

# NATIONAL PARKS BILLS

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

**S. 553**                      **S. 1017**  
**S. 1018**                    **S. 1537**  
**S. 1629**                    **S. 2892**  
**S. 2933**                    **S. 2951**  
**H.R. 3804**

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MARCH 17, 2010



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## NATIONAL PARK BILLS

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WEDNESDAY, MARCH 17, 2010

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

The subcommittee met, pursuant to notice, at 3:45 p.m. in room SD-366, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Hon. Mark Udall presiding.

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

Senator UDALL. The Subcommittee on National Parks will come to order.

The purpose of this afternoon's hearing is to consider nine bills pending before the subcommittee. Although we have a long list of bills on the agenda, for the most part, the bills appear to be fairly straightforward, so we should be able to consider them quickly.

The bills to be considered today include S. 553, to revise the route of the North Country National Scenic Trail in Minnesota; S. 1017 and S. 1018, which are bills to reauthorize the Cane River National Heritage Area Commission in Louisiana and to authorize the National Park Service to enter into an agreement with Northwestern State University to construct a curatorial facility for the Cane River Creole National Historical Park; S. 1537, which would designate Dr. Norman Borlaug's home in Cresco, Iowa, as a National Historic Site; S. 1629, authorizing the National Park Service to study the New Philadelphia archeological site in Illinois to determine its suitability for addition to the National Park System; S. 2892, to establish the Alabama Black Belt National Heritage Area in Alabama; S. 2933, to authorize a National Park Service study of the Colonel Charles Young home in Xenia, Ohio; Senate bill 2951, Senator Burr's bill to authorize the acquisition of certain lands for addition to the Blue Ridge Parkway; and H.R. 3804, a bill making minor and technical corrections to several laws affecting the National Park Service.

The subcommittee has received a statement from Senator Voinovich in support of his bill, S. 2933, and also a statement from the Norman Borlaug Heritage Foundation in support of S. 1537. Without objection, both statements will be included in the record.

[The prepared statements of Mr. George Voinovich, and Tom Spindler follow:]

U.S. SENATE,  
Washington, DC, March 12, 2010.

Hon. JEFF BINGAMAN,  
Chairman, Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee, Washington, DC.

DEAR SENATOR BINGAMAN: In an effort to protect an important chapter of American history, I recently introduced the Colonel Charles Young Home Study Act (S.2933). As a Buffalo Soldier serving with the 9th and 10th Cavalry and the 25th Infantry, Col. Young overcame severe institutional and racial intolerance to be the third African American graduate of West Point, the first African American national park superintendent, the first black U.S. military attache, the first African American officer to command a Regular Army Regiment, and the highest-ranking black officer in the Regular Army until his death.

Originally born into slavery, Col. Young made significant military and public service contributions to the nation and my home state of Ohio. His service in the Army between 1884 and 1922 rode the tide of the turbulent changing race relations in the United States. At the time, there were few assignments deemed suitable for a black officer, but undeterred, Col. Young made the most of his career. He leveraged his experiences and distinguished himself as a commander of combat troops in the Spanish-American and Mexican Wars.

As the commander of an Army unit assigned to protect and develop Sequoia National Park and General Grant National Park in the California, Col. Young lead efforts to protect the parks, completed the first wagon-road into Sequoia National park, and built lasting relations with the local populace. Col. Young's story, as it relates to our national parks, is so crucial to our modern day parks system that it was recently highlighted in the PBS documentary film by Ken Burns titled "The National Parks: America's Best Ideas," a clip of which you can find on my website here: <http://www.voutube.com/senvoinovich#p/c/1/D7x59allUqo>.

The Colonel Charles Young Home Study Act would authorize the Secretary of the Interior to conduct a special resource study to determine the suitability and feasibility of designating the Colonel Young's home, already a National Historic Landmark, in Xenia, Ohio as a unit of the National Park Service.

I want to thank you and your fellow committee members for agreeing to consider the legislation during your March 17; 2010 National Parks Subcommittee hearing. When this legislation comes before the full committee, I would respectfully request and appreciate your support for this worthy piece of legislation.

Sincerely,

GEORGE V. VOINOVICH,  
U.S. Senator.

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PREPARED STATEMENT OF TOM SPINDLER, PRESIDENT, NORMAN BORLAUG HERITAGE  
FOUNDATION, CRESCO, IA

Chairman Udall & Members of the Subcommittee on National Parks, on behalf of the Norman Borlaug Heritage Foundation, I would like to thank you for this opportunity to speak with unqualified support for S. 1537, a bill introduced by Senator Grassley of Iowa authorizing the Secretary of the Interior, acting through the Director of the National Park Service to designate the Norman Borlaug birthplace and boyhood homes and farms near Cresco, Iowa as a National Historic Site and a unit of the National Park Service.

While the members of the committee are likely familiar with the accomplishments of Dr. Borlaug, I would like to briefly summarize for the record why his birthplace, childhood home and legacy are deserving of enshrinement as a National Historical Site.

Dr. Norman E. Borlaug (1914-2009) was an agricultural scientist who was born and raised in the rural heartland near Cresco, Iowa, and was educated early in life in a typical one room Iowa schoolhouse. While his origins were somewhat typical for the time, there was nothing typical about his life and accomplishments. After completing his education in plant pathology, he spent his career working to improve international agricultural productivity by increasing wheat production through a series of innovative cross breeding techniques that in turn created a set of high yield, disease resistant varieties. While this seminal work may seem obscure or even trivial to the uninformed, it would be difficult if not impossible to overstate the importance of this work in terms of reducing global hunger, increasing global stability and, in the long term, increasing the probability of the survival of the human species itself. As a result of his insight, dedication, and work, Dr. Borlaug is credited with saving perhaps a billion lives during the 20th century, more than any person

in the history of the world. The agricultural transformation brought about by Dr. Borlaug's work and accomplishments has come to be known as the "Green Revolution", and Dr. Borlaug is widely recognized as being the "father" of this development. For his work, Dr. Borlaug received hundreds of prestigious awards, one of which, the Congressional Gold Medal, was bestowed upon him by this body three years ago in 2007. Dr. Borlaug was also awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom in 1987 and the Nobel Peace Prize in 1970. Along with Mother Theresa, Martin Luther King, Nelson Mandela, and Elie Wiesel, Dr. Borlaug is one of only five people to have ever received all three of these coveted awards, which have served as international recognition for their unending efforts to make the world a better place for all of humanity.

Dr. Norman Borlaug passed away in September last year at the age of 95. Like other great humanitarians, Dr. Borlaug was passionately engaged in his work until the very end of his life, saying only a couple days before he passed away, "Africa, my mission is not finished." Since his death, praise for and support of his body of work has come from nearly all reaches of the global community, and has included a resolution from this body (S.Res.273) as well. Dr. Borlaug is the definition of a great American and global humanitarian.

As I noted above, I speak on behalf of the Norman Borlaug Heritage Foundation (NBHF). This Foundation is a non-profit corporation with an all-volunteer board that for the past ten years has been dedicated to the preservation and interpretation of Dr. Borlaug's legacy, birthplace and boyhood home. To accomplish these objectives, the Foundation has purchased and holds unencumbered control of two properties in rural Northeast Iowa that comprise approximately 100 acres and include Dr. Borlaug's birthplace and boyhood homesteads as well as the country school that he attended as a youth. These sites are nationally significant both in terms of history and the scientific legacy of Dr. Borlaug. The Borlaug sites, set in the breadbasket of the Midwest, represent the crossroads of America where science and feeding the world met. Preserving these farms will not only help to preserve his legacy, but will provide a unique opportunity to interpret for the American public the importance of science in agriculture, and how pursuit of these two fields led Dr. Borlaug to help feed the world's neediest peoples, and avoid the often predicted epidemics of mass starvation due to food shortages. Throughout his long life, Dr. Borlaug often stated how important his childhood was in shaping his character and work ethic, and the rich soils and cooperative "neighbor-help-neighbor" culture of the early 20th century rural Midwestern farming community provided the ideal incubator for his interest in agricultural production and helping his fellow man.

It is our desire to turn ownership of the Borlaug properties over to the United States Government upon the establishment of the Dr. Norman E. Borlaug Birthplace and Childhood Home National Historic Site. We believe firmly that this could be a focal point of telling Dr. Borlaug's story within the context of farm life in early 20th century America. To date, the Foundation has been committed to promoting and interpreting Dr. Borlaug's lifetime achievements and philosophy through preservation of the Borlaug properties and outreach educational programs such as the Norman Borlaug Education Day events and the Education Residency Program. Through countless hours of volunteer labor and monetary donations, Norman Borlaug's boyhood home, barn, and the one room school house he attended have been preserved and restored. However, our Foundation has just recently acquired the birthplace home. It is in a state of disrepair, and major renovations are needed. Our resources are very limited, relying on local donations. As of now we would not be able to begin this renovation. While the Foundation recognizes the importance of preserving the physical manifestations of Dr. Borlaug's early life in Iowa, our primary goal and focus is on the future. Namely, we consider the discussion and interpretation of Dr. Borlaug's life, work and legacy, as both a scientist and humanitarian as our primary mission and interpretive themes. By looking at Dr. Borlaug's life and achievements, current and future generations will be able to view Dr. Borlaug's accomplishments at the intersection of the sciences and humanities. This in turn will serve as a starting point for their own understanding, appreciation and application of science in improving the conditions of the American and global communities, and inspire future generations to follow in Dr. Borlaug's footsteps.

Regional and local community support for this proposal is very strong. Currently, the NBHF collaborates with the City of Cresco, Howard County Economic Development, Iowa State University (ISU), volunteers, several area school districts, and the general public to provide tours, field trips, school day opportunities, summer interns for Iowa State University students and artist in residence experiences. The annual Norman Borlaug Harvest Fest is held each fall in Cresco and honors Dr. Borlaug and his family. It also provides tourism opportunities for the greater Northeast Iowa area. Field trips and education days have top-notch educators who volunteer from

ISU, NICC, and retired and currently practicing elementary teachers. Educational opportunities involve the arts, literacy, science, including “wheat and genetics” and agronomy, history of education and the one room school house, geography and global studies. But these educational experiences are limited given that all of it is through volunteerism. The ability to expand beyond our local area is not feasible given our limitations. The Foundation’s ultimate goal of a facility for educational outreach programs to the farm sites is not possible without a National Historic Site designation. The NBHF would continue to work with the Park Service where appropriate through volunteering with educational opportunities and programming, and assisting the Park Service with care and maintenance as needed.

Your support for the creation of a National Historic Site honoring the work of Dr. Borlaug would ensure that his accomplishments and legacy would be remembered in perpetuity. In his 1970 Nobel Peace Prize acceptance speech, Dr. Borlaug stated, It is a sad fact that on this earth at this late date there are still two worlds, ‘the privileged world’ and ‘the forgotten world’. The privileged world consists of the affluent, developed nations, comprising twenty-five to thirty percent of the world population, in which most of the people live in a luxury never before experienced by man outside the Garden of Eden. The forgotten world is made up primarily of the developing nations, where most of the people, comprising more than fifty percent of the total world population, live in poverty, with hunger as a constant companion and fear of famine a continual menace. Your support of this bill will ensure that we as Americans not only celebrate Dr. Borlaug’s legacy, but that we continue to work towards fulfilling his noble goals.

On behalf of the Norman Borlaug Heritage Foundation Board, I thank you for this opportunity to address your committee.

Senator UDALL. At this time, I would like to recognize Senator Burr for his opening statement.

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

Senator BURR. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank you for calling this hearing and thank you for a productive year so far.

We do have a full agenda, and I will keep my remarks brief. Nine bills, one of those bills on the agenda today involves my home State of North Carolina, the Blue Ridge Parkway Protection Act, which I introduced, along with Senator Hagan, Webb, and Warner. I would like to submit statements from Senator Hagan and Senator Webb, as well as Representative Shuler and Price, who are also supporting the bill.

[The prepared statements of Senators Hagan, and Webb, and Representatives Price and Shuler follow:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF KAY R. HAGAN, U.S. SENATOR FROM NORTH CAROLINA

Thank you to the Chairman and Ranking Member for your ongoing efforts to preserve and enhance our nation’s most pristine natural landscapes and historic national heritage areas. The Blue Ridge Parkway Protection Act (S. 2951) offers a unique opportunity to continue this enduring commitment, and I thank the subcommittee for considering this important legislation.

In North Carolina, we are fortunate to have an exceptionally diverse collection of national parks and public recreation areas. From Great Smoky Mountains National Park in the west, to Cape Hatteras National Seashore along the coast, North Carolina’s public lands provide visitors from all walks of life with opportunities to hunt, fish, hike, and simply appreciate the landscape.

In particular, the Blue Ridge Parkway has for 75 years offered visitors from across the world some of the most spectacular views in America. Originally authorized to put Americans to work during the Great Depression, construction of the Blue Ridge Parkway began in 1935 near Cumberland Knob, North Carolina. Today, the nation’s first and longest protected roadway stretches more than 450 miles from Shenandoah National Park in Virginia to Great Smoky Mountains National Park in North Carolina.

