred maintenance backlog on high priority assets, enhance the NPS' capacity to leverage public/private partnerships, and support land acquisition and grants to state and local governments for recreation. In total, the request includes budget authority of \$3.6 billion.

The highlight of the 2015 budget request is the Centennial Initiative supported by discretionary and mandatory funds. The discretionary request includes a \$40.0 million increase to invest in the second century of the National Park System. This includes a \$30.0 million increase for operations, of which \$4.0 million would support 21st Century Conservation Service Corps youth work opportunities to educate and engage the next generation; \$2.0 million would support volunteer opportunities for young people to expand the capacity of the NPS to manage volunteers in parks; \$8.0 million in competitively managed funds would support enhanced visitor services in the areas of interpretation and education, law enforcement and protection, and facility operations; and \$16.0 million would support improvement in the condition of high-priority park

assets, such as visitor use facilities, historic structures, and trails. Across these Centennial increases, the budget provides an \$8.0 million increase for youth engagement and employment opportunities, and continues the NPS' efforts to attract qualified veteran candidates to fill Federal positions. The remaining \$10.0 million for the discretionary Centennial request would provide the Federal match for the Centennial Challenge, which will leverage partner donations on at least a 50/50 basis for signature projects and programs at national parks in anticipation and support of the Centennial.

Additionally, the budget includes a mandatory proposal for projects which would support the NPS in its second century. This proposal would provide \$100.0 million annually for three years for the Federal match of an expanded Centennial Challenge, supporting signature projects at many more park units during the centennial year and into the NPS' second century. The mandatory proposal will also include \$200.0 million annually for three years for a Second Century Infrastructure Investment to address the deferred maintenance backlog and improve the condition of high priority assets.

The Administration is proposing a government-wide Opportunity, Growth, and Security Initiative which would also support the Centennial Initiative by providing another \$100.0 million for the Second Century Infrastructure Investment to address the deferred maintenance backlog.

Additionally, the NPS will also have the opportunity to compete for project funding through the multi-agency Centennial Land Management Investment Fund. The program will be managed by the Department in partnership with the Department of Agriculture and open to all of Interior's

land management bureaus and the U.S. Forest Service, to address deferred maintenance needs and land conservation, and provide youth employment opportunities. This fund would provide \$100.0 million for three years in mandatory funding. The Opportunity, Growth, and Security Initiative in 2015 also includes \$100.0 million for this program.

Overall, the budget proposal, including discretionary, mandatory, and Opportunity, Growth, and Security Initiative resources, would allow the NPS to restore 1,700 or 20 percent of the highest priority park assets to good condition. The effort creates thousands of jobs over three years, provides over 10,000 work and training opportunities to young people, and engages more than 265,000 volunteers in support of public lands.

The 2015 budget not only proposes funding that will prepare the NPS for its Centennial but focuses on the long-term sustainability of parks and programs. While our 100th anniversary only happens once, the Service is looking toward the future and the next 100 years. The budget reflects our commitment to providing exceptional visitor services, dedication to making a meaningful improvement in the condition of high priority assets, and our responsibility to protect our treasured natural and cultural resources.

Operation of the National Park System

The Operation of the National Park System (ONPS) appropriation funds the operations of our 401 parks and related programs. The 2015 budget proposes ONPS funding at \$2.3 billion, \$47.1 million over 2014 enacted.

The request for operations fully funds fixed costs of \$15.7 million and \$30.4 million in net program increases. These increases are not offset with reductions to park operations.

In addition to the Centennial Initiative discretionary proposals previously discussed, \$2.0 million is requested to fund seasonal visitor services for new parks like Charles Young Buffalo Soldiers National Monument, and new responsibilities at parks, such as the new visitor center and museum at Fort Davis National Historic Site.

An increase of \$456,000 will fund fee and rate increases for water and sewer service provided by the District of Columbia at national park sites in the District of Columbia and \$123,000 will fund services provided by the Department's Office of Indirect Cost Services, which negotiates indirect cost rates with non-Federal entities such as tribal, state, and local governments.

