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MANAGEMENT OF THE NATIONAL PARKS AND THE PARKS OF THE SOUTHWEST

HEARING

BEFORE THE

SUBCOMMITTEE ON CRIMINAL JUSTICE, DRUG POLICY, AND HUMAN RESOURCES

OF THE

COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT REFORM

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

ONE HUNDRED NINTH CONGRESS

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MANAGEMENT OF THE NATIONAL PARKS AND THE PARKS OF THE SOUTHWEST

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 13, 2005

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
SUBCOMMITTEE ON CRIMINAL JUSTICE, DRUG POLICY,
AND HUMAN RESOURCES,
COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT REFORM,
Flagstaff, AZ.

This subcommittee met, pursuant to notice, at 10 a.m., at Flagstaff City Hall, 211 West Aspen Avenue, Flagstaff, AZ, Hon. Mark E. Souder (chairman of the subcommittee) presiding.

Present: Representatives Souder, and Turner.

Also present: Representative Renzi.

Staff present: Nick Coleman and Jim Kaiser, counsels; and Malia Holst, clerk.

STATEMENT OF JOE HAUGHEY, A CITY OF FLAGSTAFF COUNCIL MEMBER

Mr. HAUGHEY. Thank you, Chairman Souder and members of the committee. I'm Joe Haughey, a city of Flagstaff council member. On behalf of the City Council and the community, I welcome you to Flagstaff and thank you for your attention to the needs of the National Park Service in the Northern Arizona Region. Mayor Donaldson asks that you accept his regrets in not being able to attend this important hearing.

The local National Parks and Monuments, Walnut Canyon, Wupatki, Sunset Crater and the Grand Canyon, are vital to Flagstaff's quality of life, our economy, and the forest health and sustainability. These parks offer cultural and natural resource attractions integral to the quality experiences of our residents and guests alike.

Lack of adequate funding for capital improvements in routine operations may limit these experiences. The Park Service also has a significant role in the health and sustainability of our forests. In this region, local, State and Federal agencies collaborate on forest health issues and respond to wild fires together. Wildland fire protection is fundamental to the vitality of the sustainability of Flagstaff and northern Arizona.

The participation of National Park Service is integral to the fire protection program in the Flagstaff area, as wild fire knows no boundaries. I urge your attention to maintaining adequate staffing and capital investment to both mitigate catastrophic wild fire and to respond when it occurs.

I recognize these are difficult times and the funding needs are great. As you consider these many needs, I urge you to consider the importance of continued maintenance of investment in the Park Service and the long-term benefits of this investment.

Thank you for your consideration, and welcome to Flagstaff.

Mr. SOUDER. Thank you very much. Thank you for letting us use the city building today. I appreciate it very much. The subcommittee will now come to order.

Good morning and thank you for joining us today. This is the fifth in a series of hearings focused on critical issues facing the National Park Service. We have had hearings in Gettysburg, Washington, DC, Boston, Seattle, Washington, and this is our fifth one. I would like to welcome all of the Members of Congress who have joined us in this hearing and who care deeply about our National Parks.

Given the great diversity of national parks in the United States, managing these sites is a daunting task, indeed. Each park unit has unique demands that require a close examination of each unit's mission, strengths, and weaknesses. It is imperative that the National Park Service carefully examine each park to determine the best possible way to manage any given unit.

Over the past few years, the National Park Service has worked on a comprehensive catalog of park units, backlogged projects, and asset inventory. These analyses are important if the parks are to be managed appropriately and efficiently. Any examination of a park's mission, management, and functions cannot be without controversy. As we have seen, recent proposals have met with vigorous opposition, and have sparked equally vigorous debate, and rightly so.

My hearings and their resulting report aim to examine the National Park Service and ultimately make proposals and recommendations. I am sure that it too will not be without controversy, but if the national parks are to survive and be a source of recreation and inspiration to future generations of Americans, then we must do all that we can to maintain them and make them better.

In addition to management of the national parks, this hearing will examine the parks of the Southwest. Most notable among the parks of this region is Grand Canyon National Park. Among the most popular and recognizable of all the national parks, it is natural that we should hold one of our hearings here.

As fitting as it is for us to have a hearing here, it is just as fitting that we are joined by one of the Grand Canyon's Congressmen, Rick Renzi. Also, I would like to welcome Congressman Mike Turner of Ohio, who is a member of the committee. Both of these gentlemen appreciate the parks and are working to ensure they survive and thrive for many, many years to come.

I would like to also welcome our witnesses. Our first panel consists of Richard Ms. Frost, the Associate Regional Director of Communications and External Relations for the Intermountain Region of the National Park Service. Mr. Frost will be testifying on behalf of the Park Service. He will be joined during the question period by Joe Alston, the superintendent of Grand Canyon National Park;

and Palma Wilson, the superintendent of the Flagstaff Area Monuments.

On the second panel, we have Deborah Tuck from the Grand Canyon National Park Foundation; Bob Keiter, representing the National Parks Conservation Association; Kimberly Spurr of the Arizona Archaeological Council; and Rick Smith, formerly with the National Park Service. Welcome to you all.

[The prepared statement of Hon. Mark E. Souder follows:]

Opening Statement
Chairman Mark Souder

"Management of the National Parks and the Parks of the Southwest"

Subcommittee on Criminal Justice, Drug Policy,
and Human Resources
Committee on Government Reform

October 13, 2005

Good morning, and thank you for joining us today. This is the fifth in a series of hearings focusing on the critical issues facing the National Park Service. I would like to welcome all of the Members of Congress who have joined us today, and who care deeply about the National Parks.

Given the great diversity of national parks in the United States, managing these sites is a daunting task indeed. Each park unit has unique demands that require a close examination of each unit's mission, strengths, and weaknesses. It is imperative that the National Park Service carefully examine each park to determine the best possible way to manage any given unit.

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On the second panel, we have Deborah Tuck from the Grand Canyon National Park Foundation, Bob Keiter, representing the National Parks Conservation Association, Kimberly Spurr of the Arizona Archeological Council, and Rick Smith, formerly with the National Park Service. Welcome to you all.

Mr. SOUDER. I would now like to recognize Congressman Turner for an opening statement.

Mr. TURNER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate your leadership and your interest in preserving our national parks, Mr. Renzi, my fellow classmate, for hosting us today, and also to thank you for your commitment to our national parks. As you and I discussed, it is a great treasure for our country and it is important to our families, and your efforts to preserve and enhance this experience and preservation for our country serves everyone, and I appreciate that.

Like the others, my appreciation and fondness of our national parks began when I was young as part of the great American vacation. My parents took my sister and me on a long adventure out west to see many of the breath-taking national parks and monuments. It instilled in us pride in our country and awe in God's creation.

As recent as this August, my wife and I had the great pleasure of recreating that vacation as an adventure for our very young children, traveling 5,890 miles in a great circle beginning from Ohio. In our journey through these national parks such as Grand Canyon, Yellowstone, Mesa Verde, Canyon de Chelly, Bryce, Zion, and others, we had the opportunity to meet outstanding park staff, some of which I see here today in this important hearing.

This tour, combined with the existence of the Dayton Aviation Heritage National Park in my district in Ohio, has added to my understanding of the National Park Service. The purpose of the National Park Service is to educate the public about the history, environment, and culture of our great country, and to preserve this heritage for future generations.

For an example of why the National Park Service is necessary for heritage preservation, one only needs to look toward the sky. Many people think mistakenly that Kitty Hawk was the birthplace of aviation, as demonstrated by North Carolina's license plate, "First in Flight." The Dayton Aviation Heritage National Park works to build a proper understanding of aviation history, and encompasses several sites in Dayton, OH, to include the home of the Wright brothers, the Wright brothers cycle shop, the Huffman Prairie, the field where the Wright brothers perfected flight, which is now the home of Wright-Patterson Air Force Base.

The Carillon Historical Park claimed the right to Flyer III, which was the world's first practical airplane that was able to sustain flight. Together these sites tell the story of Orville and Wilbur Wright, their work in Dayton, OH, in researching, engineering and building the world's first airplanes.

I look forward to hearing the testimony today from our panelists and learning their ideas to provide solutions to the operation and management needs of the national parks, especially with regard to the parks of the Southwest.

I want to thank you again everyone from the National Park Service and what you do to make our families from really throughout the world welcome in our national treasures, and what is a national treasure as a Park System.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. SOUDER. Thank you, and thank you also for your leadership in the National Audubon Historic Preservation Caucus.

I would now like to yield to Congressman Renzi, an active member of the Resources Committee, and a leader on these issues, and thank you for hosting us.

Mr. RENZI. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate being here, too, and Congressman Turner, it is great to see you. I do thank you for your friendship and your advocacy. We are classmates. Thank you for coming all the way out this summer, and coming back out to be a part of this today.

Both of you all have taken a critical issue at a very timely moment and pushed it to the forefront, and you've done so even at times without the consensus of the whole party, and I want to, first of all, recognize your leadership and your courage in doing that, and it's critical with all of the different expenses that we're seeing around the country, that we lift and bring to the forefront the treasure of the national parks.

So this hearing today in Flagstaff is timely, it's important, and it's also courageous with the leadership. I love northern Arizona, and a lot of us live here because of the breathtaking landscapes. We've got national monuments, designated areas, Sunset Crater, Wupatki Pueblo, and we have the jewel of all of the parks, in my opinion, the Grand Canyon, as well as the Petrified Forest which we're working hard to try and protect.

The Nation and our children learn about our history. They learn about our past, and they learn about our Nation and our country at these different sites and these different locations, much like the educational tour you took with your family, and so I'm very fortunate this morning to be with you to help drill into these issues, and to find out where it is that we're vulnerable, to understand the Achilles's heel in the funding mechanism and why it is that we're not seeing the emphasis in some areas pushed, and in particular to preservation and to operation and maintenance costs, and to expansion of some of the infrastructure needs, the capital improvements that is so critically and so far behind.

Again, thank you for your courage in taking the time to come all the way out here and taking you away from your families.

Mr. SOUDER. Thank you very much, and before we do proceed, two procedural matters. I ask for unanimous consent that all Members have 5 days to submit statements and questions for submission in the record, and any answers to those questions provided by the panelists, also be included in the record. Without objection, so-ordered.

I ask for unanimous consent that all Members present be permitted to participate in the hearing. Without objection, so-ordered.

Let me explain a little bit what our committee is and what we're doing here today. As you can tell, that the last thing I just read, without objection it is so-ordered that Members are permitted be able to participate in the hearing, and some of these ground rules, one thing that has been unusual about this subcommittee is that we've been working on a bipartisan basis, because I've been working very closely with the ranking member, Elijah Cummings. Because we're working on a bipartisan basis, we're able to hold hearings regardless of who is able to come at a particular point, and

have been able to do these things pretty much on a bipartisan basis, which is relatively unusual right now in Congress, and that's been a very important part of our work here.

We're an oversight committee. We're not a legislative committee. Any bills that come and relate to this, will have to roll to the Natural Resources Committee, where I'm currently on leave and Mr. Renzi is on it. What we do is as Government Reform, since I've been in Congress since 1994, I've done everything from Waco to investigations and administration to doing oversight and going down into New Orleans and Mississippi. And probably most people recently know we are the committee where Mark McGuire said that he didn't want to talk about the past, and ultimately you will see why we swear in our witnesses, and we're going through to find out whether in fact he did commit perjury, and he will be prosecuted for perjury on steroids.

Our job, if you look at Congress, is that a committee like Resources passes legislation related to parks and other matters. The Appropriations Committee then has to appropriate inside those guidelines. The Government Reform Committee then is responsible for seeing whether or not the money and policies are accomplishing the goals that Congress intended, to overlook the White House and different executive branch agencies, and then to make recommendations back to the authorizing committees, and, of course, we all sit on authorizing committees, and some sit on appropriating committees, as well, and that's the theory of how this works.

It doesn't work exactly that way in practice. People all try to make sure that other people aren't looking over their shoulder, but, in fact, what we have done in this subcommittee, which is predominantly narcotics policy, is pick an issue every 2 years where we focus. A number of years ago it was on border. Two years ago it was on faith-based, and this 2-year term we're doing a series of hearings that will be somewhere between 8 and 10 on national parks. We will report likely to on the border and there is a foundational thing in the works in the subcommittee over at Homeland Security.

That said, it is policy of the Government Reform Committee to swear in all our witnesses, so our first panel of Richard Frost, associate regional director of communications and external relations of the Intermountain Region of the National Park Service, and he will be joined by Joe Alston, superintendent of the Grand Canyon National Park, and Palma Wilson, superintendent of the Flagstaff Area Monuments, who are not official witnesses, but will be available to answer questions, and I'm going to make a side point here.

I very much appreciate the evolution of this process with the National Park Service. I want to say on the record that the National Park Service feels this pressure a lot, but so does every other agency we do, and that is ordinarily we would like to check every single statement and every comma and every semi-colon you use. That is standard when we do oversight. Official testimony has to be scrubbed from so many different places and worked through, and initially there was a lot of consternation about this series of hearings from the administration. As we've worked together, we now have superintendents that can come but not give an official scrubbed statement and field questions. We will try not to get your

careers ended with questions. We encourage you to be open and honest, but if it's too uncomfortable, just be somewhat political in your statements, and I understand that.

The goal here is not to finger-point. As you know, I'm a Republican and the Members here are Republicans, and we're not trying to—we're all trying to figure out how to pay for Katrina, we're all trying to figure out how to do these things, but we're passionately committed to know the truth, because Congress can't make decisions on how best to fund our parks, if we don't know, in fact, what's happening in this process, and that's why we need the openness. We need to know where we have disagreements on how we're going to fund it, and so on, but I very much appreciate the National Park Service now clearing and allowing more and more open testimony to be moved through this series of hearings.

And, Tom, you directly know, and Steve Martin, and others, I think we've made progress at the Department of the Interior. Owen Vee is still not our biggest cheerleader, but we're working with them more, as well, and they understand what our goals are.

With that said, will you each rise and raise your right hands.

[Witnesses sworn.]

Mr. SOUDER. Let the record show that each of the witnesses responded in the affirmative. Now, Mr. Frost, if you will give your opening statement.

STATEMENT OF RICHARD M. FROST, ASSOCIATE REGIONAL DIRECTOR, COMMUNICATIONS AND EXTERNAL RELATIONS, INTERMOUNTAIN REGION OF THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

Mr. FROST. Good morning, Mr. Chairman. I would like to summarize my testimony and request that my full testimony be entered into the record. Mr. Chairman, thank you so much for the opportunity to appear today to discuss management and operational issues affecting parks in the Intermountain Region. First, on behalf of the National Park Service, I would like to thank you and your colleagues in Congress for your continuing support of our parks and programs. Park-based funding has risen more than $150 million or 16 percent since fiscal year 2001. The increase for fiscal year 2004 to 2005, represented the largest park-based funding increase in NPS history. At a time when the Nation is faced with many challenges and demands for its financial resources, the NPS has been very fortunate.

The Intermountain Region is an integral part of the NPS System, and in many ways the birthplace. It is the home of the first national monument and first national park, as well home of icons such as Yellowstone, Grand Canyon and Mesa Verde. The Region encompasses eight States and 82 park units. In 2004, we welcomed close to 39 million visitors and generated an estimated $850 million in economic benefits.

To secure the legacy of our national parks, Director Fran Mainella has implemented the National Park Service Legacy Initiative, encompassing five themes; management excellence, sustainability, outdoor recreation, conservation, and 21st century relevancy.

To address management excellence and ensure our credibility, both on the Hill and with American taxpayers, the Intermountain

Region has developed a process to help parks determine if their core needs are being addressed in the most effective way, given each park's budget resources. This process has been adopted by the NPS as a whole.

The core operations process is park-based and park-driven. In it, a park looks at a projection of its base budget over the next 5 years. It determines what its core needs are based on its enabling legislation and other relevant documents, and then develops a list of priorities. Once its priorities are set, a park looks at all the activities it performs with its current budget and personnel, and asks do these activities match our priorities, which activities are essential, if some activities are not essential, could those resources be redirected, or if the park has a projected budget deficit, could nonessential activities be eliminated to help the park operate within its means.

This kind of information and analysis is essential for the credibility of park budgets. It helps park managers plan strategically for the future. This is not a one-time exercise, but a fundamental change in the way we do business.

To date, 26 parks in the Intermountain Region have undergone this process, representing half the Region's employees. The National Park Service nationwide is committed to completing core operation reviews at 50 parks, and we anticipate all 82 Intermountain Region parks will have completed the process by 2009.

The Legacy Initiative also emphasizes conservation of park resources. The Intermountain Region has established a record of providing superior stewardship of resources by applying innovative management. For example, we have made extensive use of the Cooperative Ecosystem Studies Units, which are composed of universities, governmental and non-profit partners that provide the NPS with research, technical assistance, and educational opportunities.

Using CESUs, for each $1 in Intermountain Region funds, we are able to attract more than $40 from other fund sources. To enhance CESU capacity to provide support for cultural resource projects, the Intermountain Region has moved three cultural resource experts to the three CESUs that serve the Intermountain Region.

Ensuring the long-term relevancy of the National Park System to America's diverse population is another important objective. To expand the relevance of our parks, the Intermountain Region has pioneered the teacher-ranger-teacher program. This program brings public school teachers from schools that serve under-privileged students into our parks to work as rangers. The teachers undergo training comparable to that of other seasonal park rangers, and then return to their classrooms with lesson plans developed from their park work experiences.

The benefits of this program are significant. As teachers return to the classroom following their park experiences, they bring to students first-hand knowledge of parks these children might otherwise never have.

In conclusion, we are deeply committed to protecting the places in our care and ensuring quality visitor experiences for present and future generations. We appreciate the support parks have received from Congress and from the American people. Thank you for the opportunity to be here today. I would be happy to respond to any

questions you or any other members of the subcommittee might have. That completes my testimony.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Frost follows:]

STATEMENT OF RICHARD M. FROST, ASSOCIATE REGIONAL DIRECTOR FOR COMMUNICATIONS AND EXTERNAL RELATIONS, INTERMOUNTAIN REGION, NATIONAL PARK SERVICE, U. S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, BEFORE THE SUBCOMMITTEE ON CRIMINAL JUSTICE, DRUG POLICY AND HUMAN RESOURCES, OF THE HOUSE GOVERNMENT REFORM COMMITTEE, AT AN OVERSIGHT HEARING CONCERNING "MANAGEMENT OF THE NATIONAL PARKS AND THE PARKS OF THE SOUTHWEST."

OCTOBER 13, 2005

Mr. Chairman, welcome to Flagstaff, Arizona, and thank you for the opportunity to appear today to discuss management and operational issues affecting parks in the Intermountain Region of the National Park Service.

First, on behalf of the National Park Service (NPS), I would like to acknowledge and thank Congress for its continuing support of our parks and programs in the Intermountain Region, as well as the entire National Park System. With me today are Joe Alston, Superintendent of Grand Canyon National Park, and, Palma Wilson, Superintendent of Flagstaff Area Monuments. They will be happy to answer any specific questions about their parks and share with you their impressions and results of the core analysis processes conducted in their parks.

The Intermountain Region is the home of the first national monument and first national park, as well as the home of national and international icons such as Yellowstone and Grand Canyon National Parks, and of world-class archeological sites like Mesa Verde National Park and Chaco Culture National Historical Park. The region encompasses eight states and 82 park units across diverse landscapes of arid deserts, high plains, high mountain ranges and red rock canyons. In 2004, the Intermountain Region welcomed close to 39 million annual visitors and generated an estimated $850 million in economic benefits to surrounding communities. We in the Intermountain Region respect the responsibilities entrusted to us by the American people, and our focus remains fixed on protecting these places for the enjoyment of the present generation and generations yet to come.

It is in that spirit of responsible trust that Director Fran Mainella has implemented the National Park Service Legacy Initiative which encompasses five guiding themes to secure the legacy of America's national parks: management excellence, sustainability, outdoor recreation, conservation, and 21st century relevancy. Underlying these themes is the recognition and conviction that the National Park System must be managed with utmost efficiency and innovation, in collaboration with intergovernmental partners and the private sector.

Congress provided nearly $560 million to operate the Intermountain Region in Fiscal Year (FY) 2005. Of that, $238.8 million was provided as appropriations for Operation

of the National Park System (ONPS). In addition to park base funding, some of the other funding sources we utilized included $10.5 million for cyclic maintenance projects, $15.2 million for repair/rehabilitation projects, $3.7 million for cultural resources projects, $2.5 million for natural resources projects, and $1 million for museum collection management.

To ensure credibility, transparency and accountability, the Intermountain Region has developed a process to help parks determine their core needs, and to help park managers look at their operations to determine if those core needs are being addressed in the most efficient and effective way given each park's budget resources. This process now has been adopted by the NPS as a whole, and is part of the NPS Legacy Initiative to promote management excellence. The core operations process is park-based and park-driven, giving park managers a powerful tool to improve the connection between their financial resources and their core needs.

In this process, a park looks at a projection of its base budget over the next five years, based on past allocations. It then determines what its core needs are based on its enabling legislation and other documents relevant to its purpose and establishment. With those core needs, a park then develops a list of priorities. Once its priorities are set, a park looks at all the activities it performs with its current budget and personnel and then asks: Do these activities match the priorities? Which activities are essential and which may not be? If some activities are not essential, could the resources for those activities be redirected toward essential functions? Or, if the park has a projected budget deficit in its out-years, could non-essential activities be eliminated to help the park operate within its means?

In addition, the core operations process indicates whether a park is able to fulfill its core functions with the resources currently allocated to it. This kind of information and analysis is essential in ensuring the credibility of park budgets, but will also help park managers strategically plan for the future based on a sound understanding of what resources they will have and how they will need to allocate them. To date, 26 parks in the Intermountain Region have adopted the core operations process, and we anticipate all 82 Intermountain Region parks will implement the process by 2009. The National Park Service nationwide has committed to initiating core operation reviews at 50 parks. This is not a one-time exercise, but a change in the way we plan our ongoing efforts. Each year, parks will look at their budget projection and use this tool for strategic planning.

Using this process we have achieved efficiencies by combining positions, encouraging partnerships, using new technology, reducing vehicle fleets, recovering costs, eliminating low-priority activities, and contracting out work that does not need to be performed by federal personnel. Interestingly, in some larger parks, a significant portion of a park's operations are conducted with non-Federal personnel. For example, only 28 percent of the workforce at Mesa Verde is comprised of Federal employees. The remainder of the work is accomplished by concessioners, contractors, cooperators, and other non-Federal sources. By taking these steps toward management excellence, we can maximize the value of the nearly $560 million we receive from Congress to care for the parks of the

Intermountain Region while also achieving the other thematic goals in the Legacy Initiative.

The Intermountain Region has used approximately 65 percent of its recreation fee funds on deferred maintenance projects, excluding the cost of collecting those funds. Overall, the region spent approximately $53 million from all fund sources in FY 04 on deferred maintenance projects. These dollars have largely funded improvements to physical assets such as buildings, roads, utilities, and trails. For example, Arches National Park used a 10-member Student Conservation Association crew to repair seven miles of trail. A similar effort was undertaken by a youth group at Chiricahua National Monument in Arizona. In addition, deferred maintenance projects improved disability access to visitor facilities at El Morro National Monument in New Mexico and Wupatki National Monument in Arizona. Additional projects in Arizona included upgrading the Mather Campground at Grand Canyon and repairing historic structures at Hubbell Trading Post National Historic Site.

The Legacy Initiative emphasizes conservation of park resources. The Intermountain Region has established a record of providing superior stewardship of resources by applying innovative and conscientious management to secure the most benefits from the dollars we receive from Congress. The Legacy Initiative also pledges support for outdoor recreation, which contributes to the overall health of Americans. Ensuring that parks continue to be prime places for recreational activity requires maintaining park facilities such as trails, roads, campgrounds, visitor centers and other amenities.

For example, the Intermountain Region has made extensive and effective use of Cooperative Ecosystem Studies Units (CESUs), which are composed of universities, governmental and non-profit partners that provide the NPS with research, technical assistance, and educational opportunities. The Intermountain Region has used $300,000 in base funds as "seed money" to attract matching funds. For each $1 in Intermountain Region funds, we are able to attract more than $40 from other fund sources. In FY 2005, CESU projects were valued at $13 million and in FY 04, CESUs provided approximately $1.8 million in support for cultural resource projects. To enhance CESU capacity to provide support for cultural resource projects, the Intermountain Region has moved three cultural resource experts to the three CESUs that serve the Intermountain Region. Overall, the Intermountain Region spent approximately $3.7 million on cultural resource activities in FY 2005, down slightly from $3.8 million in 2004 and $3.9 million in 2003. Even so, we believe our capacity to protect cultural resources has improved due to our aggressive use of CESUs and our efforts to improve the cultural resource capacities of CESUs.

The Intermountain Region is also proud of the accomplishments of the Vanishing Treasures Program, a program originally designed to address inadequate funding for protection of historic and pre-historic ruins in the region's national park units. That program has been generously funded by Congress for the last 10 years and has provided more than 60 new cultural resource positions. In FY 2005, the program received $1.5 million.

Ensuring the long-term relevancy of the National Park System to America's diverse demographics and its young people is another prime objective of the Intermountain Region through the Legacy Initiative. Data on park visitation suggest that visitors to units of the national park system are predominately middle to upper income, and largely Caucasian. To expand the reach of our national parks to a broader segment of the population, the Intermountain Region has pioneered a program called "teacher-to-ranger-to-teacher" that brings public school teachers into our parks to work as rangers. The teachers undergo training comparable to that of other seasonal park rangers and then return to their classrooms with lesson plans developed from their park work experiences. The Intermountain Region has entered into agreements with 11 school districts in Colorado and Texas, focusing specifically on districts that serve underprivileged children. To date, eighteen teacher-rangers have worked approximately 6,000 hours in eight parks at a cost to the National Park Service of $45,000.

We believe the benefits of this program are significant. As teachers return to the classroom following their park experiences, they bring to their students first-hand knowledge of the important issues facing parks. For many of these students, their teachers may serve as their first or only link to the natural and cultural resources managed by the NPS. We believe relationships like these are essential to ensuring that the national park idea flourishes in the coming decades.

Within the Intermountain Region, the Office of Indian Affairs and American Culture (IAAC) promotes constructive working relationships between national parks and diverse cultural communities. The office assists parks, Tribes, park-affiliated communities, and other Federal and state agencies, by implementing policies and projects that increase mutual cooperation and support the mission of the NPS. The IAAC provides a wide range of technical and professional services to all national parks in the Intermountain Region and also provides support services to all 388 national parks in the nation for the implementation of the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act of 1990. The IAAC comprises several distinct but related programs, including tribal liaison, the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act program, ethnography, technical assistance to Long Distance Trails, International Affairs, and other NPS programs to facilitate involvement of communities with historical and contemporary connections to heritage resources.

In recent years the Intermountain Region has become increasingly involved in issues involving our international borders. The Region includes seven units along the United States-Mexico border, which provided outstanding recreational opportunities to more than 3 million visitors in 2004. Impacts from human and vehicular activity associated with increased border activities has caused serious damage to park cultural and natural resources in these border parks. Some of the NPS units in southern Arizona include endangered and sensitive species habitat and wilderness areas, making damage to these scarce resources even more tragic. Yet, effects to the parks are not limited to endangered species or wilderness. At Padre Island National Seashore, for example, visitors have

encountered evidence of drug smuggling along park beaches. This kind of illegal activity affects parks significantly and can impact the quality of the visitor experience.