The Parkway’s breathtaking views attract nearly 20 million visitors per year, making it the most visited unit of the National Park System and one of the strongest economic engines in my state. Parkway overlooks encompass healthy forests and

wildlife habitats, pure mountain streams, and historic family farms. These views generate an estimated \$2.3 billion in North Carolina and Virginia annually, creating and sustaining jobs throughout the southern Appalachian region.

Unfortunately, despite the enduring cultural and economic import of the Parkway, federal efforts to protect high-priority views and ensure visitor safety have not kept pace with the Parkway's growing popularity. As has been noted by others during today's hearing, significant portions of land surrounding the Parkway are privately owned and subject to potential commercial development. Such development may threaten existing natural landscapes and discourage future visitation along the Parkway. Likewise, aging infrastructure threatens Parkway safety and has left portions of the Parkway closed to visitors.

With the 75th Anniversary of the Parkway's dedication occurring in September 2010, Congress has a crucial opportunity to commemorate this important milestone and reaffirm the nation's commitment to a safer and more scenic Parkway. To that end, the Blue Ridge Parkway Protection Act would authorize \$75 million over five years to allow the National Park Service to acquire and preserve high-priority land surrounding this historic roadway.

The proposed legislation would support long-term planning and new acquisition—by donation, by purchase with donated or appropriated funds, or by exchange—of up to 50,000 acres of land surrounding the Parkway. New land acquisitions would be entirely voluntary, with priority placed on enhancing scenic views; preserving recreational and natural resources; and, improving Parkway infrastructure to help ensure visitor safety.

In addition, the legislation will ensure that the Park Service will submit to Congress an annual report detailing the condition of the Parkway, including threats and land preservation needs; a list of land acquisitions that have been completed or are underway; and, a list of priority land acquisitions to be pursued in the near-term.

As an indication of the unique position that the Blue Ridge Parkway occupies both regionally and nationally, the Blue Ridge Parkway Protection Act carries bipartisan, bicameral support. Likewise, conservation groups from throughout the Southern Appalachian region have expressed strong support for these critical investments.

I urge the subcommittee to support this effort, and to recognize that a renewed investment in the Blue Ridge Parkway is an investment in the North Carolina economy. Thank you once more for considering this important legislation and I look forward to working with the subcommittee to secure its consideration before the full Senate as quickly as possible.

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PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. JIM WEBB, U.S. SENATOR FROM VIRGINIA

Chairman Udall and Ranking Member Burr: Thank you for this opportunity to address the Subcommittee on National Parks.

From our beaches to our pristine national parks and historic battlefields, Virginia's tourism industry is a leading driver of the Commonwealth's economic engine. According to the U.S. Travel Association, visitors to Virginia spent \$19.2 billion in 2007 and generated \$2.6 billion in revenues for federal, state and local governments. The Association estimates that every \$1 million spent by visitors creates 11 jobs within the tourism industry.

With these figures in mind, I believe the Blue Ridge Parkway Protection Act is a sound investment for Virginia's future. The Blue Ridge Parkway is one of the Commonwealth's most significant tourist attractions, and has been nicknamed "America's Favorite Drive" by the National Park Service. As 2010 marks the Blue Ridge Parkway's 75th anniversary, an expansion of the lands under the National Park Service's protection is an appropriate way to celebrate the Parkway and ensure its continued viability into the future.

As a longtime supporter of natural and cultural landmark preservation, I look forward to working with my colleagues in the Senate to pass this legislation.

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PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. DAVID E. PRICE, U.S. REPRESENTATIVE FROM NORTH CAROLINA

I would first like to thank the distinguished Chairman and Ranking Member for their commitment to preserving America's treasured landscapes. S. 2951, the Blue Ridge Parkway Protection Act, is in keeping with that commitment, and I appreciate your considering it today.

The Blue Ridge Parkway runs for nearly 500 miles along the crest of the Blue Ridge mountains through North Carolina and Virginia touches boundaries with state parks, four national forests, and five federally designated wilderness areas. It

is truly a national treasure, and if you haven't been, I hope you'll make a point of going.

The Blue Ridge Parkway is the most visited unit of the National Park system, with between 15 and 20 million visitors per year, and has been enjoyed by more than 850 million visitors since the park started counting in 1939. It's also a critical economic driver for the region, generating about \$2.3 billion in economic activity in both states annually.

The Parkway is best known for its scenic view, but in addition to providing spectacular vistas, lands along the Parkway also provide clean water for downstream communities, support family farms, offer abundant forested wildlife habitat, and enable recreation. In fact, the Parkway is world renowned for its diversity.

Unfortunately, the Parkway's scenic, natural, and cultural integrity are threatened. For one thing, funding has not always kept pace with increasing visitation, aging infrastructure, and the need to work with local communities on protection of adjacent land. Additionally, in most places the Parkway is only 800 feet wide, and two-thirds of mountainside and rural farm landscapes that comprise the views are privately held.

A National Park Service survey found that a significant majority of Parkway visitors consider the pristine, undeveloped landscape, and the scenic views they provide, as the biggest reason they choose to visit the Parkway and indicate they would be less likely to return to the Parkway if its scenic views were compromised.

In light of public opinion, and in honor of the 75th anniversary of the Parkway, which will take place in September 2010, I was pleased to join Rep. Shuler and a number of my distinguished colleagues from North Carolina and Virginia in a bicameral, bipartisan, bi-state effort to preserve the integrity of this treasured national resource for us and for generations to come.

We have introduced the Blue Ridge Parkway Protection Act, which would authorize \$75 million over the next five years for the Park Service to acquire up to 50,000 acres of land bordering the scenic roadway.

When compared to the cost of compensating visitors for the lost views should development hinder or damage the views from the Parkway—which is estimated at over \$5 billion—our legislation is a bargain!

While there are no specific parcels defined in the bill, all land purchases would be voluntary, and the Park Service would place a priority on lands that meet three purposes: (1) adding more scenic views along the drive; (2) enhancing the parkway's recreational and natural resources; and (3) eliminating or improving dangerous crossing and intersections.

This bill would help to protect the views that make the Parkway such a popular attraction and roadway. I hope you'll agree that ensuring the continued conservation of the land around the Parkway is a fitting way to celebrate the Parkway's 75th year. Again, I thank the Committee for considering the bill and hope you will approve it for floor consideration.

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PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. HEATH SHULER, U.S. REPRESENTATIVE FROM NORTH CAROLINA

I first want to thank Chairman Udall, my friend from North Carolina, Senator Richard Burr, and members of the Subcommittee for convening this hearing to discuss, among other issues, S. 2951, The Blue Ridge Parkway Protection Act. As you all have tremendous experience in developing legislation pertaining to our federal lands, I am grateful for the opportunity to hear your feedback on this legislation and hope that your suggestions can be incorporated into this bill at a later date.

The Blue Ridge Parkway spans the western portions of North Carolina and Virginia, running a total of 469 miles through some of the most beautiful terrain in the southeastern United States. As the most visited unit of the National Park Service, the Parkway provides recreational benefits for countless American families who enjoy the scenic drive and the abundance of opportunities for outdoor activities along the way.

The Parkway is also a valuable economic asset to the communities alongside of it, with Parkway visitors injecting roughly \$2.3 billion each year into dozens of cities and towns that rely on a thriving tourism economy.

In 2008, the National Park Service commissioned a detailed survey of Blue Ridge Parkway visitors to better understand what elements of the Parkway are of the greatest importance to them. In that survey, 97% of all visitors said that the scenic views and scenic drive were the most important attributes of the Parkway. Clearly, the natural beauty that can be observed from the roadway is what makes this the most popular unit of the entire Park Service. It is for this very reason that my col-

leagues and I have introduced H.R. 4524, which is identical to S. 2951. Both of these bills would protect the most important lands along the Parkway and ensure that these scenic views are not disrupted by deforestation and development.

S. 2951 would authorize the Park Service to acquire and incorporate into the boundary of the Blue Ridge Parkway up to 50,000 acres that are contiguous to current Parkway property. These properties must be identified by the Superintendent of the Parkway as top priorities for viewshed protection, and may only be acquired from willing sellers- eminent domain can not be used to carry out any portion of this bill.

In working with the National Park Service during the drafting of this legislation, it is clear that there are concerns about specific portions of the bill, all of which we believe can be properly addressed with the help and expertise of this subcommittee. I am grateful that the Park Service has shown such willingness to work with Senator Burr, Senator Hagan, and the sponsors of the House bill-Representatives David Price, Rick Boucher, and Tom Perriello, and myself- to enhance portions of this bill pertaining to acquisition authority and how best to utilize the great resources and abilities of qualified land conservation groups.

I thank you again for your time and attention to the Blue Ridge Parkway Protection Act. I look forward to hearing your suggestions on this bill, which will preserve the viewsheds of the Country's most visited Park Service unit and protect the many local economies that depend on it.

Senator BURR. This bill has bipartisan, bicameral support from North Carolina and Virginia. It is important for the continued enjoyment of the Blue Ridge Parkway.

Annually, the Blue Ridge Parkway enjoys 19 million visitors, making it the most visited unit of the National Park System in the country. The parkway is a major attraction for the region and significantly contributes to the local economy. This bill would authorize the National Park Service to acquire land from willing sellers on a voluntary basis to protect areas that need the Park Service's Blue Ridge Parkway Land Protection Plan.

I understand the Park Service has some concerns with our bill, but that staff has been meeting to find language that works for all parties. I look forward to working with the Park Service to address any concerns and issues.

I would like to welcome Mr. Reid Wilson from Raleigh, North Carolina, and thank all of our witnesses for being here today.

I thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator UDALL. Thank you, Senator Burr.

We will turn immediately to Senator Burr, who I understand is scheduled to preside over the full Senate at 4 p.m.

So, Senator Burr, welcome. Without further ado, we would welcome your testimony. Thank you for taking the time to appear before us today.

#### **STATEMENT OF HON. ROLAND W. BURRIS, U. S. SENATOR FROM ILLINOIS**

Senator BURRIS. Thank you, Chairman Udall, Ranking Member Burr, and members of the subcommittee. Thank you for the opportunity to appear today to discuss my legislation, S. 1629.

This legislation would direct the Secretary of Interior to perform a special resource study to evaluate the national significance, suitability, and feasibility of the New Philadelphia site, southeast of Springfield, Illinois, to be managed as a unit of the National Park Service.

I feel this designation would prove especially important, adding to our history as a country. Archaeologists have pointed out that New Philadelphia was the first town before the Civil War founded,

planned, and legally adopted by a freed African American, Frank McWorter. National Significance for the site has been established by virtue of a National Historic Landmark designation in 2009, and the ultimate goal is to create a new national park at the site of the New Philadelphia settlement.

Let me tell you a little bit about the history of this intriguing site. The history of Frank McWorter and New Philadelphia is one of daring, hard work, luck, and shrewd family leadership.

Born a slave in South Carolina in 1777, Frank McWorter moved to Kentucky with his owner in 1795. He married Lucy, a slave from a nearby farm. Later, allowed to hire out his own time and labor, McWorter engaged in a number of enterprises—notably mining the minerals of the crude niter, an essential component of gunpowder—that proved profitable, allowing him to buy his wife’s freedom in 1817, and his own freedom in 1819.

Frank and Lucy McWorter left Kentucky for Illinois in 1830, the year the Thomas Lincoln family, with son Abraham, came to Illinois from Indiana. The McWorters bought a farm in Pike County, and that is Hadley Township, and platted the town of New Philadelphia in 1836. There was a clear defined lot of family homes, businesses, and a school, where citizens of all races lived.

Bypassed by the railroad in 1869, the townspeople slowly dispersed from the scene by the late 1880s. Today, the town site is an open field, but the New Philadelphia township map with deed information shows the town lots and streets of New Philadelphia.

Frank McWorter died at New Philadelphia in 1854, and his son, Solomon, assumed family leadership. Some of the family still resides in the area.

In 2004, a 3-year National Science Foundation grant of \$230,000 allowed 3 summers of archeological work hosted by the University of Maryland, in collaboration with the University of Illinois and the Illinois State Museum. This work located many intact town features, including substantial building foundations, the remains of wells, and pit cellars. In total, surveys and archeological investigation located more than 65,000 artifacts.

Oral histories from local residents and descendants, written accounts, census, land deeds, and tax records document the town’s historical appearance. According to an 1872 map, the town consisted of 144 lots, each 60 feet by 120 feet, laid out in a grid pattern over 42 acres. Most blocks were divided into 8 lots, and the primary thoroughfares were 80 feet wide. Importantly, Frank McWorter wisely platted New Philadelphia along the 2Pike County primary roads.

Federal census reports in 1850 to 1880 indicate that residents were involved in a variety of enterprises—cabinetmaking, shoemaking, and wheelwright, carpenter, seamstress, physician, teacher, merchants, and blacksmiths. A post office operated in the town from 1849 to 1853 and is said to have served as a stagecoach stop.

