

**PROPOSED FISCAL YEAR 2010 BUDGET REQUEST
FOR THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE**

HEARING
BEFORE THE
SUBCOMMITTEE ON NATIONAL PARKS
OF THE
COMMITTEE ON
ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES
UNITED STATES SENATE
ONE HUNDRED ELEVENTH CONGRESS

FIRST SESSION

TO

CONSIDER THE PRESIDENT'S PROPOSED FISCAL YEAR 2010 BUDGET
FOR THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE AND PROPOSED EXPENDITURES
UNDER THE AMERICAN RECOVERY AND REINVESTMENT ACT

JUNE 16, 2009



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PROPOSED FISCAL YEAR 2010 BUDGET REQUEST FOR THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

TUESDAY, JUNE 16, 2009

U.S. SENATE,
SUBCOMMITTEE ON NATIONAL PARKS,
COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES,
Washington, DC.

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 2:30 p.m. in room SD-366, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Hon. Mark Udall presiding.

OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. MARK UDALL, U.S. SENATOR FROM COLORADO

Senator UDALL The Subcommittee on Parks will come to order. Good afternoon.

Mr. WENK. Good afternoon.

Senator UDALL. The Subcommittee on National Parks meets to discuss the President's budget proposal for the National Park Service and park related expenditures under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. This is the first meeting of this subcommittee in this Congress and my first as chairman, of course the first meeting as the ranking member, Mr. Burr from North Carolina.

The issues before this subcommittee which include not only National Park issues, but also historic preservation, national heritage areas, the Land and Water Conservation Fund, wild and scenic rivers and national trails are issues of personal interest to me. Are ones that are important in my home State of Colorado and to our Nation. Just as an example, the Omnibus Public Lands Act that President Obama signed into law earlier this year, included among its many provisions several items within this subcommittee's jurisdiction that are of particular interest in Colorado.

I note a couple of them.

The designation of most of Rocky Mountain National Park as wilderness, ending a more than 30-year effort to achieve that designation.

The establishment of three national new heritage areas.

Authority to purchase land from willing sellers along the Continental Divide National Scenic Trail.

Much of the subcommittee's attention of this Congress will be on the large number of bills introduced dealing with National Parks and related issues. I anticipate that we will begin legislative hearings following the July recess.

However, for our first hearing this year I thought it would be appropriate to invite the Acting Director of the National Park Service

to discuss the Agency's proposed budget for the upcoming year and to review what steps have been taken so far in implementing funding under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. The Park Service has been underfunded for many years under administrations of both parties. There remains much that needs to be done just in terms of the maintenance backlog.

For example in Colorado we have ongoing needs for basic road maintenance in parks. We've also been fortunate to have had a number of new parks created such as the Black Canyon of the Gunnison, the Great Sand Dunes and the Sand Creek Massacre National Historic Site, as well as the new wilderness areas in Rocky Mountain National Park. All of these important designations include funding the needs for facilities and services and a host of other land, wildlife and visitor management activities.

Keeping these and other parks in a condition that maintains a quality visitor experience while protecting the environment is an ongoing challenge. But one that is vitally important as these parks compromise our national heritage. It is my hope that this hearing will provide the subcommittee with the opportunity to review the basic funding and policy challenges facing the National Park Service before we begin to consider new park related bills next month.

I'd now like to recognize the ranking member from the great State of North Carolina, Mr. Burr, for any remarks he may have.

**STATEMENT OF HON. RICHARD BURR, U.S. SENATOR FROM
NORTH CAROLINA**

Senator BURR. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I want to tell you how anxious I am to work with you in your new capacity. You have big shoes to fill in Senator's Akaka's leadership on the subcommittee.

Dan, welcome.

Mr. WENK. Thank you, sir.

Senator BURR. We're glad to have you here. I think every Member of Congress that has a national park truly believes that theirs is the most visited in the country. Only one of us though, can walk away with the prize and that's the Great Smokies.

[Laughter.]

Senator BURR. So I do have something relative to the parks to be engaged, concerned and excited all at the same time. I do share that with my colleagues from Tennessee. But as I remind them regularly, originally Tennessee was part of North Carolina. So it was our generosity that allowed them to have a State and to have two Senators.

I look forward to what you've got to tell us today. As I look at the 2010 proposed budget, \$433 million that's included in 2010. It will impact various aspects of park services. Particularly I'd like to hear more about the increases in funding for land acquisition and State assistance programs.

Senator Udall and I led an effort this year on a letter requesting that Congress support the administration's request for additional funding to operate and protect our park facility and resources. It's my hope that this funding will move forward in the appropriations process quickly.

I'm also interested to hear from you, director, what you foresee as it relates to the fee free weekends affecting funds generated by

the recreational fee programs and if an increase can still be expected. I support this initiative as a way to allow more visitors to experience our parks.

Again, I'd like to thank the director and thank the chairman, and I look forward to what you have to say.

Senator UDALL. I thank the ranking member for his remarks. We had an excellent working relation in the House of Representatives. I look forward to working with him here on this important subcommittee. In the meantime we will do all we can in Colorado to increase the visitation numbers at Rocky Mountain National Park to at least give the Great Smoky National Park a competition.

Acting Director Daniel Wenk, we'd like to hear from you. You've been accompanied by Bruce Sheaffer who is your Comptroller. So, welcome. Please proceed.

**STATEMENT OF DANIEL N. WENK, ACTING DIRECTOR,
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE, DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR**

Mr. WENK. Thank you, Mr. Chairman and members of the subcommittee. I appreciate the opportunity to appear before you today on the National Park Service's fiscal year 2010 budget request and the proposed expenditures under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. If I may, Mr. Chairman, I'd like to submit my entire statement for the record and summarize my remarks.

Senator UDALL. Without objection.

Mr. WENK. We sincerely thank you for your continuing support of the work we do as stewards of many of our Nation's most treasured natural and cultural resources.

For fiscal year 2009, Congress increased the National Park Service operations budget by \$100 million which will go a long way toward helping our parks to provide better services to our visitors.

To improve the protection and preservation of our resources. To make them accessible to the public.

On August 15, 1916, the National Park Service was formed to manage special places set aside to reflect the character of our Nation and preserve them for generations to come. As the National Park Service nears its 100th anniversary as stewards of this Nation's most cherished natural and cultural resources the challenge of managing these special places has grown more complex, but no less imperative.