The Department of Homeland Security is the primary agency responsible for international border security, and DHS has significantly increased its efforts and resources in securing the Southwest border. We are currently working with DHS to establish plans of action for ensuring appropriate border security in parks along the border. For NPS, Congress has provided additional funding in each of the last three years to address the impacts on park resources and visitors, including funding for additional law enforcement positions and a vehicle barrier at Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument and Coronado National Memorial. To ensure that we continue to meet the core mission of the NPS, park rangers performing law enforcement in the border park areas meet all NPS and Department of the Interior training standards for law enforcement. Additionally, the NPS provides advanced tactical law enforcement training to rangers working in border parks facing high risks from illegal smuggling activities. To further advance the goal of secure borders, health and safety, and resource protection, the NPS works cooperatively with DHS Customs and Border Protection.

In conclusion, we are deeply committed to protecting the places in our care and ensuring quality visitor experiences for present and future generations. We deeply appreciate the support parks have received from Congress and from the American people. Thank you for the opportunity to be here today. I would be happy to respond to any questions you or other members of the subcommittee may have.

Mr. SOUDER. First, I ask for unanimous consent that all full statements and materials referred to by the witnesses be included in the record. Without objection, so-ordered.

In the interest in full disclosure, I want to say that my son works for the National Park Service in the Denver office under Mr. Frost, and, in fact, I just learned yesterday that he's been active in some of the core ops issues we're going to be working with in this question of core ops, that as a business undergrad and MBA and a person that owns a private business, some of the questions are why didn't we do some of this a long time ago, but that's true generally across the Government, and I know there's been variations of this done for years.

How would you first describe what you're doing in core operations and doing a budget analysis, how would you say this differs most from the way that you were doing it in parks?

Mr. FROST. I don't think previously parks generally speaking had a way to look at the resources they were getting and determine whether or not they were going to the essential needs of the parks. They—until our budget request, I think park to park, weren't based on a substantial analysis of what those park needs really were, so parks grew often in sort of an ad hoc fashion, depending on the leadership and the personnel and the time and the place, and this is really the first time we've conducted I think a thorough analysis of why each park was established, what its essential needs are, what it really needs to be doing, given what Congress initially asked it to do, and then to ensure that the resources it has goes directly to those needs.

Mr. SOUDER. We work basically working under the 5-minute rule, which we'll be a little generous with you here. Because this hearing is in the field, it's not quite like Washington, but when it goes red, that means on opening statement for the second panel, that you need to start winding up to the degree possible, and we want to make sure we get the information in the record, and for Members it means we now know we're ticking on overtime, because we need to do a second round.

When you do a core ops review at a park, is there going to be—are you looking at producing a document that will then go to the regional, and then the national headquarters, that will give like a tiered view of here is what we have, here is what we believe our No. 1 priorities are? You do that to some degree now in your review process to set up what you're going to fund. How do you see this kind of tiered proposal looking different as it comes up to the regional office and national office in budgeting?

Mr. FROST. This is a much more thorough analysis, and it will include a provisional management plan based on the park's priorities. It will include the kind of efficiencies the park believes it can gain under a park-based budget increase, or to support the need for additional funds if it shows that it can't be used core operations, and each park will generate with the help of the regional office a report that goes to the director, and then that will be used as a credible source of information to go to Congress to explain what the needs of those individual parks are.

Mr. SOUDER. I don't want to—what's unusual about this Committee, because we do investigations, is we have the ability to sub-

poena any documents including e-mails and phone logs, which usually we don't have to do. Occasionally we do. I don't want to make this as an official document request at this point because I want to work on a friendly basis with the Park Service, but what I would like to see at some point, if you can talk to the regional and the national office so that we have a better idea of this, is if you have completed the core ops at any park where it is that far along, compare it to a document that came up previously so we can see the practical impact of how the decisionmaking process is occurring in the budgeting process and what that difference might be, and if we can just leave it and if you can take it back to regional headquarters and figure out what's the best way to work this through, because I don't want to stifle a new project while you're still trying to work through the details, but at the same time trying to understand what the funding levels are and how we're going to do tradeoffs in support for us to see what kind of requests are coming into the system, whether it be the Resources Committee, the Appropriations Committee, and what type of future requests are coming in and what form and what that process is in its early stages. So to the degree you can look through that, and then we'll in a friendly forum try to work out a document request that is workable inside the system.

You also had an interesting quote in here in your written statement that 28 percent of the work force in Mesa Verde is comprised of Federal employees. One of the constant questions here is the basis for contracting out.

Let me ask. Do you know, Ms. Wilson, how many in your park, or also at Grand Canyon, would be contracted out versus Federal employees in the group cluster of parks that you work with?

Ms. WILSON. We actually have 34 permanent employees for the Flagstaff areas. You could probably estimate that we—for like our cultural resources, we contract out about 35 percent of our work there. For maintenance, we contract out about 50 percent of our work. I can't give you the exact numbers of people, but that will give you a rough idea of what we're currently contracting out.

Mr. SOUDER. What about at Grand Canyon.

Mr. ALSTON. I can't give you an exact number, but I suspect it's in that same range. When you look at our concession employees, I think we have about 1,500 concession employees, versus 400 permanent employees, and 360, I guess, is the actual number. You look at all of the other things we contract out, all the way from trash collection to research, to what have you, it may even be lower than that.

Mr. SOUDER. Two kind of class pressure questions that come up constantly, and I want to raise it, and I'd like to get each of your comments. In contracting out, at what point in contracting out—let me give you a brief side point. We had a big discussion in Homeland Security about after the U.S. Visit Program, we found people were abusing that and were coming in who were on our terrorist watch list. So we decided arbitrarily that people at the desk at the State Department who were clearing people coming into the United States, should be Homeland Security employees. What we found by doing that, which was a form of contracting out to another Government agency, was that—that was the entry level point for training

State Department employees, and if we knocked them out of that slot, the State Department employees were coming into a management position, and we had no integration system into the State Department.

At what point in contracting out in the Park Service—I understand it produces flexibility, but at what point do we not then have a way for people to get started in the Park Service? We have seasonal rangers, and in contracting out our seasonal rangers, they're not just contracting out, they are your Federal employees. Is it now only seasonal rangers working in the Park Service and now you have seasonal rangers who have been doing it for 14 years trying to get permanent status. At what point do we dry up the system? Anybody want to take that?

I know it's been debated on the floor of Congress a couple of times as far as have we been spending money and are looking at contracting out, and the figure you have is probably for the most heavily contracted out Federal agency forever.

Mr. FROST. I think that has a lot to do with concessions operations, and those kinds of things. I think there are still a substantial number of positions for people to enter into the Park Service and become permanent civil servants.

Ms. WILSON. I think one of the things we can show here in Flagstaff is some of the contracting out, as Rick mentioned in his statement, that we work closely with the CESUs, and one of the CESUs actually happens to at Northern Arizona University [NAU], and so through some of those contracts that we're doing, for example in archeology, is working with the students on NAU, so we're providing them some sort of basis of what the Park Service is all about, and, in fact, we have been able to hire some of those students on after they work as intern or contract basis. They come in as a term employee, and then eventually into a permanent position. And a lot of that was through the program banishing produce that we were able to bring on those archeologists. So there still is a conduit in some respects.

Mr. SOUDER. One of the other controversial areas that you hear at every park and from every superintendent is a basic reduction in the number of seasonal or permanent that deal with interpretation, that as a Member of Congress struggling with—if anybody goes with me to a park and wears a ranger hat, you are constantly asked where is the nearest restroom, how to a get to so and so, in addition to substantive questions, because clearly there is a market demand to capital ratings on the ground.

On the other hand, in our whole society, whether it be at grocery stores, retail operations, or everywhere, being that type of ability, museums are declining and growing more automated.

Do any of you want to comment on that question inside the Park Service, because it seems to me that we've had some improvement in visitor centers, some improvement in Internet, but this is the type of thing that we try to figure out to how to extend the value of the human interpretation into new methods, is going to be one of the big decisions that affect the personnel decision in the Park Service.

Mr. FROST. One of the things that the core operations process is doing, is it looks at each division inside the park and determines

if that division is able to carry out its mission, and interpretation is one of those divisions at every park, and in the core operations analyses that I have facilitated, interpretation really has worked hard to try to determine if it can do the job of educating visitors in a variety of new ways using new technology, while at the same time continuing to provide the fireside talks and the general interpretation that the public has come to love and respect in the parks.

Mr. SOUDER. At Grand Canyon, have you seen more insignificant reduction in the numbers of people in interpretation in the talks? What kinds of pressures do you have?

Mr. ALSTON. Well, as you said, the public truly loves that personal contact with our interpreters, and going back a little bit to your subject on contracting out, our employees—one of the things that we look at whether we can actually contract services in which you write into a contract, as you mentioned, when a visitor comes up and talks to somebody, they ask all of these questions, and whether that's a trash collector or whether that's one of our interpretive rangers, or myself, for that matter, that's part of the job we do, and that's an awfully hard thing to write into a contract.

But I would say that we've done a pretty darn good job. We'd always love to have more folks out there talking to visitors. We'd love to give more programs, but we've tried to keep that division as whole as we possibly can, and, in fact, over the last 5 years we've moved a disproportionate number into that division. Of course, those folks, they all do good work and they would like to see more dollars there.

Mr. SOUDER. Thank you. Mr. Turner.

Mr. TURNER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I want to state again how impressed I am with the culture of our National Park Service. When someone comes to our natural parks and they do meet a ranger or someone who is in the National Park Service or working for them, you have been able to maintain an incredible sense of hosting the individual, welcoming the individual, and an incredible sense of maintaining the wonderment that each new person that comes in and sees these things for the first time is expressing, and your echoing of that is something that I think really does enhance the experience and is the type of culture that you really see throughout your organization, and I think any Fortune 500 company would be jealous. So certainly, my congratulations to the leadership that you're able to continue that and perpetuate it.

Mr. Frost, my question is going to be for the entire panel, but it's going to focus a little bit on your portion of your title that includes external relations. The one thing that strikes me when you're in the natural park, is looking at the functions that the superintendents are responsible for or that everybody there is responsible for. They're mayors, they're managers, they're financial directors. They have all of these responsibilities in executing what is preservation of the assets that are there and making it welcoming for the people who come.

In the welcoming address that we had here this morning, one of the first topics that was raised was the issue of economic development, and certainly our National Park System works closely with the communities that host them to enhance the economic develop-

ment potential of the regions. You are in part an economic development driver, but it requires coordination and external relations.

Many of the issues that I heard about during our tour, related also to issues of your host communities, some issues of Indian affairs, some issues of how small businesses might be able to impact and nurture, issues of housing, transportation access.

A lot of these issues are addressed by other Federal agencies. So you have, one, the interaction between the National Park Service and the other Federal agencies that impact your operations, and, two, the communities that host you, and the hope that both you would have a better product and we would have greater economic development.

So I ask that each of you would speak for a moment on your efforts and successes and things that you think we could do better in supporting your efforts on both inter-governmental relations on the local level and the Federal level. I look forward to your response, Mr. Frost.

Mr. FROST. Well, I think the Park Service culture has undergone a bit of a shift in the last 10 years, and much of this is driven by the fact that in the eight States of the intermountain west and southwest, populations have exploded. So while park units were once sort of isolated islands far removed from people and the people came to them in the summertime to visit and went away, now they frequently find themselves surrounded by permanent communities, communities that have moved to that area largely because of the beautiful landscapes, the scenery, and the attractions, and the culture of those park units.

As a result of that, we have worked very hard to welcome people and bring them into our decisionmaking process and make them a part of what we've done, and that is, you know, taking some time, and there have been some bumps along the way.

One of the issues that I was first confronted with when I came to the Park Service is we had a superintendent that denied a special use permit for a run in his park, and the park was nearby the communities of Grand Junction. Well, the people of Grand Junction are politically very sophisticated. They went straight to their congressional delegation and they said, "Look at this guy, he's not letting us do an event that we've done in this park for years," and the superintendent had significant concerns. He had safety concerns with people because there were both cars and people on the road at the same time.

What he hadn't done is gone to the community and explained, "Look, I'm really worried about your safety. Is there a way we could do this and be protected." He just did not sign the special use permit, told the people they weren't going to get it, and that was it.

Well, they put a hold on the confirmation of the Director of the Park Service, the Senators did, until we figured out a way to make this work, and low and behold, we did figure out a way to make it work.

But that I think kind of is more and more anomalous. We are more tuned into the people around us, how to talk with them in a way that is not bureaucratic, it's straightforward in taking their

concerns into account, and still do the fundamental job we have to do with resource protection and visitor enjoyment.

Ms. WILSON. One of the things I've seen over the years, I've been a superintendent for almost 12 years now in a variety of parks, and I think one the things we've seen over the years is where superintendents are no longer living in the parks. We are actually living in the communities where we are neighbors to the folks who are neighbors with the park.

I think we've also seen a great deal of work here in Flagstaff. One of my members generally attends or regularly attends the tourism commission meetings, working very closely with the visitor and convention bureau so that we're looking at spreading out and lengthening the stay here for folks who are coming to Flagstaff. Besides going to Grand Canyon, we also have three other parks that are within a 30-mile radius of Flagstaff, and we want to work very closely with the city and the county and our other neighbors as we go through this.

We're active participants in fire planning in the community. We were active participants a few years back with some land-use planning within the area. We're currently working very closely with the Forest Service because our land is adjacent to them, both in fire and interpretive partnerships and other types of things, knowing that we need to get together to get the job done, because all of us have constraints within our budget, and if we put ourselves—kind of get ourselves working together, we hopefully can get the job done a little bit better.

Mr. ALSTON. Well, I would say that at Grand Canyon, we have a pretty remarkable relationship with our business community. Not only do we have a primary concessionaire that grosses literally tens and tens of millions of dollars, but—I would have to get the exact number, but probably a couple hundred other small businesses all the way from backpackers, to river runners, to tour guide companies, and trying to coordinate all of that, of course, is a lot of work, and all of those folks have their own special interests and want their access to be just right, and we try to work with them as best we can, but it's obviously a fairly daunting challenge.

We are surrounding communities—my personal history with this has been one of a pretty simple axiom. If the community is doing well economically, then they're pretty darn supportive of what you are about, and if you're working with them and at least being attentive to their economic interest—you can't always accommodate every proposal that comes in the door, obviously.

A lot of times, just by being receptive to new ideas, you can actually cause people to do a little better than they might otherwise, and that's been my experience, is that it's in our personal interest to have the people that are serving our visitors doing well, so that they can continue to provide good services, and I think that's—we see that throughout the National Park System, and I think you go into your meetings with the business community with sort of that attitude, it resolves a lot of your issues and you find out that you've got a lot of folks out there that have—they're here for the same reasons we are. They don't want to see the resources spoiled. They live in this part of the world because they truly value the quality of life that is here, and that's our common bound.

Mr. TURNER. In talking to superintendents or others about the National Park Service, one of the things we talk about in looking at funding and in needs, is the attendance of the parks, and when you talk to the various parks as to its attendance increasing, is it decreasing, what are you experiencing, one of the questions that arises inevitably is the methodology for determining attendance, and specifically it's even compounded in parks like Canyon de Chelly, at least that one would have, and even some data in which to turn in justifying their numbers.

If I could get each of your thoughts on if you have a concern with the methodologies that are being applied and whether or not we're being successful in capturing the true attendance of our parks.

Mr. FROST. Joe, why don't you start with that.

Mr. ALSTON. If I could, I would like to refer to Leah back here who is our fee collection coordinator for the park for a number of years, and she has more than experience in counting numbers than anybody else that I'm aware of.

Mr. SOUDER. Can you stand up. I'll give you the oath, and spell your name.

Mr. ALSTON. Sorry to put you on the spot, Leah.

Mr. SOUDER. Spell your name.

Ms. MCGINNIS. Leah, L-e-a-h, McGinnis, M-c-G-i-n-n-i-s.

[Witness sworn.]

Ms. MCGINNIS. I would have to say that I think that we do a very good job of tracking our numbers right now. This last year, or actually over the last 2 years at Grand Canyon, we have integrated into our cash register system different ways of counting the cars that come in and the number of people that are in those cars, and we use those numbers and work with our regional office on statistics to make sure that the formulas that we have in our numbers match what is coming through the booth, and we made some adjustments to those numbers over this last year, and we feel that now we're doing a very good job of capturing the number of visitors and the types of visitors as far as recreational or non-recreational visitors to the park.

Mr. FROST. We would be happy to provide you, too, with an explanation of the methodologies used in the Intermountain Region and nation-wide so you have that.

Ms. WILSON. In the Flagstaff areas, we're obviously much smaller than the Grand Canyon. We probably get in a year what you get in a month, but we use basic methods, and that's literally hand counters, because in a lot of cases to access the most popular trail at Walnut Canyon, you go to the visitors center, and to be able to come in, we have hand counters, and things like that.

We're starting in some cases, while redoing roads and things like that, to put traffic counters in to get a more accurate count, but I think we're fairly accurate in where we are right now.

Mr. SOUDER. Mr. Renzi.

Mr. RENZI. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Frost, thank you for your testimony and your willingness to come out today. Let me cut to the chase here. With the increase in fees being proposed at the Grand Canyon from $20 to $25, we're looking at 80 percent to be retained locally. Is that correct?

Mr. FROST. Yes.

Mr. RENZI. From a timing standpoint, from a needs analysis, what is driving the increase right now.

Mr. FROST. Well, I'll let Joe answer this in greater detail, but partly it's to solve some of the transportation safety issues at the park.

Mr. ALSTON. That is precisely right.

Mr. RENZI. Is it current transportation, or is it the transportation plan that you and I have been working on?

Mr. ALSTON. The one you and I have been working on.

Mr. RENZI. So we're getting ready now for the rate increase now, and I guess you can anticipate new buses, the new construction of——

Mr. ALSTON. Right, as well as the bypass road so we can help reduce the lines in the park.

Mr. RENZI. Joe, when you and I were in Washington talking about the transportation plan, I was under the impression, and it's my own assumption probably, and you know I have great respect for you, that if an American patriot drives all away across country with his 12 kids, and they become a patriot because that drive with 12 kids is hard, and they get to the park, and the average American has an alternative to get on the bus which costs them a lot less compared to the fee now of possibly $25, then he's got an option at that point. But right now, how long will it be before there is an option to have, or is there an option right now, to have a lesser entrance fee for that family that has come all the way and made the trek like Mike made?

Mr. ALSTON. I'm not sure what your question is.

Mr. RENZI. Right now, you can either drive in with your car and pay the $25, or you could park outside.

Mr. ALSTON. Right now there is no real alternative to get in the park.

Mr. RENZI. My point is, shouldn't we wait to increase the fee until we have that alternative so that regular Americans have the option, they have something cheaper? I'm talking about timing issues.

Mr. ALSTON. Yeah, well, part of that is that we need to get on with the business of trying to get that transportation system put in place.

Mr. RENZI. That's right, so what you do is that really you don't have the money. When we talk about capital improvements, Congress is not stepping up from an appropriation standpoint to fund the transportation plan that we authorized.

Mr. ALSTON. Well, I suppose that is one way of looking at it. We look at it a little different in that we have to put together a proposal to Congress for your consideration that lays out using those fee demonstration dollars to fund this in the absence of a line item appropriation.

Mr. RENZI. In the absence of.

Mr. ALSTON. Yes.

Mr. RENZI. Why would we go with the line item? Why wouldn't we go with—maybe you don't want to go there.

Mr. ALSTON. Yeah. No.

Mr. RENZI. Mr. Frost, could you help me? Why wouldn't we go—you know I earmark. I have no problem earmarking for the park,

but there's a lot of people that don't want to. Why would we go down there—if we are going to be holier than thou, why would we go with a line authorization and then transfer that over to an approps? Why do we go through the 3-year process.

Mr. FROST. Well, you know, I think this is getting into a philosophical discussion, but I think part of it is when you come to a park like Grand Canyon and you pay the fee for that park, you're getting services at that park.

Mr. RENZI. You're paying for infrastructure, but at $25, at what point does it become too much?

Mr. FROST. Right, but, sir, you asked earlier, the family driving across the country, what can they expect? Well, if you buy a $50 park pass, you can stop at all the parks that Congressman Turner mentioned. You get a great deal. That sort of amortizes your costs to maybe $5 to $10 a park, depending on how ambitious you are. With Congressman Turner, is was probably about 50 cents, but you do get the great value, and it's about half of what it costs to fill up your mini-van.

Mr. RENZI. If we're looking at raising fees, particularly tied to transportation plans as you want to do here, and we're looking at what I think is a limited amount of funding to the park to take care of operating costs, how do we then find the capital improvements that we need, for instance for the water infrastructure which is aged at the Grand Canyon? In the 2½ years that I've been here, I've been there nine times. I can't get away from this. It's beautiful. But I know what the Grand Canyon needs. I know the hardships there, and I know—I see the infrastructure degrading as it is right now.

So my point is if we don't get out of the cycle of funding and finding new moneys through fees that are attached to capital improvements, and we don't go with authorization of line item appropriations, then we really are totally burdening the public, and we're burdening the public of those who are the most avid outdoorsmen, our healthiest public, our recreationalists.

Mr. FROST. Well, I mean, there is, of course, a whole variety of pots of money that we draw from to do these things. We have fee demonstration dollars. We have site maintenance money. So——

Mr. RENZI. I'm with you, but it's not enough.

Mr. FROST. Well, that's exactly why we're doing this core operations analysis, because park to park, we want to be able to come to Congress with a straight face and say in this park at this time, these are our needs based on what Congress asked us to do with this public trust.

Mr. RENZI. You bet they will come to us and say, "We can't do the transportation funding unless you give us the money, otherwise don't ask us to spend the money studying it, don't ask us to take all the people off their regular jobs and go do it, and then not give us the money to do it on an authorization appropriations line, rather than constantly looking at fees. I think at $25, we're looking at a break point with the American people, in my opinion.

What do you think about the program? I don't know if you want to comment on this. This would be like American to American maybe, possibly. American to American—sworn-in American to American. The Centennial Program, what would you think about

new money, where would you go if you were in our shoes for new money, whether it's the Centennial Programs, the idea that Americans can send money from their tax—from their rebates from their taxes to the parks. Where else creatively would you all go for new money?

Mr. FROST. I have to tell you that what I see as our obligation as a Federal agency, is to be able to look at the trust that we've been given, and to assess what our needs are, to be stewards of that trust, what resources we need to do that effectively, and then come to Congress and say straightforwardly this is what we need, and then it's up to Congress to tell us, well, we're going to give you this money in this way. You can raise your fees, we can give you an increased appropriation. You need to work with your partners. You need private sector money, but that's——

Mr. RENZI. You look at the private sector and the non-profits. In my opinion, our pockets now—without the non-profits, we really are dead in the water. We really do have such a unique public private partnership right now, that the park themselves, I don't think would sustain themselves without it.

Mr. FROST. I think we are increasing reliance tremendously on partners, but we ought to. We're all working together in this enterprise. We're not lone wolves by ourselves doing this job. We have to work with a number of people.

Mr. RENZI. Thank you for your honesty.

Mr. Chairman, thank you very much.

Mr. SOUDER. Mr. Frost, I have a couple—we'll give this to you as a written question, but we're going to make a request for the—at least for the Arizona parks, what the staffing levels were in a couple of chosen years and what they are now so we can have a comparison of what's happening inside the parks.

Do you have in the—I know in the bigger, more wilderness area park, but let's say here more predominantly in Arizona, do you have many in-holdings in the park?

Mr. FROST. We have some in-holdings in the parks.

Mr. SOUDER. In the other parks in the Intermountain Region where you have more in-holdings, do you keep by the Park Service—do you keep data on the amount of acreage in the in-holdings by park?

Mr. FROST. I think most parks know that individually. Don't they, Joe?

Mr. ALSTON. Sure.

Mr. SOUDER. Do you have that at a regional level?

Mr. FROST. We can provide it. I don't have it off the top of my head.

Mr. SOUDER. It's something that you keep as a data base.

Mr. FROST. Absolutely.

Mr. SOUDER. Do you have that also by dollar value estimate of what——

Mr. FROST. Probably not, because we wouldn't get dollar value until somebody—one of the light in-holders said to us they were interested in either selling that park or selling that land and donating it, then we would have it assessed.

Mr. SOUDER. The acreage and estimated dollar of people who desire to sell.

Mr. FROST. We would probably have that, yes.

Mr. SOUDER. Can we have that for the Intermountain? One of the things we're trying to figure out—one of the anchoring things around the Centennial Act and other things we're looking at, is the 100th birthday of the park is coming up, and we should plan ahead. Last time we really had a vision for the kind of Park Service in Lowell's vision in 1966, and the question is what can we do to prompt that type of vision. Should it be for employees and maintenance? Should it be let's close in-holdings? Are there gaps in the Park Service in that there should be some kind of accommodation thereof? And one thing that is absolutely clear is we have major in-holdings questions in the United States. If you could see what you have structured without having to do a bunch of research inside the Intermountain Division, which has many of our wilderness parks, as well as many of our smaller parks, and of those in-holdings, how many of those in-holdings are trying to sell now that we don't have the money to buy, versus those who conceivably could come on, and those who are grandfathered in who are never going to sell, and then as the pending resolution of the Colorado case—if was a person that their land was—that they had a time limit on it, and now they don't want to leave.

Mr. FROST. That's I think very close to resolution.

Mr. SOUDER. That is a terrible process on the in-holdings question, going into an agreement. I know one of our colleagues disagrees with that, and I'm shocked that he would be the person to disagree with that, but the whole question on the in-holdings and trying to fill out the parks, has been huge, and the Indiana Dunes and the Sleeping Bear, National Lakeshore, clearly has erupted in Alaska in a big way with the family out by McCarthy, the pilgrims who are now gone, but it's a huge question, because in some parks, you have the parks destroyed if you don't resolve this in-holdings question, and I was just up to Acadia and they have a huge question at Acadia with questions on in-holdings, and that maybe to somebody that ought to be a priority.

When you look at core ops, do you—in trying to analyze the vision of the park—this is an interesting process. Here you have in-holdings in the park where you have a willing seller. You have traffic problems which are in every park. We were just hearing about Grand Canyon. You have questions about the number of employees and whether—almost all of our parks have pressure on the number of employees they have right now, combined with wilderness responsibilities, fish and wildlife responsibilities, archeological responsibilities, how exactly do you bring these together to prioritize? Because there are different types of goals that may or may not be related. They are all related kind of to a mission.

Mr. FROST. That's correct. What we do is we look at the enabling legislation of the park first, and in some parks it's very specific, and in some parks it's much more general, but that's a good start because that's the direction that Congress has given us with about what we should do with that particular park to park need.

Mr. SOUDER. The Grand Canyon has been through this process.

Mr. FROST. It's going through this process right now.

Mr. SOUDER. So, for example, in Grand Canyon, in-holdings questions.

Mr. ALSTON. As far as I know, we have only one small in-holding on the north side of that park of about 160 acres, and there's no adverse use out there, so it's not an issue for us.

Mr. SOUDER. So clearly transportation, local traffic using road that goes through, how many people can be on the rim in July and August and not be on top of each other, and observation by folks going up three decks. How do you balance the transportation system versus the priority for interpretation, versus the priority for preservation, versus the getting off on things which probably were there buried in the original enabling legislation, but may not have been a major focus because the major focus was preserving the canyon, not saving mining sites, Native American sites, archeological questions, probably one of the most driving questions in the enabling legislation. People were looking at preserving the Canyon, and yet now other things may have come up. How did you resolve this?