In its designation as a National Historic Landmark in 2009, New Philadelphia is recognized for its high potential to yield information of major scientific importance to our understandings of everyday life in a racially integrated community, where formerly enslaved individuals, free-born African Americans, and Americans

of European descent lived, worshipped, made commerce, and were educated together.

I have been told it is generally recognized that previous research and archaeology from this era of our history has focused on historic sites associated with the colonial settlements, sites associated with the founding of our Nation, and the southern plantations associated with slavery. New Philadelphia would add new dimensions to our understanding of this time in our country's history.

The New Philadelphia Association, a not-for-profit organization formed by area residents, seeks to appropriately preserve a substantial portion of the town site in honor of a remarkable man and family of the western Illinois frontier. Currently, 14 acres of the 42-acre site are under purchase agreement with the Archaeological Conservancy, and as I understand, the current owners of the land are open to further discussions on this project.

Ideally, a national park unit at New Philadelphia would commemorate a theme important to all Americans—the struggle for freedom and opportunity. New Philadelphia would inspire current and future generations as a place of interracial cooperation in an era and region of intense racial discord that culminated in the American Civil War.

So I want to especially thank Chairman Udall and Ranking Member Burr for their commitment to our National Park System and, second, for moving this legislation as quickly as possible. I know that, working together, we can add to the witness of history for all Americans to see and understand the remarkable accomplishments of Frank McWorter, his family, and the citizens of Pike County, Illinois.

Mr. Chairman, I just want to say that even when I was in public office as a State controller and the attorney general of Illinois, I was working on this project, trying to help to identify the site and to preserve the site.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

[The prepared statement of Senator Burris follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. ROLAND W. BURRIS, U.S. SENATOR FROM ILLINOIS

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Burr, and Members of the Subcommittee, thank you for the opportunity to appear here today to discuss my legislation, S. 1629. This legislation would direct the Secretary of the Interior to perform a Special Resource Study to evaluate the national significance, suitability, and feasibility of the New Philadelphia site, southeast of Springfield, Illinois, to be managed as a unit of the National Park Service.

I feel this designation would prove especially important, adding to our history as a country. Archaeologists have pointed out that New Philadelphia was the first town before the Civil War founded, planned and legally recorded by a freed African American, Frank McWorter. National Significance for the site has been established by virtue of a National Historic Landmark designation in 2009, and the ultimate goal is to create a new National Park at the site of the New Philadelphia settlement.

Let me tell you a little bit about the history of this intriguing site.

The story of Frank McWorter and New Philadelphia is one of daring, hard work, luck, and shrewd family leadership. Born a slave in South Carolina in 1777, Frank McWorter moved to Kentucky with his owner in 1795. He married Lucy, a slave from a nearby farm. Later, allowed to hire out his own time and labor, McWorter engaged in a number of enterprises, notably mining the mineral 'crude-niter' (an essential component of gunpowder) that proved profitable allowing him to buy his wife's freedom in 1817, and his own in 1819.

Frank and Lucy McWorter left Kentucky for Illinois in 1830, the year the Thomas Lincoln family, with son Abraham, came to Illinois from Indiana. McWorter bought

a farm in Pike County's Hadley Township and platted the town of New Philadelphia in 1836. There were clearly defined lots for family homes, businesses, and a school, where citizens of all races lived. By-passed by the railroad in 1869, the townspeople slowly dispersed from the scene by the late 1880's. Today, the town site is an open field, but the New Philadelphia township map with deed information shows town lots and the streets of New Philadelphia. Frank McWorter died at New Philadelphia in 1854, and a son, Solomon, assumed family leadership. Some of the family still resides in the area.

In 2004, a three-year National Science Foundation grant of \$230,000 allowed three summers of archeological work hosted by the University of Maryland in collaboration with the University of Illinois and the Illinois State Museum. This work located many intact town features including substantial building foundations, the remains of wells, and pit cellars. In total, surveys and archeological investigation located more than 65,000 artifacts. Oral histories from local residents and descendants, written accounts, census, land deeds, and tax records, document the town's historical appearance. According to an 1872 map, the town consisted of 144 lots, each 60 feet by 120 feet, laid out in a grid pattern over 42 acres. Most blocks were divided into eight lots and the primary thoroughfares were 80 feet wide. Importantly, Frank McWorter wisely platted New Philadelphia along two of Pike County's primary roads.

Federal census records from 1850 to 1880 indicate residents were involved in a variety of enterprises; cabinetmakers, shoemakers, a wheelwright, a carpenter, a seamstress, physician, teachers, merchants and blacksmiths. A post office operated in the town from 1849 to 1853, and is said to have served as a stagecoach stop.

In its designation as a National Historic Landmark in 2009, New Philadelphia is recognized for its high potential to yield information of major scientific importance to our understandings of everyday life in a racially integrated community, where formerly enslaved individuals, free born African Americans, and Americans of European descent lived, worshipped, made commerce, and were educated together. I have been told it is generally recognized that previous research and archaeology from this era of our history has focused on historic sites associated with the colonial settlements, sites associated with the founding of our nation, and southern plantations associated with slavery. New Philadelphia would add new dimensions to our understanding of this time in our country's history.

The New Philadelphia Association, a not-for-profit organization formed by area residents seeks to appropriately preserve a substantial portion of the town site in honor of a remarkable man and family of the Western Illinois frontier. Currently, fourteen acres of the 42-acre site are under purchase agreement with the Archaeological Conservancy, and as I understand, the current owners of the land are open to further discussions on this project.

Ideally, a National Park unit at New Philadelphia would commemorate a theme important to all Americans: the struggle for freedom and opportunity. New Philadelphia would inspire current and future generations as a place of inter-racial cooperation in an era and region of intense racial discord that culminated in the American Civil War.

I want to especially thank Chairman Udall and Ranking Member Burr for their commitment to our National Parks system, and secondly for moving this legislation as quickly as possible. I know that, working together, we can add to the witness of history for all Americans to see and understand the remarkable accomplishments of Frank McWorter, his family, and the citizens of Pike County Illinois.

Senator UDALL. Thank you, Senator Burr. Thank you for bringing this important opportunity to the attention of the subcommittee.

I think this makes complete sense. I look forward to working with you to implement this study and with the Park Service, and the legacy of Frank McWorter and all that happened in New Philadelphia is one that we should cherish and preserve.

So thanks for bringing this to the committee today. I would yield to the ranking member, if he has any additional comments?

Senator BURR. No.

Senator UDALL. You can have the last word, if you would like, or if you need to—

Senator BURRIS. I think it is time for me to go preside, gentlemen. So thank you very much, and I appreciate the opportunity to testify with such a distinguished committee.

Senator UDALL. Thank you, Senator Burris, for acknowledging our subcommittee. Thank you.

Before we hear from the panel, I think I would like to ask Senator Sessions if he has any comments.

**STATEMENT OF HON. JEFF SESSIONS, U.S. SENATOR  
FROM ALABAMA**

Senator SESSIONS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I do.

The Black Belt region of Alabama is composed of 19 counties, represented by 6 of our 7 members of the congressional delegation. In 2008, I supported a feasibility study to determine if the Black Belt should be designated a national heritage area. That study concluded the area has natural, cultural, historic, and scenic resources that can be seen through the physical features and traditions in the region from its thriving agricultural economy to its prominence in the civil rights movement.

As a result, in the 111th Congress, Senator Shelby and I introduced 2892 to establish the Black Belt National Heritage Area, and it highlights the features of the region that would designate the counties as a national heritage area.

This is a great area of our State. It is an area that I grew up in. It is a poor area of the State but has a beautiful countryside. It is particularly rural. It has an unusual land, soil, and a rich black earth that is in some ways better and some ways not as good as others, more prairie-like. It is sticky when it is wet, but it is an historic region in the State, one of the first areas to be settled.

Cotton was, of course, a primary crop over 100 years ago. But now, it is more prairie and catfish farming and that sort of thing. So, early on, the Creeks and Choctaws roamed the region. Then it was settled. The land was worked by African-American slaves who now have seen great progress as a result of the civil rights movement centered in the Selma area and other areas in that region.

So I am proud of the region. I believe it is a uniquely historical area. Senator Shelby and I appreciate the committee's consideration of that.

I will offer for the record the rest of my remarks, but I thank the committee for your consideration of what we think is a very special and unique region of our State.

[The prepared statement of Senator Sessions follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. JEFF SESSIONS, U.S. SENATOR FROM ALABAMA

ALABAMA BLACK BELT NATIONAL HERITAGE AREA

The Black Belt region is comprised of nineteen counties and is represented by six of the seven Members of the Alabama Congressional delegation. In 2008, I supported a feasibility study to determine if the Black Belt should be designated a National Heritage Area. That study concluded this area has natural, cultural, historic, and scenic resources that can still be seen through the physical features and traditions in the region—from its agricultural economy to its prominence in the Civil Rights movement. Indeed, the Black Belt had been one of the most segregated areas in the nation and the Civil Rights movement transformed the region and now most of the elected officials are African American. As a result, in the 111th Congress, Senator Shelby and I introduced S. 2892 to establish the Alabama Black Belt Na-

tional Heritage Area, which highlights the features of the region and would designate the nineteen counties mentioned above as a National Heritage Area.

This unique region played a significant role in American history. At the start of the nineteenth century, only a few Anglo-Americans lived in the Black Belt where Creeks and Choctaw farmed along the rivers and hunted on the vast prairie. However, in less than 20 years the Black Belt prairie land was transformed by farmers who rushed to Alabama to purchase land, work the soil, and grow cotton. It was one of the first great American land booms, virtually unrivaled until the California Gold Rush during the middle of the nineteenth century. By the end of 1819, Alabama was admitted to the Union, and two decades later the native Indian tribes had been forced west. In a flash, Black Belt fields were cultivated with row upon row of cotton replacing Tallgrass prairie. African-American slaves worked the land formerly roamed by Creeks and Choctaws. Indeed today the majority of the population in many of the counties is African American. It was nothing less than a prodigious, all-encompassing social, cultural, and environmental revolution. Eventually, cattle, pasture land, soybeans, catfish, forests, and paper mills replaced cotton fields on the landscape. Life on the rivers changed too. First, substantial trade towns and cities—Cahawba, Selma, Camden, Demopolis—sprang up, and for a time prospered along the riverbanks. By the middle of the nineteenth century large, paddlewheel steamboats navigated the region's major rivers transporting passengers, freight, and cotton. During the latter part of the nineteenth century and throughout the twentieth century, waterways were dammed to improve flood control, produce hydroelectric power and create reservoirs. Although change has occurred in a host of different ways in the Black Belt, the striking antebellum architecture still remains. Today, the Black Belt is rich in history and natural resources, but lacks adequate economic growth. There are treasured traditions and customs throughout the region. People travel from across the globe to walk the Edmund Pettus Bridge, to recall the Selma to Montgomery March for voting rights, participate in Civil War reenactments, visit the legendary Gee's Bend quilters, and observe firsthand Native American artifacts as well as the region's remarkable woodlands, streams, and rivers. Many of the communities in the Black Belt face declining populations, high unemployment rates, as well as infrastructure challenges. The designation as a National Heritage Area could be a positive factor in developing and encouraging new investment in a region that remains largely rural and contains some of the poorest counties in the United States. That the area is poor economically there can be no doubt. Yet it is rich in history, quality of life, faith and integrity. The spirit of the people is unsurpassed. Truly it is a unique and wonderful place, worthy of recognition as a National Heritage Area.

Senator UDALL. Thank you, Senator Sessions.

I think I speak for the ranking member, as well as for myself, in acknowledging the importance of this area and your connection personally to it. The fact that you took time to come to the subcommittee today and share your insights and your family history does not go unnoted. We look forward to working with you. It seems to make very good sense.

Senator SESSIONS. Thank you very much.

Senator UDALL. We would now call to the witness table Dan Wenk, the deputy director of the National Park Service, and Reid Wilson, executive director of the Conservation Trust for North Carolina. If you would please be seated?

Before we start with Mr. Wenk for the administration's views on these bills, I want to observe a milestone, if I might, this afternoon. Whenever this subcommittee holds a hearing such as this one, much of the work in preparing not only the Park Service's testimony, but also for providing background information for the committee is handled by the Park Service's Office of Legislative Affairs, as Mr. Wenk well knows.

I understand today is Beverly Davenport's final hearing prior to her retirement at the end of the month. She has been a key asset not only for the Park Service with her work in the Legislative Affairs Office. But Beverly, here to this committee itself, you have al-

ways been very helpful in quickly responding to requests for information and providing important background on many, many issues.

So I want to note our appreciation for all your hard work and to wish you the very best in your retirement. I have a feeling this isn't the last we have seen of you, at least heard from you because I know this committee staff here is very, very appreciative of all that you have done, and I think they are probably going to get your phone number so they can continue to call on you.

So we wanted to acknowledge you. Thank you. You make us proud.

Mr. Wenk, welcome back to the subcommittee. We keep meeting like this, do we not, about every month, and please proceed with your statement.

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

Mr. WENK. Mr. Chairman, thank you for the recognition of Beverly Davenport and the work that she does, and thank you for the opportunity to appear before this subcommittee to present the Department of the Interior's views on the nine bills on today's agenda.