Through the fiscal year 2010 budget request the National Park Service will strive to achieve the goals of the Secretary of Interior's Protecting America's Treasured Landscapes initiative and prepare for another century of conservation, preservation and enjoyment.

The National Park Service will build park operational capacity, tackle climate impacts and enhance critical stewardship programs at our parks.

Engage our youth in conservation.

Effectively maintain National Park Service facilities. Ensure organizational capacity in professional development.

The 2010 budget increase of 171 million for the Park Service provides the impetus to change 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 in the Nation's proud history and for international visitors to enjoy these special places and the stories of the country. The fiscal year 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 fiscal year 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 matching grant program for signature park projects. On the fiscal year 2010 budget request I'd like to refer you to my prepared statement and just touch a few of the highlights. Our emphasis continues to be on increasing funding for park operations.

The fiscal year 2010 budget request includes \$100 million focused on 5 key components within the operation of the National Park System account: \$73.7 million to enhance park operations capacity, \$15.9 million in the category of stewardship and education, \$5.4 million into support the National Park Service employee training and development, \$5 million as part of the Department's creating a 21st century Youth Conservation Corp Initiative, and \$10 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.

In addition the fiscal year 2010 budget request proposes a multiyear incremental approach in support of the President's commitment to fully fund the Land and Water Conservation Fund programs at 900 million annually across the Department of Interior and the United States Forest Service.

For the National Park Service the fiscal year 2010 budget proposes funding totaling \$98 million in discretionary appropriations of which \$68 million is available for the land acquisition projects and administration.

Congress also made available \$750 million of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act funding for the National Park Service directly and an additional \$170 million for park roads through the Department of Transportation.

Also, \$15 million in grants will go to protecting and restoring buildings at historically black colleges and universities.

This provides the National Park Service with a unique opportunity to make investments in projects that will achieve long term benefits to the public. We plan to use these funds to complete approximately 800 much needed projects that will stimulate our economy and benefit millions of visitors that come to our parks each year. Last week Secretary Salazar informed President Obama that the National Park Service will begin economic recovery projects at 107 National Parks within the next 100 days.

These projects fall into six major categories that will allow us to make an investment in some of our irreplaceable assets by restoring facilities, landscapes and habitat, spurring renewable energy retrofits in parks and creating jobs in park units throughout our country. These categories include:

Construction projects.

Deferred maintenance projects.
 Energy efficient equipment replacement efforts.
 Trails projects to restore trails for safer use and extend the life.
 Abandoned mine land safety projects to remedy serious health and safety concerns.
 Road maintenance projects to rehabilitate and preserve deteriorated road surfaces.

Mr. Chairman, in closing may I say again how much we appreciate your support and the support of the subcommittee for the varied programs of the National Park Service. Our employees are excited about the work we will be doing to prepare our national parks for our second century of stewardship. We look forward to working with you in meeting the challenges ahead.

Mr. Chairman, that concludes my remarks. We would be pleased to answer any questions you may have.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Wenk follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF DANIEL N. WENK, ACTING DIRECTOR, NATIONAL PARK SERVICE, DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Mr. Chairman and members of the subcommittee, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today at this oversight hearing on the FY 2010 President's request for the National Park Service (NPS).

We appreciate the support that Congress has provided for our continuing work as stewards of many of our Nation's most treasured natural and cultural resources. For FY 2009, Congress increased the NPS operations budget by \$100 million, which will go a long way toward helping our parks to provide better services to our visitors, to improve the protection and preservation of our resources and to make them accessible to the public. Congress also made available \$750 million of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act funding for the National Park Service directly and an additional \$170 million for park roads through the Department of Transportation. These funds will help us make significant, much-needed investments in facilities, equipment, and roads to show measurable improvements in facility conditions.

Through the President's 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 (+7%) for all National Park Service programs provide the impetus to shape the national park system to meet the expectations of the public for a legacy that is uniquely American. This comparison excludes Recovery Act funding. In preparation for the 100th anniversary in 2016, 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 Park Partnership 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 20,000 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 protection 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 (in response to available unobligated balances) and increased commitments under the Recovery Act.

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. This provides the National Park Service with a unique opportunity to make investments in projects that will achieve long-term benefits for the public. We plan to use these funds to complete approximately 800 much-needed projects that will stimulate our economy, provide jobs in communities across the nation, and benefit millions of visitors that come to our parks each year. The NPS will begin economic recovery projects at 107 national parks in the next 100 days. Also, \$15 million in grants will go to protecting and to restoring buildings at historically black colleges and universities.

These projects fall under six major categories that will allow us to make investments in some of our irreplaceable assets by restoring facilities, landscapes and habitat, spurring renewable energy retrofits in parks, and creating jobs in park units throughout our country. These categories include:

- (1) construction projects to upgrade facilities for health, safety, and energy efficiency, demolish those facilities that are obsolete, and replace or repair critical infrastructure;
- (2) deferred maintenance projects to replace utility, water, and wastewater systems, restore outdated or damaged facilities, and stabilize historical structures to extend their useful life;
- (3) energy efficient equipment replacement efforts to replace aging vehicles, heavy equipment, and HVAC systems with next generation energy efficient equipment;
- (4) trails projects to restore trails for safer use and extend the life of trails by controlling erosion, repairing trail surfaces, and replacing deteriorated boardwalks;
- (5) abandoned mine lands safety projects selected on their ability to maintain access and allow for airflow at mine openings to remedy serious health and safety concerns at the sites and to allow mine openings to continue to be used as wildlife habitat; and
- (6) road maintenance projects to rehabilitate and preserve deteriorated road surfaces along our 5,450 paved miles of public park roads, 6,544 miles of unpaved roads, the equivalent of 948 paved miles of parking areas.

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

Senator UDALL. Thank you, Director Wenk, for being to the point and for giving us a summary of your proposals. If I might I'd like to turn further to the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. I know you're still in the early stages of getting these funds directed into many, if not all of the national park units.

Do you feel in general your agency has been able to meet the goals of the Recovery Act? After you've answered that I'd like to go to some specific questions.

Mr. WENK. Absolutely. I believe that our projects will put Americans to work. We will find opportunities for our youth. We will reinvigorate our national parks.

Senator UDALL. You mentioned some of the numbers. I don't want to go back over those. But if they are of use to you as you answer this next round of questions, please feel free to do so.

But can you tell me how many of the funds have been spent to date? Are you on track, do you believe, to spend your funds by September 2010 as directed by the Recovery Act?