Centennial Challenge

The 2015 budget proposes a \$10.0 million matching program to reinvigorate funding for the Centennial Challenge. Funding would provide the Federal match to leverage partner donations at least one to one for signature projects and programs at national parks in anticipation and support of the upcoming 100th anniversary. This program is further bolstered by the budget's mandatory proposal to fund an additional \$100.0 million a year for three years as part of the Centennial initiative.

Land Acquisition and State Assistance

The Budget proposes \$900.0 million in discretionary and mandatory funding in FY 2015, and proposes to permanently authorize \$900.0 million in annual mandatory funding for the Departments of the Interior and Agriculture Land and Water Conservation Fund programs beginning in fiscal year 2016. For NPS, the 2015 budget proposes \$104.0 million for discretionary Federal Land Acquisition and State Conservation Grants, a net increase of \$5.9 million from the 2014 enacted level. This includes a programmatic increase of \$5.8 million for Federal Land Acquisition. This funding is critical to achieving the goals inherent in the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) Act of 1965.

Of the total amount, \$55.9 million is proposed to be available for Federal land acquisition projects and administration, a programmatic increase of \$5.8 million compared to 2014 enacted. This includes \$8.5 million to provide grants to states and communities to preserve and protect threatened Civil War battlefield sites outside the national park system through American Battlefield Protection Program land acquisition grants, a reduction of \$470,000 from 2014 enacted. This amount also includes \$29.0 million for NPS Federal land acquisition projects, an increase of \$6.9 million over 2014. The 2015 land acquisition project request totals over 4,400 acres of the highest priority acquisitions. As required by law, the proposed tracts are located within authorized park boundaries. The budget proposes a reduction to Inholdings, Donations, and Exchanges of \$1.4 million and an increase of \$835,000 to the emergencies account.

The budget also proposes \$48.1 million for State Conservation Grants and administration. Of this total, \$42.0 million is proposed for State Conservation Grants, to be apportioned to the states in accordance with the long-standing formula. Another \$3.0 million is included to fund targeted national priorities for conservation grants to states through a competitive program.

National Recreation and Preservation

The National Recreation and Preservation appropriation funds programs that support local and community efforts to preserve natural and cultural resources. The 2015 budget includes \$52.0 million, reflecting increased fixed costs of \$301,000, an increase of \$376,000 for heritage partnerships administrative support, and a programmatic reduction of \$9.5 million for National Heritage Areas (NHAs) commissions and grants, a net change of \$8.8 million below 2014. The proposed reduction supports the directive in the 2010 Interior Appropriations Act for the more established NHAs to work toward becoming more self-sufficient, yet still promotes the long-term sustainability of NHAs and the continued importance of Federal seed money for less mature areas.

The budget provides \$10.0 million for the Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance (RTCA) Program, which assists and empowers communities to implement their own vision of livability, sustainability, and responsibility, and assists partners in successfully utilizing the array of resources and tools available through Federal agencies and nongovernmental groups. The RTCA program helps promote the values of health, conservation, and enjoyment of our Nation's resources with a valuable return on investment through on-the-ground projects, such as river restoration and the creation of walking and biking trails. The budget sustains funding for

American Battlefield Protection Program Assistance Grants at \$1.2 million, which provide grants to assist partners with the preservation of threatened historic battlefields not on NPS lands. Both programs are key components of the America's Great Outdoors initiative.

Historic Preservation Fund

The Historic Preservation Fund appropriation supports Historic Preservation Offices in states, territories, and tribal lands for the preservation of historically and culturally significant sites and to carry out other responsibilities under the National Historic Preservation Act. For 2015, the budget requests \$56.4 million, level with 2014. The request provides \$46.9 million for Grants-in-Aid to States and Territories, and nearly \$9.0 million for Grants-in-Aid to Tribes. The 2015 budget also includes \$500,000 for competitive grants for the underrepresented communities program established in 2014, which is essential to the Service's ability to help revitalize communities and main streets across America. These grants help to establish preservation, recreation, and conservation ethics in urban areas, preserve historic properties worth saving, and ensure that the National Register of Historic Places is representative of the full spectrum of the Nation's cultural heritage.