I would like to submit our full statements on each of the subjects for the record and summarize our department's positions on these bills.

S. 553 would revise the authorized route of the North Country National Scenic Trail in northeastern Minnesota to include existing hiking trails along Lake Superior's north shore and the Superior National Forest and Chippewa National Forest.

The department supports enactment of S. 553 with 2 amendments to increase the overall length of the trail to 4,600 miles and to revise the language that references the map for the revised route of the trail.

S. 1017 would reauthorize the Cane River National Heritage Area Commission and expand the boundaries of Cane River National Heritage Area in the State of Louisiana. The department recommends that the committee defer action on S. 1017 until program legislation is enacted that establishes guidelines and a process for the designation and administration of National Heritage Areas. The administration anticipates submitting such a legislative proposal to you in the near future, and we recommend enactment of this proposal during this Congress.

S. 1018 would authorize the Secretary of Interior to enter into an agreement for constructing a facility on land owned by Northwestern State University that would help meet critical needs of 2 National Park Service entities—Cane River Creole National Historical Park and the Natchitoches National Center for Preservation Technology and Training.

The department supports enactment of S. 1018 with 2 amendments; to provide for a lease term of up to 40 years in order to provide maximum flexibility in amortizing the cost of the building and to provide the land at the university be leased at a nominal cost.

S. 1537 would designate the Norman E. Borlaug birthplace and childhood home in Cresco, Iowa, as a national historic site and as a unit of the National Park System. The department supports the

effort to honor Dr. Norman E. Borlaug, but suggests amending S. 1537 to authorize a study of his birthplace and childhood home rather than a designation.

S. 1629 would direct the Secretary of Interior to conduct a study of the archeological site and surrounding land of New Philadelphia town site in the State of Illinois. The department supports enactment of S. 1629.

S. 2892 would establish the Alabama Black Belt National Heritage Area in a part of the State known for its antebellum architecture and its role in the modern civil rights movement. The department recommends that the committee defer action on this legislation until National Heritage Area Program legislation is enacted and until the National Park Service completes its final review of the feasibility study for the proposed Alabama Black Belt National Heritage Area.

S. 2933 would direct the Secretary of Interior to conduct a study to determine the suitability and feasibility of designating the Colonel Charles Young home in Xenia, Ohio, as a unit of the National Park System. The department supports enactment of S. 2933.

S. 2951 would authorize funding to protect and conserve lands contiguous with the Blue Ridge Parkway. The department appreciates the strong interest in protecting scenic vistas along the Blue Ridge Parkway and the desire to have a major initiative for the parkway's 75th anniversary. However, the department does not support this legislation in its current form.

We would welcome the opportunity to work with the committee and the bill's sponsors to develop a different approach toward promoting and incorporating the work of nonprofit conservation organizations in the protection of the parkway's scenic resources.

H.R. 3804 addresses several issues that are important to the National Park Service, including authorizing 10-year extension to the National Park System Advisory Board and the National Park Concessions Management Advisory Board, standardizing the penalties for violations of NPS regulations at military parks and national historic sites, and authorizing an agreement between the National Park Service and other entities that administer historic sites at Pearl Harbor to conduct joint ticket sales.

This legislation also contains several other needed authorities and some technical amendments to previously enacted legislation. The department supports H.R. 3804.

Mr. Chairman, that concludes my statement. I would be pleased to answer any questions.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Wenk follows:]

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

H.R. 3804

Mr. Chairman and members of the subcommittee, thank you for the opportunity to present the views of the Department of the Interior on H.R. 3804, a bill to make technical corrections to various Acts affecting the National Park Service, to extend, amend, or establish certain National Park Service authorities, and for other purposes.

The Department supports H.R. 3804, which addresses several issues that are important to the National Park Service (NPS). The Department testified in support of this bill before the House Subcommittee on National Parks, Forest and Public Lands

in a hearing on November 5, 2009. The bill passed the House on December 7, 2009. We will discuss each of the portions of the bill separately in this testimony.

H.R. 3804 would authorize ten year extensions to the National Park System Advisory Board and the National Park Service Concessions Management Advisory Board. The bill also would standardize the penalties for violations of NPS regulations at military parks and national historic sites and would raise the ceiling for annual appropriations used to fund the Volunteers in the Parks Program. The bill would authorize the Secretary of the Interior (Secretary) to enter into an agreement with nonprofit organizations or other entities that manage or administer historic sites at Pearl Harbor and to allow the sale of tickets to those historic sites by NPS staff or employees of the organizations that administer the historic sites. In addition, H.R. 3804 would authorize a land exchange to address a long-standing access issue on the George Washington Memorial Parkway and would amend the D.C. Snow Removal Act of 1922 to clarify which federal agency is responsible for clearing snow from sidewalks and crosswalks in front of or around public buildings in the District of Columbia. The Martin Luther King, Junior, National Historic Site would be redesignated as a National Historical Park and the boundary of the Lava Beds National Monument Wilderness would be adjusted. Finally, the bill would make technical corrections to laws for a national seashore, wild and scenic rivers, and national heritage areas.

#### *Section 101—National Park System Advisory Board*

H.R. 3804 would extend the authorization for the National Park System Advisory Board to January 1, 2020. The Advisory Board was first authorized in 1935 under the Historic Sites, Buildings, and Antiquities Act. The Board advises the Director of the National Park Service (Director) and the Secretary on matters relating to the NPS, the National Park System, and programs administered by the NPS, including the administration of the Historic Sites, Buildings, and Antiquities Act; the designation of national historic landmarks and national natural landmarks; and the national historic significance of proposed national historic trails.

The Advisory Board meets approximately twice yearly, at the call of the Director or the Director's designee. The NPS provides support for the Advisory Board and members are appointed on a staggered-term basis for terms not to exceed 4 years. The Advisory Board has been a valuable partner of the NPS, and we look forward to continuing this partnership in the coming years. After several one-year authorizations, the NPS supports the longer time extension for this important body.

#### *Section 102—National Park Service Concessions Management Advisory Board*

H.R. 3804 would also extend the authorization for the NPS Concession Management Advisory Board for ten years, to December 31, 2019. The Concession Management Advisory Board was established on November 13, 1998 by Public Law 105-391, and is composed of seven members appointed by the Secretary. Advisory Board members must be United States citizens, and not employed by the Federal Government. Members are appointed on a staggered basis for terms not to exceed 4 years.

The Advisory Board's purpose is to advise the Secretary and the NPS on matters relating to the effective management of concessions in the National Park System. The Board helps make recommendations on ways to make the concession programs more cost effective, mitigate impacts of concession operations on park resources, improve visitor services, and allocate concession fees.

Board members are experts in hospitality, tourism, accounting, outfitting and guide industries, parks concession management, traditional arts and crafts, and parks and recreation programs, and are selected for their expertise and area of professional skills in concessions management and oversight. The combination of the expert advice and the public forum that the Board offers provides a practical approach to consider contentious concession management topics and issues.

Historically, the Board has held two to three public meetings annually. This board has also been continued by a one-year authorization and the NPS supports the longer term extension of this important body.

#### *Section 103—Uniform Penalties*

Section 103 of H.R. 3804 addresses a lack of uniformity in the penalties for violating regulations throughout the National Park System. Having different penalties for violation of the same NPS regulation, in parks that originated as military parks or national historic sites is confusing and inappropriate. The NPS has recognized that the framework for penalties for violating regulations in these military parks and historic sites was derived from unique historic statutes enacted over 60 years ago. This disparity in penalties may undermine effective and uniform law enforcement and criminal prosecution for violations on parkland.

H.R. 3804 would provide the necessary legislative authority to provide uniform, consistent penalties for NPS regulations, including in parks that originated as military parks or national historic sites. This would be accomplished by increasing the penalties for these sites from the current penalty of only a fine or a fine and/or incarceration up to three months to a fine and/or imprisonment up to six months as provided under the NPS Organic Act, 16 U.S.C. § 3, and the long-standing fine-enhancement provision of 18 U.S.C. § 3571.

*Section 104—Volunteers in the Parks*

H.R. 3804 would raise the ceiling for funding for the Volunteers in the Parks (VIP) program from \$3.5 million to \$10 million annually. In 1970 the VIP program started with a few hundred volunteers. Today, there are more than 175,000 VIPs helping to preserve and protect our natural and cultural resources. More than 370 NPS areas currently use VIPs. Volunteers range in age from young children to senior citizens. They come from all over the United States, and the world, bringing different backgrounds, skills, and talents that enrich our park programs.

The increase in the VIP ceiling proposed in H.R. 3804 is needed to more accurately reflect the resources that are being devoted to this popular program. Although the enacted levels for the VIP program were \$2.794 million in FY 2009 and \$2.797 million in FY 2010, expenditures for the program were \$5.021 million in FY 2008 and \$4.753 million (with a few expenditure reports outstanding) for FY 2009—the two most recent years for which data is available. With the President's and the Secretary of the Interior's emphasis on the importance of volunteerism, the increased ceiling would allow the NPS to recognize the benefits offered by our many volunteers each year.

*Title II—Pearl Harbor Ticketing*

World War II Valor in the Pacific National Monument includes 11 acres at Halawa Landing at Pearl Harbor and the USS Oklahoma Memorial across the harbor on Ford Island. The NPS and the U.S. Navy are developing an overarching Memorandum of Understanding to address cooperative management at Pearl Harbor.

The Pearl Harbor Naval Base is a secure site. Halawa Landing sits outside the main gates of the Base, but still within the area for enhanced security, and visitors arrive by tour bus, public transit or private car. Access to Ford Island is permitted only by shuttle bus.

In addition to the NPS's USS Arizona Memorial Visitor Center, there are two other Pearl Harbor partner-operated historic sites that are accessed through the NPS facility: the Battleship Missouri Memorial and the Pacific Aviation Museum. Visitors surrender all bags and luggage before entering the NPS facility to visit NPS sites or the partner-operated sites. Currently, the other partner at Halawa Landing, the USS Bowfin Submarine Museum, requires visitors to store their bags in a separate secure facility.

The NPS is in the midst of a \$50 million replacement of the USS Arizona Memorial Visitor Center, at Halawa Landing. When completed, this new facility will include space for a ticket counter for the Pearl Harbor historic sites partners to sell their tickets, which will be adjacent to the NPS information and ticketing counter.

Free admission to the USS Arizona Memorial is required by law. If H.R. 3804 is enacted, visitors would approach the NPS ticket booth at the entrance to the Visitor Center and receive a free, timed ticket to the USS Arizona Memorial. At the same time, visitors would be able to purchase all their tickets to other Pearl Harbor historic sites and plan their visit. H.R. 3804 would authorize NPS to work with our partners on a joint ticketing operation, and recover a reasonable fee to cover any administrative costs associated with such operation.

Our partners at Pearl Harbor enhance visitor understanding and increase appreciation for World War II Pacific Theatre history. Entrance fees to Pearl Harbor historic sites are the partners' critical source of revenue for operations and allowing the sale of their tickets at the NPS visitor center supports the NPS's broader mission to tell the story of the Pacific Theater. Joint ticket sales would be the next step in enhancing the visitor experience and our partnership. For example, visitors waiting for the launch to the USS Arizona Memorial would have additional time to explore the USS Bowfin Museum, or start their tours on Ford Island, returning to board their launch to the USS Arizona Memorial.

Section 121 of Public Law 111-88—The Department of the Interior, Environment and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2010, enacted on October 30, 2009, provides the same authority contained in Title II of H.R. 3804 regarding Pearl Harbor Ticketing for fiscal year 2010. However, the permanent authority provided by H.R. 3804 remains necessary.

*Section 301—George Washington Memorial Parkway*

Section 301 of H.R. 3804 would address a long-standing access issue on the George Washington Memorial Parkway. The Claude Moore Colonial Farm (Farm) is a 68.5-acre working colonial farm, part of the 235-acre Langley Tract property that was transferred to the George Washington Memorial Parkway in 1971 to provide public recreation and open space. The greenhouses, administrative offices, staff parking, a storage area for Farm equipment, and animal pens are located in the administration and maintenance area of the Farm. Colonial Farm Road forms the eastern boundary between the Langley Tract and the Farm and provides the main public access to the Farm from Georgetown Pike. In addition to providing Farm access, Colonial Farm Road serves as an entrance road to the Federal Highway Administration's Turner-Fairbank Highway Research Center (Research Center) and the George Bush Center for Intelligence (CIA).

The three federal agencies have discussed concerns about crossing property lines, the need to have uninterrupted access to their properties, and the need to improve security (visibility) near perimeter fencing of the Research Center. They have identified properties suitable for exchange that would provide access to the Farm's administrative and maintenance area and the means to improve security outside the fencing of the Research Center and CIA acceptable to NPS standards.

H.R. 3804 would authorize the transfer of administrative jurisdiction of land between the NPS and the Federal Highway Administration to provide the NPS with a separate access road in the administration and maintenance area for the Farm that will not go through the Research Center. In exchange, NPS would provide the Federal Highway Administration with a visible buffer on parkland outside the perimeter fence of the Research Center. NPS would also place use restrictions on another parcel of land to improve security of the Research Center.