Mr. WENK. We are on track to spend our funds. We intend to obligate the entire sum that's been allocated. To date approximately \$4 million have been obligated.

Senator UDALL. Out of a total of?

Mr. WENK. Of about \$750 million.

Senator UDALL. Right.

Mr. WENK. That low number is due to the time it does take for completion of the projects once we got approval, plus going through the contracting procedures and getting them under contract. We expect those numbers to accelerate quickly.

Senator UDALL. Can you tell me how you've gone about deciding where to direct that funding? As I understand it, in some regions you've met with stakeholder groups, you've solicited input on how that recovery money should be spent. Can you tell me how that interaction is going and your decision process on the spending?

Mr. WENK. First of all, Mr. Chairman, the projects that are on our list are projects of long standing need to the National Park Service. They are not new projects. But we've been able to accelerate from our 5-year line item construction program, from the repair rehabilitation program, and the cyclic maintenance programs.

We've been able to bring those forward. Those projects that were, if you will, shovel ready and could be obligated within the time-frame of having all the funds obligated prior to the end of the fiscal year—or by September 2010. Where we have had stakeholders who have brought money to the table and could take advantage of those opportunities, we have.

But primarily these have been from long standing programs within the National Park Service priorities.

Senator UDALL. When you say stakeholders who could bring money to the table. These are private dollars that can match Federal dollars? Can you give us a little bit of a sense of how that might work?

Mr. WENK. Actually I'm going to turn to my Comptroller. I'm not sure if we had any of those in the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. In our budget we have \$25 million of partnership money. That is where we would see a shared opportunity.

In the Recovery Act I think we may be taking advantage of—are we taking advantage of any multi-funding?

Mr. SHEAFFER. No.

Mr. WENK. I don't know that we are. I may have misspoke earlier.

Senator UDALL. Mr. Sheaffer, did you want to comment?

Mr. SHEAFFER. As Mr. Wenk said, these were projects that were drawn down from long standing backlog lists, unfunded backlog lists, if you will. To develop from scratch a new program and get it obligated in 18 months would have been an impractical solution. Honestly, the work, the projects we selected had already been vetted, merit based priority set, and passed up through the ranks from parks and regions on standing lists, as Dan said.

So that's where the projects, I think every one, was drawn from.

Mr. WENK. We do have some circumstances, Mr. Chairman, where we have selected a project from our list that we will be doing in its entirety that perhaps will stimulate a partner to do additional work such as Ellis Island. In some instances, we will do a complete project that will hopefully be an impetus for a partner organization, to raise money and to continue further with that project. However, there's not a co-mingling of funds.

Senator UDALL. Is it fair to say your approach has been similar to the one that the U.S. DOT and the State DOTs, that is Departments of Transportation taken which there are plenty of projects in the pipeline, plenty of projects that have been approved, but lacked the funding necessary to move ahead. You've taken that same approach in the Park Service.

Mr. WENK. That would be a very accurate statement.

Senator UDALL. If I might move quickly. You mentioned abandoned mine clean up. I'm curious, particularly given I've been working on this for a number of years in the House. I brought that passion, interest, over here to the Senate.

How many abandoned mines and contaminated sites exist on Park Service land? How much funding you're allocating to address those sites? What funding may be needed in the best of worlds, to address that overall need?

Mr. WENK. I'll start with the last part of the question first. We believe the last survey we did shows that a rough estimate approaching \$300 million would be necessary to address the abandoned mine issues.

Senator UDALL. Just on Park Service lands?

Mr. WENK. Yes.

Senator UDALL. Yes.

Mr. WENK. We think there's about 3,100 mines or excuse me, sites that may have as many as 8,400 features which could be multiple issues on one site. This year through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, I believe we have \$23 million that we're dedicating to it funding which will work. I'm trying to remember the exact number of mines we'll work on, 32 projects in 18 parks in 12 States that we'll address this year, or between now and September 2010.

Senator UDALL. So a start, but less than 10 percent of the need that you've—

Mr. WENK. Correct.

Senator UDALL. Put on paper, monetarily.

Mr. WENK. That's a rough estimate.

Senator UDALL. Yes.

Mr. WENK. I would say it's a very rough estimate. We don't know what the appropriate mitigation approach will be on many of those mines. Those are estimates that were developed in response to a recent IG report.

So I think they are probably in order of magnitude.

Senator UDALL. Let me turn to the Senator from North Carolina for his questions. I think we certainly will have a second round of questions as well.

Senator BURR. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Wenk, what percentage of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act do you anticipate would go to deferred maintenance?

Mr. WENK. Deferred maintenance, it's sort of in our strict definition between maintenance on smaller level projects between maintenance and trails, is almost \$140 million of that \$750. But there is a lot of deferred maintenance that will be dealt with in terms of the construction program which is about \$589 million total. But we will be working on facilities in terms of some major rehabilitation.

We'll also be dealing with roads rehabilitation. So I don't know that I can pull an exact number. But I would suggest that the majority of that \$750 would be on deferred maintenance.

Senator BURR. Yes. I looked very intently at the 6 categories that you listed under the American Recovery Act and deferred maintenance projects to replace utility water, those items that directly affected the ability for a park to function.

Mr. WENK. Yes.

Senator BURR. Not to expand, to function, has been sort of the annual Mecca to the Hill, number 1 thing that the Park Service needed.

I'm trying to understand when given a pot of \$750 million than what percentage of that did you allocate to those maintenance projects that allow that park to function for the people walking in? Not in the future with future expansion, with necessarily the mind peace. I mean we all agree that's got to be done.

What percentage went to that maintenance problem which was the number 1 issue?

Mr. WENK. Do you have?

Mr. SHEAFFER. Projects that were tagged with a deferred maintenance element are roughly \$600 million of the total.

Senator BURR. So \$600 million of \$750 million.

Mr. SHEAFFER. Right. Would address some, all or a portion of a deferred maintenance issue as part of their component. Yes, sir.

Senator BURR. The amount of deferred maintenance needs prior to the American Recovery Act was how much?

Mr. SHEAFFER. The current deferred maintenance backlog is a bit over \$9 billion.

Senator BURR. In the 2010 proposed budget you listed five categories of investment. You referred to it as five key components within the ONPS account. Given, what did you say, \$9 billion?

Mr. SHEAFFER. Yes, sir.

Senator BURR. Nine billion dollars in deferred maintenance we're addressing \$600 million.

Mr. SHEAFFER. In the American Recovery.

