

Celebrating and Enhancing America's Great Outdoors



President Obama believes we have a moral obligation to the next generation to leave our land, water, and wildlife better than we found it. Passing along the blessings we inherited will take action and a commitment to take the long view.

*Sally Jewell, Secretary of the Interior
October 31, 2014*

Nearly four years ago, President Barack Obama released the America's Great Outdoors action plan, laying out a path to achieve lasting conservation of the outdoor spaces that power the Nation's economy, shape its culture, and provide recreational access to all Americans. The AGO initiative reinvigorated conservation partnerships and reconnected the public with the lands and waters that are the shared heritage of all Americans.

Each year national parks and monuments, wildlife refuges, and Interior's other public lands provide hundreds of millions of visitors the opportunity to recreate on America's land and appreciate the Nation's cultural and natural resources. In 2013, national parks, wildlife refuges, national monuments, and other public lands managed by the Department of the Interior hosted an estimated 407 million recreation visits. These visits contributed \$41.0 billion to the economy and supported nearly 355,000 jobs nationwide. These lands interpret and memorialize important historic events, such as the Selma to Montgomery National Historic Trail's commemoration of the events, people, and route of the 1965 Voting Rights March in Alabama; provide important recreational access to growing urban populations, such as the Bureau of Land Management's Agua Fria National Monument, outside of Phoenix; and provide flood risk reduction benefits as well as vital wildlife habitat through ecosystem resilience projects, such as salt marsh restoration at Cape May National Wildlife Refuge in New Jersey.

The 2016 budget bolsters the Administration's commitment to connect Americans to the great outdoors, proposing \$5.6 billion for programs that support the AGO initiative, an increase of \$571.6 million over 2015. This includes \$5.0 billion in operating funds

for the land management bureaus, which provides these bureaus the necessary resources to operate recreation, youth, and cultural and natural resource conservation programs. This is an increase of \$449.9 million or ten percent compared to 2015. This request provides \$1.2 billion to BLM, \$1.3 billion to the Fish and Wildlife Service, and \$2.5 billion to the National Park Service for operations.

The AGO initiative includes \$276.0 million for Interior programs funded through the Land and Water Conservation Fund. Additional details on LWCF current and mandatory proposals are provided below. The budget also provides a robust funding level of \$209.6 million for grants and technical assistance to conserve species and habitat, conduct cultural and historic preservation activities, and facilitate sportsmen and recreational access. This is an increase of \$45.5 million over 2015.

The Bureau of Reclamation river restoration projects are funded at \$122.1 million, an increase of \$5.8 million compared to 2015. These projects are included because of their direct benefit to the restoration of important watershed ecosystems in the West. Included in this total is \$35.0 million for Reclamation's San Joaquin River Restoration Program, an increase of \$3.0 million that primarily will be used for the Friant-Kern and Madera Canal Capacity Restoration Projects and Seepage Management Actions. Also included is \$17.1 million for the Endangered Species Recovery Implementation Program - Platte River, an increase of \$2.4 million, to advance efforts on the J-2 Re-Regulation Reservoir Project.

Recreation and Community Engagement – Public lands managed by BLM provide the most diverse range of recreational opportunities in the Country.

While public lands are already a popular destination for recreationists, as evidenced by more than 62 million visitors in 2013, visitation is likely to increase as population growth and the urbanization of the West continues to make BLM lands accessible to more and more visitors. The BLM developed its 2014 to 2019 National Recreation Strategy to better manage the challenges of increased visitation, including providing outstanding recreational opportunities for visitors and helping adjoining communities achieve their own desired social, economic, and environmental goals. The Strategy recognizes that because public lands are connected to and integrated with communities, these lands create many opportunities for BLM to collaborate in setting mutual objectives for proposed recreation opportunities and pooling resources toward shared goals. To achieve these goals, the Strategy focuses on proactive engagement with communities, locally based government agencies, and service provider businesses.

The 2016 budget includes an increase of \$6.6 million for BLM to further implement its National Recreation Strategy. Among other things, the funds will enable BLM to more aggressively develop partnerships with communities and service providers in order to understand community values and help identify and market mutually desired recreational opportunities. The funds will also be used to upgrade BLM recreation sites to enhance recreational experience and to implement BLM's Mountain Bike Action Plan.

