

STATEMENT OF DANIEL N. WENK, ACTING DIRECTOR, NATIONAL PARK SERVICE, BEFORE THE SUBCOMMITTEE ON INTERIOR, ENVIRONMENT, AND RELATED AGENCIES OF THE HOUSE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE CONCERNING THE FISCAL YEAR 2010 BUDGET REQUEST FOR THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

May 14, 2009

Mr. Chairman and members of the Subcommittee, first and foremost, I want to thank you for your support of the National Park Service and the budget we received for FY 2009 including \$100 million in increases for park operations in the budget and the \$750.0 million in the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. I also want to thank you today for the opportunity to present the FY 2010 budget proposal of the National Park Service and let you know how much we appreciate your continued support.

In 2016, the National Park Service will celebrate its 100th anniversary as steward of this nation's most cherished natural and cultural resources. As keeper of 391 parks, 21 National Scenic and Historic Trails, and 58 Wild and Scenic Rivers, the NPS is charged with preserving unimpaired these lands and historic sites valued for their environmental resources, recreation and scenic worth, cultural and historical significance, and vast open spaces.

Through the FY 2010 budget request, the National Park Service will strive to achieve the goals of the Secretary of the Interior's Protecting America's Treasured Landscapes initiative and prepare for another century of conservation, preservation, and enjoyment. The NPS will build park operational capacity, tackle climate impacts and enhance critical stewardship programs at parks, engage our youth in conservation, effectively maintain NPS facilities, and ensure organizational capacity and professional development.

The 2010 budget increase of \$171.0 million for the Park Service provides the impetus to shape the national park system to meet the expectations of the public for a legacy that is uniquely American. In preparation for the 100th anniversary, the budget request provides the means to engage Americans in getting reacquainted with nature's wonders and the Nation's proud history, and for international visitors to enjoy these special places and the stories of the country.

The FY 2010 budget request proposes total discretionary appropriations of approximately \$2.7 billion and includes \$433 million in mandatory appropriations for a total budget authority of \$3.1 billion. This includes an increase of \$171.0 million above the FY 2009 discretionary appropriations and an increase of \$34.2 million in mandatory appropriations.

The FY 2010 budget request reflects the President's commitment to our national parks with a \$100 million program increase in park operations to maintain facilities, preserve cultural and natural resources, and protect the investments being made through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009. The FY 2010 budget request safeguards the investments made in our parks and builds upon the rich philanthropic history of the Service by including a \$25 million dollar matching grant program for signature park projects.

Operations of the National Park System (ONPS)

The FY 2010 budget request includes \$2.6 billion for ONPS, an increase of \$134.5 million (+6%) over the 2009 enacted level. This includes a \$100 million programmatic increase and funding for increased fixed costs of \$41.0 million. The 2010 budget is focused on five key components within the ONPS account: Park Operations, Climate Impacts, Youth Programs, Stewardship and Education, and Professional Excellence.

1. Park Operations - The budget proposes increases totaling \$73.7 million to enhance park operations capacity. Highlights include \$57.5 million for specific park base increases at 212 parks, \$8.0 million to support the restructuring of major procurement and contracting services in parks that will allow parks to share acquisition resources, \$5.0 million to support building the operational capacity in sworn officers and civilian support staff for the United States Park Police, \$0.5 million for park safety and regulations, \$0.5 million to improve commercial services management at parks, \$1.6 million in administrative support and public health and safety, and \$2.2 million in facility maintenance to expand emergency storm damage coverage used to provide safe, uninterrupted visitor use of facilities.

2. Climate Impacts - The National Park Service FY 2010 budget request includes \$10.0 million as part of the Department's initiative on Tackling Climate Impacts for collaboration with Interior bureaus and other State and Federal agencies that monitor climate change. The budget request will provide \$5.5 million to develop land, water and wildlife adaptation strategies, \$3.0 million to build a climate impact monitoring system using the existing NPS natural resource network, \$0.7 million to provide project seed money to the field, and \$0.8 million to assemble a Climate Impact Response Office that will develop a service-wide approach to research.

3. Youth Programs - The 2010 budget request includes an increase of \$5.0 million as part of the Department's Creating a 21st Century Youth Conservation Corps initiative to increase youth partnership programs in the National Park Service. The National Park Service is dedicated to engaging America's youth in developing a life-long awareness of and commitment to preserving our nation's exceptional natural and cultural resources through educational, vocational and volunteer service opportunities. The NPS Youth Internship Program will introduce high school and college aged youth to activities in land conservation and interpretation of natural and cultural resources. Internships involve students in intellectually challenging assignments that allow them to work side-by-side with park staff on projects that provide vocational and educational opportunities in resource protection, research, and the visitor experience at NPS sites.