Senator BURR. In the American Recovery. So you devote \$10 million to climate impacts. Walk me through that. We've got a finite amount of money. We're trying to get these parks up.

We're starting a new program, in essence, right?

Mr. SHEAFFER. For us, it is our first year for putting resources.

Senator BURR. So with a limited amount of resources and with this backlog of maintenance needs where—walk me through how this is a priority to start a new program.

Mr. WENK. The priority comes from the fact that climate change was going to have a dramatic effect on our National Parks. Our National Parks, in many cases, in many ways, are places where we're going to see the effects of climate change as it affects our ability to preserve our resources and to leave them unimpaired for future generations. There's issues in terms of climate change especially along the coast and along major river ways, that will affect archeological resources in our parks.

With a \$10 million expenditure, we're trying to establish an office to look at some of the inventory and monitoring that we need to do to understand the effects of climate change. To look at adap-

tation techniques that we can use to preserve these resources that we're entrusted to protect. If we don't take these steps, I believe we will lose resources that we will never be able to replace.

Senator BURR. Do you have a lack of confidence that elsewhere in the Federal Government we're not doing the right amount of study on climate change? That we're going to now duplicate it within the Park Service?

Mr. WENK. It's not a lack of confidence in the rest of the government. It's the confidence that we, as part of the government need to work collaboratively with the other Bureaus within the Department of Interior to address this issue in a manner that we will understand the impacts and address future strategies for how best to protect the resources that we have.

Senator BURR. I raise the question because it lessens my concern about how important the public/private partnerships are when you divert \$10 million that we could use to leverage private money to put in the parks. It lessens the urgency, I think, of \$9 billion worth of backlogs when you're diverting money over. There's no piece of the Federal Government that's not looking for money to do studies on climate change.

I think at some point we can rely on other's information once we accumulate the information we need to implement that in a collaborative way. That's one thing. But, you know, this may be one member's concern about how we've prioritized that \$10 million.

But I look at that. That's \$20 million if you leverage it against private dollars to fund parks under the structure of the Centennial Challenge as an example. I think a missed opportunity in my estimation.

Let me move, if I could, to some other areas. Recently the National Park Service received some attention regarding the utilization of eminent domain to take the land from private land owners for Flight 93 Memorial. Eminent demand is a tool that should only be used when absolutely necessary.

Could you please provide an update on the legal status of the land in question?

Mr. WENK. Mr. Chairman, I believe it was approximately 10 days ago, we met with the landowners in the area of Flight 93. Last week, National Park Service staff met with the landowners in Somerset County.

I'm pleased to say that we have made significant progress on reaching a negotiated settlement with those landowners who would in fact negotiate with us in Somerset County. I believe that we're very close to an agreement in principle with those land owners. We're hopeful if there is the use of eminent domain it will only be used in agreement with the land owner to settle some issues that we both agree need to go that route.

Senator BURR. How long have we been negotiating?

Mr. WENK. I think we've been negotiating for 2 to 3 years. I would say that the last week we probably negotiated with much more success than we have in that past 2 to 3 years.

Senator BURR. Do we currently own land for this memorial?

Mr. WENK. Yes, we do. The families of Flight 93 purchased land from the PBS Coal Company. We purchased it from them. So we do have some under our control now.

Senator BURR. That was 1,000 acres?

Mr. WENK. Approximately.

Senator BURR. The negotiations that are currently underway are for an additional \$500?

Mr. WENK. A little bit less than that, between 400 and 500 hundred acres, yes. There are 2 large landowners; the negotiations on the land price in one case has been completed. The other case we've agreed to go to eminent domain with them.

You may have heard about the agreement with the Svonavecs in January of this year.

Senator BURR. Shed some light for me, if you can, for the purposes of this memorial. What drives the need for 1,500 acres for the memorial?

Mr. WENK. A few things. There's the memorial itself. I'd be happy to provide you with the designs that have been created for the memorial. The memorial, will take, I believe it's in the area of, I'm going to say, 400 plus or minus acres, and another 300 to 400 hundred for the memorial location itself. Plus you have the access roads and some space that you need to protect the visual quality of that memorial.

Senator BURR. Share for us for the record the plans if you would.

Mr. WENK. I would be pleased to.

Senator BURR. For the total 1,500 acres.

I think most Members would agree, we want to do a memorial there that is sufficient and is done in the best possible fashion that we can. But I would love to understand better why it's 1,500 acres that's required. It's pretty tough for me to look at a situation where to complete that task we would actually use eminent domain to take somebody's land.

I think the threshold for that has to be awfully compelling. I would love to look at the plans and then possibly follow up with some questions about how many alternative plans we might have looked at that would accommodate, shy that one last land owner. How many acres are we talking about with eminent domain?

Mr. WENK. I would say it's approximately 400. The one landowner we reached agreement with in January had 274 of that 400. That was the Svonavec property that I told you about earlier.

Senator BURR. So we're really talking about 130 acres.

Mr. WENK. I believe so. But the acreage we're talking about, Mr. Burr, is literally in the area of the crash site itself.

Senator BURR. Ok. Ok. That helps me to understand a little better. I thank you.

Senator UDALL. I thank the ranking member for some insightful questions. I look forward to working with you to ensure that we have the right footprint and that we use eminent domain only as a last resort.

If I might let me pick up on the ranking member's interest in the climate change and what the Park Service is doing. I know, serving on the Sites Committee on the House side we worked on an ongoing basis to ensure that those dollars were being used in a really cost effective way and there wasn't duplication in some of the agencies that were charged more broadly with studying climate change. But I do note that the mission of the Park Service is, as is set forth

in the Organic Act is to leave our country's natural and cultural heritage unimpaired for future generations.

Now within that context climate change seems like a daunting challenge for your agency, for our agency. I think you did talk a little bit about the components the Park Service's strategy in answering Senator Burr's questions. But I don't know if you wanted to add anything to that survey, Mr. Wenk.

Mr. WENK. I think we believe that the climate change issue is perhaps one of the most far reaching and challenging aspects that we're going to face as we move forward into our next century. What we're trying to do is we're trying to establish the framework, if you will, in terms of how we're going to deal with that challenge. We're trying to look at some adaptation strategies that might work in protecting the wildlife or the habitats that we have, that we are charged to protect.