*Section 302—DC Snow Removal*

Section 302 of H.R. 3804 addresses snow removal within the District of Columbia. The Chief of Engineers of the U.S. Army was originally given responsibility for snow removal on sidewalks in front of all buildings owned or leased by the United States (except the Capitol grounds and the Library of Congress) and from all sidewalks or crosswalks used as public thoroughfares in and around all public squares, reservations, or open spaces within the fire limits of the District of Columbia. In 1925, the duties of the Chief of Engineers were transferred to the Director of Public Buildings and Public Parks of the National Capital, and subsequently to the NPS.

The NPS has not removed snow from the sidewalks of non-NPS buildings and lots for more than thirty years. Instead, the respective federal agency has taken responsibility for snow removal on public thoroughfares or on sidewalks or crosswalks in front of buildings that are owned or leased by the United States and are under such agency's administrative jurisdiction. The General Services Administration (GSA), which operates, protects, and maintains most government-owned and leased buildings and grounds in the District of Columbia, has regulations at 41 CFR Part 102-74 providing that GSA maintains and repairs such sidewalks and that snow removal is part of its complete facility maintenance schedule. The D.C. Snow Removal Act of 1922 was never amended, however, to reflect the effective change in responsibility.

H.R. 3804 would amend the D.C. Snow Removal Act of 1922 to clarify that each federal agency would be responsible for property owned by the United States and under that agency's administrative jurisdiction, including snow removal. This would make the law consistent with modern snow removal practices and would change the time period for snow removal to reflect the realities of street snow removal where plows usually clear the streets by pushing snow onto the adjacent sidewalks, and where additional time is necessary to remove it. The legislation also would allow for the duty of a federal agency to be delegated to another governmental or non-governmental entity through a lease, contract, or other comparable arrangement. If two federal agencies have overlapping responsibility for the same sidewalk, the bill would provide the authority for the agencies to enter into an arrangement assigning responsibility.

*Section 303—Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historical Park*

H.R. 3804 would redesignate the Martin Luther King, Junior, National Historic Site as a National Historical Park to reflect its multiple properties and broad themes, and provide a new map reference for the park, which reflects the proposed name change and indicates a land exchange that occurred in 2004.

*Section 304—Lava Beds National Wilderness Boundary Adjustment*

H.R. 3804 would correct errors in the 1972 law that designated wilderness at Lava Beds National Monument. Through the substitution of a new wilderness boundary map, certain improved areas would be excluded from wilderness and other areas that are appropriate for designation would be included.

Adding and subtracting parts of the two wilderness areas would produce a net increase of 399 acres in the actual amount of designated wilderness. Although the 1972 law provides for about 10,000 acres of wilderness in the Black Lava Flow area and about 18,460 in the Schonchin Lava Flow area, a 1993 survey that used Geographic Information Systems (GIS) and a map produced by the U.S. Geological Survey found that the actual acreage in the two wilderness areas is 10,125 and 17,936 respectively. The proposed legislation would provide for about 10,431 acres within the Black Lava Flow area and about 18,029 acres in the Schonchin Lava Flow area, and the map referenced in H.R. 3804 depicts two wilderness areas with the same amount of acreage as those two figures indicate. Added together, the acreage of the two wilderness areas would be the same total amount (28,460) that Congress intended to designate in the 1972 law, only distributed differently between the two areas and measured more accurately.

This proposal is consistent with Lava Bed National Monument's 1996 General Management Plan and 2006 Wilderness Stewardship Plan. The only costs anticipated from this proposal would be for signs and maps, which would be negligible.

*Other Provisions*

Finally, Title IV of H.R. 3804 would make technical corrections to several acts that involve a national seashore, wild and scenic rivers, and national heritage areas addressing a number of small issues for various parks that have been needed for a long time. We look forward to working with you for their enactment.

Mr. Chairman, that concludes my statement. I would be happy to answer any questions that you or other members of the Subcommittee may have.

S. 553

Mr. Chairman and members of the subcommittee, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today to present the Department of the Interior's views on S. 553, a bill to revise the authorized route of the North Country National Scenic Trail in northeastern Minnesota to include existing hiking trails along Lake Superior's north shore and in Superior National Forest and Chippewa National Forest.

The Department supports enactment of S. 553 with two amendments described later in this statement. This legislation would amend section 5(a)(8) of the National Trails System Act to revise the route of the North Country National Scenic Trail in northeastern Minnesota and increase the overall length of the trail to 4,600 miles. This reflects current measurements of the trail's length plus the additional 400 miles of the revised route in northeastern Minnesota. The bill includes the reference for a map that would depict the revised route of the trail.

The North Country National Scenic Trail was authorized by Congress in 1980 to provide superlative outdoor recreation opportunities and conservation of nationally significant scenic, historic, natural and cultural qualities along the trail corridor, to provide a premier hiking trail facility, and to encourage and assist volunteer citizen involvement in the planning, development, maintenance and management of the trail. The National Park Service (NPS) administers this trail. The comprehensive management plan for the trail was issued in 1982.

The authorized route of the trail in northeastern Minnesota traverses more than 70 miles of black spruce and tamarack swamp, extending westward from Jay Cooke State Park, south of Duluth, to the Chippewa National Forest, southwest of Grand Rapids. Because of the location and difficult environmental conditions within the swamp, no portion of this section of the trail has been constructed. The proposed revised route uses three existing hiking trails all developed or redeveloped by volunteers since the Comprehensive Management Plan for the North Country Trail was written. These trails, totaling over 300 miles of existing hiking trail, follow the north shore of Lake Superior and traverse the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness in the Superior National Forest, a region of the state known locally as the "Arrowhead." The proposed change has become known in the North Country Trail community as the "Arrowhead Reroute."

Since 1987, Minnesota hiking groups have requested the NPS to study the revised route and consider their recommendation for a change due to the location and the existing environmental conditions of the present segment. As a result, the NPS conducted the Northeastern Minnesota Route Assessment between 1999 and 2004. This study evaluated and compared two routes—the one authorized by Congress in 1980

and the Arrowhead Reroute. In 2003 and 2004 public meetings were held in Duluth, Ely, Grand Rapids, and Minneapolis, Minnesota. No comments opposing the proposed change in the route were received, either at the public meetings or by mail or email during the widely-publicized public comment period. The plan and environmental assessment was approved by the NPS Midwest Regional Director on September 30, 2004. The National Trails System Act states that segments of a national scenic trail may be relocated upon a determination that the relocation is necessary to preserve the purposes of the trail and to promote a sound land management program. The authorized route through 70 miles of densely wooded wetlands does not provide a superlative outdoor recreation experience. To provide a premier hiking experience and preserve the landscape would require the construction of many miles of boardwalk in order to successfully traverse those wetlands. This factor alone has not and will not encourage volunteers to become involved in establishing that route.

In stark contrast, the revised Arrowhead Reroute connects nationally significant natural, cultural, and recreational resources with outstanding scenery that epitomizes the "North Country" and has already encouraged volunteers to become involved in planning, developing, maintaining, and managing trails. Additionally, the relocation promotes a sound land management program, using established trails and proposing additional trail segments that are appropriately located and managed in accordance with established multiple use principles.

Approximately three-quarters of the Arrowhead Reroute already exists, having been built as part of the three existing hiking trails—the Superior Hiking Trail, Border Route Trail, and Kekekabic Trail. New sections that would need to be constructed to complete the reroute in the Chippewa and Superior National Forests, Minnesota state parks and forests, and county-owned lands would be reviewed for environmental impacts on critical habitat, endangered species, wetlands, and cultural resources. Where no public land exists, the trail would be developed on private property but only with the owners' permission and support.

There is strong support for the trail relocation among public agencies and jurisdictions. The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) has been a strong proponent of the relocation since the late 1980s. Also, the supervisors of the Superior National Forest and the Chippewa National Forest have indicated their support for the proposed relocated route. Local governments in Duluth, Ely, and Grand Rapids have been supportive.

Duluth and St. Louis County have already approved the extension of the Superior Hiking Trail across city and county parkland to connect Jay Cooke State Park to the south with Two Harbors to the north, the former southern terminus of the Superior Hiking Trail. More than 39 miles of new trail have been built in the city along with six additional miles between Duluth and Two Harbors. Recently, one city along the authorized route voiced opposition because they will no longer be on the official route—a route that is environmentally unfeasible. However, they did not voice this opposition during the study and public comment period back in 2004.

The North Country Trail Association and the Parks and Trails Council of Minnesota are committed to developing the connecting trail segments that will be needed between Ely and the Chippewa National Forest. The Council has pledged not only the workers to build and maintain the trail, but also the effort and funding needed to secure private lands. The NPS anticipates the cost of adding this route and constructing a footpath to be very low. The construction would be done primarily by volunteers using hand tools. Current NPS staff would provide route planning and support for the volunteers who help develop and maintain the path. Funding would be needed to supply trail markers, signage, tools, equipment, and materials to the volunteers for the 400 additional miles of trail. The average cost is estimated to be \$100 per mile per year, or \$40,000 per year.

The portions of the North Country Trail reroute yet to be built have not been laid out in detail. No specific landowners have been identified or contacted. Rather, the route assessment (study) identified a corridor several miles wide within which the trail will eventually be laid out. This will allow the NPS and its partners to design a route that will minimize the amount of private land involved and to work with landowners on a voluntary basis—if one landowner is not interested in having the trail on his property, perhaps a neighbor will be amenable. Consequently, no estimates of land acquisition costs have been developed.

Up until March 30, 2009, the Federal government was prohibited from spending funds to acquire lands for the North Country National Scenic Trail outside the exterior boundaries of existing Federal areas. However, Federal funds could be granted to others to assist them in acquiring these lands. In FY 2000 Congress directed the NPS to grant \$500,000 from the Land and Water Conservation Fund to the state of Wisconsin for acquisition of lands for the North Country Trail. Public Law 111-11, the Omnibus Public Land Management Act of 2009, provides authority for Fed-

eral agencies to acquire lands or interests in lands from willing sellers for the North Country National Scenic Trail.

We recommend that S. 553 be amended to increase the overall length of the trail to 4,600 miles and to insert language reflecting the revised map. The proposed amendments are attached to this testimony.

Mr. Chairman, this concludes my testimony. I would be glad to answer any questions that you or other members of the subcommittee may have.

Suggested amendments to H.R. 481

On page 4, line 3 strike "SEC. 3" and all that follows through line 17 and insert the following:

**SEC. 3. ROUTE REAUTHORIZATION.**

Section 5(a)(8) of the National Trails System Act (16 U.S.C. 12244(a)) is amended as follows:

- (1) strike "thirty-two hundred miles" and insert "forty-six hundred miles", and
- (2) strike "Proposed North Country Trail" through "June 1975" and insert "North Country National Scenic Trail, Authorized Route", dated February 16, 2005, and numbered 649/80,002."

S. 1017

Mr. Chairman and members of the subcommittee, thank you for the opportunity to present the views of the Department of the Interior on S. 1017, a bill to reauthorize the Cane River National Heritage Area Commission and expand the boundaries of Cane River National Heritage Area in the State of Louisiana.

The Department recommends that the committee defer action on S. 1017 until program legislation is enacted that establishes guidelines and a process for the designation and administration of national heritage areas. The Administration anticipates submitting such a legislative proposal to you in the near future and we recommend that Congress enact national heritage area program legislation this Congress. The Administration's FY 2011 Budget proposes to reduce funding for national heritage areas to focus resources on those park activities that most closely align with its core mission and encourage areas to become self-sufficient, consistent with a FY 2010 Congressional directive.

Cane River National Heritage Area in northwestern Louisiana was established in 1994 as a complementary designation to the Cane River Creole National Historical Park, which was established at the same time. The national heritage area was intended to assist in preservation, ensure cultural sensitivity, and minimize the need for federal land acquisition. The heritage area is known for its historic plantations, Creole architecture, and complex multi-cultural legacy. The area is home to a unique blend of French, Spanish, African, American Indian, Creole, and other cultures. It is an extraordinarily significant area because the cultures that shaped the Cane River region in the 1700s remain there today, which is rare in the United States.

S. 1017 would reauthorize the Cane River National Heritage Area Commission through 2025. Under current law, the commission, which serves as the local coordinating entity for the Cane River National Heritage Area, is scheduled to terminate on August 5, 2010. The commission operates in accordance with the heritage area management plan that was completed in 2003 and approved by both the Governor of Louisiana and the Secretary of the Interior. It is currently overseeing numerous projects and programs including a successful signage and wayfinding program, preservation of National Historic Landmarks and national register properties, development of a military heritage assessment and tour focusing on Civil War sites in preparation for the Civil War sesquicentennial, and teacher workshops on Creole history and culture.

Under S. 1017, the composition of the Cane River National Heritage Area Commission would be modified to reflect current conditions. The heritage area's 1994 enabling legislation identified specific entities for representation on the commission. In some cases, those entities have evolved into other organizations. In addition, in order to allow commission representation of the entire range of cultural and landowner interests, as intended in the original legislation, the number of members would be increased from 19 to 23.