The FWS national wildlife refuge system is also a critical component of the AGO initiative. The refuge system delivers conservation on a landscape level, delivering benefits such as improved water quality, flood mitigation, and important habitat for the survival and protection of endangered species. It also offers recreational opportunities such as fishing and wildlife watching. With 80 percent of the U.S. population residing in urban areas, these activities and outdoor experiences are unfamiliar to many. To ensure the development of a new conservation constituency, FWS is actively developing strategies to engage urban audiences in meaningful, collaborative ways that build sustainable, broad-based support for its mission.

To address this challenge, FWS developed the Urban Wildlife Refuge initiative and designated 14 Urban Wildlife Refuge Partnerships in demographically and geographically varied cities. Current partnerships include the Masonville Cove project in Baltimore, Maryland, which began as the restoration of

an abandoned and contaminated area near Baltimore Harbor by the local community and the Maryland Port Administration to mitigate the impacts of dredging material from the Harbor. This effort established the Masonville Cove Environmental Education Center, providing environmental education programs with others such as the nearby National Aquarium, to reach more than 8,000 students and 330 teachers since its start. The FWS provides assistance with visitor services and wildlife management at the on-site nature area recently brought back to life by the community. The nature area features walking trails and a floating dock for kayakers and canoeists and is planned to include 71 acres of water and 54 acres of land open for free use by the public. The 2016 budget includes an increase of \$5.0 million to establish three additional Urban Wildlife Refuge Partnerships.

Across the Nation, national parks capture the public's imagination and provide opportunities to enjoy natural and cultural resources and historic sites. August 25, 2016, marks the Centennial of NPS. The Centennial will kick off a second century of stewardship of America's national parks and community engagement through recreation, conservation, and historic preservation programs, and will celebrate the achievements of the past 100 years. The 2016 budget proposes a \$326.3 million increase in current funding for the NPS Centennial initiative to ensure the Centennial provides a venue for every American to embrace the opportunities to explore, learn, be inspired, or simply have fun in their 405 national parks. The Centennial is also an opportunity to convey how the national park experience can be replicated in the daily lives of Americans through community-based recreation, conservation, and historic preservation programs. Additional details on these increases are included in the National Parks and Public Lands Centennial section of this chapter.

The current funding request is complemented by the Administration's legislative Centennial proposal to fund an additional \$500.0 million a year for three years as mandatory appropriations, including \$100.0 million for the Federal matching portion of the Centennial Challenge program; \$300.0 million for high priority deferred maintenance projects; and \$100.0 million for a competitive Public Lands Centennial Fund, which will benefit Interior's land management bureaus as well as the Department of Agriculture's Forest Service.

The National Park Service is America's storyteller and protector of the places where America's history can be found. As we prepare to celebrate the National Park Service's Centennial in 2016, we have rededicated ourselves to sharing more diverse stories of our Nation's history, particularly the struggles for civil rights. By telling these stories, we are inviting new audiences to visit their national parks and historic sites and to discover a personal connection in these special places.

*Jonathan Jarvis, Director of the
National Park Service
May 30, 2014*

Protecting America's Cultural Resources – The vision for engaging Americans in resource stewardship does not end with a once-in-a-lifetime trip to one of the jewels of the national park system. Interior and its bureaus provide multiple avenues for Americans to explore, learn, and be inspired by the Nation's history. One important opportunity to experience history is the 50th Anniversary of the Voting Rights Act signed in 1965. The Administration proposes to celebrate civil rights in America in 2016 through targeted NPS investments to highlight the struggle undertaken by Americans to secure civil rights and liberties and celebrate the actions that inspired many groups in America and around the world to continue to pursue progress for civil rights.

The budget proposes increases of \$50.0 million, including \$10.0 million to provide the necessary resources to improve high priority facility projects at NPS sites associated with the Civil Rights movement



such as the Selma Interpretive Center at the Selma to Montgomery National Historic Trail; \$6.0 million to fund projects to document, interpret, and preserve civil rights history in the national park system; and \$1.5 million to address critical base operating needs at sites such as the Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad National Historical Park in Maryland and the Charles Young Buffalo Soldiers National Monument in Ohio. Also included in the initiative is \$30.0 million for competitive historic preservation grants to preserve the stories and sites associated with the Civil Rights movement, and \$2.5 million for grants-in-aid specifically to Historically Black Colleges and Universities to document, interpret and preserve the stories and sites associated with the progression of civil rights in America.