So I believe that the \$10 million initial investment, if you will, is an investment that will really enable us to work with our sister bureaus within the Department, with the Forest Service, with NOAA and others to really, if you will, come to grips with the magnitude of the change, the potential impact on the National Park Service site and look at ways that we can effectively deal with some of the changes that we'll be facing.

Senator UDALL. For the record, I understand that there's \$133 million that's allocated among 5 agencies in the Department of Interior at this initiative. I think you talked generally about working with the other agencies within the Department of Interior. Coordination is going to be critical.

Do you believe that there is that spirit of collaboration, at least as you begin to do this work?

Mr. WENK. Absolutely. In fact, starting tomorrow there's a meeting within the Department of the Interior with Deputy Secretary Hayes as well as with the Science Advisor with all the Bureaus up at the National Conservation and Training Center in Shepherdstown. We're literally going to be looking at how we coordinate, how we work together, to make sure we're not duplicating efforts, to make sure we have a solid approach to identifying the issues and potential management strategies to deal with it.

Senator UDALL. Is it fair to suggest that some of the work, if not most of the work, that would be undertaken in the climate change initiative is in addition on to what you're biologists and your scientists are already doing in understanding ecosystems and understanding wildlife use patterns etcetera? I think if you would respond to that.

Mr. WENK. I think that's a fair characterization. We do have a Natural Resource and Stewardship in Science program within the National Park Service. That program has looked at a variety of things.

Looking at vital signs of our national parks, for example, is a program that links 270 parks linked together, if you will, in 32 like equal regions. We evaluate the vital signs of those parks so we can get some understanding of the impacts that are going on out there even today.

Senator UDALL. Let me, if I might, return to questions I asked about abandoned mine clean up. There has been an effort to pass

Good Samaritan legislation that would provide ways in which volunteers and non-profits could help do that work in a very cost effective way. At the same time keep faith with liability provisions of the Clean Water Act as well as Super Fund considerations.

Do you believe that the Park Service could benefit from Good Samaritan volunteers to work to clean up these sites and in effect the agency, the Park Service that is, would benefit from addressing these Clean Water Act liabilities that now are in the law and make it difficult?

Mr. WENK. I believe that that probably has. In terms of benefiting from the Good Samaritan, I believe that we'd have to look at individual sites. I think there probably are a number of sites that would lend themselves to that kind of cooperative work. I think we'd probably have to evaluate that on an individual basis.

But we'd certainly want to that and would hope to do that.

Senator UDALL. Yes. I would note that certainly the Park Service has made increasing use of volunteers. I think there's a greater sophistication across the board if you will, with many, many groups that have sprung up, friends of this park, friends of that park. I hope we can harness that excitement and that affection, that love for these national parks that exist in all the communities around every national park.

Mr. WENK. I agree. Oftentimes our friend organizations are focused on particular areas of interest within parks. It's not uncommon for some parks to have more than one friends group that might be focused on different kinds of initiatives.

Senator UDALL. I would note that my friend Senator Barrasso has arrived from the great State of Wyoming. I wanted to give him an opportunity to also ask some questions of the panel.

Senator BARRASSO. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate it. I was with some wonderful girl scouts from Wyoming and visiting with them.

I'm sorry for being a little late. I had a chance to talk to Senator Burr as he was leaving and I was coming in. I know he raised the issue with you of the maintenance backlog.

You know, in the President's budget it's notable that the Park Service has chosen to decrease the construction budget, but this is accomplished by covering the construction needs with stimulus funds. So I'm just curious it seemed to me there was an opportunity for the Park Service to catch up on the facilities maintenance backlog. I'm not sure that we're really doing that.

Mr. WENK. There is a capacity issue that we have within the National Park Service in terms of managing the planning, design and construction process with the vast majority of that \$750 million going to those construction contracting, if you will, requirements for management. The reduction of the line item construction program in 2010 is, we certainly hope, a temporary reduction. But it really gets to a capacity issue. We still have the need for a robust construction program.

Senator BARRASSO. I'm wondering about acquisition too. I mean some of the money is being spent now on land acquisition or new Federal employees in 2010. So if we acquire more acres and more employees in 2010, how are we going to keep up those acres and

the employees in 2011 when the need for construction funding returns and there isn't the stimulus money.

Mr. WENK. I'm not sure I fully understand your question, Mr. Barrasso. The moneys that are being spent under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act are being accomplished almost totally through contracts. They are not being spent on hiring government employees.

If I'm not answering your question, I'm sorry. So it's not an issue of trying to find additional employees to take that place. They'll come in. Do that work. They will leave the park area.

Senator BARRASSO. But some money is used on acquiring more lands. Is that correct?

Mr. WENK. No.

Senator BARRASSO. No money at all from the President's budget is being used?

Mr. SHEAFFER. In the President's budget, yes.

Senator BARRASSO. Yes. So that's the concern that I have. If we're spending more money in the President's budget to acquire land and we don't have some of this additional funding. Aren't we just going to be compounding our problem by having more land to manage without the resources put into that land. We have a backlog right now of what we need to do. Isn't that just going to compound the problem?

Mr. WENK. I don't think it has to compound the problem at all, Mr. Barrasso. There's some cases where the land we would purchase are in holdings within National Parks where we actually may have a higher management cost to manage that land as an in holding than we would as a continuous park area.

Senator BARRASSO. So you're saying it's going to cost less to manage more?

Mr. WENK. In some cases.

Senator BARRASSO. Because of what you're able to pick up some areas, you're not going to have to go around.

Mr. WENK. Or you're not going to have to manage for those special park uses that take place within the park.

Senator BARRASSO. Ok. I just want to make sure we're not putting quantity ahead of quality. We have two jewels of the Park System in Wyoming with Yellowstone National Park, Grand Teton National Park.

I have significant concerns with upkeep and with backlog of projects that need to be done. I want to make sure that we can focus what we have on getting that done.

I am encouraged by what I read about in the statement: "Sylvan Pass is to be kept open and requires funding for avalanche management," which is critical to us in Wyoming. It has been an area of discussion and contention. I'm delighted to see that this has been included because management of the pass and of the East entrance to Yellowstone have both been very important to the local communities.

I know you have an issue about the \$716,000 and 2.7 full time equivalents who are going to be utilized to implement the winter use decision in Yellowstone National Park. Can you talk a little bit about that?

Mr. WENK. The winter use at Yellowstone National Park, I believe, probably relates directly to the Sylvan Pass and the activities that it would take to keep Sylvan Pass open for access.

Senator BARRASSO. I was going to submit some questions, but I'm fine with this. Thank you.