S. 1017 would also expand the boundaries of the Cane River National Heritage Area to include all of Natchitoches Parish west of the Red River. This change would add significant cultural and natural resources, including Spanish Colonial, Native American, U.S. military and westward expansion sites. Among the resources that would be included are original trail ruts of El Camino Real de los Tejas, the Spanish

Colonial trade route stretching from Natchitoches to Mexico City that is now a designated national historic trail.

If the committee decides to take further action on S. 1017, there are two issues we would like to call to your attention. One is the length of the existence of the commission. The 1994 authorizing legislation for the heritage area envisioned the transition of management from a Secretarial-appointed commission to another entity within 10-15 years. S. 1017 would allow that transition to be postponed for as long as 15 years, until 2025. Consistent with the idea that national heritage areas should be locally driven, nearly all other national heritage areas that were first established with a federal commission as the managing or coordinating entity have transitioned to a non-federal coordinating entity, usually a non-profit organization. That process is underway at Cane River where a non-profit organization that could serve as the local coordinating entity is currently being developed.

The other issue is the authorization of appropriations. The 1994 enabling legislation authorized unlimited appropriations with no sunset date and no matching fund requirement, for the Cane River National Heritage Area. Congress has held most other national heritage areas to authorized funding of \$10 million over 15 years in the initial heritage area designation, and required matching funds from other sources.

Mr. Chairman, this concludes my prepared remarks. I would be pleased to answer any questions you or any members of the subcommittee may have.

S. 1018

Mr. Chairman and members of the subcommittee, thank you for the opportunity to present the views of the Department of the Interior on S. 1018, a bill to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to enter into an agreement with Northwestern State University in Natchitoches, Louisiana, to construct a curatorial center for the use of Cane River Creole National Historical Park, the National Center for Preservation Technology and Training, and the university, and for other purposes.

The Department supports S. 1018 with amendments described later in this statement. This legislation would authorize an agreement for constructing a facility on land owned by Northwestern State University that would help meet critical needs of the National Park Service. The facility would be known as the Collections Conservation Center.

Located along the Cane River in Natchitoches Parish, Louisiana, Cane River Creole National Historical Park was established by Congress in 1994 to preserve the distinctive architecture and cultural landscapes of the only two, intact French Creole plantations in the United States, and to interpret the complex multicultural history of the Cane River area. The park preserves and protects a total of 67 historic structures at two locations, Magnolia Plantation and Oakland Plantation. Cane River Creole National Historical Park also contains a nationally significant museum collection estimated at more than one million objects, which represent all aspects of French Creole plantation life from the 1700s until the end of the plantation era. Most artifacts are stored in a former bar and restaurant, which is the only space available for lease. Other artifacts are stored in a three-sided historic tractor shed, which is located in the park. Present care and storage of these resources do not meet National Park Service museum standards. Consequently, precious museum objects are at risk of being exposed to inadequate temperature and humidity controls, periodic roof leaks, insect infestation, theft, and vandalism. A new state-of-the-art curatorial center would address these problems and was discussed in the park's 2001 General Management Plan and its 2003 Museum Collection Management Plan.

The National Center for Preservation Technology and Training is a research division of the National Park Service that was authorized under a 1992 amendment to the National Historic Preservation Act. It is located on the campus of Northwestern State University. In fulfilling its mission, the center conducts innovative conservation and collections management research and advances the use of science and technology in the field of historic preservation. The center has minimal laboratory space to conduct its work and is in need of additional space to house its laser conservation laboratory and materials research program.

Northwestern State University's Williamson Museum houses an archaeological and ethnological museum collection related to the Southeastern Tribes of the United States. Frequently used by tribal members for research on cultural traditions, the museum also serves as a gathering place for tribes and the public during special events. The museum collection is currently inadequately housed and is inaccessible to school groups because of its location in a college classroom building that has no available bus parking nearby.

Northwestern State University has available land that would be suitable for a structure that serves the purposes of the proposed Collections Conservation Center. The university is willing to contribute the use of the land for the center under the condition that the new center includes enough space to house its Williamson Museum collection, contingent on the approval of the Board of Supervisors for the University of Louisiana System. The anticipated cost to construct the center is approximately \$12.5 million. Funding to build and operate the center would be subject to the availability of appropriations and NPS priorities.

The land is above the 500-year floodplain, which is the level required for constructing curatorial facilities under National Park Service policies. It is also close to the building on campus used by the National Center for Preservation Technology and Training and it is about two miles away from the Cane River Creole National Historical Park headquarters. The authority for an agreement between the university and the National Park Service for a facility on the university's campus would be another facet of the close relationship between the two entities that was envisioned both in the enabling legislation for the preservation center, which provides for the center to be established on the university's campus, and in the enabling legislation for the park, which provides for a research program to be coordinated with the preservation center and the university.

We recommend that the bill be amended to provide for a lease term of up to 40 years in order to provide maximum flexibility in amortizing the cost of the building, and to provide that the land at the university be leased to the National Park Service at nominal cost. We would be happy to work with the committee to provide appropriate language for those and other amendments. Mr. Chairman, this concludes my prepared remarks. I would be pleased to answer any questions you or any members of the Subcommittee may have.

S. 1537

Mr. Chairman, thank you for the opportunity to testify on S. 1537, a bill to authorize the Secretary of the Interior, acting through the Director of the National Park Service, to designate the Dr. Norman E. Borlaug Birthplace and Childhood Home in Cresco, Iowa, as a National Historic Site and as a unit of the National Park System.

The Department supports the effort to honor Dr. Norman E. Borlaug, but would like to work with the committee to amend S. 1537 to authorize a study of his birthplace and childhood home instead of designating it at this time as a new Park Service unit.

S. 1537 would authorize the Secretary of the Interior to designate the Dr. Norman E. Borlaug Birthplace and Childhood Home as a National Historic Site if the Secretary acquires fee simple and unencumbered title to the Norman E. Borlaug property by donation from the Norman Borlaug Heritage Foundation. The Secretary would administer the unit in accordance with laws generally applicable to preserving national historic sites.

The homes and sites of renowned American scientists, artists and humanitarians provide a valuable link to understanding our country's history and achievements and are an important part of our national heritage. Dr. Norman E. Borlaug's scientific and humanitarian achievements certainly place him in this illustrious group.

Norman Borlaug grew up on a family farm outside of Cresco, Iowa. He was a strong and vigorous young man who could perform prodigious amounts of manual labor in the fields and used this strength as a competitive, trained athlete in his high school and college days. He was always interested in agriculture and felt the need to help the poor in the world. His interests and work led him to become one of the greatest humanitarians of all times.

Dr. Borlaug was a central figure in the "green revolution." During the 1960s over a period of four years, he was instrumental in helping farmers in India increase wheat production by an order greater than that achieved during the preceding 4,000 years. He also enabled developing countries to move toward achieving a balance between population growth and food production.

Dr. Borlaug received the Nobel Peace Prize in 1970 for his accomplishments in India and Pakistan and for his role as the "Father of the Green Revolution", the only person working in agriculture to ever be so honored. Since then, he has received numerous honors and awards, including the Presidential Medal of Freedom and the Public Service Medal. He created the World Food Prize in 1986, which is the Nobel Prize for Food and Agriculture. The headquarters of the World Food Prize is located in Des Moines, Iowa. The life and achievements of Dr. Norman E. Borlaug have contributed extensively to alleviating world hunger in countries such as Canada, India, Mexico, Latin America, Norway, Pakistan, and the United States.

The purchase and restoration of the birthplace and 106-acre childhood home and farm is being undertaken by the Norman Borlaug Heritage Foundation, a non-profit organization, formed to promote Dr. Borlaug's lifetime achievements and philosophy through education programs and projects at Dr. Borlaug's birthplace, childhood home, and one-room schoolhouse.

The National Park System includes many previous residences of distinguished Americans such as Benjamin Franklin, Clara Barton, and Thomas Edison. However, there are also many residences of distinguished Americans that are not part of the system. A study would look at whether the Federal government is the most appropriate entity to manage the site. Conducting a professional study allows Congress to be sure it is protecting an area that meets the criteria for inclusion into the National Park System.

With respect to historical sites, a study would not only look at whether the event or person associated with the site was historically significant, but it would also look at the integrity of the buildings, and other factors, such as whether there are other sites that might more appropriately tell the story associated with a particular individual.

A study also will enable the NPS and the Congress to identify the costs in acquiring, restoring, and operating a potential site. We believe the information gathered during the study process is invaluable and better ensures the NPS can continue its progress in addressing deferred maintenance and other needs in our national parks amidst financial challenges.

We recommend that the subcommittee amend S. 1537 to authorize a study of the Borlaug home, farm, and one-room school house to determine whether they conform to the criteria for potential new units of the National Park System. We estimate the cost of the study to be approximately \$250,000 to \$300,000. We would be glad to work with the subcommittee on the appropriate language. We do note that at present there are already 47 previously authorized studies for potential units of the National Park System, potential new National Heritage Areas, and potential additions to the National Trails System and National Wild and Scenic River System that have not yet been transmitted to the Congress.

Mr. Chairman, thank you for the opportunity to comment. This concludes my prepared remarks and I will be happy to answer any questions you or other subcommittee members might have.

S. 1629

Mr. Chairman, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you to provide the Department of the Interior's views on S. 1629, a bill to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to conduct a special resource study of the archeological site and surrounding land of the New Philadelphia town site in the State of Illinois.

The Department supports enactment of S. 1629. However, we believe that priority should be given to the 47 previously authorized studies for potential units of the National Park System, potential new National Heritage Areas, and potential additions to the National Trails System and National Wild and Scenic River System that have not yet been transmitted to the Congress.

S. 1629 authorizes a special resource study to evaluate the national significance of New Philadelphia, Illinois, and to determine the suitability and feasibility of designating the site as a unit of the National Park System. The bill directs the Secretary in the course of the resource study to consider alternatives for the preservation, protection and interpretation of New Philadelphia, Illinois, by Federal, State or local government entities or any other interested individuals, and to identify the costs estimates for any Federal acquisition, development, interpretation, operation and maintenance associated with the range of management alternatives. We estimate the cost of the resource study to range from \$200,000 to \$300,000, based on similar types of studies conducted in recent years.

New Philadelphia, located near Barry, Illinois, was founded in 1836 by Frank McWhorter, an enslaved man from Kentucky, who bought his own freedom and the freedom of 15 family members. New Philadelphia is the first known town platted and officially registered by an African American before the Civil War. The rural community situated near the Mississippi and Illinois Rivers flourished at first, but later fell in decline when the railroad bypassed the community in 1869; it was eventually dissolved in 1885. The site of New Philadelphia, an archeological site with no visible above-ground evidence, was designated a National Historic Landmark on January 16, 2009.

Mr. Chairman, this concludes my prepared statement. I would be happy to answer any questions that you or other committee members may have regarding this bill.

Mr. Chairman and members of the subcommittee, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today to present the views of the Department of the Interior on S. 2892, a bill to establish the Alabama Black Belt National Heritage Area, and for other purposes.

The Department recommends that the committee defer action on S. 2892 until program legislation is enacted that establishes criteria to evaluate potentially qualified national heritage areas and a process for the designation and administration of these areas. The Administration anticipates submitting such a legislative proposal to you in the near future, and we recommend that Congress enact national heritage area program legislation this Congress. In addition, we recommend deferring action on S. 2892 until the National Park Service completes its final review of the feasibility study for the proposed Alabama Black Belt National Heritage Area. The Administration's FY 2011 Budget proposes to reduce funding for national heritage areas to focus resources on those park activities that most closely align with its core mission and encourage areas to become self-sufficient, consistent with a FY 2010 Congressional directive.

There are currently 49 designated national heritage areas, yet there is no authority in law that guides the designation and administration of these areas. Program legislation would provide a much-needed framework for evaluating proposed national heritage areas, offering guidelines for successful planning and management, clarifying the roles and responsibilities of all parties, and standardizing timeframes and funding for designated areas. Program legislation was introduced in the 109th and 110th Congresses, and we look forward to continuing to work with Congress on this very important issue.

The feasibility of the Alabama Black Belt area for designation as a national heritage area is the subject of a study now being finalized by the Alabama Black Belt Heritage Area Task Force. Since the creation of the task force in 2006, it has grown from a group of ten people into an active organization with over 65 members across 19 counties. The organization has worked closely with the National Park Service and the Alliance of National Heritage Areas to demonstrate a strong basis for seeking potential national heritage area status. The task force has also implemented several successful projects in the Black Belt region.

The draft feasibility study includes an extensive inventory of cultural and natural resources of the region; identifies four interpretive themes; describes the plans for management, preservation, and interpretation of the region; and, contains a detailed environmental assessment. It indicates that the proposal for a national heritage area has strong support from the public and a myriad of state, local, federal, and non-governmental partners throughout the area that are essential for successful planning and implementation of a national heritage area. It recommends that the Center for the Study of the Black Belt at the University of West Alabama serve as the local coordinating entity for the proposed national heritage area, as provided for in S. 2892. The center was identified as the preferred management entity based on its ability to provide a sustainable foundation for the implementation of a national heritage area, promote an integrated vision and leadership, engage ongoing community participation, build reciprocal partnerships, and facilitate programs across all 19 counties included in the proposed Alabama Black Belt National Heritage Area.