Conserving Public Lands through the Land and Water Conservation Fund – Congress enacted the Land and Water Conservation Fund Act of 1965 as a bipartisan commitment to safeguard natural areas, water resources, and cultural heritage, and to provide recreation opportunities to all Americans. Today, the LWCF is helping to provide for America's outdoor spaces—public and private, large and small, urban and rural—as envisioned by the American people.

The budget requests full funding for LWCF, including \$672.3 million for Interior, of which \$276.0 million is current and \$396.3 million is mandatory funding. This includes \$172.8 million for current Federal land acquisition funding, of which \$52.7 million is for acquisition of Collaborative Landscape Projects to address specific conservation priorities identified through a collaborative process conducted by Interior's land management bureaus and the U.S. Forest Service. The current request also includes \$50.0 million for FWS Cooperative Endangered Species Conservation Fund grants and \$53.2 million for NPS State Assistance grants. The mandatory proposal for Interior includes \$274.4 million for Federal land acquisition, of which \$97.5 million is identified for collaborative landscape projects, \$50.0 million for FWS Cooperative Endangered Species Conservation Fund grants, \$47.0 million for NPS State Assistance grants, and \$25.0 million for NPS Urban Parks and Recreation Fund grants.

The LWCF provides funding to secure access for the American public to their Federal lands for recreational opportunities—from hunting and fishing, to canoeing and bird watching. Of the \$900.0 million current and mandatory funding proposal for LWCF, \$574.9 million will support conservation, sportsmen access, and recreational opportunities on Federal land.

Within this total is \$20.0 million in current and mandatory funds to specifically improve access for sporting and recreation. This includes \$2.5 million for recreational access in parks; \$12.5 million for improved access to refuges and BLM public lands; and \$6.1 million for improved access to National Forests for sportsmen and hunters.

Over its 50-year history, the fund has protected conservation and recreation land in every State and supported tens of thousands of State and local projects. The Departments of the Interior and Agriculture work in cooperation with local communities, rely on willing sellers, and maximize opportunities to secure rights-of-ways, easements, and fee simple lands. The mandatory LWCF proposal will support simpler, more efficient land management; create greater access for hunters and anglers and other recreation opportunities; create long-term cost savings; address urgent threats to some of America's most special places; and better support State and local conservation priorities. Conserving landscapes and meeting the present day needs of local communities requires collaboration among all stakeholders, including private landowners, conservation and recreation groups, and local, State, tribal, and Federal governments. The Administration's LWCF request supports broad collaboration around locally driven priorities and more efficient and coordinated ways of investing in, restoring, and managing the Country's natural and cultural resources.

The Administration's LWCF request includes continued funding for the Collaborative LWCF initiative. This interagency program brings Interior and the Department of Agriculture together with local stakeholders to identify large natural areas where LWCF funds can achieve the most important shared conservation goals in the highest priority landscapes. Conserving large-scale natural areas provides multiple resource and economic benefits to the public, including clean drinking water, recreational opportunities, protected habitat for at-risk and game

species, and jobs generated on and off these lands. The Secretaries of the Interior and Agriculture follow a rigorous merit-based evaluation process to select landscapes for investment in the collaborative landscape planning process. After evaluation and prioritizing multiple ecosystems, they selected eight landscapes for current and mandatory funding in 2016:

- Florida-Georgia Longleaf Pine Initiative.
- High Divide in Idaho and Montana.
- Islands Forests at Risk in Hawaii.
- National Trails in Delaware, Idaho, Massachusetts, Montana, New Mexico, Pennsylvania, and Virginia.
- Northern Coastal California.
- Pathways to the Pacific in Oregon and Washington.
- Rivers of the Chesapeake in Delaware, Maryland, Pennsylvania, Virginia, and West Virginia.
- Upper Rio Grande in Colorado and New Mexico.