Mr. FROST. I think what you do is you look at things that the Department has been asked to do through enabling legislation and other documents, and then the park sets its priorities based on what it feels it has to do to meet its basic resource protection, visitor enjoyment, and safety goals. The park sets those priorities and then looks at it. The whole impact activity such as cleaning the bathrooms, the road maintenance, the snow removal, to scientific examination, to resource protection, to law enforcement, and see if those—match those activities against the priorities, and see if those activities are really clearly directed at those priorities, and if they're not, to adjust them so they're really getting the people in the park doing the job that the park basically needs to do, and in that process it falls out whether you need to, for example, maintain back country roads that you have had maintained before, is that something that you need to do, or are you providing education programs in the schools nearby. Is that something that somebody else can take up that you really ought to be doing as part of your park resources and protection directive. It is the whole variety of activities that the parks are engaged in to try and make sure that those activities match with the parks needs and priorities.

Mr. SOUDER. Are you setting grids up with points and then waiting with the different variables; is that how you——

Mr. FROST. Well, you look at all of the activities division by division, and the park goes through this in the initial exercise, and then in subsequent months and it tries to make sure that what it's people are on the ground doing, matches up with the priorities it sets for itself, based on the directives it's been given by Congress and through other supporting documents, and frequently there's a little bit of a disconnect because often parks grow in sort of an ad hoc basis.

There's project money to do this, or there is a very strong chief of interpretation or chief of maintenance that gets money to do other things, and it doesn't have the sort of a strategic plan, so we want to be able to come to Congress and say these are the things that the park is doing, this is what its needs are, and here is exactly what they are and why we said that.

Mr. SOUDER. On the demonstration fee, if I could just pull—because this is a very unusual opportunity here at this hearing, and

I know I'm going over with my followup questions. First off, one big thing we hear in backlog dollars—excuse me—in demonstration fee dollars, is that many parks would like to use that for operations, or at least part of that. Is there any park that has a demonstration fee that has eliminated the backlog?

Mr. FROST. I think that sort of an eliminating the backlog is a loose—I mean, I have a house that was built in 1917. I don't think I'll ever eliminate that backlog as long as I live. I'll always be replacing sewer pipes or shingles or carpets, and while that is not a precise analogy, I think it is on point.

Mr. SOUDER. Congress intended the demonstration fee to be mostly used for backlog or new projects. If we were to relax that, saying we're running short, how would you set a figure that if you've achieved 50 percent of your backlog, you could use 25 percent on operations? How would you—given the backlog is such an illusory figure, would we—because the goal here was not to use this fee for an annual raise.

At the same time, sometimes the backlog may not be as urgent as in other places as the operations budget.

Mr. FROST. Our condition assessment system and the FMFS data base we're putting together allows the park to look at its facilities and say these are facilities that are in poor condition, these are the facilities that are in good condition, this is the kind of work that needs to be done, and that does two things. One, it allows the Department to set its priorities, where it wants to put its resources and what we need most to protect, and, two, it will help us get a better handle on the illusive backlog figure.

We are getting better every year at honing in on exactly what needs to be done inside the parks, and really that has been a process that we are undergoing that is going to help us be much more effective in targeting the resources.

Mr. SOUDER. One of the major pressures in every park right now in questions is can transportation systems be cut back during peak seasons as opposed to the hema period. In Grand Canyon, if you used the demonstration fee, are you looking to use that fee as the primary source of funding, the sole source of funding for the new transportation system.

Mr. ALSTON. Right now, we're looking at least the vast majority of that system being funded through fee demonstration.

Mr. SOUDER. So how long would it take to build the transportation system to accumulate—would you borrow against it? How would you——

Mr. ALSTON. Well, if we implement the $25 fee next year, that will help a great deal, but there is—we think we can get this done in 4 or 5 years. We presented to Congress a schedule that we think is realistic for paying for this primarily out of fee demonstration dollars.

Mr. SOUDER. Could you submit a copy of that to this committee?

Mr. ALSTON. Yes.

Mr. SOUDER. And you think that—would that use from that period of time all the $25?

Mr. ALSTON. I'm sorry?

Mr. SOUDER. Would the entire demonstration fee be used?

Mr. ALSTON. No. It would not have to be used. It would still leave us with $6 or $7 million a year to work on the backlog and other projects we have.

Mr. SOUDER. Would it be sufficient then to maintain the system under that?

Mr. ALSTON. That's our hope, yes.

Mr. SOUDER. But it couldn't—I'm sorry. I forgot. Superintendent Rice is your Deputy.

Mr. ALSTON. Yes. That is correct. Craig.

Mr. SOUDER. Craig, could I swear you in.

Mr. AXTELL. Absolutely.

Mr. SOUDER. Could you state your name and spell it for the record.

Mr. AXTELL. My name is Craig Axtell, C-r-a-i-g A-x-t-e-l-l.

[Witness sworn.]

Mr. SOUDER. Bryce has had a difficult challenge with your transportation systems. Could you explain a little bit what's happened and what the status of that is?

Mr. AXTELL. I can. We initially had a 5-year contract for both the staging area outside the park and the actual operation service contract for the shuttle, and perhaps what was done for that contract was not sufficient planning to coordinate our anticipated revenues with the cost of the contract.

So unfortunately we had to use in that early period a substantial amount of our fee demonstration program moneys. That 5-year contract expired last year, so this past summer was the first year under a new contract. Again, a service contract, and, now for this year, our transportation revenues that we collect of roughly about $530,000 is about equal to our contract—our service contract. So we're really adjusting the number of hours we operate the shuttle, really closely with the amount of revenue we're getting, and fortunately for us, it really works out that is the amount of service hours, which is approximately 5,000 service hours. That takes care of the congestion at the various overlooks.

It is a voluntary shuttle system, but it's very well accepted. A lot of people like it, and the community likes it. The business community likes it, and so right now we believe we're on track financially so that the transportation system is sustainable.

Mr. SOUDER. What's your current fee and price?

Mr. AXTELL. It's $20, and half of that is the transportation fee; $10 is the actual entrance fee itself. The fee demonstration, and then $10 for the transportation fee.

Mr. SOUDER. Thank you. We'll probably have some additional written questions, and you could provide for this hearing record anything you have in your transportation plan, some of that data, so we can kind of maybe group a couple of transportation things together at one hearing site, because this region has done more, and Grand Canyon has had this debate for a long time, and we kind of analyze as we go.

If I could ask Mr. Frost, is Zion operated under a similar—they have had a transportation plan for a while?

Mr. FROST. They do. They have had a transportation plan a while.

Mr. SOUDER. And is it similarly operated through a demonstration fee.

Mr. FROST. Yes. Is it voluntary, too, Craig?

Mr. AXTELL. Zion is a little different. There is a mandatory shuttle system for part of the year up the main part of the canyon, but there's other portions of Zion park that are open where you can drive in with your automobile. Their entrance fee is the same as Bryce; $20.

Mr. SOUDER. What about Rocky Mountain? That is a small——

Mr. FROST. It's a small bus system that is voluntary, that takes you to a specific part of the park.

Mr. SOUDER. Is there a BMF?

Mr. FROST. No.

Mr. SOUDER. Is it partly funded through the demonstration fee?

Mr. FROST. I think it is.

Mr. SOUDER. If you can provide something on that, and also any other—because Bryce and Zion probably are two of the biggest right now that have the shuttle system. I'm trying to think if they had one—I saw one in Acadia. There are others that have variations, and interestingly, in Acadia, the Island Explorer is heavily funded by L.L. Bean through private sector donations and other ways that have integrated the local community around it, and there are multiple creative ways, as we have the pressures on tax dollars, of how to do this.

And I also want to say for the record that we have another hearing record for the Members here we have been looking at, and I would appreciate any suggestions from any of the witnesses today and anybody else that wants to submit this, how to do this, because basically the Resources and the Appropriations Committee have more or less agreed with this question, and that is one of the problems with rising demonstration fees. I believe there are two problems. One is the parks pass is too cheap relative to the individual park, and I know that Bryce and Zion always argue who is going to get the payload on the park pass, but the more critical thing here is that the concern is low income people aren't going to be able to get into the parks, and there's general consensus in the Appropriations Committee, and I've talked to the Honorable chairman in the Resource Committee, we need a way and everyone agrees we need a way, to basically give a refundable credit to low income people.

The question is how do we establish and get them a parks pass. One way is directly through their tax return. There are some objections to turning a tax return into that type of thing, but if you are under a certain level, you can request from NPS a parks pass. Another thing would be to show at the gate—what would you show at the gate? That your kids are eligible for low-income lunch? But how to do it in a non-stigma way at the gate? That's why we're trying to figure out a way to do this, but nobody is trying to put pressure on. But for a middle class family, it's still a very cheap event that, particularly if you get a parks pass, but we don't want to price people we're trying to get into the park system out of the market with entry fees and the cost of the parks pass.

So anybody that has a proposal, we've toyed around with that, but Chairman Regula, Hanson, Young, Pombo, I don't think there's

opposition to this. It's a question I have how to implement that. Any other questions, Mr. Turner, Mr. Renzi?

Mr. RENZI. I have one followup. Mr. Frost, when you look at the Grand Canyon as one of those visited parks in all of America, if not the most visited, and you look at the fact that the funding for the Grand Canyon is not even in the top 10, you look at the fact that it's one the eight wonders of the world. Do you think of—the demonstration fees that you collect in the park, the 20 percent that doesn't stay local, it goes back where?

Mr. FROST. It goes to other parks that don't collect fees and they can apply for some of that money.

Mr. RENZI. Do you think it would be reasonable for Congress to look at a formula where if there's such a disparity between the number of visitors, the infrastructure needs particularly of the Grand Canyon, the disparity with the fact that it's not in the top 10 in funding, that maybe until we do get caught up, that 20 percent that is leaving, should stay local.

Mr. FROST. I defer to policymakers with greater depth and vision on that.

Mr. RENZI. Unfortunately, my vision is somewhat relying on your vision.

Mr. SOUDER. May I make a brief comment on that. It is really interesting because a number of years ago at Apostle Island, anyone coming in from western Nebraska from one of the—at Scott's Bluff, basically everybody going west stops there, and they have an entrance fee, so they collect this huge amount of entrance fees with hardly any park, and Apostle Islands has all these islands and nobody goes into the visitors center. All these boats come in and they have no way to collect the entrance fee.

So less than 10 percent of the people at Apostle Islands pay an entrance fee, and they have all these projects that need to be taken care of and don't have any entrance dollars. So the proposal was to kind of address these extremes.

But you have an interesting variation, which is if you, in fact, have a backlog, why is it going to spread, and the question is how do we measure that, and one of the things if you could take back, Rick, as a request to Intermountain, is would you have data inside that would enable us to make that kind of a decision? Does the data even exist, because the whole intent of this was to cover a lot of the little parks that don't get the entrance fees or parks that don't have a way to collect, but—and the assumption was that certain parks were accumulating dollars, but what about if we aren't going to do line item questions at Grand Canyon, why should they be deferring money over to the National Park Service and then have us have to do a line item to cover something that they already have the dollars for.

Mr. FROST. I'm thinking this is because Joe is such an incredibly generous guy.

Mr. ALSTON. I worry about that generosity. I would like to answer your question. One initiative that has been out there, and people have played with this for a long time, but it seems to have generated a little enthusiasm here lately, is developing something called the Score Report which takes into consideration all of the complexities of managing, I suppose, any land management agency,

like visitation, size of the area, wilderness components, size of the concession operation, number of miles of roads, number of miles of trails, all of the things that go into—number of different housing units, all of the things that go into putting pressure on the budgets of the parks and trying to get some sort of universal or consistent handle on that whole question, and really I don't know where they are with that right now, but I know it's been back in here in the last several years.

Mr. SOUDER. You said the Score Report?

Ms. WILSON. The Score Card.

Mr. ALSTON. Score Card, actually.

Mr. TURNER. I wanted to give one comment. We have an opportunity to submit questions and then followup. I would like to work with both Joe and Craig to followup with written questions to highlight things I know you are working on, and I will be contacting you to discuss the format of those questions, but they will go along with the issue of Bryce and your transportation system and the need for legislative authority that will help you with your contracting process.

And then with the Grand Canyon, two of the things that struck me in the discussions that I've heard relates to your clean-up issues with respect to the mines and the success that you've been having there, and some of the difficulties, and the second is the important issue of we need a newer air space and how we might be able to assume greater effectiveness.

And I wanted to add one point to the issue of the park pass. Those park passes are worth such gold if you think of the Norman Rockwell moment where my wife and I, upon losing our park pass into a crevasse in our dash. We are in the parking lot outside of the national park where we have our legs stuck out our doors, we have flashlights and all kinds of contraptions, with our kids peering over the back seat hoping we would not have lost the pass, and were successful in digging it out.

So it was worth the effort. The park pass certainly is one of the incredible opportunities that families have when they do plan the great American vacation and go to multiple parks. We certainly, I think the chairman's statements are very important, to look at how does the funding of our national parks get impacted by the manner in which we construct them. So I want to do it right and in a way that enhances your efforts.

Mr. SOUDER. Thank you each for your testimony today. We will followup with some additional questions. The first panel is dismissed.

The second panel could come forward. Our second panel is composed of Deborah Tuck, president of the Grand Canyon National Park Foundation; Bob Keiter, board member in the National Parks Conservation Association [NPCA]; Kimberly Spurr, board member of the Arizona Archaeological Council; and Rick Smith, former associate regional director of the Natural and Cultural Resources, Southwest Regional Office of the National Park Service. As soon as you get settled, I'll have you all stand.

[Witnesses sworn.]

Mr. SOUDER. Let the record show that each of the witnesses responded in the affirmative. We thank you for coming today, look forward to your testimony. We'll start with Ms. Tuck.

Ms. TUCK. We have a question. Mr. Keiter's testimony is about the parks of this Region. My testimony is about one park. Do you want to still start with me?

Mr. SOUDER. Why don't we start with Mr. Keiter. You may proceed to give your testimony.

STATEMENTS OF BOB KEITER, BOARD MEMBER, NATIONAL PARKS CONSERVATION ASSOCIATION, NPCA; DEBORAH TUCK, PRESIDENT, GRAND CANYON NATIONAL PARK FOUNDATION; KIMBERLY SPURR, BOARD MEMBER, ARIZONA ARCHAEOLOGICAL COUNCIL; AND RICK SMITH, FORMER ASSOCIATE REGIONAL DIRECTOR, NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

STATEMENT OF BOB KEITER

Mr. KEITER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and members of this subcommittee. I am pleased to appear before you today to discuss the future of our national parks. Thank you for holding this important hearing to examine the challenges faced by our southwestern parks, and for your commitment to making our National Park System the best that it can be. My name is Bob Keiter. I am the Wallace Stegner professor of law and director of the Wallace Stegner Center for Land, Resources, and the Environment at the University of Utah, where I teach and write in the areas of natural resources, public lands, and constitutional law. I am here today in my capacity as a 7-year member of the National Parks Conservation Association Board of Trustees, and on behalf of NPCA's 300,000 members nationwide.

On a personal note, I've had a life-long love affair with the parks ever since during the 1950's I grew up next to the C&O National—the C&O Canal, National Historic Park, which as you know is located just a few miles from the Capitol. I still treasure the countless hours that I spent exploring that wonderful place as a child.

I would like to address three matters today that I know are of concern to this committee. First, the budgetary and funding challenges facing the southwestern parks; second, the recent ill-advised budget reconciliation proposal; and, third, equally ill-advised management policies rewrite proposal.

As to funding, one of the pervasive challenges facing America's national parks, is chronic under-funding, a problem that did not occur overnight and that has grown under administrations and Congresses of both parties. Business plans developed in more than 70 national parks across the Nation, show that on average, parks operate with only two-thirds of the needed funding, a system-wide deficit in excess of $600 million annually.

Compounding this problem are increased security demands placed on the parks since September 11, 2001. In addition, individual park sites have been forced to absorb a number of un-budgeted costs including costs of living adjustments, storm damage from Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, and other fixed costs.

Here in Arizona, the effects of increased homeland security demands are evident at Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument which is located along the international border. The park has expended nearly $18 million between fiscal years 2003 and 2005, to build a vehicle barrier, to increase border security, and to protect the park resources. The park's resources staff now spends virtually all of their time monitoring law enforcement impacts on the park itself.

Across the southwest, the national parks are facing an array of budgetary and funding challenges. Insufficient operations and maintenance funding is plaguing the Grand Canyon—I think we will hear much more about that later—putting the park's fragile resources at risk.

As simply one example, the park has recorded more than 3,940 archeological sites and artifacts that tell the area's historic and its 10,000-year-old human history, but only 3 percent of the park has been adequately surveyed, compromising the protection of archeological sites yet to be discovered.

Looking at three national parks in my home State of Utah, Bryce, Canyonlands, and Zion, we find many of the same challenges. NPCA has produced State of the Park reports for all three parks within the past year, with the Zion report completed most recently in July of this year.

The September 2004 State of the Parks report found that Canyonlands's overall stewardship capacity, that is the Park Service's ability to protect resources at the park, rated a score of poor, concluding that inadequate staffing and an annual funding shortfall of $2 million is limiting the Park Service's ability to address these resource threats and to meet the needs of nearly 400,000 visitors annually.

NPCA's June 2005 State of the Park report found that Bryce Canyon's annual budget of $2.7 million falls $1.8 million short of what is needed annually to adequately maintain popular trails, educate visitors, and protect the nearly 40,000 museum artifacts.

Our July 2005 State of the Parks report found that Zion National Park stewardship capacity rated a poor. The park's operational budget is $3.5 million short of what is needed to adequately care for resources and provide visitor services. This means Zion lacks the funding to hire more staff. The daily—the number of daily guided trail walks and ranger talks have been cut in half. No interpretive rangers are present at trail heads or Zion Lodge, and the park had been forced to deny ranger programs to school groups.

These chronic shortfalls are particularly troubling because of the economic impacts that the parks generate in this area. Nationally, approximately $11 billion in economic impacts each year in tourism revenue alone, as well as 226,000 tourism related jobs in local economies.

In the southwest, we see these impacts amount to more than—in the southwest where more than 36 million tourists visited the parks in Arizona, New Mexico, Utah and Nevada, we see similar economic impacts. These visitors spent over $1.6 billion in the parks and gateway communities and supported over 39,000 jobs and generated over $653 million in personal income for our communities, $377 million in Arizona alone.

Very briefly, turning to the budget reconciliation matter, current Federal budgetary pressures have the potential to further jeopardize the parks. The recent House Resources Committee drafted legislation, could require the sale and development of 15 national parks and turn the remaining parks into commercial billboards.

You should know that an NPCA Commission poll found that well over 75 percent of the respondents strongly opposed the sale or commercialization of our national parks. I should add that even during the height of World War II, when the Nation's very survival was an issue, Congress refused to open Olympic National Park to timber harvesting for constructing military airplanes. Surely, we can resist the same or even lesser budgetary pressures today.

Regarding management policies, the Department of the Interior is considering revising the parks' management policies. The contemplated changes would radically alter the Park's Services interpretation of its mission and the fundamental purpose of the system which for almost 90 years has focused on preservation.

When Congress established the National Parks System in 1916, it expressly stated that the fundamental purpose of the system is to conserve the scenery and the natural and historic objects and the wildlife therein, and to provide for the enjoyment of the same unimpaired for the enjoyment of future generations.

Since then, Congress has consistently reaffirmed that the Park Service is responsible for administering the system in conformity with this fundamental purpose, most recently in the 1978 Redwood amendments to the Organic Act.

The courts have regularly endorsed the same interpretation of the agency's mission, as has every scholar with whom I'm familiar who has examined the Organic Act and its history. The Department's efforts to rewrite the park management policies would undermine the very essence of the Organic Act's non-impairment standard.

As Pulitzer Prize Winning Author Wallace Stegner observed, the national parks are the best idea America ever had. Our national parks truly represent and speak to the essence of what it means to be an American and to share in the American experience. It is incumbent upon us, the generation now charged with caring for our Nation's heritage, to ensure that we leave these priceless places intact and un-impaired for our children, and indeed for generations yet unborn.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman for holding this hearing, and I'm happy to answer any questions that the committee may have.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Keiter follows:]

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Testimony of Robert B. Keiter, Professor of Law and Director of the Wallace Stegner Center for Land, Resources and the Environment, University of Utah

Board of Trustees, National Parks Conservation Association

Re: "Management of the National Parks and Parks of the Southwest"
before the
Subcommittee on Criminal Justice, Drug Policy and Human Resources
of the House Government Reform Committee
U.S. House of Representatives

Flagstaff, Arizona
October 13, 2005

Mr. Chairman and members of the subcommittee, it is with great honor and pleasure that I appear before you today to discuss the future of our national parks. I want to thank you for holding this important hearing to examine the challenges faced by national parks in the Southwest and for your interest and support of our nation's crown jewels -- our national parks.

My name is Robert Keiter. I am the Wallace Stegner Professor of Law and Director of the Wallace Stegner Center for Land, Resources, and the Environment at the University of Utah, where I teach in the areas of natural resources, public lands, constitutional law, and federal courts. I have written extensively on public land and natural resource law, including the publication of numerous books and articles, most recently "Keeping Faith with Nature: Ecosystems, Democracy, and America's Public Lands," a book that examines the evolution of public land policy during the past three decades, focusing on the emerging role of ecology in setting resource management priorities and standards.

I am here today in my capacity as a member of the National Parks Conservation Association Board of Trustees, on which I have served for the last seven years. Since 1919, the nonpartisan National Parks Conservation Association (NPCA) has been the leading voice of the American people in protecting and enhancing our National Park System. NPCA, our 300,000 members, and our many partners work together to protect the park system and preserve our nation's natural, historical, and cultural heritage for generations to come.

National parks in the Southwest exemplify the natural wonders and cultural treasures that we value as a nation. From the cliff dwellings of Mesa Verde to the rapids of the Grand Canyon, Southwestern national parks protect some of the nation's most valued assets. At the same time, these parks share the same funding challenges facing our national parks across the country.

Funding Challenges

One of the most pervasive challenges facing America's national parks is chronic under-funding. This problem did not occur overnight. Rather, it has grown over decades of inadequate funding under administrations and congresses of both parties.

Business plans developed in more than 70 national parks across the nation show that on average, parks operate with only two-thirds of the needed funding—a system-wide deficit in excess of $600 million annually. Annual operating budgets of the national parks simply have not kept pace with needs. Compounding this problem are the increased security demands placed on the parks since September 11, 2001.

Individual park sites have also been forced to absorb a number of unbudgeted costs, including cost-of-living adjustments, storm damage, and other fixed costs. With the current surge in oil prices, the utility and vehicle fuel costs associated with managing the 388 national parks covering 83.6 million acres exacerbate the financial crunch placed on our parks. For example, El Malpias and El Moro national monuments in New Mexico have recently learned that their electric costs are about to double; other parks can expect similar challenges.

One only has to look at the recent storm damage caused by hurricanes Katrina and Rita to see another example of financial strain on the Park Service. Not only do natural disasters like these have devastating consequences in terms of recovery and clean-up costs to the to the affected park sites, but they also wreak havoc on park personnel costs. National Park Service employees from across the nation have been temporarily deployed to Louisiana and Mississippi to aid in the recovery efforts at John Lafitte National Historical Park, New Orleans Jazz National Historical Park, and Gulf Islands National Seashore, among other parks. From superintendents - to interpreters - to law enforcement rangers, the relocation of Park Service personnel is further stretching the Park Service's resource protection and visitor service delivery capacity at the home parks of these personnel, as these individuals understandably are temporarily detailed to parklands affected by the hurricanes.

While the Park Service is still facing the budgetary ramifications of storm damage to national park units such as the Blue Ridge Parkway, damaged last year by hurricanes Charley and Frances, the damage to the parks affected by hurricanes Katrina and Rita is likely to far eclipse those costs. As a result, the Park Service is once again forced to allocate its existing operations and maintenance funding to address the unbudgeted costs of storm damage. Congress has passed two emergency supplemental appropriation bills for hurricanes Katrina and Rita, but all monies have been allocated to FEMA and the military to-date. The Park Service is expected to receive monies from a future fiscal year 2006 emergency supplemental appropriations bill for facility infrastructure repair and other costs, but it is unlikely to cover the operating costs of personnel reassigned to help in the disaster recovery efforts, placing further strain on tight park budgets.

Homeland Security Demands

The Park Service's funding challenges are compounded by unfunded demands related to homeland security, which NPCA profiled in its 2005 report, *Faded Glory: Top 10 Reasons to Reinvest in America's National Heritage*. This is particularly prevalent in the national parks of the Southwest. The burden posed by border and homeland security demands on the Park Service is extensive. To the extent this situation does not change, funds for these activities will continue to drain needed resources from vital park management and protection functions and erode the experience that visitors can expect in many of our national parks.

Since September 11, 2001, the National Park Service has been forced to spend a substantial amount for national security in our parklands. Security-related operating costs of the Park Service have reached approximately $40 million in annual recurring costs through fiscal year 2005, primarily in the nation's icon and border parks. Of this amount, $14 million is attributed to the Park Police, which operated at the Statue of Liberty, at the National Mall in Washington, DC, and the Golden Gate National Recreation Area in San Francisco. The Park Service estimates it spends an extra $63,000 every day the nation is at code orange alert. In 2003 alone, the Park Service was forced to use nearly $8 million in fee receipts for increased security demanded by three code orange periods.

Construction costs associated with increased security needs at five locations - Lincoln Memorial, Washington Monument, and Jefferson Memorial in Washington, D.C; Jefferson National Expansion Memorial in St Louis; and Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument here in Arizona have totaled $48 million since September 11, 2001. Unfortunately, the Park Service does not receive any compensation from the Department of Homeland Security for the costs it incurs and is forced to pay the bills by reducing resources devoted to resource protection and visitor services.

And these figures barely scratch the surface when it comes to the true fiscal impacts of unfunded homeland security demands on parks. For example, during heightened security periods Park Service employees are relocated to icon and border parks, both requiring increased travel costs, as well as reduced services in the parks from which the staff was relocated. These increased security demands placed on the Park Service's already strained budgets have resulted in many other needs in the parks going unmet.

Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument – Homeland Security Case Study

Here in Arizona, the effects of increased homeland security demands on the parks are evident when looking at the budget of the Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument, which NPCA included in 2004 on our list of America's 10 Most Endangered National Parks. While border security is not the responsibility of the National Park Service, the Park Service is entrusted to protect park resources from whatever threats arise. Parks along the border, such as Organ Pipe Cactus, have no choice but to engage in park protection activities related to border issues that threaten park resources and damage the experience of visitors. Nearly $18 million in expenditures between fiscal years 2003 and 2005 have been allocated to build a vehicle barrier to increase security and protect the resources in the Organ Pipe, which were being heavily impacted by vehicles coming over the border from Mexico. In addition, the Border Patrol is heavily engaged in interdiction activity within Organ Pipe.

The Border Patrol and the Park Service at Organ Pipe have been making important strides in coordinating their work, given their very different missions and expertise, but the park clearly is under-resourced to handle its significant challenges. For example, rather than engage in the types of resource management projects they handled in the past or interacting with visitors, Organ Pipe's resources staff now spend virtually all their time monitoring law enforcement impacts on the park itself—mapping incursions, evaluating impacts to soils and cacti, researching changes to the area's hydrology, and other associated projects. The park has 3-4 maintenance staff that spend virtually every working hour of every day maintaining certain roads in the park to facilitate movement of the Border Patrol, so those roads do not become impassable due to desert conditions and thereby encourage the creation of new roads in the wilderness. The park is forced to devote its scarce resources to border-related law enforcement activities rather than to serving visitors. The situation at Organ Pipe is so dire that the very existence of the park is being threatened. A review board convened after the tragic killing of park ranger Chris Eggle at Organ Pipe in 2002 concluded that "Illegal smuggling activities . . . are threatening the existence of the park and the fundamental agency mission to protect its employees, visitors and resources."