Senator UDALL. Would you be able to stay for another round of questions?

Senator BARRASSO. Yes.

Senator UDALL. Or would you like to continue?

Senator BARRASSO. No, no. That would be alright.

Senator UDALL. Why don't we have another round? I'll do my best to stick to a 5-minute timeframe. I think it's good to have a Senator from Wyoming here.

I would like to ask that the LWCF questions or land acquisition questions more broadly that Senator Barrasso mentioned be submitted for the record. You may have already started this process, through acquisitions that are in the pipeline and plans that you have. I know even, I would assume, although I could be wrong, that in Yellowstone and Grand Teton there may still be in holdings. There still may be boundary adjustments that we're trying to fix in some cases through the LWCF funds or acquisition funds.

Let me turn to bark beetle. We're experiencing a major infestation in Colorado. You don't have to go very far from Denver to the West to see it.

I think Senator Barrasso's State, the same situation is unfolding. They, the beetles, are not only killing trees on Forest Service lands, they are also having a meal on park lands. What are you doing to address the threat? How much are you spending on it? Tell us a little bit about your proposal in the budget and how much additional funding could you use?

Mr. WENK. First of all, we're trying to understand the extent of the problem by mapping the outbreaks of Mountain Pine beetle within our units. That's actually now going on in all our Western States except for North Dakota. Fifty-seven of our park units have reported elevated populations of beetle infestations.

We're not addressing the problem from a specific fund source. Our Park Superintendents are reprioritizing some of their monies within the natural resources program to address the problem. We will treat trees as it becomes necessary.

For example, there might be trees in campgrounds or developed areas that we want to make sure are protected. Where we're not successful and where trees pose a safety issue we will literally remove those trees through hazard tree removal programs. But we have not yet identified a special fund source to deal with that.

So we're dealing with it out of park base budgets.

Mr. SHEAFFER. We do get a small amount of money from the Forest Service for forest pest control, \$800,000 to \$1 million a year in that year, have for many years.

Senator UDALL. So you do have a cooperative relationship with the Forest Service.

Mr. SHEAFFER. BLM, Forest Service.

Senator UDALL. The BLM as well.

Mr. SHEAFFER. Yes, sir.

Mr. WENK. To give you an idea of cost, at Rocky Mountain National Park, which obviously you're very familiar with, sir, there's the belief that there will be a need to remove almost one million trees at a cost of about \$7 million.

Senator UDALL. Not insignificant. Why we continue to look into this issue. Colorado is, I think, citizens in Wyoming as well, looking to find ways that the market might add value to these trees and therefore help us remove them and reduce fuel loads are necessary.

In some cases, of course, the trees will stay in place. They may serve an ecological purpose. They may be difficult to reach. But it certainly is an increasing threat, one that concerns a lot of us.

Let me turn to the budget again. Talk to you about the funding for public and private partnerships that are particularly directed at repairing and improving of the Park Service facilities for the 100th anniversary which will be a wonderful event. Can you tell me how the money will be spent? In other words what's your process for selecting projects and how will it differ, if at all, from previous years?

Mr. WENK. The 2008 budget appropriated \$25 million for that purpose. We did not have it in the 2009 budget. We're pleased that it is in the 2010 budget.

We initiated a process in 2008 where we went out to our park areas, into our friends organizations. At that time we had commitments from friends groups and organizations, I believe for projects that were in an excess of \$300 million that they said they had funding available and ready to go.

Through our prioritization process, we will try to look at—we'll have to re-ask the question. As you know some of the economic landscape has changed since that time. Friends groups may or may not be in the same position they were in 2008.

So we will go out with a call once again to our park areas. We will ask for those projects that have funding available, where all the design and environmental compliance work has been done.

In the cases where there are projects, programs, excuse me, and not projects in terms of educational programs, we have many requests. We funded many of those as well. We will have the opportunity to go through and prioritize again.

We will set the criteria, which would be very much the same criteria as for 2010. We will identify those highest priority projects that are ready to go with moneys ready to be spent by the friends to match our funds and we'll move forward.

Senator UDALL. So this is \$300 million of private money ready to be matched with \$300 million of public money to upgrade and construct facilities?

Mr. WENK. There was a commitment. There was a statement by our friends group that those funds were available. In not all cases were the projects ready to go at the same time.

But they were saying that the level of funding was available. That if it could be that would have been the source for matching funds. We have cases where some partners have said they will give us more than a one-to-one match.

For example, they would provide \$2 for every \$1 of our dollars. We would look at all those different opportunities.

Mr. SHEAFFER. In some cases that match would come from a State or local government. It's not all private.

Senator UDALL. It's not all. That sounds exciting as long as those moneys don't all go to Yellowstone or Grand Teton National Park.

Senator BARRASSO.

Senator BARRASSO. I object, Mr. Chairman. I think it should all go to Wyoming.

[Laughter.]

Senator BARRASSO. Thank you. I've got a couple of quick last questions. In 1988 the Park Service sold dead timber from Yellowstone. Now we're looking at this environment with the bark beetle.

Can we do that in this insect event with the bark beetles in terms of selling some of the timber or harvesting?

Mr. WENK. I think once again it would be situational. We would look at how we would remove timber from, for example, campground areas or developed areas and see what might be appropriate. I think we'd have to look at each case individually and determine what our policies, regulations, and laws would allow in each individual case.

Senator BARRASSO. Alright. If you had some additional thoughts, I may put a couple of these questions into writing as well.

There have been new regulations in terms of the National Park Service. I'm wondering how you're moving forward to meet the deadline to allow gun owners to carry weapons in the parks?

Mr. WENK. We are working very hard to literally understand how the new law affects each park individually. Looking at the State law in the political subdivision, if you will, of a county or a city requires us to look at every park, every location and understand the laws for that political subdivision.

So we are going through that process right now. As you might imagine in a place like Yellowstone National Park which is in three States and probably four or five different counties, the potential would be there to have that law enforced in different ways. I don't think that necessarily the case in Wyoming. But that's just an example of what we have to go through for every park area.

Senator BARRASSO. Then a final question. I'm wondering what you've encountered in terms of have there been any delays in implementation of the American Reinvestment and Recovery Act due to NEPA compliance, NEPA regulations? What, you know, has there been money available that you were not able to spend because of complying with NEPA?

Mr. WENK. Not yet. One of the criteria that we had going into this in terms of identifying the projects was to look at those projects that were shovel ready or that we were very confident would be shovel ready within that timeframe. That included completion of the necessary environmental compliance.