The Administration's mandatory funding proposal for LWCF provides full mandatory funding for these programs beginning in 2017. Mandatory funding will increase the financial certainty needed to build and enhance local and community conservation partnerships and optimize valuable investments by leveraging other Federal and non-Federal funds. It will enable efficiencies in managing LWCF programs and facilitate a more predictable, transparent, and inclusive process. Mandatory funding also will achieve the original intent of the LWCF Act—the dedication of a meaningful portion, \$900.0 million, of the royalties private companies pay to access the Nation's offshore oil and gas reserves for the preservation of the Nation's lands and waters for the benefit of all Americans, now and in the future.

AMERICA'S GREAT OUTDOORS
(dollars in millions)

	2015 Enacted	2016 Request	Change
LAND MANAGEMENT OPERATIONS			
Bureau of Land Management	1,083.8	1,175.2	+91.4
Fish and Wildlife Service	1,207.7	1,326.8	+119.2
National Park Service.....	2,275.8	2,515.1	+239.4
Subtotal, Land Management Operations	4,567.2	5,017.2	+449.9
LAND AND WATER CONSERVATION FUND PROGRAMS ^{1/}			
Federal Land Acquisition			
Bureau of Land Management	19.7	38.0	+18.3
Fish and Wildlife Service.....	47.5	58.5	+11.0
National Park Service.....	50.8	64.3	+13.5
Office of Valuation Services	12.0	12.0	0
Grant Programs			
Fish and Wildlife Service			
Coop. Endangered Species Conservation Fund ^{2/} ...	27.4	50.0	+22.6
National Park Service			
State Assistance Grants.....	48.1	53.2	+5.0
Subtotal, LWCF Programs	205.6	276.0	+70.4
OTHER ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS			
Fish and Wildlife Service			
North American Wetlands			
Conservation Act Fund Grants	34.1	34.1	0
Neotropical Migratory Bird Grants.....	3.7	4.2	+0.5
State and Tribal Wildlife Grants.....	58.7	70.0	+11.3
National Park Service			
Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance.....	10.0	10.2	+0.1
Historic Preservation Fund Grants	56.4	89.9	+33.5
American Battlefield Protection Program Grants	1.2	1.2	0
Subtotal, Other Assistance Programs	164.1	209.6	+45.5
SUBTOTAL, LAND MANAGEMENT AGENCIES	4,937.0	5,502.8	+565.8
BUREAU OF RECLAMATION RIVER RESTORATION			
Water and Related Resources			
River Restoration Activities ^{3/}	112.2	83.6	-28.7
San Joaquin Restoration Fund			
River Restoration Activities	[32.0]	35.0	+35.0
Central Valley Project Restoration Funds			
River Restoration Activities	4.0	3.5	-0.5
Subtotal, Reclamation Projects.....	116.2	122.1	+5.8
TOTAL, AMERICA'S GREAT OUTDOORS.....	5,053.2	5,624.8	+571.6

^{1/} The Administration will submit a legislative proposal to permanently authorize annual LWCF funding. For ease of comparison, the table does not display any mandatory funding.

^{2/} The 2015 enacted level for the FWS Cooperative Endangered Species Conservation Fund included a total of \$50.1 million, of which \$27.4 million was derived from LWCF.

^{3/} The Consolidated and Further Continuing Appropriations Act of 2015 provided Reclamation \$50.0 million for Western Drought Response, \$8.0 million for Water Conservation and Delivery, \$4.0 million for Fish Passage and Fish Screens, and \$1.0 million for Environmental Restoration and Compliance. At the time of budget preparation, these funds have yet to be distributed by program, but a portion may be allocated to projects and programs within AGO.

NATIONAL PARKS AND PUBLIC LANDS CENTENNIAL

In celebration of the 100th anniversary of the National Park Service in 2016, Interior proposes a comprehensive Centennial initiative investment in the parks and public lands. Funding provides increases for a multi-year effort to recommit to the preservation of these special places, to invest wisely in the park system's most important assets, to use parks and the public lands to enhance informal learning, engage volunteers, provide training opportunities to youth, and enhance our ability to leverage partnerships to accomplish this mission.

