

**STATEMENT OF JONATHAN B. JARVIS, DIRECTOR, NATIONAL PARK SERVICE,
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON
NATURAL RESOURCES, SUBCOMMITTEE ON NATIONAL PARKS, FORESTS, AND
PUBLIC LANDS CONCERNING THE FISCAL YEAR 2013 BUDGET REQUEST FOR
THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE**

February 28, 2012

Mr. Chairman and members of the subcommittee, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today at this hearing on the 2013 President's budget request for the National Park Service (NPS).

Introduction

The 2013 President's budget request proposes total discretionary appropriations of \$2.6 billion for the NPS. This is a net decrease of \$1.0 million below 2012 enacted discretionary appropriations. The request fully funds \$27.0 million in fixed costs and provides increases totaling \$39.2 million to fund essential programs and emerging operational needs. Reflecting the President's call for fiscal discipline and sustainability, the budget also includes \$67.2 million in strategic reductions in park and program operations, construction, and heritage partnership programs. The request also includes \$407.5 million in mandatory appropriations, an estimated net increase of \$3.5 million. In total, the request includes total budget authority of \$3.0 billion, \$2.5 million over 2012.

The 2013 budget supports continued stewardship of the Nation's most cherished resources through the Administration's America's Great Outdoors initiative. Through partnerships with States and others, America's Great Outdoors is a landmark investment in engaging people in the outdoors and expanding opportunities for recreation and conservation of our Nation's natural and cultural heritage. 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 this initiative. In these tough economic times we recognize the value the 397 national parks provide all Americans – as places of introspection and recreation and as economic engines that create jobs and help our gateway communities thrive. Today, I am pleased to announce the release of a new economic impact report that shows visitor spending in national parks in 2010 generated more than \$31 billion of sales which supported more than 258,000 jobs in the U.S. economy. The people and business owners near national parks have always known their economic value. In many communities, especially in small, rural communities, national parks are the clean, green fuel for the engine that drives the economy. The President's budget will ensure that national parks continue to serve the 281 million 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.

In addition to this important initiative, the NPS has begun a strategic approach to prepare for our Centennial year in 2016. The National Park Service's "A Call to Action" is a recommitment to the exemplary stewardship and public enjoyment of our national parks, calling upon NPS

employees and partners to commit to actions that advance the Service toward a shared vision for strengthening our parks through 2016 and into our second century.

Budget Summary

The 2013 President's budget requests increases or maintains funding for programs that support the President's America's Great Outdoors initiative.

The Operation of the National Park System, which is a key component to America's Great Outdoors and funds the operations of our 397 parks and related programs, is proposed to be funded at \$2.3 billion, a \$13.5 million increase over 2012.

A total of \$119.4 million is requested for Land Acquisition and State Assistance, critical to achieving the goals inherent in the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) Act of 1965. This is an increase of \$17.5 million over 2012. The budget includes \$59.4 million for Federal land acquisition and administration, which would be used to acquire high-priority lands from willing sellers within national parks, and leverage other Federal resources, along with those of non-Federal partners, to achieve shared conservation outcome goals in high-priority landscapes. The budget also includes \$60.0 million for the State Conservation Grants program and its administration, of which \$20.0 million would be targeted at a competitive matching grants program for States to carry out more strategic and larger-scale outdoor recreation and conservation projects.

The budget sustains funding for the Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance (RTCA) program at the 2012 level, which will help communities promote their own vision of livability, sustainability, and responsibility and assist partners in successfully utilizing the array of resources and tools available through Federal agencies and nongovernmental groups. RTCA 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. Funding is also sustained for American Battlefield Protection Program Assistance Grants, which assist partners with the preservation of non-Federal historic battlefields at the local level, and for the Historic Preservation Fund, which supports Historic Preservation Offices in States, Territories, and tribal lands for the preservation of historically and culturally significant sites and other responsibilities defined under the National Historic Preservation Act.

Operation of the National Park System

The 2013 budget proposes \$2.3 billion for the Operation of the National Park System, an increase of \$13.5 million from 2012. The request for operations funds increased fixed costs of \$26.0 million and \$12.2 million in program increases. These increases are offset with \$24.8 million in strategic program reductions to park operations and servicewide programs.

Of the program reductions, park base operations are reduced by \$21.6 million and servicewide programs are reduced by \$1.0 million. These reductions would be applied strategically to minimize the impact on the visitor experience and park resources. This reduction would have impacts on the level of services provided to visitors and the level of operational maintenance parks are able to achieve; however, by ensuring flexibility in the implementation of reductions, park managers would be able to develop cost saving measures that minimize the impact of these

reductions on park visitors to ensure their safety and that of our employees and the protection of park resources. All specific reductions in budgetary resources and the areas of reduction would be determined based on a park's mission, goals, and operational realities.