We actually have placed on our list projects in excess of the amount of money available so if we do run into an obstacle we can remove that project and substitute another high priority project in the Service.

Senator BARRASSO. So you don't see a delay in your ability to go to shovel ready projects? There are enough shovel ready projects available to handle the available funds?

Mr. WENK. I believe there's enough shovel ready projects to handle the available funds.

Senator BARRASSO. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. No other questions.

Senator UDALL. I Thank the Senator from Wyoming for taking the time to attend this, I think, very important hearing in the Subcommittee on National Parks. I look forward to working with him. Perhaps he and I could exchange visits to some of the best park units in the whole country.

Although Senator Burr was here earlier bragging about the visitation levels at the Great Smokies National Park.

Senator BURR. He's left. So let's stick it to the roof with the Rocky Mountains then.

[Laughter.]

Senator UDALL. If I might, let me turn to your programs for youth. I know you've committed increasing the number and availability of the work programs for our young citizens. Your budget documents indicate that the Park Service's goals employ nearly 10,000 young people through the Recovery Act funds.

I assume that's a big increase in the number of young people working in the parks. What sort of capacity do you have to support that effort, lodging, transportation, supervision? I have a couple of teenagers. Actually my son will say he's not a teenager, he's in his early twenties.

But what sort of capacity do you have to manage all those groups?

Mr. WENK. Mr. Chairman, one of the great opportunities we have is to provide employment opportunities in our parks for youth. By working with organizations such as the Student Conservation Association and others, we do not have to provide as much of the administration and housing as we would if we had hired them directly. I would ask Mr. Sheaffer if he would add some of our capacity issues and programs.

Mr. SHEAFFER. The youth programs we employ in an area are mostly using organizations like the Student Conservation Association.

Senator UDALL. SCA.

Mr. SHEAFFER. Other public land corps like organizations do provide that sort of logistical support, administrative support and the like. We also do use Youth Conservation, YCC youth. We hire directly. In some of those cases, we are limited by our capacity.

Getting the largest number working through these other organizations is the thing we found most successful.

Senator UDALL. My understanding is, and I support this if this is in fact the case, that you undertake this mission in part to recruit potential future employees. Also it's a part of the outreach to communities across America. What do you do to ensure that you reach to underrepresented youth, communities in urban areas, for example?

Do you have a conscious approach to drawing those kinds of young people into work with the park service?

Mr. SHEAFFER. The organizations, Mr. Chairman, that we deal with, do an excellent job. YCC is particularly diverse with only just a bit over 50 percent, a bit under 50 percent minority representation. The Conservation Corps do well too and have been doing better recently with our encouragement.

So I'd say our diversity numbers have been improving substantially. The numbers that you mentioned, the numbers that we will be dealing with hopefully over the next 2 years as a result of the Recovery Act is kind of unprecedented ground for us. So there's a number of things we're going to learn in the next 2 years.

I can assure that the administration, the Secretary is interested in seeing that kind of momentum stay with us over the next few years and building to even larger numbers. So we're going to be learning a lot. We're learning a lot in terms of how we actually conduct ourselves with them.

The agreements that we have are probably going to expand the number of groups we deal with in the next few years and error is going to be telling us a lot about how we're going to about successfully doing that.

Senator UDALL. Many traditional programs of this type are fairly long in the time commitment demand, often at 12 weeks. Sometimes, I think with particular shorter summer vacation timeframes, it's hard for young adults to be able to generate that kind of time. Do you have alternative programs where you work with shorter duration or varied levels of commitment for these potential volunteers and interns?

Mr. SHEAFFER. You are absolutely right, Mr. Chairman. The SCA, for example, tend to run 12- to 14-week programs. But some of the other corps groups that we work with have much shorter duration programs, as little as 3 to 6 weeks, sometimes dictated by the project that we bring to them, and the nature of the duration of the project we bring to them.

So again I think that we'll probably be tapping those kinds of sources far greater in the next 18 months than we have in the past. So—

Senator UDALL. Is it fair to say that some of the work that is done is really project directed and driven? That's my memory of how the SCA works. There are other jobs and other employment opportunities where it's more general in nature. So do you have that mix of reasons that you have the access to these workers?

Mr. SHEAFFER. That is true. In this particular case the Recovery Act effort is principally job/project oriented. A lot of it is, you know, trail work for example, prevalent.

But you're right. There are some particularly working through SCA where you have some college age folks who can do other work and in terms of resource management.

Senator UDALL. Interpretation.

Mr. SHEAFFER. Exotic weed removal and the like. Yes, sir.

Senator UDALL. Education.

Mr. SHEAFFER. That's right. That's right. Our normal programs do conduct a number of those things.

We have a highly successful program; we work through SCA hiring business students, graduate business students to come in and help the National Park Service. An extraordinary program that ultimately, in many cases, leads to employment with the Park Service in business activities.

Senator UDALL. I need to do my own homework. But I've long followed SCA although in the last few years I haven't directly analyzed their balance sheet and their activity. But you're implying

that SCA still a strong and active and engaged organization. Is that correct?

Mr. SHEAFFER. Absolutely, without question.

Senator UDALL. It has a long time partnership with the Park Service?

Mr. SHEAFFER. Yes, sir.

Senator UDALL. I think it'd be fair to have the record show that Secretary Salazar has a deep commitment to youth activities and to youth recruitment. He built a record in Colorado when he headed the Department of Natural Resources in this area. There are some successful programs in Colorado that we look to as an example.

I know that's been one of his passions. It's a passion of his now as Interior Secretary. I assume you both would nod and say, yes, that's very, very true. But I wanted to make that clear, too.

Mr. SHEAFFER. Made clear to us.

Senator UDALL. Yes. He's made that clear to all of us. Let me keep pursuing this area of interest, youth involvement particularly in regards to the Recovery Act.

There was a provision that encouraged the Secretary to use the Youth Conservation Corps or the Public Land Corps while carrying out Recovery Act projects. We've been talking to that point. But recently we've heard that some of your non-Federal partners are struggling to come up with a 25 percent non-Federal match required under these programs.

Do both the YCC and the Public Lands Corps require a 25 percent match?

Mr. SHEAFFER. Yes, they do. The authority by which we engage with these people, with these groups is the Public Land Corps Act which requires the 25 percent match. It's not new to them.