Sally Jewell, Secretary of the Interior
March 26, 2014

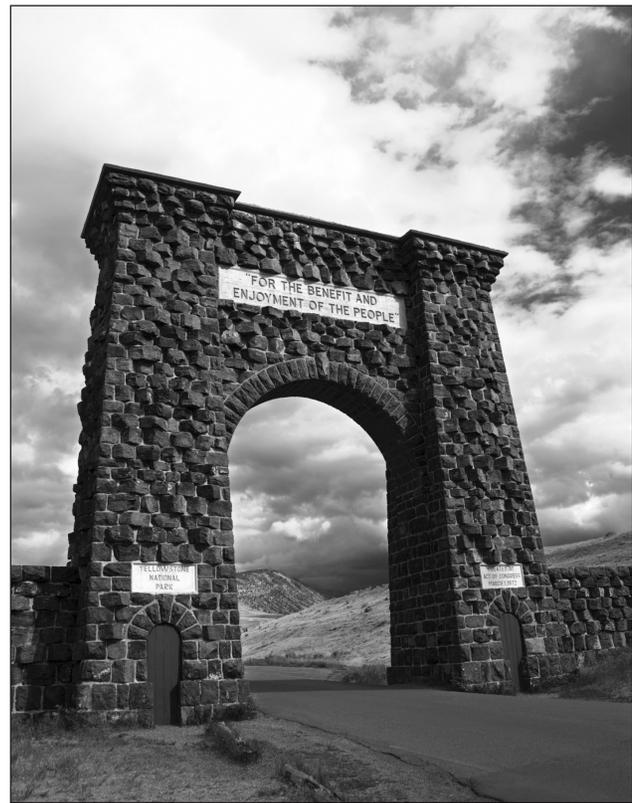
In 2016, the National Park Service celebrates 100 years of preserving the Nation's most significant natural and cultural resources. Interior's budget capitalizes on this significant event proposing investments to reinvigorate the tremendous assets of the national parks. Although the emphasis is on the future of the parks, the budget includes complementary initiatives in the Bureau of Land Management and Fish and Wildlife Service to engage the American public with Interior's broad range of outdoor recreation and natural learning opportunities.

At its inception in 1916, NPS was charged with a dual mission—to make the parks accessible to all while preserving them for future generations. America has changed dramatically since the birth of NPS, and this once revolutionary concept of preserving the Nation's most significant natural and cultural resources has evolved into a quintessential symbol of the Nation.

Prior to 1916, the Federal government only sporadically engaged in preserving public lands and focused mainly on the western United States. In 1832, Congress established the Hot Springs Reservation in Arkansas, and in 1872, Yellowstone National Park was established. In 1890, Yosemite, General Grant—now part of Kings Canyon—and Sequoia National Parks were created. In 1906, the Antiquities Act gave the President the authority to declare national monuments. Among other numerous sites, this Act allowed for the protection of the Grand Canyon National Monument in 1908.

However, no specific organization, let alone uniform policies for the management of this growing assembly of parks and monuments existed. National parks were administered by the Secretary of the Interior, but as in the case of Yellowstone, were patrolled by soldiers detailed by the Secretary of War. The national monuments were administered in various ways: monuments of military significance by the Secretary of War, those within or adjacent to national forests were placed under the Department of Agriculture, and the rest were administered by the Department of the Interior.

While NPS initially had responsibility for 14 national parks and 21 national monuments when it was created on August 16, 1916, today it covers over 84 million acres, encompassing 405 park units, and helps administer dozens of affiliated sites—the national heritage areas, national wild and scenic rivers, national historic landmarks, and national trails. In accomplishing its mission, NPS has the support of over 150 non-profit park friends groups, 65 cooperating associations, and 246,000 volunteers. Additionally, NPS works with States, Tribes, local governments, and other partners to protect natural, cultural, and recreational resources outside of the park units. This assistance takes the form of grants,



such as the Land and Water Conservation Fund State Conservation Assistance grants and Historic Preservation Fund grants, or through technical assistance from programs such as the Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance program.

In 2016, the Centennial will celebrate the achievements of the past 100 years and kick off a second century of stewardship and engagement for America’s national parks and public lands. Already, NPS, FWS, and BLM are implementing innovative actions across the Country to engage new, younger, and more diverse audiences and to invest wisely and sustainably in preserving America’s special places.