Strategic increases proposed include \$2.0 million for U.S. Park Police operations. This includes \$600,000 for the United States Park Police (USPP) to provide for additional patrols at national icons in Washington, D.C. and New York City and enhance USPP administrative support, and \$1.4 million for USPP visitor and resource protection activities associated with the 2013 Presidential Inauguration. A separate increase of \$1.2 million for National Capital area parks, particularly the National Mall, also would support visitor services and related activities associated with the Presidential Inauguration. Also included is a \$610,000 increase for the Challenge Cost Share program, an important component of the America's Great Outdoors initiative which provides matching funds to qualified partners for projects that preserve and improve NPS natural, cultural, and recreational resources. An increase of \$250,000 is also proposed to build on past and current Administration efforts to strengthen ocean and resource stewardship in the Nation's 74 ocean and Great Lakes parks.

Land Acquisition and State Assistance

The 2013 budget proposes \$119.4 million for Federal Land Acquisition and State Conservation Grants, an increase of \$17.5 million from the 2012 enacted level. This includes \$144,000 for increased fixed costs and \$17.4 million in programmatic increases.

Of the total amount, \$59.4 million is proposed to be available for Federal land acquisition projects and administration, including \$9.0 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. This amount also included \$31.5 million for NPS Federal land acquisition projects, of which \$20.2 million is for mission specific core land acquisition priority projects, and \$11.3 million is for land acquisition projects identified as part of an ongoing collaborative landscape planning process to achieve the highest priority shared conservation goals among the three departmental land management bureaus and the Department of Agriculture's Forest Service, per Congressional direction. The cross-bureau criteria emphasize opportunities to jointly conserve important large-scale landscapes, especially river and riparian areas, wildlife habitat, urban areas that provide needed recreational opportunities, and areas containing important cultural and historical assets. Additional criteria for these projects include the ability to leverage partner funds, the degree of involvement with other Interior bureaus for the project, and the urgency for project completion. The 2013 land acquisition project request totals over 27,100 acres of the highest priority acquisitions. As required by law, the proposed tracts are located within authorized park boundaries.

The budget also proposes \$60.0 million for State Conservation Grants and administration. Of this total, \$36.5 million is proposed for traditional State Conservation Grants, to be apportioned to the States in accordance with the long-standing formula. An additional \$20.0 million would be allocated to States based on a competitive process targeting priority projects that support the America's Great Outdoors initiative. This component would promote projects that support both outdoor recreation and conservation in urban areas where access to open space is limited;

protect, restore, and connect natural landscapes, including wildlife corridors; and provide access to rivers and waterways. The competitive grants component was developed to more specifically address the public's concern about the lack of open space and outdoor recreational areas in certain urban, rural, and other areas - an idea that was frequently conveyed during listening sessions for the America's Great Outdoors initiative.

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 2013 includes \$52.1 million, reflecting increased fixed costs of \$0.3 million and a programmatic reduction of \$8.1 million for funding for National Heritage Areas (NHAs), for a total net change of \$7.8 million below 2012. 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 sustains funding for the Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance Program, which assists and empowers communities to protect their own special places and enhance local outdoor recreation opportunities; and American Battlefield Protection Program Assistance Grants, 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 2013, the budget requests \$55.9 million, with no change from 2012 levels. This provides \$46.9 million for Grants-in-Aid to States and Territories, and nearly \$9.0 million for Grants-in-Aid to Tribes.

Construction

The budget proposes \$131.2 million for Construction, reflecting increased fixed costs of \$0.5 million and programmatic reductions of \$24.7 million, for a total net change of \$24.2 million below 2012 levels.

Line item construction is requested at \$52.4 million, and 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 ten projects including continuation of ecosystem restoration at Olympic and Everglades National Parks and critical new repair projects at parks such as Yellowstone, Dry Tortugas, and Denali. Consistent with the Administration's Campaign to Cut Waste, the budget proposes funding for demolition and removal of unoccupied, excess structures at Blue Ridge Parkway.

Performance Integration

In formulating the 2013 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. We also continue to exercise strict controls on travel costs as we improve oversight over our limited budgetary resources. Given the far-reaching responsibilities of the NPS, we must support the efforts of the entire Federal government to regain a balanced budget while strategically focusing our efforts and resources on those functions critical to the protection of resources, visitors, and employees, and on the experience at the core of every visit.

Mr. Chairman, this concludes my summary of the 2013 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.