The volume of projects we're sending their way and to some degree the lateness with which we're dealing with them this season has, I think, caused some problems. But we've heard that there may be some difficulties in the—

Senator UDALL. You've heard this concern. Do you think this is limiting your ability to engage youth? Do you have any flexibility to decrease the amount of this non Federal match?

Mr. SHEAFFER. I don't believe there's any flexibility in the current law. I do believe that there are some revisions to Public Land Corps Act that are under consideration that would give us some flexibility to reduce it. But it is fixed at 25 percent in the current law, I believe.

Senator UDALL. Any potential that these non Federal youth corps entities might be able to use in kind contributions?

Mr. SHEAFFER. In kind is commonly used in that match. Yes, sir. Commonly used.

Senator UDALL. I would very much like to work with you all as you look at how you can create additional flexibility or working within the provisions that are in place. Because we have heard those concerns expressed as well.

Let me, if I might, we're going to adjourn the hearing here shortly. But I want to just go back to the Land and Water Conservation Fund conversation we had earlier. I know there are concerns about

whether we purchase additional land, whether we have the capacity to manage that land. Do we have the personnel to manage it?

In some cases those are important questions, legitimate questions. In other cases, you purchase in holdings or you have long planned boundary line adjustments which aren't going to demand additional personnel. In fact, the purchase may make it easier for the Park Service, Dr. Wenk, to do the work it has to do.

By way of a little historical background the Land and Water Conservation Fund was established to help finance important land acquisitions on Federal lands including parks. It also has a State side element to it. I'm very familiar with this because of my family's involvement in the LWCF. I'm also, for the record, would like to be known, I'm frustrated that we rarely, if ever, actually direct all those Land and Water Conservation Funds into the purposes for which they were originally designed.

So those flows, allocation flows, ebb and flow. Can you tell me if there's a backlog of land acquisition needs that are not being met by LWCF allocations for the parks?

Dr. Wenk.

Mr. WENK. We have a prioritized list of approximately \$2 billion worth of lands that need to be purchased.

Senator UDALL. That's not insignificant.

Mr. WENK. That's not insignificant.

Senator UDALL. I think it calls for a—and I'm editorializing, but for direct funding. We've done some work through the years. We got very close early in this decade if my memory serves me right, very early in this decade.

The good work of Congressman Young and Congressman Miller in the House side and there were Senators over here in a bipartisan way to really work to try to find a solution. But we fell short. But I think this is something we can't let continue to just bounce along because of the needs you outlined.

Of course, there are tremendous opportunities at the State side level. There are also additional provisions in LWCF that draw people of all backgrounds and all ages into the out of doors. So I'm deeply committed to continue to see if we can't find a way to do that.

Mr. WENK. We have identified just and sort of the order of magnitude, Mr. Chairman, that's the priority list. We believe there's about another \$2 billion that has not yet been prioritized.

Senator UDALL. That's excellent—thank you for taking the time to come over today for the first hearing on this subcommittee on National Parks. I want to in particular, Mr. Wenk, Mr. Sheaffer, thank you for your service to a unique and special American institution, the National Park Service.

It's long been said and I think it will long be said that the National Parks may be America's best idea. Thank you for the leadership you provide. I look forward to working with you and the Secretary to really give the National Park Service the support and the resources it needs as we approach the 100th anniversary of the Park Service's founding.

We'll leave the record open for 2 weeks for additional statements and questions for the record.

This hearing is now adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 3:31 p.m. the hearing was adjourned.]

APPENDIX
RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS

RESPONSES OF DANIEL N. WENK TO QUESTIONS FROM SENATOR MURKOWSKI

Question 1. How much of the stimulus spending for the National Park Service is going to be for projects not on Park Service lands?

Answer. Of the \$750 million appropriated under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act for the National Park Service (NPS), \$15 million is designated for grants to Historically Black Colleges and Universities, which are not NPS properties. Of the remaining \$735 million funded for work in NPS units, \$363,000 is targeted for work on two affiliated properties which are not owned by the NPS but for which the NPS has authority and responsibilities to perform capital improvement work. These two merit-based, high-priority projects are at the Ice Age National Scenic Trail in Wisconsin and the Thomas Cole National Historic Site in New York.

Question 2. Earlier this year Director Wenk sent out notice that lead ammunition and fishing tackle would be prohibited in park units. The statement was later modified to indicate that the ban only applied to park employees. However, this clarification does not clarify your earlier statement that you will “eliminate” the use of lead “by the end of 2010.” How do you reconcile these conflicting statements and what should sportsmen expect from the park service in the future?

Answer. On March 4 2009, Acting Director Dan Wenk issued an internal memo regarding the NPS intent to remove lead from a variety of natural resource-related activities within NPS units. The memo stated that the NPS will first work towards cessation of lead use for in-house activities by (1) implementing non-lead ammunition use in NPS wildlife culling operations so that meat can be safely donated, (2) dispatching sick or wounded wildlife in parks with non-lead ammunition where carcasses are left in the field for scavengers, and (3) continuing to clean up firing ranges within NPS boundaries. These reduction efforts are currently underway.

A clarifying statement was released on March 18, shortly after the original press release. It stated that the NPS will look at the potential for transition to non-lead ammunition and fishing tackle by working with our policy office and appropriate stakeholders and other interested groups. This process will require public involvement, comment, and review. Currently, our staff is working on a careful analysis of the law and policy that addresses the use of lead and ways they may apply to activities in national parks. Once the analysis is finished, a strategy for completing the next steps in the process will be developed.

Current regulations pertaining to hunting or fishing in NPS units still apply and have not been changed. Some state wildlife management agencies and sportsmen’s groups are concerned that this is a move to reduce hunting and fishing in national park units. It is not. It is a proactive initiative to ensure that the NPS is a leader in environmental conservation and that park units and resources are preserved and managed to the high standards that the American public expects of the agency.

Question 3. What plans are being made to facilitate the restoration of 2nd Amendment rights in National Parks? Have you considered consulting with the BLM or the Forest Service on this issue? Has Secretary Salazar given you any indication that he will seek to impede the clear will of the Senate on this matter?

Answer. The National Park Service will follow Congress's directive and implement the new firearms law, which states that its provisions will take effect nine months from the date of enactment. On BLM land generally, state and local agencies enforce laws related to firearms. We consulted with the U.S. Forest Service during our attempts to find a comprehensive database of state firearms laws. Secretary Salazar directed the National Park Service to implement the firearms law.

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