The national wildlife refuge system is well positioned to offer rewarding and convenient outdoor adventures to an increasingly urban society. At least one wildlife refuge is within an hour’s drive of most major cities and more than 260 wildlife refuges are near smaller cities. Targeting refuges within 25 miles of cities like Baltimore, Maryland and Seattle, Washington, the FWS Urban Wildlife Conservation program offers access to a variety of outdoor experiences, reaching out to nearby young people, in particular. The BLM has developed a National Recreation Strategy – Connecting with Communi-

ties to expand efforts to develop partnerships with communities and service providers to encourage recreational opportunities on the public lands.

The Department, NPS, and the National Park Foundation are working closely with partners and stakeholders across the Country to produce programs, events, and activities that will drive broad awareness, deepen engagement, and increase support for America’s national parks, the work of NPS, and its partners. The Find Your Park public awareness campaign will reintroduce the public to the National Park Service and its work with communities across the Country. The public awareness campaign, which is funded through generous philanthropic support, will spotlight all public lands. The goal of these efforts is to connect with the next generation of public land visitors, supporters, and advocates.

The President’s budget proposes a robust Federal investment of current and mandatory funding, underscoring this Administration’s commitment to maintaining the Nation’s shared natural and cultural resources. This significant investment will include:

NATIONAL PARKS AND PUBLIC LANDS CENTENNIAL INITIATIVE	
(dollars in millions)	
	2016 Request
CURRENT	
Construction - Deferred Maintenance	+111.9
Operation of National Park System	
Deferred Maintenance	
Repair and Rehabilitation	+66.7
Cyclic Maintenance	+64.1
New Parks and Critical Responsibilities	+13.5
Youth Urban Engagement	+11.5
Youth Every Kid in a Park Coordinators	+8.5
Seasonal Workers	+8.0
Volunteers	+2.0
Centennial Challenge: Federal Project Match	+40.0
TOTAL, CURRENT APPROPRIATION	+326.3
MANDATORY	
Construction - Deferred Maintenance	+300.0
Centennial Challenge - Federal Project Match	+100.0
Departmental Operations	
Public Lands Centennial Fund	+100.0
TOTAL, MANDATORY APPROPRIATION	+500.0

-
- \$242.8 million to address high priority deferred maintenance needs across the national park system. This total investment of \$559.1 million will address work beyond the reach of NPS at current funding levels and will also protect those investments for future generations through ongoing preventive maintenance. Along with the additional \$300.0 million deferred maintenance legislative proposal discussed below, all 6,735 highest priority assets will be restored and maintained in good condition over ten years.
 - \$43.5 million for NPS operations to expand volunteer opportunities at parks, engage youth, enhance visitor experiences through additional seasonal staffing, and address critical responsibilities at existing and new park units. This includes \$20.0 million to transport over a million urban youth a year to national parks and public lands, with dedicated youth coordinators to welcome them and their families.
 - \$40.0 million for the Centennial Challenge program, providing an important Federal match to leverage partner donations for projects and programs at national parks in anticipation and support of the upcoming Centennial.
 - \$33.0 million in BLM and FWS to increase public engagement with the national wildlife

refuges and National Conservation Lands. The FWS proposes to expand its successful Urban Wildlife Conservation Program for partnerships encouraging city dwellers to enjoy the outdoors, and engaging new audiences to connect with outdoor experiences both on wildlife refuges and partner lands. The BLM proposes investments in the National Conservation Lands and its National Recreation Strategy – Connecting with Communities to develop partnerships with communities and service providers encouraging recreational opportunities on the public lands.

- \$500.0 million a year for three years as a mandatory appropriations legislative proposal comprised of: \$100.0 million for the Federal matching portion of the Centennial Challenge program; \$300.0 million for high priority deferred maintenance projects; and \$100.0 million for the National Parks and Public Lands Centennial Fund, which will award project funding competitively to Interior’s public lands bureaus and the U.S. Forest Service. This multi-agency program will be managed by the Department and will fund projects to enhance visitor services and outdoor recreation opportunities, restore lands, repair facilities, and increase energy and water efficiency.

