



Engaging the Next Generation

Children across our Nation are increasingly disconnected from nature, yet playing outside and learning about the natural world is fun, healthy, and creates lifelong connections to nature.

*Sally Jewell, Secretary of the Interior
July 28, 2015*

A key priority for Secretary Jewell is the engagement of the public in Interior’s mission, particularly America’s young people. The future of America’s public lands depends upon young people becoming active stewards of the environment throughout their lives. Interior has a unique opportunity to harness the strong spirit of the Nation’s youth, and encourage them to use their time, energy, and talent to play, learn, serve, and work on our public lands and cultural treasures.

The Department of the Interior plays a key role in improving the Nation’s future by introducing, involving, and encouraging the next generation as stewards of culture, history, land, water, and wildlife. In this dynamic and changing Nation, more and more people are isolated from the outdoors in cities and large urban areas. Young people are increasingly drawn indoors and are becoming inactive. The Department’s unique assets provide great opportunities to connect this generation to the outdoors and the Nation’s natural and cultural resources in exciting and meaningful ways.

To address the growing disconnect between young people and the outdoors, Interior developed strategies to promote public-private partnerships and collaborative efforts across all levels of government to connect young people with the land and inspire them to play, learn, serve, and work outdoors. The result will maximize opportunities for youth through visitor and educational programs, partnerships, volunteerism, and employment. These efforts can be leveraged through social media and technological enhancements to expand opportunities for travel and tourism and life-long learning.

Secretary Jewell is leading a holistic and dynamic effort with bold goals of getting millions of the Nation’s youth active, outdoors, and connected to nature. In order to reach these goals, Interior is forging new public-private partnerships and working in partnership with its Congressionally authorized foundations—the National Park Foundation and the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation—to secure private philanthropy in the Department’s program and plan. To date, the Secretary has received support from American Eagle Outfitters, Coca-Cola, Camel-Bak, The North Face, REI, Thule, and the Johnson Ohana Charitable Foundation to name a few.

PRIORITY GOAL YOUTH EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING

GOAL: Build the next generation of conservation and community leaders by supporting efforts to get young people to play, learn, serve, and work outdoors.

METRIC: By September 30, 2017, the Department of the Interior will:

- Involve 10 million children in outdoor recreation programs.
- Engage 10 million youth in environmental education programs.
- Support one million volunteers annually in service projects on public lands.
- Provide 100,000 work and training opportunities for young adults on public lands between 2013-2017.

The Department set the goal to provide 40,000 work and training opportunities during 2014 and 2015 for young adults toward the Interior goal of 100,000 by 2017. Interior met its priority goal by providing 52,596 work and training opportunities over the past two years. Collaborative efforts across all levels of government and mobilization of the 21st Century Conservation Service Corps resulted in several high impact initiatives, including the Latino Heritage internship, an engineering internship pilot in the field of materials and corrosion; developing the Next Generation of Conservationists grants; continuing the AmeriCorp Environmental Summer Steward program; and expansion of the Urban Wildlife Conservation Program. These initiatives enabled significant progress towards Interior's goal to provide 100,000 work and training opportunities to young people and veterans by the end of 2017.

Youth engagement objectives continue to be a priority for Interior bureaus. In 2017, the budget proposes to fund \$102.5 million for youth programs in the Bureau of Land Management, Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement, Bureau of Reclamation, U.S. Geological Survey, Fish and Wildlife Service, National Park Service, and Bureau of Indian Affairs—a collective \$37.7 million increase over the 2016 enacted funding levels.

The 2017 request includes a \$2.6 million increase within USGS for hiring, mentoring, and engaging young people in the sciences. Through the USGS Cooperative Research Units program, USGS scientists advised and mentored 534 science, technology, engineering, and math graduate students in 2015. The USGS also sponsors undergraduate and graduate education programs—such as the Doris Duke Conservation Scholars Program—that focus on minority student recruitment and career training in natural resources to increase the number of undergraduate students from groups underrepresented in the workforce who choose to pursue studies and a career in conservation. The educational component of the National Cooperative Geologic Mapping Program, EdMap, is educating science students in the skills of geologic field mapping and scientific research, while providing necessary experiences for success in STEM careers.

Annually, the Mendenhall Research Fellows program brings outstanding student scientists under the mentorship of USGS senior scientists. Other youth programs, such as the Student Interns in Support of Native American Relations, target and attract a wide range of diverse and incredibly talented

young people to cultivate interest in the sciences and add to a foundation of science for America's future workforce. Participants in the Native Youth in Science – Preserving Our Homelands summer camp program – learn how integrating science and traditional ecological knowledge can protect and preserve the ecosystems and homelands of their Tribe.