The budgetary impact of homeland security and border-related expenditures does not simply affect finances, staff, and visitors within border parks themselves, but also means fewer resources available to meet the needs of many other national park units. At Carlsbad Caverns National Park in New Mexico, for example, staffing shortages affect law enforcement and visitor safety services. Carlsbad has 76 full time filled positions—down from a high of 105 FTE several years ago. Carlsbad has 5 park rangers—1 chief ranger and 4 commissioned rangers—to protect and serve visitors throughout the 46,000-acre park. This makes it difficult for the park to engage in even limited backcountry patrols, and can be extremely frustrating for those unfortunate park visitors who experience problems like traffic accidents or theft.

Core Operations

As the Chairman knows, the National Park Service has initiated a new process to identify the "Core Operations" of each national park in an effort to provide parks more flexibility in their current budgets. Our understanding is that this process entails an intense process of inspection and introspection by park managers to determine which park activities and programs support the core mission of each park.

A decade ago, parks commonly allocated about 80 percent of their operating funds to so-called Personal Services, or the fixed salary and expenses attached to permanent staff. Because of the increase in pay grades (GS scale) for many park employees, the rising cost of retirements and other benefits, and the failure of successive Congresses and administrations adequately to budget for and fund these needs, parks know commonly spend nearly 90 percent of their limited budgets on personnel costs. This leaves little room to fund the ongoing expenses of running a park – fuel and repairs of ranger vehicles, seasonal rangers to run interpretive programs, and supplies and materials for resource managers. This is analogous to trying to run a manufacturing company when all of your costs are tied to workers and no funds are left to purchase the materials necessary to make the products.

This clearly is an undesirable position for the Park Service, and it is a significant underlying reason why we have read in press reports this year that parks have been unable to afford a seasonal workforce and other essentials to running parks, especially during peak season. NPCA's longstanding position has been that this predicament demands more support from Congress and the administration – at least $600 million in additional operating funds per year for the Park System. At the same time, we believe it is essential to find sensible management efficiencies wherever possible.

As a general proposition, we are inclined to support any initiative, including Core Operations Analysis, which improves efficiency in the parks, provided that initiative is consistent with the important mission of the National Park Service. As you know, Mr. Chairman, NPCA's Center for Park Management focuses exclusively on assisting park managers in implementing tools to enhance their effectiveness, leverage their resources best, and employ best practices demonstrated elsewhere. For example, the Center has worked with a number of parks improving fleet management and optimizing park fee collection activities.

As we understand the goal of Core Operations Analysis -- to facilitate a hard look by individual parks at how they prioritize their spending and resource allocations -- we believe Core Operations Analysis has the potential to provide a beneficial tool to the parks. However, we would offer several cautions as the Park Service continues to refine and experiment with this potentially significant process.

First, it would be unfortunate and unwise if core operations methodology were used by anyone, either in Congress, the Department of the Interior, or the Office of Management and Budget, to justify further reductions in services or resource protection activities within the parks. A park funded at the bare minimum is far from sufficient. NPCA does not believe such cuts are a goal of the Park Service. However, we would caution the agency to be extremely careful in how it characterizes items that may not be deemed "core," so they do not somehow become "expendable" in the eyes of the uninformed.

Second, important attributes of specific national parks may not be adequately spelled out in the originally authorizing legislation, but nonetheless may be critical elements of these parks' missions and equally important to the visitors who come to enjoy them. Many parks, for instance, were set aside for their outstanding scenery, wildlife, or archeological sites, but the authorizing legislation for many parks may not specifically state that educating the public about these resources is in fact one of the purposes of that park. Numerous polls have shown that interpretation is central to the enjoyment of a majority of park visitors, and its importance should not be diminished. Another example is Petrified Forest National Park. Petrified Forest originally was set aside to preserve its beautiful petrified wood, but we now have come to understand that the park is perhaps the premier place in the world for Triassic-era paleontology. Clearly, the Park Service should not, nor would we expect them to want to, define protection of paleontological resources at Petrified Forest as anything other than core.

As we push ahead to ensure that the parks receive the resources that clearly are needed, we also support challenging park staff to do some hard thinking about how their resources are organized and prioritized, which Core Operations Analysis has the potential to facilitate. The

attempt to use these analyses to identify additional budget room for parks simply to operate is also a worthy goal, but we expect a sound and effective process to also identify many unmet needs at many parks, which will require the additional allocation of resources. The Park Service must be careful that the political process does not somehow subvert the worthwhile intent of Core Operations Analysis. Otherwise this becomes an exercise that places parks on a slow starvation diet that keeps their hearts beating, but fails to cure the disease at is affecting them. The American public expects our national parks to thrive, not merely to survive.

National Parks in the Southwest

The national parks in the Southwest face the same budgetary challenges as parks throughout the nation. As the *Arizona Republic* wrote in April 2004: "You don't have to look far to see how our National Park System is fraying. Check out the water pipeline to the North Rim of the Grand Canyon, built in 1927 and in desperate need of replacement. Walk the eroding trails at Petrified Forest. See how illegal immigration and drug trafficking are tearing up the landscape at Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument. Chronic shortfalls in funding are eating away at our National Park System."

Grand Canyon National Park

The immense and colorful Grand Canyon is one of the world's most powerful and inspiring scenic landscapes. While Grand Canyon National Park is one of the nation's most visited parks, with nearly 4.7 million visitors last year, it faces the same funding challenges afflicting the Park Service as a whole. Insufficient operations and maintenance funding is plaguing Grand Canyon, putting the park's fragile resources at risk.

Grand Canyon Operations

The base operating budget for Grand Canyon National Park over the past five years has failed to come close to meeting inflation, having increased from $18.2 million in fiscal year 2001 to $19.6 million in fiscal year 2006--increasing only a total of seven percent over five years. When factoring in the park's purchasing power, the park is actually losing ground.

A consequence of this shortfall can be seen when looking at the protection of archeological resources at Grand Canyon. The park has recorded more than 3,940 archeological sites and artifacts that tell the story of Grand Canyon's 10,000-year old human history. However, only three percent of the park has been adequately surveyed, compromising the protection of sites yet to be discovered.

Unmet Project Needs at Grand Canyon

According to the Park Service's Project Management Information System (PMIS) list of maintenance projects, the Grand Canyon has a total of $238 million in unfunded projects, ranging from the rehabilitation cultural landscapes at Kolb Studio to the restoration of North Rim trails. A small sample of examples include:

- The Hermit road on the South Rim provides visitors with access to Hermit Rest, a remote cabin that is also the starting point for a popular backcountry trail. The rehabilitation of this road, the surface of which has crumbled so badly in some spots that it resembles a broken potato chip, will cost nearly $9 million dollars. But there is concern that the cuts to the president's requested funding for the Park Roads program in the transportation reauthorization act recently passed by Congress will delay the start and completion of this project, thereby inhibiting visitor service.

- Along the banks of the Colorado River in the park, archeologists have identified 10 prehistoric sites that are being threatened by erosion due to lack of sediment deposits by the water flow. The Park Service needs $1.2 million to excavate and study these sites before they are unearthed and their ancient artifacts are washed away, but the funds are not yet available.

- The park's overflight and soundscape management plan, listed as a $2.4 million unfunded item on the park's PMIS database, needs to be completed if the park ever hopes to meet the mandate of Senator McCain's 1987 national park overflight management act, which required the substantial restoration of natural quiet in the canyon. An alternative dispute resolution process to address this overflight act's as-yet unmet goal of natural quiet restoration is currently underway. It involves the Park Service, the Federal Aviation Administration, air tour operators, conservationists, and tribal representatives. Funding of the plan, however, is still necessary.

The subcommittee may wish to examine a more detailed list of the park's unfunded cultural and natural resource research needs, which is available online at cpcesu.nau.edu/new/pmis/GRCA2pmis.htm.

Given the scope of the unmet needs in Grand Canyon, it is not surprising that Park officials announced last month that entry fees into the park will be increased from $20 to $25 next year.

While private philanthropies, such as the Grand Canyon National Park Foundation, provide important project funding to fill in some of the gaps at the park, this funding must supplement, not replace, the federal responsibility to support our nation's most treasure natural and cultural public lands through the appropriations and budget processes.

State of the Parks Case Studies (Bryce Canyon, Canyonlands, Zion)

In 2000, NPCA initiated the State of the Parks program to assess the condition of natural and cultural resources in the parks, and to determine how well equipped the National Park Service is to protect the parks – its stewardship capacity. The goal is to provide information that will help policymakers, the public, and the National Park Service improve conditions in national parks, celebrate successes as model for other parks, and ensure a lasting legacy for future generations. Working with national parks through NPCA's Center for the State of the Parks over

the past five years, NPCA has produced 25 reports focused on diverse natural and cultural parks across the nation.

Looking at three national parks in my home state of Utah, Bryce Canyon National Park, Canyonlands National Park, and Zion National Park, we find many of the same challenges. State of the Parks reports for all three have been produced within the past year, with the Zion report completed most recently in July of 2005.

Canyonlands National Park

Established in September 1964, Canyonlands National Park protects prehistoric petrogylphs, ruins, and nearly 340,000 breathtaking acres of the Colorado Plateau, where the Green and Colorado rivers meet to form one of North America's most biologically diverse eco-regions. Canyonlands is home to 628 species of plants, 31 fish, ten amphibians, 25 reptiles, 218 birds, and 81 mammals. Rock art, granaries, cowboy camps, and ancient artifacts tell the stories of past human inhabitants in the park. Because the park is located far away from major population centers and development, today's visitors experience many of the same vistas as early explorers, relatively unchanged after thousands of years. Dark night skies and natural soundscapes give visitors a sense of the park's wildness.

The September 2004 State of the Parks report found that Canyonlands' overall stewardship capacity – the Park Service's ability to protect resources at the Canyonlands National Park – rated a "poor" score of 60 out of 100. The report concluded that inadequate staffing and an annual funding shortfall of $2 million is limiting the ability of the Park Service to address the park threats and meet the needs of nearly 400,000 visitors annually. Insufficient funding impairs the park's ability to assess and protect the areas vast archeological heritage, including ancient petroglyphs and nearly 700,000 museum objects that chronicle 11,000 years of human history. The park needs nearly $36 million for deferred maintenance projects and 171 identified unfunded projects. More than $4.2 million are needed for cultural resource projects, including a park-wide cultural resource inventory, ethnographic overview, and condition reviews for high priority structures identified on the List of Classified Structures. With a base operating budget of merely $5.3 million, these unmet needs represent a tremendous challenge to the park to meet its mission.

In addition, the report found Canyonlands to be vulnerable to extensive road claims in its backcountry related to the Revised Statute 2477, which was enacted before Yellowstone was designated as a national park and was repealed roughly 30 years ago. R.S. 2477 would subject sensitive areas of the park to a potential level of vehicular use that the Park Service has determined would be unduly harmful.

Bryce Canyon National Park

First proclaimed a national monument in June 1923, Bryce Canyon National Park includes 35,835 acres of breathtaking spires, hoodoos, and windows carved by wind from color sedimentary rock. Bryce is composed of a series of 14 amphitheaters located along the rim of

the Paunsaugunt Plateau, home to more than 500 plant species and many bird and mammal species, telling the story of humans who have lived in the area of thousands of years.

NPCA's June 2005 State of the Parks Report found that Bryce Canyon's annual budget of $2.7 million falls approximately $1.8 million short of what is needed annually to adequately maintain popular trails, educate visitors, and protect the nearly 40,000 museum artifacts such as American Indian artifacts and historic furnishings. The report rated Bryce Canyon's overall stewardship capacity as "poor," for a score of only 44 out of 100. Funding constraints have resulted in the Park Service's inability to fund several critical staff positions at Bryce Canyon, including cultural resource experts, trail maintenance staff, biological technicians, law enforcement rangers, interpreters, and a geologist. At current funding levels, rangers at Bryce must focus on the immediate needs of visitors, with most of their time spent on search-and-rescue calls, medical calls, traffic patrols, and fires. As a result, they are able only to provide minimal proactive attention to park resources.

Zion National Park

Zion, one of the earliest additions to the National Park System, enjoys millions of visitors annually and manages an exemplary transportation system, which makes it easy for visitors to keep coming back. Zion is probably best known for its geologic features that include deep canyons and rock towers interspersed with high plateaus and mesas. Zion's location at the intersection of three biophysical provinces, as well as its elevation gradient from lowlands at 3,700 feet to maintains that peak at 8,726 feet, combine to create conditions ideal for a multitude of plant and animal species. The park protects 894 species of plants, 78 species of mammals, 290 species of birds, 44 species of reptiles and amphibians, and four native species of fish. Human use of Zion Canyon dates back at least 8,000 years, to people who hunted and gathered and those who later farmed the fertile land along the Virgin River.

Our July 2005 State of the Parks report found that the park's stewardship capacity to rate "poor," a score of 60 out of 100. While overall conditions of Zion's natural resources rated "good" 82 out of 100, the park's cultural resources rated "poor" 54 out of 100. The park's operational budget is $3.5 million short of what is needed to adequately care for the resources and provide visitor services. With an existing base operating budget of only $6.2 million, this funding shortfall is alarming.

As a result of this shortfall, important resource protection projects go unfunded, and the park cannot afford to hire critical staff positions to support basic resource management functions. For example, Zion's interpretive staff is comprised of 8 full time employees, 10 seasonal employees, and one volunteer – a ratio of roughly 1 interpreter for every 105,000 park visitors. The interpretive staff at Zion educates visitors about the park resources, its human history, and helps to instill an appreciation and understanding of the park and its importance to America's heritage. However, because Zion lacks the funding to hire more staff, the number daily guided trail walks and ranger talks have been cut in half, no interpretive rangers are present at trailheads or the Zion lodge, and the park has been forced to deny ranger programs to school groups.

Southwest National Parks' Base Operating Budgets at a Glance

When reviewing the base operating budgets of the national park sites in Arizona, New Mexico, Utah, and Nevada, you find a similar trend to the budgets of parks across the nation– base operating budgets simply are not keeping pace with the need. As you will note in the chart (Appendix 1), only six of the 45 parks in the Southwest are slated for base increases above the rate of inflation in the fiscal year 2006 budget: Grand Canyon National Park in Arizona; Bandelier National Park and Salinas Pueblo Missions National Monument in New Mexico; and Arches National Park, Timpanogos Cave National Monument, and Zion National Park in Utah. And these parks are receiving only very modest increases, slightly above inflation. For example, Grand Canyon National Park is slated to receive a 3.5 percent increase in the 2006 fiscal year, compared to an inflation rate of 3.1 percent. As fortunate as Grand Canyon is to receive this small increase at a time of such fiscal austerity, the park continues to face enormous challenges.

Overall, the Southwestern national parks are slated on average to receive an increase of only 2.5 percent to their base operating budget in the current 2006 fiscal year that began on October 1—more than half a percentage point below inflation. When factoring in a 3.1 percent rate of inflation, and adding to that the increased demands placed on the Park Service from the recent natural disasters in the Gulf region, it is no wonder the Park Service is unable to keep up with the needs of the parks.

While the parks did receive helpful increases to their base operating budgets in the 2005 fiscal year, by the time those appropriations reached the bottom line in most parks, many parks actually lost purchasing power. And unfortunately, despite doing better than much of the public land agencies within the Department of the Interior in the fiscal year 2006 appropriations bill, the Park Service was not able to sustain what little momentum they appeared to gain last year. Truly addressing the parks' annual operating shortfall requires a sustained effort to provide significant increase in the rate of investment in annual operating funding over a period of years, in addition to identifying management efficiencies in the parks. Absent this, our parks at best are merely treading water, and in most cases they are losing ground.

Economic Benefits of National Parks in the Southwest

According to the National Park Service, the national parks generate about $11 billion in economic impacts each year in tourism revenue alone. The parks generate over 226,000 tourism related jobs in local economies, not to mention their additional positive economic impact on communities.

National parks play a critical role both in the identity and the economy of the Southwest. More than 36 million tourists visited the national parks in Arizona, New Mexico, Utah, and Nevada in 2003. These visitors spent over $1.6 billion in the parks and gateway communities, supported over 39,000 jobs, and generated over $653 million in personal income for our communities, $377 million in Arizona alone. I have included a chart (Appendix 2) showing these economic impacts. As you can see, the national parks in Arizona, New Mexico, Utah, and Nevada the Southwest have a tremendous economic impact in the region.

Specifically, Grand Canyon National Park is one of the most visited national parks in the country, and is vitally important to the northern Arizona and the regional economy. According to a recent report by the National Park Service and Michigan State University (MSU), "Economic Impacts of Grand Canyon National Park, Visitor Spending on the Local Economy" released in January 2005, park visitors spent $338 million within the local region in 2003, including $137 million inside the park and $201 million in gateway communities. Using MSU's Money Generation Model, the study found that when secondary effects are included, the total economic impacts of visitor spending at Grand Canyon in 2003 was $429 million in direct sales, $157 million in personal income, $245 million value added, and almost 7,500 local jobs attributable to the visitation at the park.

The Case for Land Acquisition – Petrified Forest National Park

Petrified Forest National Park, originally proclaimed a national monument by President Theodore Roosevelt in 1906, is located in northeastern Arizona. It was originally set aside to preserve the concentration of rainbow-hued petrified wood, scenic landscapes of the Painted Desert, rare shortgrass prairie, and more than 500 archeological and historical sites that reflect a 10,000-year continuum of human history. The park's 93,500 acres protect the world's largest and most colorful concentrations of petrified wood. It is, according to paleontologists, the world's gold standard for Triassic-era paleontology.

With strong leadership from Congressman Renzi and Senators McCain and Kyl, and with broad bipartisan support, Congress passed, and President Bush signed into law on December 3, 2004, the Petrified Forest National Park Expansion Act of 2004. This legislation authorized the expansion of this remarkable park by 128,000, providing the opportunity to protect in perpetuity the area's world-class paleontological and archeological resources for future generations. Although an important step in protecting these priceless resources, the legislation was by no means the end of that effort. Now the challenge is to ensure these lands actually are added to the park through donation, exchange or purchase.

A number of the landowners at Petrified Forest are potentially interested in exchanging their land, which we hope can be done as expeditiously as possible. However, it is clear that some of these lands will have to be purchased as well, as authorized by the legislation. Unfortunately, funding for the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF), the federal tool for purchasing such important lands, has been slashed in recent years. While federal LWCF funding for National Park Service acquisitions achieved a high watermark of $130 million in fiscal year 2002, Congress appropriated only $45 million for national park land acquisition in the recently enacted fiscal year 2006 Interior Appropriations bill.

The expansion of Petrified Forest was significant in that it had the wholehearted support of the local community, the landowners who owned the vast bulk of the expansion area, the administration, the state, and a bipartisan group of legislators in the House and Senate. It would be a tragedy if the necessary follow-through to acquire these lands for the park were hampered because of the unavailability of needed LWCF funds.

Not only does the Petrified Forest case speak to the need for better funding of LWCF, but it also shows how a park addition can actually help facilitate more efficient management and resource protection. For example, the additions will better facilitate the protection of the park's remarkable resources from looting. With the use of modern technology, the park is able to use relatively low-cost sensing technology to help police against looters. But this can only be done effectively once the necessary acquisitions occur. As the administration prepares its fiscal year 2007 budget, we strongly encourage the Park Service to request the necessary funds to begin making progress toward the necessary and newly authorized acquisitions at the park. We encourage Arizona's Congressional leadership to work with the White House and their Congressional colleagues toward this important goal.

Vanishing Treasures Program – A Model of Success

One program critical to the support of national parks in the Southwest is the Vanishing Treasures Program. The Vanishing Treasures Program was initiated in 1993, when the National Park Service identified and began acting upon a critical weakness that was threatening the existence of unique, rare, and irreplaceable prehistoric and historic ruins in a number of Park Service units in the western United Sates. To quote a National Park Service 2004 Year End Report, "After 20 years of inadequate funding, backlogged treatment needs, and a lack of information on condition, thousands of prehistoric and historic ruins at 44 National Park Service units in the arid west were identified as being threatened with severe deterioration and loss if immediate action was not taken."

The Vanishing Treasures program has been critical to the Park Service's cultural resource stewardship efforts to save priceless cultural resources in Southwestern parks. At the end of FY 2003, more than $8.7 million in federal funds had been provided to the National Park Service through the program. For example, the Vanishing Treasures program has enabled Grand Canyon National Park to hire an archeologist to manage the condition of prehistoric ruins and historic masonry buildings located in the South Rim of Grand Canyon National Park. In FY 2005, with monies from the Vanishing Treasures program, El Mapais National Monument was able to hire six seasonal masons from the nearby Peublos of Acoma and Zuni in order to stabilize the prehistoric Pueblo and historic homestead.

NPCA strongly supports the Vanishing Treasures program and encourages Congress not only to continue, but also increase, financial support for this important program. The program represents a success story in the continuing and never-ending effort to protect and preserve our nation's cultural heritage. As Glenn Fulfer, superintendent of Salinas Pueblo Missions National Monument, a park that preserves and interprets the best remaining examples of the 17th-century Spanish Franciscan mission churches states: "The Vanishing Treasures program is a last defense against the loss of these tangible symbols of America's heritage."

It would greatly complement the Vanishing Treasures Initiative if Congress would pass the National Park Centennial Act. As you are well aware Mr. Chairman, in addition to your leadership with this important legislation, three members of the Arizona delegation in the House of Representatives have sponsored the bill: Representatives Renzi, Grijalva, and Pastor; Senator McCain introduced the companion measure in the Senate. The bill would establish a "Cultural Resource Challenge," similar to the Park Service's Natural Resource Challenge, which is designed to fund the protection of cultural resources, including the documentation and preservation of archeological sites within the national parks.

Budget Reconciliation Threat to the Parks

Current federal budgetary pressures have the potential to further jeopardize national parks. Recently, the House Resources Committee Chairman drafted legislation that could require the sale and development of 15 national parks for energy and commercial purposes, and turn the parks that would remain into commercial billboards. The sites subject to sale under the proposal honor Revolutionary War heroes, African American leaders, and American Indian culture, as well as preserve magnificent Alaskan wilderness and wildlife, priceless archeological sites, and even an additional memorial to our greatest conservation president, Theodore

Roosevelt. Closing these parks would rip significant pages from our American story, but could also devastate Native subsistence economies in parts of Alaska, as well as affect local economies in other areas that rely on visitors to these parks to generate annual tourism revenue. These 15 parks make up approximately 23 percent of the total park system acreage—which is already only 2 percent of U.S. public lands.

Equally troubling, the proposal would commercialize all national parks if this proposal were to become law. The draft requires the National Park Service to sell commercial advertising in all Park Service Official Maps and Guides, and on the exterior and interior of all buses, shuttles, vans, trams, and passenger ferries operated within the National Park System. If this generates less than $10 million in advertising revenue annually, every park unit in the system would lose access to its recreation fee monies under the Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act, which would be placed in moratorium. Currently, the parks collect more than $150 million annually in critically needed fee monies. Additionally, the proposal requires the Park Service to solicit and sell commercial sponsorship of park visitor centers, education centers, information centers, museums, trails, auditoriums, amphitheaters, and theatres throughout the National Park System. As a result, the Grand Canyon's Bright Angel Trail could be renamed the Citibank Trail. And if the Park Service failed to sell at least $10 million in sponsorships, all authority provided under the National Park Service Concessions Management Improvement Act of 1998 would be in moratorium.

NPCA recently commissioned a poll by Zogby International to gauge public opinion on these proposals. Eighty-four percent of respondents opposed the sale of commercial naming rights—70 percent strongly opposed such sales. Seventy four percent opposed the sale of commercial advertising in park brochures and on park vehicles, and 79 percent opposed the closure and sale of national park units. The public has spoken clearly on this issue, and NPCA will do everything necessary to ensure that such misguided proposals are defeated.

Congress and the administration have a responsibility to protect our national heritage. However, this proposal would put our American heritage on the auction block. It should be rejected outright.

Management Policy Revisions

As you know, led by a political appointee at the Department of the Interior, the National Park Service is considering proposed changes to its management policies. Individually and cumulatively, these contemplated changes would radically alter the Park Service's interpretation of its mission and of the fundamental purpose of the National Park System. For almost 90 years, preservation of the parks has been clearly established as the Park Service's primary mission. Mr. Hoffman's draft policy changes, however, would change that mission and permit the parks to be used in ways inconsistent with the preservation as their predominant purpose. The proposed rewrite of the management policies, if permitted to take effect, would harm national parks from Gettysburg to Yellowstone to the Grand Canyon, and compromise the experiences of present and future generations of Americans. We would remind the subcommittee of the testimony of former Park Service Director Russell Dickenson, who led the Park Service throughout the first

Reagan term and before, during, and after the tenure of Interior Secretary Watt. Mr. Dickenson stated that, "not even in the most challenging days of the 'Watt era' did we face anything as potentially damaging to the national parks" as the Hoffman effort.

As the nation's leading park advocacy organization, NPCA shares the concerns expressed by park professionals and retirees that the Hoffman draft revisions depart radically from the fundamental stewardship ethic that has preserved our national parks from their beginning. We question the urgency with which the Department of Interior appears to be pursuing these extensive modifications to the management policies of the Park Service, which were last modified only four years ago. Over the past 25 years, the Park Service's fundamental management policies have been revised only twice – in 1988 during the Regan administration and in 2001 during the Clinton administration. Both versions underwent extensive professional review and were issued to the public for comment for extended periods, and both were identical in their interpretation of the meaning of the key language in the National Park Service Organic Act.

Heeding the advice of National Park Service professionals who have effectively managed our national heritage for decades, we strongly oppose, and urge the Department of Interior to abandon, the proposed management policies rewrite. With the Park Service so strapped for resources at this time, it should only be required to engage in such a process, with significant fiscal and policy ramifications, if it is absolutely necessary. We do not believe a case has been made for revising these policies now, and any policy changes should be conducted in an open, careful, deliberative process, starting with a scoping process that allows for broad public input and vetting of any changes.

It appears, nevertheless, that the Park Service has been instructed to prepare a revision to the Hoffman draft, which we expect to be released very shortly. While we question the rationale for modifying the policies at all, we sincerely hope that draft will reject the multitude of extreme proposals in the Hoffman draft.

If the Department pursues a rewrite of the policies, it will be critically important that any changes are made extremely carefully and deliberately. If the Department directs the Park Service to pursue changes to the policies, significant public comment will be critical to ensure any proposals are well understood and necessary. A quick comment period following a Federal Register notice, when prior modifications under both Republican and Democratic administrations have taken years, would be a disservice to the American people and to our national heritage. Thus far, the process being used to rewrite the policies is unprecedented in the history of the Park Service. Revisions to the management policies should not be politically driven.

As Pulitzer Prize winning author Wallace Stegner reminds us, the idea of national parks was "the best idea America ever had." The Congress, at the time it established the National Park System in 1916, expressly stated the "fundamental purpose" of the Park System is "to conserve the scenery and the natural and historic objects and the wildlife therein and to provide for the enjoyment of the same unimpaired for the enjoyment of future generations." Since then, Congress has consistently reaffirmed that the Park Service is charged with administering the

Park System in conformity with this "fundamental purpose." And in defining the Park Service's legal obligations, the courts have regularly endorsed that same interpretation of the agency's mission. It is abundantly clear, therefore, that the primary purpose of the Park System is preservation, so that our grandchildren may experience these places as you and I do today.

Mr. Hoffman's effort to rewrite the Park Service's management policies would undermine the very essence of the National Park System and to jeopardize that legacy. Any proposed or final revision to the Park Service's management policies must therefore reject such changes.