Geographically, Alabama's Black Belt is part of a larger crescent-shaped area known as the Southern Black Belt, which extends from Virginia to Texas. The term refers to the fertile black soil of the region. This soil drew pioneers to settle the lower-central portion of Alabama in the 1820s and 1830s where they established and operated a network of cotton plantations using the labor of enslaved African Americans.

During the Antebellum era, the Alabama Black Belt became one of the wealthiest and most politically powerful regions in the United States. Thriving commerce elevated Montgomery, Selma, and Demopolis into some of the nation's most affluent towns. The architecture that grew out of this plantation culture produced some of the finest churches and rural residences in the state, including Rosemount and Thornhill in Greene, Countryside in Camden, and Gaineswood in Demopolis. When the Civil War began, Montgomery was chosen as the first capital of the Confederacy. The region's distance from the front lines saved it from much of the ravages of the war.

During the Twentieth Century, this area gained fame as the site where the Tuskegee Airmen trained during World War II, and as a center of the civil rights movement in the 1950s and 1960s. Montgomery County was the site of the 1955-56 bus boycott that challenged segregation of public transportation. Highway 80 in Dallas, Lowndes, and Montgomery counties shaped the route taken by participants

of the historic march for equal rights from Selma to Montgomery in 1965. The Lowndes County Freedom Organization, later the Black Panther Party, was an outgrowth of that march.

Rivers and streams from several large basins—the Sipsey-Warrior, Coosa-Tallapoosa, Alabama-Cahaba, Tombigbee, and Chattahoochee—flow through the Alabama Black Belt. When cotton was the dominant crop grown in the region, the Black Belt's many navigable waterways enabled growers to transport their harvests to the docks in Mobile for shipment abroad. Row crops are less prevalent today as more of the rural Black Belt land today is now used for livestock or aquaculture.

While largely viewed as a region of hardship, the Alabama Black Belt has produced a rich variety of artists, musicians, writers, and other public figures. Notable figures from this region include Booker T. Washington, Rosa Parks, Harper Lee and Truman Capote. Three sites in the region managed by the National Park Service commemorate nationally significant history: the Tuskegee Airmen National Historic Site and the Tuskegee Institute National Historic Site, both units of the National Park System, and the Selma to Montgomery National Historic Trail.

If the committee decides to move forward with S. 2892, we would like to work with the committee to provide the appropriate map reference for the national heritage area and to ensure that the language of the bill is consistent with previously enacted national heritage area designations.

Mr. Chairman, this concludes my prepared remarks. I would be pleased to answer any questions you or any members of the subcommittee may have.

S. 2933

Mr. Chairman, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you to provide the Department of the Interior's views on S. 2933, a bill to authorize a special resource study to determine the suitability and feasibility of designating the Colonel Charles Young Home in Xenia, Ohio, as a unit of the National Park System.

The Department supports enactment of S. 2933. However, we believe that priority should be given to the 47 previously authorized studies for potential units of the National Park System, potential new National Heritage Areas, and potential additions to the National Trails System and National Wild and Scenic River System that have not yet been transmitted to the Congress.

S. 2933 authorizes a special resource study, in consultation with the Secretary of the Army, to determine the suitability and feasibility of designating the Colonel Charles Young Home as a unit of the National Park System, and to consider other alternatives for preservation and protection of the home and interpretation of the life and accomplishments of Colonel Young for future appreciation by the public. The bill also authorizes consultation and collaboration with the Ohio Historical Society, Central State University, Wilberforce University and other interested Federal, State or local governmental entities, private and nonprofit organizations or individuals in accomplishing the resource study. The home is a National Historic Landmark. We estimate the cost of this study to range from \$200,000 to \$250,000, based on similar types of studies conducted in recent years.

Colonel Charles Young was the third African-American to graduate from West Point, and a distinguished African-American officer in the United States Army, commanding troops in combat in the Spanish-American War and the Mexican expedition against Pancho Villa. Colonel Young was one of the first military attaches in the United States, serving in Haiti and Liberia, and a pioneer of techniques in military intelligence. The experience of Colonel Young in the Army between 1884 and 1922 illustrates the changing nature of race relations in the United States during a period spanning from the end of the Civil War to the beginning of the Civil Rights movement.

Colonel Young was a friend and associate of other distinguished African-Americans of the period, including poet Paul Laurence Dunbar from nearby Dayton, Ohio; and as the commander of an Army unit assigned to protect and develop Sequoia National Park and General Grant National Park in the State of California, Colonel Young is recognized as the first African-American to be the superintendent of a National Park.

Mr. Chairman, this concludes my prepared statement. I would be happy to answer any questions that you or other Committee members may have regarding this bill.

S. 2951

Mr. Chairman, thank you for the opportunity to present the views of the Department of the Interior on S. 2951, a bill to authorize funding to protect and conserve lands contiguous with the Blue Ridge Parkway to serve the public, and for other purposes.

The Department appreciates the strong interest in protecting scenic vistas along the Blue Ridge Parkway and the desire to have a major initiative for the parkway's 75th anniversary that the introduction of S. 2951 demonstrates. The magnificent views and recreational opportunities along the 469-mile parkway are the major reason why the parkway has long been the National Park Service's most heavily visited unit. However, the Department does not support this legislation in its current form. We would welcome the opportunity to work with the committee and the bill's sponsors to develop a different approach toward promoting and incorporating the work of nonprofit conservation organizations in the protection of the parkway's scenic resources.

We are sympathetic to the desire of supporters of the Blue Ridge Parkway to find a mechanism to quickly channel land acquisition funds to protect the stunning views and the recreational opportunities that are so highly valued by visitors to the parkway. The parkway has identified a number of land acquisition goals in its Land Protection Plan that, along with the lands adjacent to the parkway threatened by encroaching development, could easily add up to the 50,000 acres envisioned to be protected under S. 2951.

Other units of the National Park System have also identified opportunities for land acquisition to protect resources from encroaching development. The Administration proposes to begin addressing these needs with a request in the FY 2011 budget of \$106 million for National Park Service land acquisition—a significantly larger amount than has been requested or appropriated for many years. The FY 2011 request is the first step toward the Administration's goal of providing a total of \$900 million a year—full funding—for federal land acquisition and other programs funded through the Land and Water Conservation Fund, and it holds the hope that within a few years we will be able to better address the needs at many more of our units, including the Blue Ridge Parkway.

As desirable as it would be to acquire more land at the Blue Ridge Parkway, we find the approach taken by S. 2951 problematic, as it would duplicate existing law in some instances and establish new law that would not be appropriate in others. It would also conflict with the Administration's specific land acquisition priorities for FY 2011.

Section 4 of S. 2951 would authorize the Secretary of the Interior to acquire up to 50,000 acres of adjacent land that is identified in the parkway's Land Protection Plan or that meets the plan's amendment criteria. However, the authority to acquire lands contiguous to the parkway already exists; therefore this language is unnecessary.

Section 5(a) would authorize appropriations of \$15 million for each of fiscal years 2011 through 2015 for the land acquisition authorized by this bill. As with section 4, this subsection is unnecessary because unlimited authority for appropriations for land acquisition at the parkway already exists.

Although subsection 5(a) may be viewed as sending a message that Congress desires that \$15 million a year for five years be appropriated for the parkway, we note that such funding is not included in the Administration's FY 2011 budget request. Although we cannot predict what the Administration might request for specific land acquisition projects for the next four years, it would be unusual, even with higher overall levels of land acquisition funding, to request this much for one park. Any request for this park would be subject to the Administration's prioritization process that uses consistent and merit-based criteria to select projects.

Section 5(b) would authorize the Secretary to use funds appropriated for land acquisition at the Blue Ridge Parkway to award grants for certain purposes. This grant authority would be unprecedented. One purpose of the grants would be to acquire land and interests in land, although the bill does not specify what guarantee the taxpayer would receive that the lands would be permanently protected. We would like to consider how such authority might be used to supplement, yet not duplicate, the National Park Service's own land acquisition capability, which is funded directly by Congress. We are fortunate to have an office that handles land acquisition for the Blue Ridge Parkway—the National Park Service's National Trails Office in Martinsburg, West Virginia—that is so well regarded for its expertise in acquisition at linear units that other federal agencies have used its services for that purpose. We are also fortunate to have the expertise and leveraging capability of several nonprofit land conservation organizations in protecting lands that are critical to the integrity of the Blue Ridge Parkway. We need to employ both capabilities in this cause.

Subsection 5(b) as introduced lacks provisions regarding intended recipients and requirements for disposition of the land acquired through grants, so we are unclear about exactly what is intended. However, this proposed authority may be the seed of an idea for better utilizing the capabilities of nonprofit land conservation organi-

zations in the protection of the Blue Ridge Parkway. The organizations have at their disposal certain resources and tools that federal land acquisition officials lack. We would like to work with the committee and the bill's sponsors to explore ways to enhance the use of the organizations' capabilities in the cause of protecting the parkway.

The second purpose of the grants would be to enter into cooperative agreements with nonprofit conservation organizations for technical expense assistance, such as appraisals and hazardous material surveys, for lands the organizations acquire for conveyance to the parkway. It is a common practice for conservation organizations to acquire land for potential addition to National Park Service units with the intent of holding the properties until the National Park Service is able to acquire them. However, in these cases, the expenses associated with acquiring these lands are borne by the organizations; they are not paid by the National Park Service unless arrangements are made in advance to coordinate the ordering of these services to avoid duplication of the expenses. We are concerned that paying for expenses associated with acquisition in advance of a conveyance would raise expectations about acquiring property that might not be met. In addition, setting this precedent for federal funding of non-federal administrative costs would treat land acquisition at the Blue Ridge Parkway differently than acquisition at every other unit of the National Park System, which would not be fair or appropriate.

Finally, Section 5(d) makes clear that the cooperative agreement arrangements with nonprofit organizations that are contemplated in this legislation could entail annual payments of as much as \$250,000 a year to defray the organizations' "administrative expenses," which would not necessarily be limited to costs associated directly with land acquisition. This could open the door to the reimbursement of costs that are unrelated to the purposes of the Land and Water Conservation Act. Since the act prohibits federal employees from being paid for any expenses not related to federal land acquisition from funds appropriated for land acquisition, it would run counter to the spirit of the act to allow non-federal employees to be paid for expenses not related to federal land acquisition.

Mr. Chairman, this concludes my statement. I would be happy to answer any questions that you may have.

Senator UDALL. Thank you, Mr. Wenk.

Let us turn to Mr. Wilson for your statement, and then the ranking member and I will direct some questions and comments your way.

So, Mr. Wilson, the floor is yours. Welcome.

**STATEMENT OF D. REID WILSON, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR  
CONSERVATION TRUST FOR NORTH CAROLINA**

Mr. WILSON. Thank you, Chairman Udall and Ranking Member Burr.

My name is Reid Wilson, and I am the executive director of the Conservation Trust for North Carolina. CTNC works to increase the amount of protected natural lands in our beautiful State, and we do this in 2 ways.

First, we represent, promote, and assist 24 local land trusts, so that they can protect more land in the communities they serve. Second, we have the good fortune of being a land trust ourselves that focuses on protecting land along the Blue Ridge Parkway.

I am presenting my testimony today on behalf of eight other land trusts in Virginia and North Carolina that work to protect parkway lands. We all strongly support the Blue Ridge Parkway Protection Act, S. 2951, introduced by Senator Burr and cosponsored by Senators Hagan, Webb, and Warner, and H.R. 4524, introduced by Representatives Shuler, Price, Boucher, and Perriello.

I want to express our sincere thanks to you, Senator Burr, and to the other sponsors for introducing this important legislation and for your leadership.

These bills would provide much-needed funding to conserve lands to help ensure that the parkway is as awe-inspiring to future generations as it is to us today. There are 5 reasons why it is critically important to expand funding for land conservation along the Blue Ridge Parkway.

First, parkway is the most visited unit of the National Park Service, but its most popular features are under threat. The parkway is a national treasure. Its 469 miles of spectacular vistas, mature forests, pristine streams, and hiking trails attract nearly 20 million visitors per year. Yet it is an extremely fragile ribbon threatened by development.

In most places, the parkway's land corridor is only 800 feet wide, and most of the property that makes up the views is privately owned, vulnerable to development. In recent years, unplanned rampant growth has denuded forests, choked streams with silt, destroyed wildlife habitat, and ruined scenery.

In a recent survey of parkway visitors, over 95 percent said that scenic vistas were extremely important or very important in their decision to visit the parkway. An earlier survey found that if scenic quality degrades, roughly one quarter of visitors would reduce their number of visits to the parkway and many would not return at all.

So why is that important? This brings me to my second point, which is that the parkway is one of the strongest economic engines in the region, providing \$2.3 billion to local communities in those 2 States.