4. Stewardship and Education - The FY 2010 President's budget request proposes increases totaling \$5.9 million for resource stewardship and interpretive programs. The proposal includes \$2.0 million for Historical and Archeological Inventories and \$2.5 million to implement the NPS Ocean Park Stewardship plan to enhance research, operational, and educational programs. An increase of \$1.4 million will advance the Interpretation and Education Renaissance Action Plan and institute a web-learning pilot program to provide information for internet visitors of all ages.

5. Professional Excellence - The most valuable assets available to the Park Service are its more than 23,000 dedicated employees. An efficient and effective park system requires that NPS

invest in their professional development. An increase of \$3.9 million will directly support this investment, including \$2.7 million to enhance the Service's leadership and management succession program and \$1.2 million to support the expansion of the Superintendents Academy. Nearly \$1.0 million is proposed to automate the labor-intensive human resource processes that are critical to achieving efficient operations and recruiting new and diverse employees and \$0.5 million is requested to ensure acquisition employees receive adequate training.

The FY 2010 budget request also details a restructuring that recalibrates funding among the programs within the ONPS account. This realignment brings budget requests in line with expenditures, providing Congress with a more clear understanding of the needs of the Park Service and the use of appropriated dollars to support activities.

Park Partnership Project Grants

The FY 2010 budget request continues to support the partnership aspect of the Protecting America's Treasured Landscapes initiative through a \$25.0 million Park Partnership matching grants program. The program invites individuals, foundations, businesses, and the private sector to contribute donations to support signature programs and projects in our national parks. Partners in these projects are required to match the Federal funding, at a minimum of 50 percent of the cost, with private philanthropic donations.

Land and Water Conservation Fund

The 2010 President's request includes a renewed commitment of resources to programs funded through the LWCF and proposes a multi-year incremental approach to fully fund these programs at \$900.0 million annually across the Department of the Interior and the U.S. Forest Service. For the National Park Service, the FY 2010 budget proposes funding totaling \$98.0 million in discretionary appropriations, of which \$68.0 million is available for Land Acquisition projects and administration. Included within the proposal is \$4.0 million to provide grants to States and local communities to preserve and protect Civil War battlefield sites outside the national park system. The request also provides \$30.0 million, including administrative costs, for State Conservation Grants funded by the LWCF. An additional \$10.0 million for State Conservation grants is available from the LWCF in mandatory appropriations.

Construction

The \$206.0 million requested for Construction includes \$116.8 million for line-item construction projects. This request, along with recreation fees, park roads funding, and the funding made available through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, will provide substantial resources towards protecting and maintaining existing park assets.

Historic Preservation Fund

The NPS plays a vital role in preserving the Nation's cultural history through a variety of programs that address preservation needs nationwide. The 2010 budget for the Historic Preservation Fund is \$77.7 million, including \$20.0 million for Save America's Treasures and \$3.2 million for Preserve America grants. The budget requests \$54.5 million for Grants-in-Aid to States, Territories and Tribes for Historic Preservation. The request includes an additional \$4.0 million for States and Territories and \$1.0 million for Grants-in-Aid to Tribes.

National Recreation and Preservation (NR&P)

The National Recreation and Preservation appropriation funds programs connected with local and community efforts to preserve natural and cultural resources. Highlights within the total request of \$53.9 million include \$15.7 million for National Heritage Areas and an increase of \$0.5 million to provide technical assistance to communities through the Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance program.

Fixed Costs and Offsetting Reductions

The FY 2010 budget request proposes \$43.2 million to fully fund fixed costs, enabling parks to strive toward the goals of the Park Service without absorbing non-discretionary fixed costs increases. The proposal reflects increased costs for pay, health care, services provided by other agencies, and the Department's Working Capital Fund.

The budget request proposes decreases in funding totaling \$46.6 million. Reductions reflect the elimination of funding for non-recurring costs such as \$4.0 million for the Presidential Inauguration and \$5.8 million in congressional earmarks. An estimated \$2.0 million in savings will be gained from reduced operational costs due to energy efficient retro-fitting of federal buildings. The budget proposes a reduction of \$32.4 million in Line-Item Construction primarily due to reduced expenditures in Everglades and in light of Recovery Act commitments.

Performance Integration

In formulating the FY 2010 budget request, the National Park Service utilized a variety of tools to incorporate performance results into the decision-making process. These tools include the Budget Cost Projection Module, the Core Operations Analysis, 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 Service, as well as to support further accountability for budget performance integration at all levels of the organization.

American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009

The National Park Service received \$750 million through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009. The NPS plan to restore facilities, landscapes and habitat, spur renewable energy retrofits in parks, and create jobs with funding provided through the Act is included with the budget justification and can also be found online at Recovery.gov.

Mr. Chairman, this concludes my summary of the FY 2010 budget request for NPS. We would be pleased to answer any questions you and the other members of the subcommittee may have.