Construction

The budget proposes \$138.3 million for Construction, reflecting increased fixed costs of \$401,000 and a net programmatic increase of \$1.5 million, for a total change of \$878,000 above 2014 levels.

Line item construction is requested at \$61.7 million, \$1.1 million above 2014. The request includes only the highest priority construction projects to address critical life, health, safety, resource protection, and emergency needs, and does not propose funding any new facility construction. The request funds 15 projects including the completion of the restoration of Elwha Dam at Olympic NP, phase three of the irrigation, drainage, and water collection system on the National Mall, and repairs to high visitor-use facilities such as the Awahnee Hotel at Yosemite NP and Alcatraz Cellhouse at Golden Gate NRA. Consistent with the Administration's Campaign to Cut Waste, the budget proposes funding for demolition and removal of unoccupied, excess structures at Cape Cod National Seashore and Appalachian National Scenic Trail. Additionally, the budget realigns \$1.0 million of funding for strategic planning and human resources functions within construction to the operations account.

Mandatory Request for LWCF

In addition to the major mandatory funding investment the budget is proposing for the Centennial Initiative, the budget includes a proposal for mandatory LWCF funding, of which \$192.2 million is proposed for the NPS. Of this amount, \$115.2 million is for Federal land acquisition, including \$2.5 million for projects that specifically address recreational access and \$5.0 million for American Battlefield Protection Program land acquisition grants. The new authority would provide a level of stability to address the significant acreage that has been identified as endangered or important to the NPS mission, and would allow states to better plan their efforts from year to year. In 2015, funding would target an additional 33,000 acres in 18 parks and nine trails. The proposal includes \$52.0 million to be directed to the LWCF State Conservation Grants program and would support an additional 150 grants to states. This

proposal would also fund \$25.0 million for Urban Park and Recreation Recovery (UPARR) grants intended to rehabilitate existing indoor and outdoor recreation facilities in urban cities and counties that represent the most physically and economically distressed communities nationwide.

Government-wide Opportunity, Growth, and Security Initiative

As mentioned above, complementing the President's 2015 budget request is a separate Opportunity, Growth, and Security Initiative; a demonstration of investments to spur economic progress, promote opportunity and strengthen national security. The NPS would benefit from \$100.0 million in Second Century Infrastructure Investment projects funded via this initiative, plus an additional \$6 million that is not tied to the NPS Centennial to provide an infrastructure investment for the Historic Preservation Fund to expedite Federal permitting and get infrastructure projects off the ground.

Other pieces of the Opportunity, Growth, and Security Initiative also have the potential to benefit the NPS. Half of the multi-agency Centennial Land Management Investment Fund, or \$100.0 million, is funded via this initiative. Also, the NPS is included in a proposed \$140.0 million investment in Interior's research and development activities. This funding would support research and development efforts for ecosystem restoration and protection, water resources management, and species protection; and would complement the President's proposal for a Climate Change Resilience Fund.

Planning and Performance Integration

In formulating the 2015 budget request, the NPS used a variety of tools to incorporate performance results and other information into the decision-making process. These tools include the Budget Cost Projection Module, the Business Planning Initiative, and the NPS Scorecard, as well as continued program evaluations. These tools are used to develop a more consistent approach to integrating budget and performance across the NPS, as well as to support further accountability for budget performance integration at all levels of the organization.

Promoting Efficient Spending

In keeping with the spirit of the Administration's commitment to cutting waste in Federal Government spending, the Department continues to pursue an aggressive agenda to reduce administrative costs. Several years ago, the NPS began a servicewide process of strategically prioritizing those mission-critical items essential to each and every park and program. The NPS will continue to exercise strict controls on travel costs and devise strategic alternatives to travel, optimize the number of IT devices, limit the publication and printing of hard copy documents by offering publications in electronic form, increase executive fleet efficiencies, and limit extraneous promotional items. The 2015 budget reflects the priorities of the NPS as the primary agency promoting both conservation and recreation for every citizen and visitor to enjoy.

Mr. Chairman, this concludes my summary of the 2015 budget request for the National Park Service. We would be pleased to answer any questions you or the other members of the subcommittee may have.