Conclusion

The national parks are at the core of our national identity. The parks of the Southwest protect some of our country's most spectacular and treasured natural and cultural resources, as well as provide us with unparalleled recreational and educational opportunities.

The National Park Service is entrusted with a great responsibility -- to preserve unimpaired the natural and cultural resources and values of the National Park System for the enjoyment, education, and inspiration of this and future generations. However, the severe fiscal challenges facing our parks today are undermining this important mission.

In a little more than ten years, America will celebrate the National Park Service's 100th anniversary. Our national parks are special places and deserve our steadfast support. The creation of the first parks and the Park System required bold vision on the part of our leaders, who thankfully had the foresight to realize the necessity for protecting and preserving the many poignant examples of our nation's heritage. Their gift to us, which we must pass on to future generations, can only ensured if we take the same bold action to address the many challenges facing our parks today, including the severe fiscal challenges and management threats that they confront.

Mr. Chairman, thank you for holding this important series of hearings. I am happy to answer any questions.

Appendix 1

Base Operating Budget for Arizona NPS Units
NPS FY 2004 – FY 2006 (all dollar amounts in thousands)

Unit	FY 04 Enacted	FY 05 Estimate	Increase FY 04 to FY 05	% Increase	FY 06 Request	Increase FY 05 to FY 06	% Increase	% Gap Between Inflation and Funding Request for FY 06*	Change In Real Dollars From FY 05 Estimate to FY 06 Request**
Canyon de Chelly NM	1,343	1,509	166	11	1,539	30	2	-1.1	-18
Casa Grande Ruins NM & Hohokam Pima NM	653	773	120	15.5	792	19	2.4	-0.7	-6
Chiricahua NM & Ft Bowie NHS	1,334	1,464	130	8.9	1,511	47	3.1	0.0	0
Coronado Nmem	937	961	24	2.5	977	16	1.6	-1.5	-14
Glen Canyon NRA	9,256	9,848	592	6	10,072	224	2.2	-1.4	-88
Grand Canyon NP	18,567	18,921	354	1.9	19,599	678	3.5	0.4	70
Hubbell Trading Post NHS	683	719	36	5	739	20	2.7	-0.4	-3
Lake Mead NRA	14,085	14,432	347	2.4	14,763	331	2.2	-1.4	-127
Montezuma Castle NM & Tuzigoot NM	1,118	1,148	30	2.6	1,186	38	3.2	0.1	1
Navajo NM	758	858	100	11.7	875	17	1.9	-1.2	-10
Organ Pipe Cactus NM	3,070	3,267	197	6	3,328	61	1.8	-1.3	-42
Petrified Forest NP	2,534	2,768	234	8.5	2,845	77	2.7	-0.4	-11
Pipe Spring NM	656	676	20	3	696	20	2.9	-0.2	2
Saguaro NP	2,821	3,094	273	8.8	3,193	99	3.1	0.0	0
Tonto NM	726	768	42	5.5	790	22	2.8	-0.3	2
Tumacacori NHP	745	915	170	18.6	937	22	2.3	-0.8	-7
Average				7.4			2.5		

*Based on 3.11% rate of inflation.

**The FY 06 request provided an increase of $50.5 million to National Park System operations. The final FY 2006 Conference provided an increase of $60.5 million, subject to a across the board cut of 0.476 percent.

Base Operating Budget for Nevada NPS Units
NPS FY 2004 – FY 2006 (all dollar amounts in thousands)

Unit	FY 04 Enacted	FY 05 Estimate	Increase FY 04 to FY 05	% Increase	FY 06 Request	Increase FY 05 to FY 06	% Increase	% Gap Between Inflation and Funding Request for FY 06*	Change In Real Dollars From FY 05 Estimate to FY 06 Request**
Death Valley NP	6,790	6,957	167	2.4	7,126	167	2.3	-0.8	-52
Great Basin NP	1,894	1,944	50	2.6	2,003	59	2.9	-0.2	-3
Lake Meade NRA	14,085	14,432	347	2.4	14,763	331	2.2	-0.9	-127
Average				2.5			2.5		

*Based on 3.11% rate of inflation.

**The FY 06 request provided an increase of $50.5 million to National Park System operations. The final FY 2006 Conference provided an increase of $60.5 million, subject to a across the board cut of 0.476 percent.

Base Operating Budget for New Mexico NPS Units
NPS FY 2004 – FY 2006 (all dollar amounts in thousands)

Unit	FY 04 Enacted	FY 05 Estimate	Increase FY 04 to FY 05	% Increase	FY 06 Request	Increase FY 05 to FY 06	% Increase	% Gap Between Inflation and Funding Request for FY 06*	Change In Real Dollars From FY 05 Estimate to FY 06 Request**
Aztec Ruins NM	960	1,013	53	5.2	1,041	28	2.7	-0.4	-4
Bandelier NM	2,491	2,549	58	2.3	2,654	105	4	0.9	23
Capulin Volcano NM	609	651	42	6.5	667	16	2.4	-0.7	-5
Carlsbad Caverns NP	5,231	5,343	112	2.1	5,486	143	2.6	-0.5	-28
Chaco Culture NHP	1,764	1,950	186	9.5	1,990	40	2	-1.1	-22
El Malpais NM	1,041	1,116	75	6.7	1,150	34	3	-0.1	-2
El Morro NM	558	573	15	2.6	586	13	2.2	-0.9	-5
Fort Union NM	674	773	99	12.8	793	20	2.5	-0.6	-5
Gila Cliff Dwellings NM	216	370	154	41.6	374	4	1.1	-2.0	-8
Pecos NHP	1,291	1,324	33	2.5	1,352	28	2.1	-1.0	-12
Petroglyph NM	1,597	1,478	-119	-8.1	1,512	34	2.2	-0.9	-13
Salinas Pueblo Missions NM	1,201	1,234	33	2.7	1,277	43	3.4	0.3	3
White Sands NM	1,351	1,387	36	2.6	1,421	34	2.4	-0.7	-10

*Based on 3.11% rate of inflation.

**The FY 06 request provided an increase of $50.5 million to National Park System operations. The final FY 2006 Conference provided an increase of $60.5 million, subject to a across the board cut of 0.476 percent.

Base Operating Budget for Utah NPS Units
NPS FY 2004 – FY 2006 (all dollar amounts in thousands)

Unit	FY 04 Enacted	FY 05 Estimate	Increase FY 04 to FY 05	% Increase	FY 06 Request	Increase FY 05 to FY 06	% Increase	% Gap Between Inflation and Funding Request for FY 06*	Change In Real Dollars From FY 05 Estimate to FY 06 Request**
Arches National Park	1,140	1,168	28	2.4	1,215	47	3.9	0.8	9
Bryce Canyon National Park	2,674	2,768	94	3.4	2,848	80	2.8	-0.3	-8
Canyonlands National Park	5,334	5,294	40	0.8	5,442	148	2.7	-0.4	-21
Capitol Reef National Park	1,856	1,923	67	3.5	1,977	54	2.7	-0.4	-7
Cedar Breaks National Monument	346	354	8	2.3	364	10	2.7	-0.4	-1
Dinosaur National Monument	2,777	2,865	88	3.1	2,943	78	2.7	-0.4	-13
Glen Canyon National Recreation Area	9,256	9,848	592	6	10,072	224	2.2	-0.9	-88
Golden Spike National Historic Site	698	884	186	21	901	17	1.9	-1.2	11
Hovenweep National Monument	493	506	13	2.6	512	6	1.2	-1.9	10
Natural Bridges National Monument	432	444	12	2.7	457	13	2.8	-0.3	-1
Rainbow Bridge National Monument	101	104	3	2.9	104	0	0	-3.1	-3
Timpanogos Cave National Monument	703	744	41	5.5	782	38	4.9	1.8	14
Zion National Park	6,008	6,153	145	2.4	6,396	243	3.8	0.7	45
Average				4.5			2.6		

*Based on 3.11% rate of inflation.

**The FY 06 request provided an increase of $50.5 million to National Park System operations. The final FY 2006 Conference provided an increase of $60.5 million, subject to a across the board cut of 0.476 percent.

Appendix 2

Arizona 2003
Economic Impacts of National Park System*

Unit	Recreation Visits	Total Visitor Spending	Average Spending Per Party Day	Local Jobs Created	Personal Income Generated
Canyon de Chelly NM	866,498	$39,810	$90	989	$17,310
Casa Grande Ruins NM	87,687	$2,280	$65	57	$790
Chiricahua NM	44,976	$2,050	$83	51	$880
Coronado NMem	89,309	$2,750	$62	73	$1,010
Ft Bowie NHS	8,445	$370	$89	10	$160
Glen Canyon NRA	1,876,984	$108,530	$77	2,564	$45,270
Grand Canyon NP	4,124,900	$338,130	$211	7,812	$169,810
Hubbell Trading Post NHS	163,883	$7,220	$89	180	$3,130
Lake Mead NRA	7,915,581	$240,360	$100	5,815	$81,890
Montezuma Castle NM	637,024	$28,060	$89	697	$12,190
Navajo NM	76,620	$3,390	$88	84	$1,470
Organ Pipe Cactus NM	277,566	$12,370	$86	306	$5,350
Petrified Forest NP	586,245	$36,130	$111	910	$15,960
Pipe Spring NM	56,341	$2,480	$89	62	$1,080
Saguaro NP	643,697	$39,670	$110	998	$17,520
Tonto NM	59,216	$2,610	$89	65	$1,130
Tumacacori NHP	52,393	$1,620	$62	43	$590
Tuzigoot NM	115,216	$5,080	$89	126	$2,200
Totals	**17,682,581**	**$872,910**	**$93**	**20,842**	**$377,740**

* Economic impacts where estimated using the MSU Money Generation Model (MGM2).

Nevada 2003
Economic Impacts of National Park System*

Unit	Recreation Visits	Total Visitor Spending	Average Spending Per Party Day	Local Jobs Created	Personal Income Generated
Death Valley NP	890,375	$40,120	$74	1,059	$14,750
Great Basin NP	87,020	$3,830	$71	101	$1,400
Lake Meade NRA	7,915,581	$240,360	$100	5,815	$81,890
Totals	**8,892,976**	**$284,310**	**$82**	**6,975**	**$98,040**

* Economic impacts where estimated using the MSU Money Generation Model (MGM2).

New Mexico 2003
Economic Impacts of National Park System*

Unit	Recreation Visits	Total Visitor Spending	Average Spending Per Party Day	Local Jobs Created	Personal Income Generated
Aztec Ruins NM	42,493	$1,160	$79	28	$490
Bandelier NM	287,096	$11,110	$88	271	$4,730
Capulin Volcano NM	61,373	$1,320	$59	33	$460
Carlsbad Caverns NP	457,631	$18,920	$87	460	$8,060
Chaco Culture NHP	84,621	$1,800	$52	43	$750
El Malpais NM	151,127	$4,860	$78	123	$1,720
El Morro NM	57,889	$1,780	$75	45	$630
Fort Union NM	12,944	$260	$47	9	$90
Gila Cliff Dwellings NM	47,869	$1,090	$56	28	$390
Pecos NHP	38,326	$710	$54	19	$260
Petroglyph NM	58,101	$2,170	$90	52	$1,050
Salinas Pueblo Missions NM	33,827	$1,090	$78	28	$390
White Sands NM	492,008	$21,630	$118	585	$8,100
Totals	**1,825,305**	**$67,900**	**$74**	**1,724**	**$27,120**

* Economic impacts where estimated using the MSU Money Generation Model (MGM2).

Utah 2003
Economic Impacts of National Park System*

Unit	Recreation Visits	Total Visitor Spending	Average Spending Per Party Day	Local Jobs Created	Personal Income Generated
Arches NP	757,781	$63,750	$172	1,757	$24,650
Bryce Canyon NP	903,760	$40,690	$78	1,081	$15,040
Canyonlands NP	386,986	$16,390	$71	417	$5,790
Capitol Reef NP	535,441	$23,180	$76	615	$8,550
Cedar Breaks NM	569,455	$17,570	$62	461	$6,420
Dinosaur NM	289,849	$9,000	$58	228	$3,180
Glen Canyon NRA	1,876,984	$108,530	$77	2,564	$45,270
Golden Spike NHS	45,230	$1,990	$89	50	$870
Hovenweep NM	29,737	$1,320	$87	33	$570
Natural Bridges NM	98,874	$4,390	$87	109	$1,900
Rainbow Bridge NM	98,865	$4,360	$89	109	$1,890
Timpanogos Cave NM	106,030	$6,070	$115	144	$2,940
Zion NP	2,458,792	$80,900	$86	1,935	$33,830
Totals	**8,157,784**	**$378,140**	**$88**	**9,503**	**$150,900**

* Economic impacts where estimated using the MSU Money Generation Model (MGM2).

Mr. SOUDER. Thank you very much for your testimony. We'll now come back to Ms. Tuck.

STATEMENT OF DEBORAH TUCK

Ms. TUCK. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Representative Turner, and Representative Renzi. I think in fairness to all people who are here, I need to reveal that both Representative Souder and Representative Renzi are members of the Grand Canyon National Park Foundation. Thank you for your membership.

My name is Deborah Tuck, and I'm here representing the Grand Canyon National Park Foundation, the not-for-profit fundraising partner of the National Park Service at the Grand Canyon. Today I'm going to talk about three things. One, I'm going to talk about philanthropy in the parks. Two, I'm going to talk with the budget situation at this park, and I'm going to try to illustrate for you in just one segment in the park why under-funding makes a difference.

In the case today, I've chosen science. It's not because we couldn't do this for transportation, that we couldn't do it for interpretation. It is that it's just very—this is an easy way to show what under-funding means. In the interest of time, I've eliminated a whole section about volunteerism which is an equal part of our mission, in hopes that you will ask me about this during the questioning period in what under-funding has done to volunteerism in the park.

Our mission at the Foundation is to preserve, protect and enhance the Grand Canyon National Park. That means we really restore historic buildings. We take care—we help the park take care of wildlife, and wildlife means everything from bacteria to buffalo. It means we build new trails, and it means that we restore historic trails.

The challenge for the Foundation is that we must refine the role of stewardship for our national parks, because most Americans simply assume that caring for our parks is solely the responsibility of the Federal Government. I want to add, I know something about philanthropy. There are many people in this room who have spent their entire lives in the National Park Service. They do us a great service.

I have spent my entire life in philanthropy. I run two family foundations for two of the most wealthy families in this country and did so for 16 years, and I have spent the rest of my life raising money for non-profit organizations. Unfortunately, the truth is that our national parks, as you've heard Mr. Keiter say, operate with just two-thirds of the needed funding. What does that mean in terms of the park I love and serve? A business plan study of this park in 2001, let's keep in mind that was 4 years ago, found that the annual operating shortfall of the Grand Canyon was $8.5 million. That included $1.76 million for natural resource protection, $1.5 for interpretation, and $1 million for maintenance. In short, this park operates at 65 percent of what it needs every day to get the park up in the morning, put it through the day, and keep it safe through the night.

Here is what I want to ask. Think about your favorite well-run business. Would it still be operating at 65 percent? My hat is off to Joe Alston and the tremendous people who work at the Grand

Canyon park. They do what private industry would and could not do. The truth is that the fiscal year 2006 budget enacted for the Department of the Interior, provided the NPS with its discretionary appropriation of $2.289 billion, or 1.1 percent less than the NPS received in fiscal year 2005. And if you look at the National Park Service's own Web site, the fiscal year 2006 funding level is $2 million less than the agency received in fiscal year 2001, 5 years ago.

At the Foundation, we're concerned about providing human, as well as financial resources in the park, and this is the part where I hope you will ask me about what a decrease in Federal funding has meant so that this park is turning away volunteers for boy scouts, Elder hostel and kids who don't want to spend their spring break down in Florida, but want to spend their spring break at the Grand Canyon.

Protecting ecological diversity and maintaining the park, ought to be a core responsibility of the Park Service, but if the funding is simply not there, then we, the Foundation, must make a decision. Either we try to raise private funds to supplement insufficient Federal dollars, or we walk away and let programs die.

So as I've said, the challenge for philanthropy is to define the role of stewardship, as many donors who understand the critical needs facing the park, nevertheless, want assurances that their private dollars will not be used to offset public responsibilities. They want us and the Park Service to maintain the bright line between Federal responsibility and private opportunity, but as you can see, Mr. Chairman, that bright line is becoming increasingly blurred.

So now I'm going to talk about the example of just one department at the Grand Canyon; science. Science at the Grand Canyon, according to Bob Moon in our Intermountain West Regional Office, is 9 percent of our base budget. This is interesting, because in our park, unlike the other icon parks, the science division also includes planning and compliance. Generally, funding for science divisions at icon parks in the west average about 14 percent, so in reality, the science at the Grand Canyon, once you subtract compliance and planning, is about half of what the budget is for science at Yellowstone.

Here is a snapshot of what that current situation means at the Grand Canyon. At the Grand Canyon there is only one wildlife biologist on the staff. This park covers 1.2 million acres. You can ask me about what this means, too.

There are only two archeologists on staff, and Mr. Keiter has discussed what that means, and amazingly, at a park known around the world as a geological wonder, we have no practicing geologist at the park. Increasingly, the park is abandoning its park on getting rid of invasive species, unless it can be paid by soft money. We now pay for all of the work removing invasive vegetation below the rim—the Foundation.

The establishment of the National Park Service in 1916, reflected a national consensus that natural and cultural resources contained within America's parks must be protected and held in the public trust and preserved for future generations. This park has a very special relationship with Teddy Roosevelt who, before there was a Park Service, set this land aside for all future generations, that it remain un-impaired. It is a place that he said restores your sole.

The word conservation and the concept of science-based management of resources, really didn't exist in the public sector until Roosevelt became President. Teddy Roosevelt knew 50 years before it became fashionable, that careful environmental stewardship is our collective obligation to future generations. He established America's commitment to conservation, reflecting the sense we must safeguard our national treasures and our collective national heritage.

There is a crisis in our national parks, and it's a quiet crisis, and I want to offer five suggestions of things that Congress could do. First, they need to increase the internal allocation to science within the Park Service. You cannot make resource-based decisions without science. Congress can act by restoring the President's Cooperative Conservation Initiative. This funded thousands of good projects in our Park Service, and those projects are now not being funded.

Congress can act by passing the National Park Centennial Act as proposed by Arizona Senior U.S. Senator John McCain, and I'm proud to say our Congressman, Mr. Renzi.

And the last point, within the Park Service budget, funding equity must be restored among the major icon national parks. The truth is that budgetary pain has not been equally shared between the parks.

Earlier this year at the request of our board, we did some work on the funding for our park, as opposed to funding for other parks. What we found was that over a 12-year period of looking at 26 major national parks, the Grand Canyon got the lowest percentage increase. This is the No. 2 park in the country in terms of visitation. It's the No. 1 park in terms of foreign visitation.

If we look at some other icon parks as comparison, the Grand Canyon received only 26 percent of the budgets for the three icon parks of the west, and Yellowstone garnered 41 percent of the money for the icon parks in the west. Cumulatively, from 1998 through 2006, the Grand Canyon received a total of $14.67 million in capital appropriations, and Yellowstone received $125.9 million.

For the current 5-year plan, fiscal year 2007 through 2010, the plan is for $2.5 million in capital funds for the Grand Canyon, and $42.4 more million for Yellowstone.

Now, we don't begrudge Yellowstone, or anyone any more money, but this is unfair. Our Foundation would have to raise $150 million to catch up with Yellowstone.

Those of us in friends organizations also know and understand that there is an increasing need for creative partnerships to seek private philanthropy support and an increasing need for citizen stewardship, stewardship that can be expressed through financial support for volunteerism in the park.

Philanthropy has had a long and successful history in the national parks, and we're proud of that success, and while we'd like to maintain our existence on a bright line, today's budget realities demand that we refine the role that private philanthropy and citizen stewardship can and ought to play.

Maybe I'm a cock-eyed optimist, but I believe the American people still embrace Teddy Roosevelt's concept of conservation and environmental stewardship. Places like the Grand Canyon are part of our collective heritage, and we all share the responsibility to ensure protection of these places with all of their resources.

Wallace Stegner was right. This is the most beautiful place on Earth. Thank you for your efforts to help us protect the Grand Canyon.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Tuck follows:]

Testimony of Deborah E. Tuck
President, Grand Canyon National Park Foundation

October 13, 2005
Subcommittee Hearing in Flagstaff, Arizona
Committee on Government Reform
U.S. House of Representatives

Thank you Mr. Chairman . . .and welcome to Flagstaff.

My name is Deborah Tuck, and I'm here representing the Grand Canyon National Park Foundation . . . the not-for-profit fundraising partner of the National Park Service at the Grand Canyon. Our mission at the Foundation is ***"to preserve, protect and enhance Grand Canyon National Park by promoting citizen stewardship through philanthropy, volunteerism, and broad-based public education and information."***

We pursue that mission by trying to create a better connection between public and place. We want people to know the critical need for the preservation and restoration of fragile desert and riparian ecosystems at the Grand Canyon . . . we want them to appreciate the Park's tremendous biodiversity . . we want them to know the tremendous human history of the Grand Canyon, including the significant history before white men arrived in this hemisphere.... we want them to appreciate the splendid architecture of America's stellar woman architect, Mary Coulter....we want them to experience the awe and wonder of hiking below the rim and floating the Colorado.... and we want them to understand the importance of stewardship for this very special place. We want the general public to understand that ***we all must share*** a stewardship responsibility for our national parks . . . and stewardship builds and strengthens the bonds between people and their parks.

The challenge for the Foundation is that we must redefine the role of stewardship for our national parks . . . because most Americans simply assume that caring for our parks is solely the responsibility of the federal government.

Unfortunately, the truth is that our national parks operate, on average, with just two-thirds of needed funding . . . base funds essential for resource protection, visitors' services, facility operations, facility maintenance, and park support programs. And nationwide, only about 12% of the NPS budget goes toward resource stewardship – including all science, archeological, and historic preservation programs aimed at protecting parks' natural and cultural resources. A business plan study of this park in 2001 found that the annual operating shortfall at the Grand Canyon was $8,500,000 including $1,760,000 for natural resource protection, $1,500,00 for interpretation, and $1,000,000 for maintenance. In short this park operates at 65% of what it needs for daily operating needs. May I ask, sir, how many for profit business would be operating if they had only 65% of what they need for basic operating expenses.

The truth is that the FY 06 budget enacted for the Department of Interior provided the NPS with discretionary appropriations of $2.289 billion . . . or 1.1% ***less*** than what the NPS received in

FY 05 ($2.314 billion). In fact, the Park Service's FY 06 funding level is even about $2 million ***less*** than what the agency received in FY 01 – five years ago.

So what we've seen is a dramatic increase in the number of "friends groups" established to help support projects at individual parks. According to the GAO, these groups – like the Grand Canyon National Park Foundation – now support many of our national parks . . . and their support is an important supplement to federal appropriations.

At Grand Canyon, for example, the Park's annual, federally appropriated operating budget has been roughly $19 million . . . but over the past five years, our Foundation has supplemented that budget with approximately $13.5 million in additional program support. And that total doesn't count the volunteers who donated their time and talents to help support the Park. Last year alone, more than 1,200 volunteers contributed over 49,000 hours to a variety of resource protection projects at the Grand Canyon – that's time valued by the National Park Service at nearly $850,000 . . . in a single year.

But inadequate federal funding is even beginning to limit the ability of the Park Service to properly accommodate those who want to volunteer their time to help protect the resources of the Grand Canyon. A recent example is the Grand Canyon Re-Vegetation Center.

This is a program that has historically been heavily reliant on volunteers; over the past six fiscal years, more than 90,000 volunteer hours . . . labor valued by the Park Service at more than $1.5 million . . . have been devoted to the plant conservation and habitat restoration activities of the Grand Canyon Re-Vegetation Center. Long-term volunteer partnerships have been cultivated with environmental groups (such as the Sierra Club)...with school groups (including university-based organizations around the U.S.)...with youth groups (such as Boy Scout and Girl Scout troops throughout the country)...with service organizations (such as Rotary Clubs and Elderhostel chapters)...and organizations such as the Student Conservation Association and the American Conservation Experience. These volunteers have helped with the management and control of invasive vegetation . . . with the collection of seeds from native plants among the Park's 129 different, and distinct, vegetation communities . . . with the salvaging of native plants in areas adversely affected by development or drought . . . and with the restoration of wildlife habitat.

This past year, staffing shortages at the Park meant that park staff was no longer available to train and supervise volunteers at the Re-Vegetation Center . . . and volunteers had to be turned away. A Boy Scout troop from suburban Chicago that had been volunteering for this program for many years . . . were told not to come this year. Elderhostel volunteers that had made regular trips to the Grand Canyon were told their help couldn't be accommodated this year. A dozen students from Vanderbilt University who had planned to spend their spring break volunteering at the Park . . . were told we couldn't use them, because the Park had no one to train and manage them for ten days.

As a result, volunteer hours for this important program at the Grand Canyon declined from nearly 19,000 in FY 2004, to just over 6,000 in FY 2005 . . . and the very survival of the re-vegetation program is in serious doubt.

Because of the Park's dramatic, 8000-foot elevation gradient, it contains multiple distinct ecosystems . . . with great biological diversity. The Park includes at least 1,500 species of native vascular plants . . . including a dozen endemic plants and 63 that have been given special status by the U.S. Fish &Wildlife Service. It was because of the Park's great diversity of biotic communities, and the NPS management requirement "to maintain native biodiversity" . . . that the Grand Canyon established its internal Re-Vegetation Center in the first place. The Center was intended to ensure the continuing genetic integrity of the native plants found within the Park's distinct vegetation communities.

Closure of this program would mean that all native plants currently being maintained in the Park's nursery/greenhouse would be lost . . . three existing seed fields with genetically-matched grasses growing from native seed (maintained for the Park by the National Resources Conservation Service) would all be plowed under . . . and without the program, ***all*** project volunteers would be turned away.

This Foundation is currently attempting to secure funding to supplement the Park's own resources . . . so that this important re-vegetation and habitat restoration program can be maintained. But clearly, in this instance, we are talking about the Foundation providing the margin of ***survival*** . . . and not a margin for excellence.

Protecting ecological diversity . . . and maintaining the genetic integrity of native vegetation at one of this country's premier national parks . . . ought to be a core responsibility of the Park Service. But if the funding is simply not there . . . then we must make a decision . . . either we try to raise private funds to supplement insufficient federal dollars, or we walk away . . .and let the program die.

So as I said, our challenge is to redefine the role of stewardship . . . as many donors who understand the critical needs facing the Park . . . nevertheless want assurances that their private dollars will not be used to offset public responsibilities. They want us – and the Park – to maintain a ***"bright line"*** between the federal responsibility, and the private opportunity.

But as you can see, Mr. Chairman, that bright line is becoming increasing blurred.

In my opinion, the Park Service's continuing operating shortfall is simply no longer sustainable. Irreplaceable resources are being placed at risk. Parks are facing a critical shortage of field personnel . . . and nowhere is it more evident than in the science, or resource protection, divisions.

At the Grand Canyon, for example, visitation has been steadily increasing – now approaching nearly five million people per year. The threats of negative resource impacts are increasing . . . yet insufficient federal funding has forced the Grand Canyon Science Center to reduce (short-term ***and*** long-term) conservation and resource stewardship efforts. When one compares the funding for the Science Center at this park with the funding for science divisions at other icon parks, funding at the Grand Canyon falls alarmingly short. Funding for science at the Grand Canyon is about 9% of base budget (however the Science Center at the Grand Canyon includes

compliance and planning. In other icon parks, planning and compliance are outside of the science division). Generally funding for science divisions at icon parks in the West averages 14%. In reality funding for science at the Grand Canyon (once planning and compliance funding is subtracted) is half that of Yellowstone. The Science Center receives the smallest amount of funding of any of the field divisions at the park about as much as the shuttle bus operation.