In the lead up to the 100th birthday of the National Park Service in 2016, the Administration launched the Every Kid in a Park initiative as a call to action to get all children to visit and enjoy America's unparalleled outdoors. Today more than 80 percent of American families live in urban areas and many lack easy access to safe outdoor spaces. At the same time, kids are spending more time than ever in front of screens instead of outside. A 2010 Kaiser Family Foundation study found young people now devote an average of more than seven hours a day to electronic media use, or about 53 hours a week—more time than a full-time job.

America's public lands and waters offer space to get outside and get active, and are living classrooms that provide opportunities to build critical skills through hands-on activities. To inspire the next generation to discover all America's public lands and waters have to offer, all 4th grade students and their families will receive free admission to all National Parks and other Federal lands and waters for a full year, starting with the 2015-2016 school year.

The 2017 budget includes a \$20.0 million increase for the Every Kid in a Park initiative. Of this increase, \$11.5 million will be for efforts to introduce annually to nearby national parks at least one million 4th grade students from elementary schools serving disadvantaged students in urban areas. The remaining \$8.5 million will ensure park units have programming tailored for young people and their families, especially at high visitation and urban parks.

Within BIA, the budget includes an additional \$2.0 million to support youth participation in natural resources programs that focus on the protection, enhancement, and conservation through science, education, and cultural learning. Programs aimed at tribal youth will open doors to future job opportunities, instilling respect for the resources and an appreciation of their importance to tribal culture and livelihood. The request supports new tribal youth projects and training programs throughout Indian Country and supplements the existing training programs within the Forestry, Water, and Agriculture programs.

The Bureau of Indian Education budget includes a \$6.6 million increase for scholarships for post-secondary education with a focus on recipients seeking degrees in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics fields. The availability of advanced education opportunities for tribal members is a high priority for Tribes. An educated and skilled tribal member workforce is seen by Tribes as a key element of economic development. This increase is part of the Administration’s launch of Generation Indigenous, focused on removing the barriers to success for Native youth by taking a comprehensive, culturally-appropriate approach to help improve the lives and opportunities for Native youth. This government-wide initiative builds on work the Department and other agencies have begun with Tribes to implement education reforms and address other issues facing Native youth.

that connects to the nearby Rocky Mountain Arsenal National Wildlife Refuge. This will allow a healthy watershed to flourish, bridging the gap between young people and the great outdoors.



Through the Urban Wildlife Conservation Program, FWS is inviting city dwellers to enjoy the outdoors by creating opportunities near urban communities. An additional \$5.5 million is requested in the 2017 budget to extend successful partnerships in Baltimore, Maryland, and Albuquerque, New Mexico, to other refuges across the Country. The FWS will use this increase to create additional urban community partnerships to engage youth in nature-related activities and programs. Along with communities and partners near Denver, Colorado, FWS is working with kids to help turn a degraded retention pond in an underserved neighborhood into a local park

The OSMRE budget includes an increase of \$1.0 million to expand the use of reforestation techniques in coal mine reclamation and provide opportunities for youth engagement with the outdoors. Reforestation efforts, many involving the Nation’s youth, have provided an opportunity to reintroduce the American chestnut tree. The American chestnut was king of the forest over much of the Eastern United States and an important part of cultural heritage until destroyed by Asian fungus blight in the first half of the twentieth century.

ENGAGING THE NEXT GENERATION			
(dollars in millions)			
	2016	2017	
	Enacted	Request	Change
Bureau of Land Management.....	1.0	1.0	0
Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement.....	0	1.0	+1.0
Bureau of Reclamation	3.5	3.5	0
U.S. Geological Survey	23.7	26.3	+2.6
Fish and Wildlife Service.....	13.5	19.0	+5.5
National Park Service	18.2	38.2	+20.0
Bureau of Indian Affairs.....	5.0	13.5	+8.6
TOTAL, ENGAGING THE NEXT GENERATION	64.8	102.5	+37.7
<i>[NPS Recreation Fees].....</i>	<i>[6.4]</i>	<i>[6.4]</i>	<i>[0]</i>

PREPARING THE NEXT GENERATION OF OUTDOOR STEWARDS— ONE CITY AT A TIME

The value and benefits of time spent outside are well documented, although, unfortunately, a growing disconnect exists between young people and the great outdoors. As part of Interior's bold youth initiative to engage the next generation of outdoor stewards and inspire millions of young adults, Secretary Jewell launched a nationwide effort in 50 U.S. cities to increase awareness, support, and participation in outdoor programs.

The American Express Foundation joins Interior's 50 Cities Initiative and invests in the creation of local coalitions in 50 cities across the Country to help achieve these goals. The initiative was started in 25 cities in 2015 and programs in the remaining 25 cities will begin in 2016.

Using our public lands as living classrooms is one of the ways the Obama Administration is working to ensure all students have the tools they need for a bright future.

*Sally Jewell, Secretary of the Interior
November 18, 2015*