In order to ensure the preservation of the Park's fragile ecosystems, and maintain biological diversity, park managers must have current, objective, science-based data about the resources; yet no comprehensive natural or cultural resource inventories have been conducted. Since 2001, this Foundation has provided almost all of the funding for Grand Canyon National Park to collect the biological data, which is a basic requirement for effective natural resource management.

At the Grand Canyon, there is only one wildlife biologist on staff . . . for a Park covering 1.2-million acres . . . containing several distinct ecosystems within its boundaries . . . and home to at least ten threatened or endangered animal species. Yet, even though the Park provides habitat for threatened or endangered species . . . the Park Service cannot afford to hire staff to monitor those species. In recent years, the Foundation has been the ***only*** source of funding for wildlife protection projects at the Park involving California condors . . . mountain lions . . . desert mountain bighorn sheep . . . . and eight meso carnivore species at both the South and the North Rims.

There are only two archeologists on staff . . . for a Park with approximately 4,500-recorded archeological sites that help tell the story of the Grand Canyon's 10,000-year-old human history. And we know that only roughly 3% of the Park has been adequately surveyed . . . so there may be 50,000 archeological sites yet to be discovered . . . and protected.

And amazingly, at a Park known around the world as a geological wonder . . . there is ***no*** geologist on staff at the Grand Canyon.

Of course, the Grand Canyon is not unique in this regard . . . as park managers across the country are forced to make difficult decisions as they struggle to balance budgets. Insufficient federal funding has forced parks to reduce conservation and resource stewardship efforts so that they can accommodate immediate visitor services and recreational needs.

The Park Service must set priorities . . . and make difficult choices. And for almost the entire 90-year history of the Service, the agency has experienced an internal tension between park management for visitor recreation . . . and park management for ecological and resource protection.

Over this past summer, I had the opportunity to read an insightful book by Richard West Sellars entitled "Preserving Nature in the National Parks" . . . and I would certainly commend it to you, Mr. Chairman, and to your colleagues on this Committee.

At the outset (page 3), Mr. Sellars hits the reader with this observation: *"It might be assumed that management of national parks with the intent of preserving natural conditions would necessarily require scientific knowledge adequate to understand populations and distributions of*

native species and their relation to their environment, and that without such information the parks' natural history is fraught with too many questions, too many unknowns...Yet it has not been the view of park management throughout most of the Service's history...National Park Service decision-making most often has not been scientifically informed."

Again (pages 274-275) Sellars notes, *"The Park Service's long neglect of science [has] crippled its recent research efforts and thus the credibility of its natural resource programs."*

Yet, the Park Service would point out that they have never received such a specific statutory mandate from the Congress; according to the NPS, even though the Organic Act of 1916 called for the parks to be left "unimpaired" for the enjoyment of future generations . . . it did not mandate science-based resource management as a means of achieving that goal.

And because the Park Service ***never*** has enough money to do everything it wants to do....they must make difficult choices....and often chooses between visitor services, and resource protection.

But Sellars concludes his book with a stark warning (page 290): *"In this era of heightened environmental concern, it is essential that scientific knowledge form the foundation for any meaningful effort to preserve ecological resources. If the National Park Service is to fully shoulder this complex, challenging responsibility at last, it must conduct scientifically informed management that insists on ecological preservation as the highest of many worthy priorities. This priority must spring not merely from the concerns of specific individuals or groups within the Service, but from an institutionalized ethic that is reflected in full-faith support of all environmental laws, in appropriate natural resource policies and practices, in budget and staffing allocations, and in the organizational structures of parks and central offices. When – and only when – the National Park Service thoroughly attunes its own land management and organizational attitudes to ecological principles can it lay serious claim to leadership in the preservation of the natural environment."*

After years of chronic under-funding . . . the ***only*** viable alternative for many parks has been to seek partnerships to provide funds from non-federal sources . . . so that critical resource protection needs can be met.

The establishment of the National Park Service in 1916 reflected a national consensus that the natural and cultural resources contained within America's parks must be protected – held in the public trust – and preserved for future generations. The NPS has the difficult task of protecting the complex ecological balances at parks such as the Grand Canyon . . . while still providing recreational opportunities for visitors . . . and doing all of that within severely constrained federal operating budgets.

In my opinion, Mr. Chairman, Congress and the American people need to recognize that their national parks are in serious jeopardy . . . and the irreplaceable natural and cultural resources they contain are imperiled. There are real and imminent threats to the ecological integrity of our parks.

One hundred years ago, our nation's 26th President – Theodore Roosevelt - fought unsuccessfully to have Congress establish the Grand Canyon a national park. He did, however, secure passage of the Antiquities Act in 1906 . . . and he then used that Act to unilaterally protect the Grand Canyon for future generations by declaring it a national monument in 1908. Congress didn't move on the establishment of a national park at the Grand Canyon for another eleven years . . . but Teddy Roosevelt acted – to protect the natural and cultural resources for all time.

While standing at the edge of the Grand Canyon, President Roosevelt said, "Keep this great wonder of nature as it is . . . Keep it for your children and your children's children, and for all who come after you." It is a place that "restores our soul."

The word "conservation" – and the concept of science-based management of resources – did not exist until Teddy Roosevelt became president . . . stopping raids on the public's resources, and creating millions of acres of national forests, parks and wildlife refuges. TR's record was based on a powerful insight that is still relevant a century after his presidency . . . and is an insight that should guide all of us as we consider how we ought to care for our national parks. Teddy Roosevelt knew – fifty years before it became fashionable – that careful environmental stewardship is our collective obligation to future generations. He established America's commitment to conservation . . . reflecting the sense that we must safeguard our national treasures . . . our collective national heritage.

The fact of the matter is that today, we live in an unsettled world . . . and federal budget realities dictate that there is little chance for significant increases in federal funding for our nation's parks. But there ***are*** things that Congress, and the National Park Service, can do to help address the immediate crisis.

First, they need to ***increase*** the internal allocation to science within the Park Service. Science-based management is critical to resource protection. That means that science-based staffing positions must be restored – particularly at the major parks, such as the Grand Canyon.

And we know that privatization, or outsourcing, is not the answer. Protection of resources in our national parks is not a function to be outsourced to the lowest bidder.

Congress can act by restoring the President's Cooperative Conservation Initiative . . . an excellent program that has been left unfunded for the past two years. Through CCI partnerships, citizen stewards were put to work tackling invasive species, reducing erosion along stream banks, and enhancing habitat for wildlife at parks throughout the nation.

Congress can act by passing the National Park Centennial Act – as proposed by Arizona's senior U.S. Senator, John McCain.

And within the Park Service budget, funding equity must be restored among the major, icon national parks . . . both operational funding, and capital funding. The truth is that the budgetary "pain" has not been equally shared among the major parks.

Looking only at the three "icon" parks of the West – Grand Canyon, Yellowstone, and Yosemite – they collectively received $57.8 million in operational funding in FY 98. Yellowstone received 39% of that "icon" funding total . . . Yosemite received 33% . . . and the Grand Canyon received the smallest share of 28%. Eight years later, that funding gap had grown: by FY 06, Yellowstone garnered 41% of the "icon" total . . . Yosemite stayed at 33% . . . and the Grand Canyon had dropped to only 26%.

The disparity becomes even more pronounced – especially with Yellowstone – when one looks at the capital funding comparisons. Cumulatively, for the period from FY 1998 through FY 2006 . . . the Grand Canyon received a total of $14.67 million in capital appropriations . . . while Yosemite received $18.42 million . . . and Yellowstone received $125.9 million. Further, the NPS is proposing in its current five-year plan (FY 07 through FY 10) to spend $2.5 million in capital funds at the Grand Canyon . . . and a staggering $42.4 million more at Yellowstone.

Certainly, I don't mean to begrudge Yellowstone . . . or any other park . . . for its success in securing federal appropriations to meet its critical needs. But such a dramatic disparity makes it difficult for us . . . as the foundation partner at the Grand Canyon . . . to persuade private donors to support projects at the Grand Canyon . . .when the federal government has spent (or will spend) $150 million ***more*** for projects at Yellowstone over this twelve-year period than they will spend at the Grand Canyon. As a foundation . . . we would need to raise $150 million just to get the Grand Canyon ***even*** on capital project spending.

Those of us in friends organizations also know, and understand . . . that there will be an increasing need for creative partnerships to seek private philanthropy support . . . and an increasing need for citizen stewardship . . . stewardship that can be expressed through financial support or volunteerism within the parks.

Philanthropy has had a long and successful history in the national parks . . . and we're proud of that success. And while we would all like to maintain our insistence on a "bright line" . . . today's budget realities demand that we redefine the role that private philanthropy, and citizen stewardship, can and ought to play.

We ***must*** adapt . . .because the stakes are too important. The natural and cultural resources of our parks ***must*** be protected . . . because if we should lose them, they would be lost forever.

I believe the American people still embrace the Teddy Roosevelt concept of conservation and environmental stewardship. Places like the Grand Canyon are part of our collective heritage . . . and we ***all*** share the responsibility to ensure the protection of these places . . . with all their resources. Wallace Stegner was right "this is the most beautiful place on earth". Thank you for your efforts to help us protect the Grand Canyon.

Mr. SOUDER. Thank you very much. Ms. Spurr.

STATEMENT OF KIMBERLY SPURR

Ms. SPURR. Good morning. The Arizona Archaeological Council appreciates the opportunity to submit testimony to this subcommittee, and we appreciate your being here to listen to this. The Arizona Archaeological Council is a non-profit voluntary association existing to promote the goals of professional archeology in Arizona. Its stated mission is to preserve cultural resources through education and advocacy. Our membership includes professional and advocational archeologists working in academic, private business, local communities, Federal and State Government, and Tribal agencies.

The AAC strongly supports the National Park Service's mission to preserve cultural resources, its long-term leadership in this regard, and the commitment of its employees. We applaud the flexible programs that the NPS has implemented, such as the CESUs for extending its limited funding.

However, a number of recent changes in the NPS, including the re-organization of the Intermountain Regional Office and the changes to the Keeper of the National Register, add to the challenge of responsibly managing America's cultural resources. Those changes have been the subject of a lot of attention from the professional archeological community.

Based upon information provided by the National Parks Conservation Association, the State of the Parks Program, a 2004 by Colorado College's State the Rockies Program and input from professional archeologists in Arizona, the AAC submitted on May 25, 2005, a letter to Director Fran Mainella expressing our concerns about the asset management plan, the use of the FMFS system and qualifications of cultural resources personnel.

This letter was also sent to the superintendents of parks in the Four Corners area. On September 8th, we received a reply from the Office of Director of the NPS. We are submitting copies of both of these letters with our testimony.

The letter we received from the Director does not clarify our questions or adequately address our concerns. The letter was quite general in reply, and essentially directed us to contact each park unit with specific questions or issues that we had. Our concerns, however, lie with NPS-wide policies and procedures. We are, therefore, currently in the process of preparing a response, and we plan to continue this dialog with the NPS.

As you will see in the letter that has been submitted for the record, we have basically three specific issues that we would like to open a dialog about. The first is the use of the single asset management system to evaluate the condition and assign maintenance funds to all park facilities. This is a system that essentially equates prehistoric and historic features as equal to modern buildings and infrastructures. The use of this system has a high potential to result in minimum funding for cultural resources preservation when budgets are tight. It basically comes down to cultural resources versus visitor facilities, and we feel that this is not in the best interest of cultural resources.

Second, recent restructuring and personnel policies have resulted in supervisory positions being filled by people who do not necessarily meet the Secretary of Interior standards which are used throughout the archeological community to establish qualifications. The NPS should exemplify these qualifications that are required in the professional community throughout the United States, but it appears that cultural resources in some parks are suffering from daily and long-term decisions made by managers who lack appropriate training and are unaware or do not follow legal requirements and standards for cultural resource compliance.

We have heard of several incidents where there has been damage to cultural resources because the superintendents or the managers directly in charge of daily operations, did not seem to be aware of standard procedures and legal requirements before development had taken place.

Finally, we are concerned that the system of review for National Park Service undertaking, could be adversely impacting archeological resources. A programmatic agreement was set up in 1995, which allows park superintendents to establish compliance, a task that is normally undertaken by the State Historic Preservation offices in each State in the country.

We're concerned this system has led to a lack of rigorous compliance with Federal laws to protect cultural resources, and this is somewhat tied to the concern of personnel qualifications.

The Arizona Archaeological Council is grateful for the opportunity to provide the subcommittee with our perspective on these changes in the National Park Service oversight.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Spurr follows:]

Arizona Archaeological Council, P.O. Box 27566, Tempe, Arizona 85282

May 25, 2005

Hon. Fran P. Mainella, Director
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
1849 C. Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20240

Dear Director Mainella,

The Arizona Archaeological Council (AAC) is an organization that primarily represents professional members of the archaeological and cultural resources community working in Arizona. Recently our organization has become aware of potentially serious threats to prehistoric and historic cultural resources administered by the National Park Service (NPS) in the greater Southwest. AAC is concerned about current policies and procedures that may adversely affect irreplaceable cultural resources under the protection of the NPS.

Our first concern is the treatment of prehistoric and historic features as equal to modern buildings and infrastructure for the purposes of asset management and facility management within the NPS. As we interpret Director's Order 80 (Asset Management), there is no distinction drawn between modern facilities such as visitor centers, trails, water systems, and campgrounds, and prehistoric or historic structures. This leaves prehistoric and historic features vulnerable to inappropriate methods of repair, stabilization, and preservation. Worse yet, prehistoric and historic resources may be assessed as requiring too much money or effort to be maintained when compared to visitor facilities; this is exemplified by the requirement that parks document the Current Replacement Value of each asset (DO 80), including prehistoric features. Cultural resources that contribute to the significance and uniqueness of NPS units (or are the reason why certain units were created) but are in need of expensive maintenance may therefore be allowed to degrade beyond repair if modern infrastructure is deemed more important by managers. Under the asset management process, irreplaceable resources are likely to be given low priority for maintenance funding, especially at parks with extensive visitor facilities and maintenance backlogs, or those with particularly small operating budgets. We feel strongly that the use of a single set of protocols for assessing modern NPS facilities, historic structures (both those in use and unoccupied), prehistoric resources, and natural resources is inappropriate. Just as the Facility Management Software System was designed to address the maintenance backlog of NPS infrastructure, there should be an assessment of maintenance requirements for prehistoric and historic resources, as a category separate from modern facilities. Funds for preservation should be allocated based on the significance of, and potential impacts to, each archaeological resource. Assessment of cultural resources should be undertaken in the context of cultural resources management rather than within the framework of facilities management.

A related concern is the proposed use of standards derived from the construction industry in maintaining NPS facilities (for example, Charette and Marshall 1999, *National Institute of Standards and Technology Report 6389*). Again, by not distinguishing between modern structures and prehistoric or historic features, there is a great potential for inappropriate application of modern industrial standards to the irreplaceable resources that have been entrusted to the NPS for long-term protection. Not only will use of construction standards likely contribute to deterioration of features, we are troubled by the precedent that use of inappropriate standards may set for management of cultural resources by other agencies. The

application of modern construction industry standards to cultural resources seems to reflect management decisions by NPS administrators who are unfamiliar with the importance and uniqueness of the resources and the legal mandates that require the NPS (and all other land management agencies) to protect resources within their jurisdiction. We hope that the NPS will immediately reconsider the proposal to use construction standards for maintenance of cultural resources, and involve qualified, experienced archaeologists and architectural historians in establishing rigorous criteria for maintaining both historic and prehistoric structures and features.

A second major concern of the AAC is the apparent lack of consistent and appropriate review of NPS undertakings that have the potential to impact cultural resources. Through the professional archaeological community, our members have become aware of incidents within NPS units where prehistoric and historic resources were adversely impacted by construction or maintenance activities. It is unclear to us why these activities were allowed to proceed without adequate archaeological compliance beforehand. The AAC promotes adherence to all state and federal regulations regarding cultural resources, and we are concerned that the NPS has no, or does not adhere to, established protocol for consultation with State Historic Preservation Offices (SHPOs) regarding plans for maintenance, construction, or demolition of park infrastructure. If each park unit is responsible for establishing compliance relationships with the SHPO, we believe there is a greater chance that projects will not receive appropriate review and comment by SHPO. We understand that the NPS and SHPOs have signed Programmatic Agreements to streamline the compliance review process, and presume the PAs stipulate that those personnel who meet the Secretary of the Interior's Standards are directly involved in making management decisions pertaining to the impact of undertakings on cultural resources. We would like to know more about the protocols currently in place to ensure NPS compliance with all applicable laws.

This bring us to perhaps our most basic concern, one that bridges all of the issues discussed above, regarding the qualification of personnel within the NPS who manage cultural resources. The NPS is charged with establishing and promulgating national standards for personnel who supervise archaeological research, as well as the criteria for evaluating and preserving those resources (National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended). As a division of the Department of the Interior, the NPS personnel should exemplify the qualifications listed in the Secretary of the Interior's Standards. It has come to the attention of the AAC and other state professional organizations that NPS personnel, specifically those individuals charged with making decisions regarding the daily and long-term care for to cultural resources, do not always meet the Secretary's Standards. In addition, it appears that in some cases park superintendents and other high-level managers may not be aware of the legal requirements and standards for cultural resources compliance; in these cases the need for qualified and experienced technicians and mid-level managers is even greater. As professional archaeologists we believe it is entirely inappropriate for unqualified personnel to make management decisions, no matter who is ultimately responsible, as this situation will have detrimental consequences for our irreplaceable resources sooner rather than later.

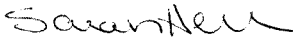
Due to our concerns about this matter, we respectfully request that you implement a review of all managers and technicians currently in positions to make decisions regarding documentation and management of cultural resources. We request that you ensure that these people meet the Secretary's Standards and have the training necessary to effectively protect the resources, and, more importantly, to prevent future adverse impacts to these resources. We also request that each park assess the percent of staff involved in cultural resource management and the percent of the park budget and staffing that is allocated to park operations. This is an important distinction at park units that were established primarily to protect cultural resources. The AAC encourages the NPS to remain a dedicated and qualified steward of the significant cultural resources preserved for America's heritage in regional parks, and to set the standards for professional cultural resource research.

We are also interested in positions that exist within central and regional offices that provide services to the parks as well as the external NPS functions that are performed. AAC is aware that the NPS is currently in the process of reducing the number of cultural resource professionals in central and regional offices. We understand that the Intermountain Region has been directed to reduce their cultural

staff by June 2005. Given the importance of historic properties in both cultural and natural resource parks, we would be interested in the NPS' justification for this action. We understand that a similar review has recently been completed on cultural resource staff in the NPS' Washington office, which has caused concern across the broad spectrum of cultural resource professional throughout the nation.

The AAC feels that these issues require urgent attention to ensure that cultural resources are not further endangered by ongoing activities in the parks or by changes in NPS protocol that are currently being considered from implementation. We hope to promote discussion of these issues between the NPS and professional archaeologists. We sincerely believe that the efforts of all concerned parties will be necessary to ensure a continued commitment by the NPS to preservation of our nation's most valuable cultural resources.

Sincerely,



Sarah Herr
President, Arizona Archaeological Council
representing the AAC Board of Directors

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September 08, 2005

H32(2200)

Ms. Sarah Herr
President, Arizona Archaeological Council
P.O. Box 27566
Tempe, AZ 85282

Dear Ms. Herr:

Thank you for your electronic letter of May 25, 2005. I appreciate your representation of the Arizona Archaeological Council's interest in the National Park Service's stewardship of cultural resources in the southwestern United States. Those parks hold important sites—both historic and prehistoric—and our employees are privileged to be responsible for the preservation of those significant resources.

The first concern you express is that the National Park Service (NPS) is treating historic and prehistoric features as assets equivalent to modern park facilities and thereby not according cultural resources the special protection that they deserve. This is not the case. NPS asset management protocols give us a broad array of factors to use in assessing maintenance and preservation needs, ensuring that no aspect of the work is overlooked and allowing us to more accurately estimate the funding required. Preservation of resources is one of our primary mandates. We use every tool available to us to professionally protect and maintain cultural resources in the Southwest.

A primary goal of the NPS Asset Management Program is to provide structure and policy around a consistent framework for all of the Service's assets, while recognizing that prehistoric and historic resources require different management approaches. As needed, we refine and adapt our Asset Management Program to incorporate the challenges posed by these unique resources within the broader asset management program. The asset management program provides the NPS with a defensible business case for program funding. While the facility condition index (FCI) provides a relative indicator of an asset's condition, it should not be the only factor in determining where NPS invests resources. The asset priority index (API) will be used to prioritize the Service's asset portfolio. By their very nature, significant cultural resources will rise to the top of the priority list due to their mission-based need. Both the FCI and API are tools to assist the Service in decision-making. Both must be considered, along with other management and resource information, in making resource allocations.

We are compiling a comprehensive list of modern facilities, archeological resources, historic structures, and other heritage assets so the NPS can assess how best to care for and treat this wide range of assets. We are further along in this process for modern facilities and historic structures than for archeological resources. To ensure that the unique aspects of cultural resources are considered, NPS has an internal working group of subject-matter professionals as well as experienced field managers developing an appropriate approach for archeological resources within the general framework of the servicewide asset management program. Our stewardship of archeological resources is to preserve them unimpaired for future generations. These resources cannot be replaced on a cyclical basis. They require different materials and treatment methods, focused on preservation and not replacement.

The National Park Service shares your commitment to the National Historic Preservation Act, Section 106 compliance process. In 1995, in accordance with the Programmatic Agreement with the National Conference of State Historic Preservation Officers (NCSHPO) and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP), the NPS delegated Section 106 responsibilities to park superintendents. As the decision makers for all park undertakings, superintendents have access to the full spectrum of professional cultural resource assistance from park, regional or technical center staff. Their Section 106 responsibility, as with all other responsibilities, is subject to annual performance review. Currently the NPS is in consultation with the NCSHPO and the ACHP to renew the Programmatic Agreement. The process will review anecdotal evidence of failures to meet responsibilities as well as evidence of invigorated new commitments to cultural resource management.

Another concern you raise is that National Park Service personnel, who make decisions regarding the care of cultural resources, do not have the qualifications specified by the Secretary of Interior's Standards. Cultural resource employees of the National Park Service are distributed throughout the nation in NPS units, regional offices, curatorial and treatment centers and the Washington office. Our staff includes Ph.D. and M.A. level professionals in every discipline of cultural resources, not only those addressed in the Secretary's Standards. Specific disciplinary expertise is available to all superintendents and other managers, ensuring that the resources we protect receive the highest level of professional attention. Those NPS units that cannot maintain a specialist position in a given discipline have access to specialists through their regional offices or technical centers.

On a related note, the Intermountain Regional office is committed to maintaining a professional cultural resource staff to assist the parks and external programs. Long-term financial sustainability for the central offices of the National Park Service required significant restructuring that began 8 years ago. During this process in the Intermountain Region, 40 percent of all permanent positions were eliminated. In comparison, the loss of cultural resource positions during this same period was only 17 percent. The current proposed reduction in cultural positions is the result of a comprehensive analysis to improve productivity and effectiveness. However, most of these positions are not being abolished. We are relocating positions from the traditional central office locations to places like partnering universities (Cooperative Ecosystem Studies Unit at University of Arizona) and moving some into other organizational divisions, such as Maintenance, Planning and Indian Affairs, where they are better situated to assist parks and external program needs.

I appreciate your interest in the National Park Service's management of cultural resources. If you have other, more specific questions, please feel free to communicate your concerns directly to the relevant park or NPS unit superintendent.

Sincerely,

SIGNED BY STEVE P. MARTIN

(for) Fran P. Mainella
Director

Attachment: Letter from Ms. Sarah Herr

cc: Jim Garrison, Arizona SHPO
Carol Griffith, Arizona Assistant SHPO
Georgianna Contoguglia, Colorado SHPO
Susan Collins, Colorado State Archaeologist
Kevin Black, Colorado Assistant State Archeologist
Kate Slick, New Mexico SHPO
Elizabeth Oster, Archaeology, New Mexico
Wilson Martin, Utah SHPO
Kevin Jones, Utah State Archeologist
Martha Catlin, Advisory Council on Historic Preservation
Janet Matthews, NPS Associate Director Cultural Resources
Frank McManamon, DOI Department Consulting Archaeologist

Superintendents:

Arches National Park
Bandelier National Monument
Black Canyon of Gunnison National Park
Cedar Breaks National Monument
Chiricahua National Monument
Canyon de Chelly National Monument
Carlsbad Caverns National Park
Capulin Volcano National Monument
Coronado National Monument
Dinosaur National Monument
El Morro National Monument
Fort Bowie National Historic Site
Gila Cliff Dwellings National Monument
Grand Canyon National Park
Golden Spike National Historic Site
Hubbell Trading Post National Historic Site
Mesa Verde National Park
Natural Bridges National Monument
Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument
Aztec Ruins National Monument
Bent's Old Fort National Historic Site
Bryce Canyon National Park
Chaco Culture National Historical Park
Casa Grande National Monument
Canyonlands National Park
Capitol Reef National Park
Colorado National Monument
Curecanti National Recreation Area
El Malpais National Monument
Florissant Fossil Beds National Monument
Fort Union National Monument
Glen Canyon National Recreation Area
Great Sand Dunes National Park/Preserve
Hovenweep National Monument
Lake Mead National Recreation Area
Montezuma Castle National Monument
Navajo National Monument
Pecos National Historical Park

Petrified Forest National Park
Pipe Springs National Monument
Rocky Mountain National Park
Sand Creek Massacre Natl. Historic Site
Sunset Crater Volcano Natl. Monument
Tonto National Monument
Tuzigoot National Monument
Wupatki National Monument
Zion National Park
Petroglyph National Monument
Rainbow Bridge National Monument
Salinas Pueblo Missions Natl. Monument
Saguaro National Park
Timpanogos Cave National Monument
Tumacacori National Historical Park
Walnut Canyon National Monument
Yucca House National Monument

William Lipe, SAA Government Affairs Committee
Kenneth Ames, SAA President
Ron Rood, President, Utah Professional Archaeological Council
J.R. Gomalak, President, New Mexico Archaeological Council
David Phillips, New Mexico Archaeological Council
Ted Hoefer, President, Colorado Council of Professional Archaeologists
Darcy Gamble, National Park and Conservation Association
Jerry Rogers, Coalition of NPS Retirees
Kate Stevenson, National Trust for Historic Preservation
Frank Buono, Public Employees for Environmental Responsibility

Mr. SOUDER. Thank you very much. Mr. Smith.

STATEMENT OF RICK SMITH

Mr. SMITH. Good morning, Mr. Chairman and other members of the subcommittee. My name is Richard Smith. I began my NPS career as a seasonal ranger in Yellowstone National Park in 1959, and retired in 1994 as the Associate Regional Director for Natural and Cultural Resources in the National Park Service's former regional office in Santa Fe, NM. I, therefore, worked during both Republican and Democratic administrations.

In between these dates, I served in Yosemite, at the Service's ranger training center here in Grand Canyon, in the Service's headquarters in Washington, DC, in Everglades National Park, in the Philadelphia Regional Office, in Carlsbad Caverns, in Guadalupe Mountains National Park in Santa Fe, with temporary assignments in Fredricksburg National Military Battlefield, and in Alaska. Following my retirement, I was asked to return to duty as the acting superintendent of Yellowstone National Park.

I come before you today representing the Coalition of National Park Service Retirees, a group consisting of 435 former employees of the Service, all of whom had experience similar to mine and many of whom were senior leaders.

Mr. Chairman, this is the first time in the 89-year history of the National Park Service that its retirees have ever felt the need to join together to comment on the management of our Park System. Our group includes two former directors, 16 former regional directors, and more than 100 ex-superintendents. To quote an old cliche, we have been there and done that.

What causes a group like this to give up fishing, hunting, travel and golf, what most retirees do, and instead join together to monitor how the political leadership of the Department of the Interior and our National Park Service are managing National Park Service areas. Quite frankly, Mr. Chairman, it's because we don't like what we see.

We don't like it when these political leaders or their appointees instruct our colleagues who are still working to lie to the American people and call cutbacks in visitor services in parks service level adjustments. Park employees we know have told us the real story of reduction in visitor center hours, elimination of interpretative and environmental education programs, reduction in resources management activities, and even curtailment in resources protection programs. Parks simply don't have enough money for their annual operations.

Now, we would normally applaud the effort going on in many parks in the Intermountain Region to conduct core management or core operations analyses. It appears to us, however, that the current analysis shows little regard for effectiveness in accomplishing park goals and objectives, as opposed to its emphasis on efficiency.

Those conducting the core obligation analyses in parks are instructed to assume prior to the analysis that fully one-third of their employees are likely to be engaged in non core activities. I was the superintendent or deputy superintendent in four national parks. We never had one-third of our employees involved in work that did not directly contribute to accomplishing our mission. If the core op-

erations analysis is just another excuse to reduce employee numbers, rather than seriously looking at park operations, then we believe the current employees will not be very willing participants in this exercise.

We are deeply disappointed, Mr. Chairman, that the departmental—that a departmental political appointee, the former director of the Cody, Wyoming Chamber of Commerce, is a department's lead on a process that will radically alter the management policies of the National Park Service and impose a political agenda on those policies. We are disturbed that, despite the President's campaign pledge to eliminate the maintenance backlog in the National Park System, that the Congressional Research Service in March of this year, March 9, 2005, estimated that the backlog is somewhere between $4.5 and $9.69 billion, depending on which assumption one used.

Claims by the department political leadership that they have reduced the maintenance backlog by $4.9 billion in the last 4 years are bogus. Ask them how much of this is new money as opposed to regular maintenance funding. While the NPS conducts regular maintenance operations with available funds, the backlog just continues to grow.

We are saddened when the political leadership continues to lead the way toward privatization and commercialization of our national parks. Do we really want to turn over park maintenance, park administration and resources management to the lowest bidder? Do we want to sell advertising space on park shuttle buses or on park brochures, or even sell off parks, as Representative Pombo recently suggested? I don't think so.

Mr. Chairman, since 1872 with the establishment of Yellowstone National Park, each succeeding generation of Americans has had its opportunity speaking through its Representatives in Congress to add the areas to the System they believe deserved protection and perpetuity.

As a matter of generational equity and of respect for those who came before us, we should manage these areas with the highest regard for their resource integrity and their ability to remind us who we are and what we are as a people and as a Nation. We should not be careless with this legacy, nor allow it to be subjected to a political agenda.

I very much appreciate, Mr. Chairman, the opportunity to address you and members of the subcommittee this morning. I'll be pleased to try to answer any questions that you may have. Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Smith follows:]

STATEMENT OF RICHARD B. SMITH
COALITION OF NATIONAL PARK SERVICE RETIREES
FLAGSTAFF HEARING OCTOBER 13, 2005
HOUSE SUBCOMMITTEE ON CRIMINAL JUSTICE,
DRUG POLICY AND HUMAN RESOURCES

Good morning, Mr. Chairman and other members of the Subcommittee. My name is Richard Smith. I would like to reiterate the appreciation expressed by other former National Park employees who have appeared before your Subcommittee for holding these hearings to examine the current management of our national parks.

I began my National Park Service (NPS) career as a seasonal ranger in Yellowstone National Park in 1959 and retired in 1994 as the Associate Regional Director for natural and cultural resources in the National Park Service's former Regional Office in Santa Fe. I therefore worked for the NPS during the administrations of both Republicans and Democrats. In between those dates, I served in Yosemite, at the Service's ranger training center in Grand Canyon, in the Service's headquarters in Washington, DC, in Everglades National Park, in the Philadelphia Regional Office, in Carlsbad and Guadalupe Mountains, and in Santa Fe with temporary assignments in Fredericksburg National Military Battlefield and in Alaska. Following my retirement, I was asked to return to duty as the Acting Superintendent of Yellowstone National Park, a position I occupied for 4 months until the newly-appointed superintendent could leave his previous position. I come before you today representing the Coalition of National Park Service Retirees, a group consisting of 435 former employees of the Service, many of whom were senior leaders. Mr. Chairman, this is the first time in the 89-year history of the National Park Service that its retirees have ever felt the need to join together to comment on the management of our park system. Our group includes two former Directors, 16 former Regional Directors and more than 100 ex-superintendents. To quote an old cliché: we have been there and done that.

What causes a group such as this to give up fishing, hunting, travel and golf, what most retirees do, and instead join together to monitor how the political leadership of the Department of the Interior and the National Park Service are managing national park service areas? Quite frankly, Mr. Chairman, it's because we don't like what we see. We don't like it when these political leaders or their appointees instruct our colleagues who are still working to lie to the American people and call cutbacks in visitor services in parks "service level adjustments." We don't like it when the Director of the National Park Service and the Secretary of the Interior travel around the country, boasting that the budget of the National Park Service has more money per acre, per employee and per visitor than ever before. They know that this is true only because they have reduced the number of employees, the number of visitors to parks has dropped and that the acreage of the System has remained relatively static. Park employees we know have told us, on the other hand, the real story of reductions in visitor center hours, elimination of interpretive and environmental education programs, reduction in resources management activities, and even curtailment in resources protection programs. Parks simply don't have enough money for their annual operations. This fact is borne out in the business plans that many parks developed. Just as a typical example in a large park, Yellowstone reported annual operating deficits in resources protection of 3.29 million; visitor experience and enjoyment, $9.5 million; facility operations,

$3.4 million; maintenance, $2.1 million; and management and administration, $4.3 million. Of course, this type of information flies in the face of the Secretary and the Director's mantra that there is plenty of operating money so we don't hear very much about the business plans anymore.

We would normally applaud the effort going on in many parks in the Intermountain Region to conduct core operations analyses. It is always helpful to make sure that parks are dedicating their human and fiscal resources to the highest priority programs and projects. From what we have seen and heard of the current effort, however, there seem to be some basic flaws. For instance, the analysis follows division breakdowns in parks, categorizing effort in maintenance, protection, interpretation, administration or resources management. This very traditional approach does not promote holistic or innovative thinking. The exercise appears to us to sort work rather than prioritizing it. The analysis shows little regard for effectiveness in accomplishing park goals and objectives as opposed to its emphasis on efficiency. It is also being conducted without public input or review. We are suspicious, moreover, when we see information that was leaked to us from active employees that instruct those conducting the core operations analyses in parks to assume, prior to the analysis, that fully 1/3 of their employees are likely to be engaged in non-core activities. How would you like to be considered non-core? Where does the leadership get this number? I was superintendent or deputy superintendent in 4 parks. We never had 1/3 of our employees involved in work that did not contribute to accomplishing our mission. We know that many smaller parks in the system have well over 90% of their annual operating programs tied up in personnel services rather than the 80% that is the goal of the core operations analysis. If the core operations analysis is just another excuse to reduce employee numbers rather than seriously looking at park operations, then we believe that current employees will not be very willing participants in the exercise.

We are disturbed that despite repeated scientific evidence that snowmobiles disturb the natural quiet of Yellowstone, adversely affect wildlife populations and pose threats to visitor and employee health, and despite the overwhelming desire of the hundreds of thousands of Americans who participated in the public comment periods during the EIS process that snowmobile use be phased out that these machines continue to be permitted in Yellowstone and Grand Teton National Parks based on the desires of Departmental political appointees and their allies in the mechanized recreation industry. The insistence on their continued use devalues science and demonstrates their contempt for public opinion.

We are deeply disappointed that a Departmental political appointee, the former director of the Cody Wyoming. Chamber of Commerce, is the Department's lead on the process that will radically alter the management policies of the National Park Service. Despite the assurances from the Assistant Secretary for Fish, Wildlife and Parks that the Hoffman rewrite was just a suggestion and is now off the table, we know from the NPS employees who are engaged in negotiations with Mr. Hoffman now about the final draft version to be submitted to the public for comment that his suggestions are very much on the table and that the incremental changes that have marked previous policy rewrites are not going to be acceptable to the political appointees of the Department and the Service. What is particularly disturbing about the process that the Bureau and the Department are following in this rewrite is that NPS subject matter specialists and even the superintendents, the ones charged with implementing these policies, will not see the

proposed changes until the general public does. This is unprecedented, Mr. Chairman. Previous policy modifications went through a full field review. There are fewer than 50 current NPS employees who have even seen the various drafts. In fact, no one outside a very select group would have seen the Hoffman redline version had we not leaked it to the press and to our colleagues who are still working. The ensuing editorial comment in over 30 major newspapers across the country demonstrates how little confidence there is in the Department's version of how to preserve and protect our park areas and in the secret process they attempted to use in the rewrite. What are they afraid of? This is no way to conduct business in an era that demands transparency from its government agencies.

We are disturbed that despite the President's campaign pledge to eliminate the maintenance backlog in the National Park System—now the Department says that he merely promised to reduce it—the Congressional Research Service in March of this year estimated the backlog to be between $4.5 and $9.69 billion depending on which assumptions one uses. Assistant Secretary Manson recently replied to a question about the maintenance backlog asked by a journalist by asserting that the Administration had invested more than $4.9 billion in maintenance in the last 4 years. Mr. Chairman, this is a very disingenuous answer. What Assistant Secretary Manson failed to point out is that almost none of this is new money targeted to reduce backlog maintenance. He is simply adding up the maintenance budget for the last 4 years, plus Federal Highway money that was not even included in the final bill recently approved by the Congress, and claiming that it addresses the backlog. The reality is quite the contrary. While the NPS conducts regular maintenance operations, the backlog continues to grow.

We are saddened to watch the ongoing efforts by the political leadership of the Department and the Park Service to privatize our national park system, a system that author Wallace Stegner called, the "best idea America ever had." The Department and the bureau continue their efforts to push competitive sourcing throughout the system. The idea of outsourcing Park Service maintenance, administrative, research, and resources management operations to the lowest bidder is repugnant to most Americans. It is also highly impractical. The plumber whose job is outsourced is very likely to also be a member of the park's search and rescue team or structural fire brigade. The auto mechanic may also be member of the wildland fire management team. The contract researcher does his/her job and leaves. Unlike a regularly employed researcher, he or she does not have to live with the consequences of the recommendations that he or she makes. There is no way that the lowest bidder can provide these kinds of multi-talented people. And besides, do we really want the low bidder to take care of the parks that previous generations of Americans said deserved protection in perpetuity?

Your congressional colleague, Representative Richard Pombo of California, recently proposed legislation that would require the NPS to raise $10 million by selling advertising on park brochures and other publications and by allowing park shuttle buses to carry sideboard advertising. His bill also authorized the wholesale naming of park infrastructure to recognize private donors to raise another $10 million. The bill also called for selling 15 parks for development purposes. Pombo later claimed that this was a joke and that the Congressional Budget Office released his draft bill prematurely. The Coalition of NPS Retirees, however, is not laughing. Neither, Mr. Chairman, is Representative Baird, a co-sponsor of your NPS Centennial Bill and the co-founder, with you, of the National Parks Caucus, who wrote

Representative Pombo a strong letter deploring these privatization efforts. As if this were not enough, the NPS has opened a public comment period on a revised Director's Order 21, the donation policy. This revision opens the door to increased donor recognition opportunities—for a big enough donation, I can now have the Richard Smith bench placed in a park—and eliminates the "prohibited source" provisions, opening the way to donations by corporations that generate profits through tobacco and liquor sales. The march toward privatization continues apace.

What is particularly disturbing about these moves toward privatizing the park system and depending increasingly on fees is that they significantly increase the probabilities that the system becomes less "national" and less open to the "common" American – and more open to commercial, special and regional/local interests, and to Americans who can afford to pay the ever-increasing entrance and user fees. This is not what was intended when the system was established. The only way to change that trend is for Congress to accept the responsibility to "fully" fund the needs of the system so that these other mechanisms of support aren't needed. Mr. Chairman, your Centennial bill would go along way toward accomplishing this goal.

One characteristic of our group, Mr. Chairman, is that we do more than complain about management actions of the current political leadership of the Department and the Service. In September 2004, we published a document entitled, *A Call to Action: Saving our National Park System.* This document contains a 5-step program for reinvigorating the management of the National Park System and returning to the bipartisan support that used to characterize the political oversight of the System in time to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the establishment of the National Park Service in 2016. In light of the more than 12,000 years of experience in park management possessed by the members of the Coalition, we believe that these recommendations merit examination and subsequent action by the Congress and by the Administration.

Call to Action I:

- There is the immediate need for an annual reoccurring operational budget increase for the National Park Service of at least $600 million dollars required to restore the Service's ability to manage the daily operations of our National Park System.
- Efforts to weaken the mission of the National Park Service by a variety of initiatives carried out by the current administration must cease, to be replaced by progressive and constructive decisions that celebrate and strengthen that mission.

Call to Action II:

- Establish and convene a non-partisan National Parks Blue Ribbon Commission to examine the most effective organizational model for the governance of the National Park System and the National Park Service to report to Congress and the President on its findings and recommendations.

Call to Action III:

- Establish and convene a non-partisan and technical expert panel to sort "fact from fancy" and determine what are the true budget and personnel needs of the National Park Service, evaluating what governmental processes stand in the way of success and what is required to assure it. This panel will report its findings to the National Parks Blue Ribbon Commission.

Call to Action IV:

- Agency discretion to manage the National Park System must be restored to the National Park Service, where career professionals are valued, encouraged, developed and held accountable to managing the public's trust.

Call to Action V:

- We must revitalize our park system by combining the recommendations of the groups mentioned in Calls to Action II and III into a bold multi-year "*Keeping the Promises*" plan culminating in 2016, the 100th anniversary of the National Park Service.

The entire document, Mr. Chairman, can be found at our website, www.npsretirees.org.

Mr. Chairman, since 1872 with the establishment of Yellowstone, each succeeding generation of Americans has had its opportunity, speaking through its representatives in Congress, to add the areas that were important to that generation to the National Park System. As a matter of generational equity and of respect for those who came before us, we should manage these areas with the highest regard for their resource integrity and their ability to remind us of who we are as a people and a nation. We should not be careless with this legacy nor allow it to be subjected to a political agenda.

I very much appreciate the opportunity to address you and the members of the Subcommittee this morning. I will be pleased to try to answer any questions you or the other members may have. Thank you.

Mr. SOUDER. You know, Mr. Turner is going to have to leave, so I'm going to start off with Mr. Turner.

Mr. TURNER. Mr. Chairman, I appreciate that, and I appreciate all of the time that everyone has spent on both of these panels in preparing for coming before us. I've a plane to catch at 1:10, which is the difference between my getting back to D.C. today versus tomorrow, as you know, some of you I have communicated with, so I appreciate the chairman allowing me to ask this panel questions prior to the time that I need to depart.

Mr. Smith, I got to tell you, in reading both your statement and in the hearing what you presented, I'm really disappointed in your statements. I'm really disappointed in the tenor of your statements. I read your statement beforehand and I was going to be interested in the manner in which you presented it. It really shows such an unbelievable contempt for people who work very, very hard for the National Park Service, some people which may have opinions which are different than yours and some people may have challenges which you currently are not facing, but I counted in your statement seven times you used the word "political."

You have three people up here who were elected in a political process, and you will not hear us talking about political agendas or political issues. You will hear us talking about substantive issues facing the park district, and I think you have a tremendous opportunity with your association to advance issues that those that are on the inside of the system are not on a day-to-day basis free to do, but to do it in a manner that is so disparaging the people who are working on it, I don't think is helpful for the process, and I do not have a question for you.

Ms. Tuck, I do have a question for you. You invited us to ask you about volunteers and the impacts the cuts are having with the volunteers, and I would like you to speak about that, and, also, I'm very interested in having the national parks and seeing the extent to which they're struggling with invasive species, and you mentioned that in your comments and also in your effort to assist the Grand Canyon in their eradication efforts.

If you might also, after you complete your comments about the volunteers, speak a moment about that effort and its impact on the Grand Canyon.

Ms. TUCK. OK. Thank you. I'm known for being long-winded, and when I practiced this morning, I topped out at 12 minutes, so I had to cut. So I know I still went over, but I did better than my usual record.

Our Foundation, the budget of our park is $19 million. Over the last 5 years, we've given—we've raised $13.5 million for this park, with three employees. Last year alone, more than 1,200 volunteers contributed 49,000 hours to a variety of—only resource protection. We're just measuring resource protection. I'm not measuring everything. And that's time valued by the National Park Service as $850,000.

But the limited Federal funding has meant that the Park Service no longer has people who can train or supervise volunteers. We have had a long tradition of hosting Elderhostels, boy scouts. The relationship of people with parks, that's really important, and what

we think that relationship is, is that stewardship is more than money. It is also service.

There is one program, the Greenhouse Program at the Grand Canyon and the Re-vegetation Program that historically has been heavily reliant on volunteers. Over the last 6 fiscal years, that program alone got 90,000 volunteer hours, labor valued by the Park Service—we used this figure in a recent grant application to a private foundation, so these are the Park Service's figures. They valued that volunteer time at $1.5 million.

As a result of staff cuts, this important program at the Grand Canyon declined from nearly 19,000 in fiscal year 2004, to just over 6,000 in 2006. As a result of that, one of the things that we did is to decide that we would hire a half-time volunteer coordinator within the Foundation to help the park use volunteer experiences. These are people—these experiences volunteering in the park, make people stewards forever.

I had—one of the most wonderful weekends of my summer, was spent on the North Rim with a bunch of Navajo boy scouts from Tuba City who had never been to the Grand Canyon, and they had the time of their lives, and I have to say that they asked to come back for their winter camping experience, and I'm going to be the only woman invited to the winter camping experience. So I'm pretty proud of this little group of boy scouts, and I think we need to look at what cutbacks mean in terms of cutbacks in terms of volunteers.

The problem with invasive species is a horrible problem in all of our parks. You will see on the table right outside here a little brochure we did with Park Service staff, looking and focusing on the 10 most wanted invasive species in the park. The park is now using this brochure. It's going out with every back country permit. Some of the rangers have them so they can help identify them. It's a really difficult problem, and you can eradicate a species, and then if you don't come back in the next year and do additional clean-up work, some of—all of the work you did the first year can get lost.

This year we raised $189,000 for the inner canyon vegetation, and we're currently looking—we have—we think we're going to get a grant for $250,000 to continue that program next year, but I think this is a core operation of the Park Service. It's not something that we should be doing.

Mr. TURNER. Thank you. I'm going to submit a followup question on the issue of invasive species. I want to thank you so much for holding this hearing. I learned so much about our national parks, and whenever I hear from those who have the responsibility of stewardship or those who are working diligently with them to preserve them for our country and our Nation, it gives us an ability to serve Americans better in Congress the more that we know of what's needed.

I want to congratulate my fellow classmate Rick Renzi on his impeccable record on preserving and defending our national parks and those things that are in his back yard, and some of the policies that you pursue have a greater impact than just those that are in your district, because you certainly have a national perspective with respect to our national parks, and I thank you for your leadership there. Thank you, gentlemen, for including me.

Mr. SOUDER. Thanks for coming.

Mr. Renzi, would you like to go next?

Mr. RENZI. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mike, thank you so very much for coming all the way from Ohio to be with us. I appreciate it.

Mr. Keiter, I was really taken—and I want to thank you for your honesty when you said that over time both Republicans and Democrats deserve the blame over many administrations, so the underfunding problem has gone on for years. I feel like we've reached a point with the critical infrastructure, particularly some of the capital improvements—major capital—it's like a home that you didn't—as you described, that you haven't invested properly in maintaining.

When you look at new sources of money, when you look at trying to make up the major deficit now that we're so far behind, can you share any kind of creative thoughts you have on ways for us to come up with that funding?

Mr. KEITER. A few thoughts that have both occurred to myself and to NPCA, one obvious potential source of revenue, which I know that several of you have been involved with, would be obviously the Centennial Act, and the check off scheme that is included within that legislation, and that certainly is one potential source.

I probably should add that NPCA has prepared several dozen State of the Parks reports that I alluded to in my testimony, and I believe you will find in those reports for each individual park some suggestions of potential additional revenue sources.

Mr. RENZI. In the Centennial Program, how much money do you think from your outside budgeting look—how much money do you think we could raise on the Centennial program.

Mr. KEITER. You're taking me into realms that a dirt lawyer would be very reluctant to venture into.

Mr. RENZI. Do we have a projection on—that is the chairman's bill. I give him great credit for it. Do you have an idea of what the Centennial Program may raise over 5 years or 3 years.

Mr. SOUDER. No, to answer your question, because the way the Centennial Act is drafted, which won't pass in its current form because what it says is that the shortfall that sets the target goals of the amounts the departments are behind. Then it says what we don't raise is national Federal expenditures. It isn't matched. It is made up by the difference.

I think the best opportunity we have here that is realistically within the budget, we are looking at something where the dollars are matched by Federal dollars, rather than the shortfall made up. But it's uncertain what that will be, and none of us really know, but it could be significant, particularly if there is a Federal match, because that would really help the Foundation as they go out and try to do that.

Mr. RENZI. Particularly if we spend some money educating people on the idea that you could check on your tax form that your rebate money, money you may want to donate. I cut you off.

Mr. KEITER. Well, just very quickly. The business plans that NPCA has done on a number of parks include some suggestions at the end of those plans for possible revenue sources. I don't have specifics right in front of me for individual parks, but we do have

those business plans—or, excuse me—State of the Parks plans completed for several of the parks in this Region.

Obviously private philanthropy is a potential source, but as we've heard today and as you're well aware, the key there is that this source of revenue has historically gone to provide the park with something that they do not otherwise have or receive or should expect through core operations and maintenance funding, and I think it's key that we maintain that distinction, and in some cases, as we've heard today, get back to maintaining that distinction.

Mr. RENZI. Thank you very much.

Mr. Smith, I know Mr. Turner took you to task. Mr. Pombo is a good friend of mine. He's chairman of my full committee, and he is a good man who is bipartisan. He has returned a lot of land to Native Americans. In your—the record needs to reflect an inaccuracy in your statement, which I read three times last night—I'm not here—I'm going to give you a chance to talk, but you said that the parks, the acreage in the system remain relatively static. You're aware Chairman Pombo pushed through legislation to add 122,000 acres to Petrified Forest. So that's inaccurate to say that about the man.

What he said was the fact that his request to find out whether or not what it was going to cost should not have been released, and that request actually came out of the subcommittee.

I do give you credit, though, sir, because with your criticism you did go and take five points on a call to action and try not to just criticize, but find solutions. When you look at new money and you look at—in my—I get criticized by some of my colleagues sometimes for earmarking. Somebody is going to earmark. You turn your money over to A DOT, they earmark at the State level. You turn your money over to the Park Service, they're going to earmark. So I use my earmarks to make up for the deficits and the deplorable conditions in my district.

I then say on top of that we need to appropriate and authorize and look at those solutions, but authorization of appropriations can be a 2 or 3-year process, as we all know, so with the earmarks and with the authorization of appropriations, with creative solutions as we've seen coming out of the chairman, what else do you have as far as a solution for us to come up with new moneys, given the conditions that we are in the country?

Mr. SMITH. Well, Mr. Renzi, what we did in the call for action is to suggest the formation of a Blue Ribbon Committee, and I recognize that takes a couple of years, but we need to, I think, rethink how we fund the National Park System, and I think we need to rethink how we manage the National Park System.

One of the things that has been talked about, and I think a commission like this could study, would be the removal of the National Park Service from the Department of the Interior and make it somewhat similar to the management of the Smithsonian, an independent agency that then would not—you know, I certainly am not just critical of the current administration. Other administrations, as you pointed out, have contributed to this problem, but under—something that kind of gives us a fresh look, because what's happening now is that we're down this path of annual appropriations. The National Park Service is part of the Department of the Inte-

rior, and it isn't working. It doesn't work very well, and our parks are slowly declining, and the reason—and as proof of that, you're holding these hearings.

Mr. RENZI. I agree.

Mr. SMITH. So I think we need to do that. We also suggested, Mr. Congressman, the formation of a technical committee that would advise this Blue Ribbon Commission on this horrible problem with the maintenance backlog. I applaud the Park Service now for its new maintenance management system. I went through the first generation of computerized maintenance management system, but to separate fact from fancy—to separate fact from fancy and bring to the American public in time for the Centennial of the Park Service, 2016, a plan to resuscitate and reinvigorate the management of our National Park System.

Mr. RENZI. Thank you. Deborah, I want to thank you, because you have mentored me in areas when I needed knowledge, and you and I also have been great friends, and the trips I've taken to the Grand Canyon, you have helped me—we've worked on projects together.

Since you've been around over the last 5 years, how much money has your organization raised roughly?

Ms. TUCK. About $13.5 million.

Mr. RENZI. And the goals that you have in the future are phenomenal. When you look at taking the $13 million and change that you raised and putting it into different projects, is there a coordinated effort? Are you able to know what Joe needs to where you could stop the bleeding, or is it that you're—go ahead.

Ms. TUCK. Yes and no. You know, we can always improve, but the Foundation—and I think this is true of all of the friends organizations—we're not an independent agency. We're not co-dependent, but we're not an independent agency, either, so what we raise money for are projects that Joe and I agree upon.

I think what would be helpful is when the park starts its budgeting process, because Park Service people don't necessarily know what philanthropic possibilities are, that, in fact, the Foundation at the local level sit down with the park managers and hear what the needs are, so that you can say, "Gee, you're talking about"—for example, I'm not sure how this happened, but there was a renovation of a railroad station at the Grand Canyon. Well, there are a couple of different kinds of Federal sources and national sources in which that money could have come out of, so I think that we could improve that a little bit, but one of the things we're contemplating doing, we have 660 miles of trail below the rim. We have 880,000 hikers on those trails, so one of Joe's biggest problems every year is how do I find the money to repair the trails. You know our climate. You know what happens when the Bright Angel washes out. So we're hoping to create a $20 million endowment in honor of a member of our board and Arizona's first person in the cabinet, Stewart Udall, so that every year we will produce for the park $1 million if we meet that goal, so that Joe no longer has to worry about where is the money going to come to repair our trails.

But here is your responsibility and the responsibility of the other elected officials. Then once he has that, don't downgrade the dollars so that if he's had $19 million, you can say, "Oh, Joe, you've got

$1 million a year, so therefore you're only going to get $18 million." That's not fair.

Mr. RENZI. I agree.

Ms. TUCK. What foundations are doing is providing the margin of excellence, not meeting core operations money. That's where we should be.

Mr. RENZI. I agree. Mr. Chairman, thank you very much.

Mr. SOUDER. I thank you for your testimony. Each one of these hearings, we learn more, and it gets harder and not easier to try to figure anything out about how to deal with this.

First let me, Mr. Keiter, say that without the data and regular information from the NPCA, it would be impossible to hold these hearings. And to the degree we can coordinate together, which is not easy in the political environment we're in, we can increasingly delineate the fact that the decisions that we're making, that each year we've tried to increase funding. We've worked with that on a regular basis, and in the perspective of the overall discretionary budget, the Park Service has done well. That means they're falling less behind than every other agency in the U.S. Government.

I'm going to digress a second on a couple points. You gave me questions. It's our tremendous challenge as we look at this, that all of us sit on all kind of committees, and this is a zero sum game, and sometimes people advocate for the parks or advocate for other things, don't understand that this is a zero sum game.

The question is, is each marginal thing we're going to do in the parks, is that worth reducing the amount we pay for prescription drugs for the senior, is it worth reducing the what we're paying for Katrina for people who are coming back and make them pay more of their share? We have to make tough decisions of whether we're going to have 8 percent, 12 percent, or 20 percent flu vaccinations held back in case we get hit with the bird flu. If we increase that, it isn't available for parks. It's a zero sum game.

We can have philosophical arguments about taxation, but the fact is that no party in any State is increasing taxes right now. There may be some shifting around in things, but if you look at what's happening in welfare expenditures and juvenile delinquency and mental health, all funds are going down at the State and Federal level.

Part of our problem here, quite bluntly, is the State Parks are not coming up with their share, and in almost State in the budget meetings, has had more land and responsibility options moving to the Federal Government, and even as I visited joint operations, whether it be Indiana at Indiana Dunes, California Redwoods, Alaska, Washington State, what we see is the State and Federal Government partnership and the Federal is getting an increasing percentage of that share because the State Governments are strapped and not putting the dollars in. This is the uniform difficult challenge.

That said, as we kind of drown in our day-to-day problems, part of my commitment with this and part of the reason we're doing these hearings, is that the question is that you can't be so short-term focused that you don't leave a long-term legacy for your kids and grandkids. And in our National Park Service, one of the things we have is our long-term legacy, and we have to understand what

our restrictions are and what realistically we can achieve, but seek high, but understand that whenever we have multiple hurricanes and the types of disasters we have and if we get hit with another terrorist attack, that these things change, that when people say are you screening—to Homeland Security, are you screening every bag on every airplane? If we do, it means a funds reduction in the National Park Service.

It is not going to be that there's going to be this sudden boost up in revenue and we'll be able to screen every bag. We have to take risks and tradeoffs, and the question is how do we take those risks and tradeoffs. Now, today's testimony was helpful and, for example, this archeology question is very complex, and we'll probably have some followup in trying to sort out the differences between the new buildings, the prehistoric buildings, and the current buildings. I'm on the Board of Indiana Landmarks, and one of the things we have to have out of landmarks groups is, not just this isn't the way we're going to do it, but how do we propose to make value judgments.

We are not going to preserve everything. We cannot afford to preserve everything. I think it's a good point about separating visitor facilities from historic facilities, but in those historic facilities, the 50-year rule isn't working. What happens—and we also can't have this egalitarian thing that every building is of equal value.

Some things have hierarchies of values, uniqueness of values, and those concepts maybe change over time, but clearly I wanted to make sure that historic and archeology resources stay in the mix. But to do that, we're going to need aggressive specifics, because I agree with your fundamental, that it is not in many cases as high a priority in the debate system, and some of these debates are pretty nasty.

When I first went on the Park Subcommittee, my first debate was about Gettysburg. Do you tear down the cycloramic theater which was a historic structure sitting on this historic framework. Which was the forethought of the park? Was it the battlefield, or was it to preserve cyclorama which was designed by a very significant designer, one of his best creations. It had meant a lot to visitors, but it meant you couldn't appreciate where the key point of the battle turned.

And these are very tough questions that we have to sort through. At Lexington and Concord, there are buildings there that the Park Service has that were built on the trail that inhibit, in my opinion, some of the ability to understand what the battlefield looked like, but we kept them because they're historic buildings, but they don't have anything to do with the time period that we set the park up for.

And how we resolve these things is very critical because by not making the decisions of how to prioritize, we don't have the money. Now, this leads to a very fundamental challenge here on kind of the crown jewel of parks versus the mid level parks versus the smaller, everything from postage stamp to political—what our former Park Director from my home State called park rail projects, that—and that anybody who manages the Park Service tries to come up with different types of ways to try to discourage Congress from adding things to the System.

One of the big debates we had in the Centennial Act that we're still trying to work through is how do we not only relate the private sector money, but how do we on the public side balance—if you focus too much on maintenance and operation and backlog—everybody focuses on maintenance, operation and backlog—and you don't add new things to the Park Service?

So, for example, another thing I support is Curt Weldon adding the heart of the Brandywine Battlefield to the Park Service. The problem with it here is that it's not a—it's a somewhat degraded area. It was offered by a seminary. They offered it at a lower cost than it would—I think it was a couple million dollars compared to $6 million if they sold it for condos. If the condos would had gone over that battlefield, we would never had that battlefield. It is adjacent to a fish and wildlife area, and it is one of the only open grassy areas of the areas in the area of Philadelphia. That's not a problem they have as much in the west, but it's a problem out east for any kind of green space.

Now, when that park ran potential comes up, do we in effect divert resources from operations in other parks and from bigger parks where there is a lot of public support, to add something that once it's built over, it will never be part of the Park Service? We will never tear down the condo, and it offers green space in areas where there isn't green space, and while it wasn't a critical battle, it was an important battle.

One of the tradeoffs here, and we push too much in one direction and another. Partly, we don't want to make judgments, generally speaking, but in my State, there's a total of 3 percent public lands, total. Federal, State, local, township and county; 3 percent Federal land. Not a problem—the same problem that my friend Rick faces or Greg Walden where we'll be next up in Oregon. I sat next to him on a Resource Committee. He's 90 percent. And Jim Gibbons on the other side was 96 percent in Nevada.

We only have 3 percent. So guess what. We can't stitch together big parks. We want heritage areas, and the heritage area money is coming out of the Parks budget. It's coming out of the Interior. So now the National Park Service has to manage areas for which they have no control, and that what was intended as a well meaning attempt not to, in effect, reduce Park Service core budgets, as a result of the further diffusion. And then in Boston we have a thing called the National Park area, which in Boston Harbor we didn't own any land, the Federal Government. All they were doing was coordinating a bunch of things including Logan Airport which sits inside the boundaries of the National Park area.

The Park Service is so diffuse right now, and nobody wants to say what are the crown jewels, what are the mid jewels, and what are the others. So there has been a back door, in my opinion, when you refer to the amount of dollars that goes to Yellowstone, Grand Canyon and Yosemite, and not to have those dollars shifted—the American public, when they say they don't want any change to the National Park Service, they're thinking of the crown jewels and their local park. If you told them, "Would you rather have Grand Canyon be under-funded, or cut out some of the small parks," they would say cut out some of the small parks. Unless you're representing that area or unless you have an archeological national view, it

is a very tough challenge in polling, because they don't even know how many units we have or the diversity of the Park Service or the challenge.

One of the hot things we're going through right now on the tax code question is land donations. Should you be able to take a land donation, and there is a proposal in the Senate we need to fight because it could be critical to the Park Service, which is, "can you value land donations at its market value, or the value you bought it at?" Well, this becomes a huge thing to the Nature Conservancy, to different groups working easements, that one of the things we're doing for new land, instead of buying it, we try to get easements, because that way we preserve the views and try to keep cattle ranches and other things there in the area without disturbing the park.

But to the degree the tax code changes, to the degree we have these different pressures, this is incredibly complex. I thought these hearings were going to be a little more narrowly targeted. When I realized we were looking at the funding of the Park Service, we were automatically into questions of how you do core ops, how do you do an assessment of prioritization, how you do—personnel costs are eating up—we just had a huge company that had a great impact, the Indiana Delphi, declare bankruptcy, that GM and Ford are both teetering. U.S. Steel, the steel companies, they can't pay the pensions.

We have the problem with the Federal Government. Nobody put aside the money to match the pensions and the health care, so every time you look at an employee tradeoff as opposed to contracting out or a purchasing tradeoff, the numbers are staggering that are facing us in the Park Service.

We're talking about 5 years. You look out 15 years, these shortfalls are staggering, and they are not going to be able to be met without a lot of creative type thinking.

I have registered aggressively my concern, and I understand that there are other politics going on, that Chairman Pombo's proposal to sell off parks isn't going to pass. Partly—and I made it clear that I won't vote for a budget bill that includes that.

At the same time, this is partly a battle over Alaska, because most of these lands are in Alaska, and how are you going to do budget offsets, and basically it is somewhat of a battle over drilling on the Arctic Refuse. It was a push on one side to try to get another issue. It wasn't over selling parks. Parks aren't going to be sold. I'll just tell you that.

The other question of how much commercialization is going to be in the parks is a very tough challenge and something that we need to visit. I appreciate all your comments, but I have—for example, I referred earlier to the transportation system that mostly isn't in the park, but goes into the park in Acadia where L.L. Bean does have their name on the back of it.

The question is how far are we going to go and where are we going to go in allowing commercialization? And I think this is a valid question. We see little Kodak moment spots around. It's a little naive to say that it hasn't already been in the park, that they clearly—the concessionaires have it, but I think there's a general

consensus that there has to be a cap that we ought to talk about where this is going to be.

The American public doesn't want to pay for the parks, and then walk in the parks that look like a constant advertising gimmick. The question is how can we meet these tradeoffs.

I think that the Hoffman memo which popped up in the Seattle hearing, as well, isn't going to be implemented in the way it was proposed, but it has significant fundamental challenges to the way we've done business. I don't think it will be in that form, but some of these questions are going to be hotly debated, partly because, quite frankly, and I don't think we will probably get into this, but I want to raise this to give you a broader prospective, is that we have as somebody that came in from the outside—I don't have a park in my district. I don't have any Federal land in my district. I'm interested generally in the subject and care passionately about it, so I don't have a dog in the sun, so to speak.

But I tell you what, coming in as a management person and trying to figure out what national monuments are and what preserves are and what's a recreation area and what's under the BLM, what's under the Park Service, what's under the Forest Service, it is incredibly confusing, and why Mount Saint Helens National Monument inside the National Forest are both operated by the Forest Service, but one works under Park rules and one operates under Forest rules, I don't understand, and what's happening here is we've confused the general public who is trying to figure out what is a mixed-up goal of the Federal Government of what's wilderness, what is recreation, what's kind of a blend of wilderness and recreation, and where are we going to get the money. If it's not BLM land, where will we get resources out of this country?

If we don't clarify this as we move toward 2016, and try to figure out what should be vital in debates like the Hoffman memo, and then when you say, we heard earlier in the first panel, it was agreed in the park plan as far as cooperation, in order to get a park in, there are so many deals cut. You can use snowmobiles on these 2 acres, but not this 170 acres. You can use a jet ski over as you come into the park on this one lake, but not over on this lake. You can use watercraft only going 15 miles an hour here, 20 miles an hour there, and 25 miles an hour over there.

The agreements we have, although we're trying to get some worth, are just extraordinary and complex, and it makes it very hard to come up with a national vision. That's how we put our Park System together, but now as we look at it, often what we'll hear, quite frankly, from the environmental groups, is over here, and what we hear out the pro heavy usage groups is over here, when, in fact, it's very complex.

Now, I want to pursue a couple specific things. I think when we have an organization like this, and so many of you are—a number of people here have vouched for your organization. It's interesting to kind of look beyond what is immediately in front of you and see that nationally this is a huge challenge, but this is what a commission would be helpful to help you out in trying to say what is our vision, how does the Park Service fit in. All of you retired and have the experience to help us come up with how did it get this way, how could this be changed, not just in the funding question, but

how we should be—as we try to figure out when are we going to add new land, when not, what are the tradeoffs? Mr. Smith.

Mr. SMITH. I think, Mr. Chairman, if we could do that outside of the normal arena in which we debate these kinds of issues, and have this independent commission appointed by the Congress or by the administration or by whomever, that would represent then a detailed and no-political look at how these issues—you've brought up 15 issues here in the last couple of minutes that are really troublesome, that are difficult, and we need to resolve them, and I don't see that we're in the process of resolving them very well under the current situation. So if we could do something outside the box.

You know, in 1963, you may remember that the Department of the Interior appointed a committee headed by Professor Starker Leopold from the University of California to look at how resources management should be conducted in the National Park Service.

The commission met for, if I'm not mistaken, for 6 months, a year, whatever, and came back with the recommendations, and the Park Service was able to adopt those recommendations, and it's made a significant difference in the way that the Park Service conducts its resources management activities.

It's that kind of commission that I'm thinking about that would help us sort out or sort through the kinds of questions that you're raising.

Mr. SOUDER. Let me pursue that just a second. I want to go over to this Foundation question, which we haven't dealt with in the other hearings, and I want to talk about how you address that question. I learned this early on. I was a baby politician when I never thought I would be a politician, but I learned as I took cost accounting and as we did case studying in grad school at Notre Dame, that—let me define the parameters and other people can figure out the solution based in fact by how I define the parameters.

The problem with the commission in this political environment is—how would you feel if I picked a commissioner picked by Secretary Norton? I just make that comment to illustrate here how the commission is really going to be a function of who picks the commission. Isn't it?

Mr. SMITH. Well, of course, and I would think that the responsibility to pick the commission would be distributed equitably so that everyone would have an oar in the water and it couldn't be accused of being overly partisan. You know, the Leopold Commission was composed of professors, it was composed of resources management specialists from various fields, and the recommendations that they brought back, were not—and I pardon using this word, "partisan" in the sense that they could be traced back to either Democratic or Republican roots. They were recommendations that really went to the heart of the question; how should the Park Service manage its natural resources within the Park System, and that's the kind of commission that we're envisioning as a way to sort through and make recommendations to the President.

Mind you that these recommendations would have to be adopted by whatever administration was in power, so, I mean, there obviously would be some political tinge to what happened, but it seems to me, again, that we're not making much progress at the present time in arresting the slow decline of the parks in the System, and

if we could think about some different ways of Governments, if this commission could think about some different ways of funding the kinds of question that you asked, Mr. Renzi, about other kinds of innovative, creative funding mechanism, we think that's worth a try.

Mr. SOUDER. It's interesting, and we'll continue to followup to see whether that actually is a viable presentation—a viable thing. Let me suggest two things about—a couple things about commissions. The advantage we have here is we look at it as looking around the centennial as an organizing principle, that the premises and the language of how you define it. To the degree that it attaches blame that looks partisan makes it impossible. I find that commissions are generally much more enthusiastically supported by those not in power than in power, which is to say that the Republicans are less likely to be enthusiastic about a commission than the Democrats who don't have majority in any particular area right now, arguably within the Supreme Court.

The second thing related to the commission is the majority tends to like a commission if they use a commission to pass the buck, and so if we don't want to know how to deal with Social Security, we'll get a Social Security commission, because then we can blame the commission for making the hard decisions.

In trying to think that out, the political reality of how a commission would play through here, if this plays through going into a very close election, it would be finger-pointing that the Republican Party didn't spend enough money, it's dead on arrival. If it's moves to be more like a Social Security commission where it's taking decisions that are out and say or just it isn't going to happen, just to be honest, that says look we have a challenge here that needs to be addressed outside the political process. Maybe even its report comes in—it's a qualified year that comes in after the next Presidential election so it doesn't get caught up in the back and forth of the political process. The national parks have historically been bipartisan.

Let me be blunt. The environmental movement hasn't endeared themselves to the Republican Party, and the Republican Party hasn't endeared themselves in the environmental movement, and because of that, to the degree it gets caught up in those kind of issues in a very bitter divided country, that the previous consensus for the national parks starts to fall apart. In minutes, it's easier for Members not to vote for the funding bills because you say well this group here tried to beat us, wants an increase in funding.

The other side tries to use that then to try to gain power, and it's inevitable to some degree, but it hasn't been historically as much that case. What's been interesting about it is the hearing process because we've had many Republicans attend, and on the centennial bill, we're trying to work through something.

So the breadth of what this commission pursues, if it gets into clean air and clean water, which visions out of the Park Service immediately come into play, you get a different dynamic than if it stays more focused narrowing on the park, so even defining how broad the vision of the commission would be, would be very, you know—make it more or less political.

Mr. SMITH. I'm confident, Mr. Chairman, that we could figure that out. This is a great country, and we've figured out difficult problems before, and if management and preservation and protection of our National Park System is an important issue, which I think it is, I think we could find a way to appoint a commission that would operate, as you point out, outside the political realm, and to come back and bring to the Congress and to the President, good, solid, professional recommendations about how the Park System should be governed and how it should be financed, and I'm confident we can do that. This is a great country. We can do that kind of stuff.

Mr. SOUDER. Thank you. Ms. Tuck, you raised a really challenging question that we hear constantly from private sector people, including right now, say, FEMA versus private relief efforts in Louisiana. It's not unique to parks. This is true when we get into child care questions, how do we provide juvenile services in the United States, that there is really kind of a double part to this, that to some degree Grand Canyon, Yellowstone and Yosemite, and your funds in the parks themselves, because of their popularity, this is used in effect where we go down on the House floor and argue for more funding for the parks, then multiple Members come down and argue that the Lincoln Memorial Home is under funded in the State of Indiana. You use the crown jewels—in effect, you get used to get funding for everybody else.

Ms. TUCK. Correct.

Mr. SOUDER. To some degree, to the degree that the demonstration fees are collected at those parks and the private funding groups give to those parks, to some degree you're supporting the rest of the system. Do you think your donors like that or dislike that? When they give money to the Grand Canyon, the suggestion that—because the hint underneath that was, look, they want to just give to the Grand Canyon, you don't want to see the money replaced by having Federal funds transfer to other places because we're giving to Grand Canyon, but in a effect, they're helping the Park Service as a whole and it's not like the funds are going to education.

Ms. TUCK. Right. I think there are two issues. No. 1, to the extent where the boats rise for the Grand Canyon and the rest of the icon parks, the boats rise also for the other parks. I think everybody understands that. What cannot happen is if a group becomes tremendously successful in raising money for a park, then you cannot cut the appropriations for that park, or philanthropy will cease.

I think we're at a very interesting time with parks and philanthropy. There is a lot of argument about this within the friends groups that raise money for parks, but if you think about it and you think about where State universities were at the turn of the last century and you think about where they are now—you know, if State universities had to exist now on tuition and what they get from legislature, they would be terrible, pathetic places.

I think the promise for philanthropy for national parks is really, really great. I mean, if I had to pitch you about what you're going to leave in your will, what is the greater legacy than the Grand Canyon? What is a better legacy gift? And we haven't done very

much about that, but I think it is a double-edge sword. It's going to take a while to develop.

When a park accepts philanthropy, then sometimes things have to be done a little differently. The world with philanthropy is not the same world as the Park Service, and sometimes the Park Service doesn't like that. Sometimes it does like it. But if donors give money for a specific item, then they expect that item will be completed, and completed more or less on time.

That creates a different kind of dynamic within the Park Service. Philanthropy can offer a lot of possibilities in terms of dollars over the long-term, but it will mean that some part of the Park Service will have to operate differently, and there is really not a very good discussion about that, yet, between both the friends groups and the Park Service.

Mr. SOUDER. You raised a question about doing—you suggested there ought to be defined boundaries as to what philanthropy does and what Government funding does, which is a very interesting question. To some degree—I keep wanting to say—I don't remember whose testimony, but one of you pointed out that at Grand Canyon—it may have been yours—that it was 80 percent personnel, it is now 90 percent personnel.

Isn't that to some degree what's happening, is that the Federal Government is basically saying, "we can barely cover personnel cost?"

Ms. TUCK. This should be Joe's question, not mine, because—Joe, it's your question about where—what the personnel costs are and what percentage personnel costs are at the Grand Canyon.

Mr. ALSTON. Could you restate the question?

Mr. SOUDER. Could you come up to the mic? One of these testimonies said that at Grand Canyon 80 percent had been—personnel had risen to 90 percent.

Mr. ALSTON. I think our figures are about 82—83 percent.

Mr. SOUDER. But that has been rising over time.

Mr. ALSTON. No, I don't think so. It's been relatively constant here for about 5 years, maybe even decreasing a little bit. For us, what it comes down to in our department is how much flexibility you have in your budget. Not only do you have your personnel cost, a fixed cost, but then you have all the other things you have to do, buy trash bags and toilet paper and cleaning supplies, and all those things that are necessary. So how much flexibility would you have——

Mr. SOUDER. Let me ask the question. Have you had a reduction in full-time permanent employees.

Mr. ALSTON. Over the last 5 years, I think we looked at—we reduced our base-funded personnel by five positions over the last 5 years.

Mr. SOUDER. So how many positions do you have.

Mr. ALSTON. I think 360, so——

Mr. SOUDER. So it's a minimal reduction compared to other parks. How were you able to—is it because it's a crown jewel and it has received more steady increases in your park? How have you not had the reductions in personnel.

Mr. ALSTON. Some of that—well, there was a variety of reasons for it. For example, cost of collection. We have increased the num-

ber of fee collectors through the fee demonstration programs. So we have people out on the gates. That's been one of our—actually increased the number of positions that way, so that some of the other positions have been offset, so what you're seeing—you take those out, then you're actually seeing maybe reductions in some of the other base-funded positions.

What else. Basically, it's been fairly constant. If you look at the soft budget, you would see that it's been in the last 5 years fairly constant.

Mr. SOUDER. Thank you. Ms. Tuck, listening to that, my other question is, as I understood that, and it is more than having—and Mr. Keiter's testimony shows that all of the parks have made significant reduction in numbers of employees, and we heard that across the country.

We also heard there is a shift in employees. Some employees take collection at the gate, and some blend into Homeland Security questions, Organ Pipe Cactus being an example. So what you have is a reduction in people who are wildlife personnel, biologists, archeologists, as what we heard from Ms. Spurr. Given the fact that trend—even if we increase the park budget at a greater rate than three, and hypothetically get this out to double, and forgetting the Centennial Act for a minute, that the pressure is still going to be on the foundations to pick up some of the gaps, because the health care costs are going up to raise—let's say conservatively 8 to 10 percent, and I don't think anybody would sign up for 8 to 10 percent, and pension plans are—the cost pressures are just huge.

If your park budget focuses on the maintenance, where would you draw the lines? In other words, as far as specifics, I found it very interesting, because I agree with you. If people pay for the things substantive, but how would we draw the lines here? If we drew them as science or archeology, the practical impact may be there's no science or archeology.

Ms. TUCK. That's a dilemma that you face, and it's a dilemma to the point that I have some colleagues that raise money the same way I do, and you've met some of them like Ken Olsen, I think. It's a dilemma. Where is—the code word we use is "bright line." Where is that bright line.

And unlike some groups, the Grand Canyon friends group has crossed that line, and we've crossed the line to make sure that science, in fact, exists at the Grand Canyon.

Here is an example. One of the great success stories of the last 50 years is the California condor. It was headed toward Dodo bird status, meaning extinction, as sure as you and I are sitting here. Twenty-two years ago, there were 22 condors. We have more than 50 condors in our park.

The Park Service doesn't have any money. There is a legal responsibility to take care of those condors, but the only money it has comes from our organization. Condors are wonderful birds. You may think they're ugly, but they are comical. They are inquisitive. Don't knock them. They're great birds.

And if you don't have some inner, you know, where some visitor is not as in tune as Rick would be with his children, says, "Susie, hold up your ham and cheese sandwich," and as a 3-year-old, for the little condor, the condor can take that hand. So why is it that

if the Park Service has a responsibility to care for threatened and endangered species, they don't have the money?

Joe has to make tough decisions every day. I wouldn't be in his position for all of the rocks in the Grand Canyon, but somehow as we define what these parks are about, we have to be clear that if we're making decisions in the natural resource parks, there has to be adequate science to make those decisions.

So, back to your question about the philanthropy, the wise people that are on my board, and there is one here today, one of my board members, along with Joe, makes those decisions. Joe can propose. And what we decided was we didn't want weakened science at our park, so we agreed to take on some things that are, in fact, core operation. We hope that changes.

I mean, there are a lot of needs this park has, and I have chosen today to use science just as an illustration. We could have the same conversation about transportation, interpretation, historic buildings, archeological sites. We all have difficult—there is a difficult choice for the Park Service, but then the Foundation has to choose, and if we get into too much of core operations, then our donors are not going to support this.

They want to provide that margin of excellence. They're excited about our project to restore historic boats. They're excited about building 73 miles of rim-side trails, all of which are wheelchair accessible. They want the Stewart Udall Endowment. Do they want to help with the toilet paper budget or slogging out the toilets along the trail? No, siree. That is a core operation.

So that bright line question becomes important for everybody as we really try to grow the potential for philanthropy, to essentially provide the kind of support that State universities get in our country, and that's what I think the opportunities are.

Mr. SOUDER. One of the challenges that I agree with is that as we—one of the things I've been debating on the Centennial Act as we look at 2016, is at Mission 66 giving the vision as the highway—interstate highways were going, and the visions of the parks. It's not clear that they also will motivate the taxpayer to increase their giving or their spending directly through the budget to say we'll pay for the toilet paper, but somebody has to pay for the toilet paper or they'll be very mad, particularly if they say put $5 in to have toilet paper if you go into this john. That would be less popular than the trail map.

One last question, and I'll see if Mr. Renzi has anything. Mr. Smith, we were talking earlier—Ms. Tuck basically said Yellowstone was getting way too much money. You were acting superintendent after you retired. Do you know why this would have been? Is this a recent blip, or has historically that been true?

Mr. SMITH. Well, we often refer in the Park Service to Yellowstone as the mother park, as being the first park, and I assume that the long history of support for Yellowstone has just continued on growing. I don't have any idea at the present time whether Yellowstone is getting more or less of its share than it deserves, but I would assume that historically, since Yellowstone was the first national park, that it has continued to occupy a preeminent position in the Congress mind when it goes to—I mean, you know, almost anybody you ask in the United State, name a national park,

they're probably either going to say Yellowstone or Grand Canyon, and I assume that's the same way in the Congress, too.

Mr. SOUDER. I think that we'll look into the particulars of it. I think that they just redid their sewer system, which is something when you have a blip up you're going to have over a couple years. We know the wolf and visitor projects. I'm just trying to figure out how did—we did Old Faithful. Are we doing some of the lodge? That's a huge annual difference, and the question is what would it be. They don't have a big delegation in Congress.

It may be that the Grand Canyon, because for a while it was a projected budget expansion of the transportation system. It may be that got transferred out and wasn't used, but we'll look into that question because it is a basic equity question that puts tremendous pressure on the individual Congressman when it is raised.

Mr. Keiter, thank you for the detailed by-park information that you presented. Do you have any additional comments you want to make after listening to my comments and the exchanges here?

Mr. KEITER. How did you know that a professor could stay quiet for this entire period of time. My students would have been amazed that I made my remarks in 7 or 8 minutes, and I appreciate your forbearance at the beginning of my testimony.

The only real comment that I have to make, and I appreciate your observation, Mr. Chairman, is the fact that NPCA has attempted to work and will continue to work under the aegis of its board, etc., on a non-partisan basis, and our goal has been and will continue to be to try to provide hard, good, solid, detailed facts through such exercises as the State of the Parks reports that I alluded to in my testimony, as well as the business plans that we initiated and got underway that the Park Service has put under its wing currently, and I hope that through that sort of clear, detailed information, that the committee can make some good, sound judgments about how we might go about providing the resources the parks so clearly need.

Mr. SOUDER. Thank you, and I wrote down in the margin a couple of particular followup things on some of your testimony that will be on my mind. Anything else.

Mr. RENZI. No.

Mr. SOUDER. Thank you for hosting us. Thank you all for participating in this hearing, and this will be published as an official committee record. We'll have much of this up on our Web site, as well, and then a final report will probably come out late next year sometime. With that, the subcommittee stands adjourned.

[Whereupon, the subcommittee was adjourned.]

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