As Senator Burr well knows, thousands of furniture and textile jobs in the mountains are gone, and they aren't coming back, unfortunately. We can't afford to allow the tourism industry to suffer the same fate as manufacturing. So we must conserve the parkway, the backbone of tourism in this region.

Third, the corridor along the parkway is an incredible natural resource with rich and diverse wildlife habitat. The parkway contains 600 miles of pure mountain streams. It also contains 43 species of amphibians, over 1,600 species of plants, and 9 federally listed threatened or endangered species. Adding more acres to the parkway would ensure that wildlife habitat is protected rather than fragmented.

Fourth, this bill is urgently needed due to the effects of the recession. For one thing, there is less State funding available for conservation projects now. On the flip side, there is more land available for less money, due to falling real estate prices and distressed properties coming onto the market.

While development along the parkway has slowed, its pace was furious before the recession and will, no doubt, pick up again. So there is no time to waste.

Fifth, the parkway is celebrating its 75th anniversary this year. Passage of the Blue Ridge Parkway Protection Act and appropriation of funding would be a fitting way to mark the anniversary of this hugely popular, but chronically underfunded jewel of the National Park System.

The bill itself is straightforward. It would authorize \$75 million over 5 years to purchase properties and conservation easements adjacent to the parkway. All transactions would be done with willing land owners, no eminent domain. Only properties listed as prior-

ities in the Blue Ridge Parkway's Land Protection Plan would be eligible to receive funding.

The bill would facilitate partnerships between the Park Service and nonprofit conservation organizations. Often these land trusts can move more quickly than the Government. The land trusts could buy the land or easement, hold it, manage it, protect it until the Park Service could supply its funding. Otherwise, you might lose the property to development.

Then all fee simple purchases would be conveyed to the National Park Service and added to the parkway's boundaries, and all properties with conservation easements would continue in private ownership, and easements would be held and monitored by the National Park Service.

We understand that the National Park Service has some concerns about the bill as drafted. From my conversations with the staff of the bill's lead sponsors, it is clear that there is a strong desire to work with the Park Service to resolve these issues. I just want to say that from the land trusts, who are very interested in this, we are equally eager to work with all those involved to come up with language that is agreeable to everyone.

We all share a sense of responsibility to pass on to future generations clean rivers and streams, abundant wildlife habitat, ample opportunities to enjoy the outdoors, and a sound economy—in short, a high quality of life. The Blue Ridge Parkway Protection Act would help achieve all of those goals for those who come after us.

I respectfully urge you to pass this important legislation and to work with the Appropriations Committee to secure funding in the next budget. Admittedly, our Nation faces extraordinary budget constraints. But just like 75 years ago when the parkway was created, this relatively small investment will save a treasured landscape at bargain prices and ensure that jobs are created and maintained in a region of the country with chronic high unemployment.

Thank you, and I would be happy to answer any questions you might have.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Wilson follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF D. REID WILSON, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, CONSERVATION TRUST FOR NORTH CAROLINA,

S. 2951

Thank you, Chairman Udall, Ranking Member Burr, and members of the subcommittee. I appreciate the opportunity to be here today. My name is Reid Wilson, and I am the Executive Director of the Conservation Trust for North Carolina, based in Raleigh. CTNC works to increase the amount of protected natural lands in our beautiful state. We do this in two ways. First, we represent, promote and assist 24 local land trusts, so that they can protect more land in the communities they serve. Second, we are a land trust ourselves, and we focus on conserving the natural and scenic corridor of the Blue Ridge Parkway.

I present my testimony on behalf of eight other local land trusts that do excellent work to protect lands along the Parkway—Blue Ridge Rural Land Trust, Foothills Conservancy of North Carolina, High Country Conservancy, Land Trust for the Little Tennessee, Piedmont Land Conservancy and Southern Appalachian Highlands Conservancy, all in North Carolina, and Western Virginia Land Trust and Valley Conservation Council in Virginia.

The Conservation Trust for North Carolina has protected over 30,000 acres along the Blue Ridge Parkway in 39 locations. Properties we've conserved include the 17,000-acre watershed that supplies drinking water for the city of Asheville, and the

8,000-acre watershed for the town of Waynesville. CTNC over the years has protected and conveyed 18 properties (all but two of them donated) totaling 1,321 acres to the National Park Service, and these lands have been added to the boundaries of the Parkway. We appreciate the close working relationship we have with the excellent staff at the Blue Ridge Parkway.

We strongly support the Blue Ridge Parkway Protection Act, S. 2951, sponsored by Senator Burr and cosponsored by Senators Hagan, Webb and Warner, and H.R. 4524, introduced by Representatives Shuler, Price, Boucher and Perriello. These bills would provide much-needed funding to conserve lands to help ensure that the Parkway is as awe-inspiring to future generations as it is to us today.

There are five reasons why it is critically important to expand funding for land conservation along the Blue Ridge Parkway.

- First, the Blue Ridge Parkway is the most visited unit of the National Park Service, but its most popular features are under threat.
- Second, the Parkway is the economic lifeblood of nearby mountain communities.
- Third, the Parkway is an incredible natural resource with rich and diverse wild-life habitat.
- Fourth, right now is an outstanding time to buy land along the Parkway.
- Fifth, the Parkway celebrates its 75th anniversary this year.

Let me take each point in turn.

First, the Parkway is a national treasure. Its 469 miles of spectacular vistas, mature forests, pristine streams and hiking trails attract nearly 20 million visitors per year to North Carolina and Virginia. Yet the Parkway is an extremely fragile ribbon, and its scenic, cultural, and natural integrity are threatened by development. In most places, the Parkway's land corridor is only 800 feet wide, and most of the property that makes up its views is privately owned, vulnerable to development at a moment's notice.

In recent years, unplanned rampant growth along the Parkway has denuded forests, choked streams with silt, destroyed wildlife habitat, and ruined scenery with new subdivisions, roads, and shopping centers. In a recent survey of Parkway visitors, over 95 percent said that scenic vistas were extremely important or very important in their decision to visit the Parkway. An earlier survey found that if scenic quality declines, 22 percent of respondents in North Carolina and 26 percent of respondents in Virginia would reduce their number of visits to the Parkway. Many said they would not return at all.

Clearly, people travel to the Parkway to see the views. The best way to protect those vistas is to conserve the lands that comprise them.

Second, the Parkway is one of the strongest economic engines in the region, providing \$2.3 billion per year to local communities. Visitors spend between \$149 and \$172 per person per day at the Parkway. Clearly, protecting the Blue Ridge Parkway is critical to future economic growth in neighboring communities. The growing tourism industry depends on a healthy Parkway. The furniture and textile industries have been hit hard in the mountains. Those jobs are gone, and aren't coming back. We can't afford to allow the tourism industry to suffer the same fate as manufacturing, so we must conserve the Parkway—the backbone of tourism in this region.

Let me give you a couple of examples that show how fundamental the Parkway is to economic growth for dozens of towns up and down its length. Whenever a section of the Parkway is temporarily closed for repairs or by snow, Parkway staff receive numerous anxious phone calls from inn and restaurant owners. They want to know how soon the road will be reopened because their businesses are taking a hit. Now imagine if 10 percent or 20 percent fewer visitors came to the Parkway each year. We know from the Park Service survey that declines of that magnitude could take place if the views alone are degraded. This would devastate local businesses—outfitters, restaurants, guides, attractions, inns and hotels—that depend on tourists.

Or take the Orchard at Altapass. This historic apple orchard and general store sits adjacent to the Parkway about an hour north of Asheville. It's a hub of activity in spring, summer and fall. It's a place where locals come to clog to live music, visit with their friends from neighboring hollows, purchase from among 75 varieties of delicious apples, and grab an ice cream cone when it's hot. It's a place where tourists flock, especially in the fall, to see stunning views of mountain foliage from the store's patio. On one weekend alone last fall the orchard had 6,000 visitors. I can guarantee you that those numbers would have been cut by half or more, had the views been developed. Fortunately, CTNC helped broker a deal with the landowner, CSX Railroad, and the state of North Carolina to place a conservation easement on nearly 1,500 acres adjacent to the orchard. Not only will the views be protected for-

ever, but so will jobs at the orchard and in the nearby tourism-dependent towns of Spruce Pine and Little Switzerland.

Third, the corridor along the Parkway contains important natural areas that should be protected and expanded. The Parkway is home to the headwaters of 15 watersheds and contains some 600 miles of pristine streams. Protecting water at the source means that downstream communities pay less to supply clean drinking water to their residents. The Parkway also contains 43 species of amphibians, over 1600 species of plants, and nine federally listed threatened or endangered species. Juxtaposed with those numbers is the number of the Parkway's adjacent landowners—roughly 4,500. The Parkway has surveyed the 29 counties it runs through to determine what plans they have for development, and based on that, staff believe that development will become an even more pressing problem in the years to come. Adding more acres to the Parkway would ensure that wildlife habitat is protected and not fragmented.

Fourth, this bill is urgently needed due to the effects of the recession. For one thing, there is less state funding available for conservation projects. And, on the flip side, there is more land available to conserve, for less money, due to falling real estate prices and distressed properties coming onto the market. For instance, CTNC was able to purchase a 534-acre conservation property at a discount at the very end of 2008. And, we're currently negotiating with a bank to purchase a foreclosed property. We have an outstanding opportunity to buy Parkway land, but it won't last indefinitely. While development has slowed during the recession, its pace was furious before then, and will no doubt pick up again with the economy. There's no time to waste.

Fifth, the Parkway is celebrating its 75th anniversary in 2010, culminating in September. Passage of the Blue Ridge Parkway Protection Act and appropriation of funds would be a fitting way to mark the anniversary of this hugely popular but chronically underfunded jewel of the national parks system.

Seventy-five years ago, the United States faced an economic crisis much like the one we're in today. Rather than lock away its money, the federal government invested—funding public works programs that not only put hundreds of thousands of people to work, but created, protected and promoted some of the nation's best-loved places, including the Blue Ridge Parkway. The Parkway has been an unqualified success.

Continued federal investment in the Parkway is a must to ensure that it will thrive for generations to come.

Fortunately, North Carolina and Virginia lawmakers have taken the lead on legislation to help save the Blue Ridge Parkway's majestic views and natural areas. I want to thank Senators Burr, Hagan, Warner and Webb, and Representatives Shuler, Price, Boucher and Perriello for their leadership in introducing the Blue Ridge Parkway Protection Act. This legislation is desperately needed because a lack of funding has been a critical barrier to protecting the Parkway's forests, streams and vistas.

The bill is straightforward. Here are the highlights.

- It would authorize \$75 million over five years, beginning in FY 2010-11, to purchase fee simple properties and conservation easements adjacent to the Parkway, towards a goal of protecting an additional 50,000 acres.
- All transactions would be done with willing landowners. Nothing would be taken by eminent domain claims.
- Only properties listed as priorities in the Blue Ridge Parkway's Land Protection Plan would be eligible to receive funding.
- Any lands or easements purchased would have to be adjacent to the Parkway.
- The bill would enable the Park Service to work in partnership with non-profit conservation organizations to conserve priority properties. Often these land trusts can move more quickly than the federal government to purchase a property or easement. The land trusts could buy the land or easement, hold it, protect it and manage it until the Park Service could supply funding to the land trust. The bill would ensure that these non-profits are reimbursed by the government after purchasing the properties or easements on behalf of the Park Service.
- No purchase would be made over appraised value.
- All fee simple purchases would be conveyed to the National Park Service and added to the Parkway's boundaries as soon as feasible. All properties with conservation easements would continue in private ownership, and easements would be held and monitored by the National Park Service.

Passage of this bill and subsequent appropriations would constitute a critical investment in the Blue Ridge Parkway's scenic, natural, and cultural vitality, and in

the future economic well-being and quality of life of North Carolina and Virginia. Although the funds provided by the Blue Ridge Parkway Protection Act would not be used for traditional brick and mortar projects, they would provide a long-term stimulus for small businesses throughout the Blue Ridge Mountains to maintain jobs that depend on tourism.

We understand that the National Park Service has some concerns about the bill as drafted, specifically about the mechanism for providing the funding for specific properties. From my conversations with the staff of the bill's lead sponsors, it is clear that there is a strong desire to work with the Park Service to resolve these issues. CTNC and other land trusts that work along the Parkway are similarly eager to work toward language that is acceptable to all. I'm happy to report that discussions between congressional staff and the Park Service are already underway.

We all share a sense of responsibility to pass on to future generations clean rivers and streams, abundant wildlife habitat, ample opportunities to enjoy the outdoors, and a sound economy—in short, a high quality of life. The Blue Ridge Parkway Protection Act would help achieve all of those goals for those who come after us.

I respectfully urge you to pass this important legislation and to work with the Appropriations Committee to secure funding in the FY 2010-11 budget and beyond. Admittedly, our nation faces extraordinary budget constraints, but just like 75 years ago, this relatively small investment will save a treasured landscape at bargain prices and ensure that jobs are created and maintained in a region of the country with chronic high unemployment.

Thank you, and I'd be happy to answer any questions.

Senator UDALL. Thank you, Mr. Wilson.

Let me turn immediately to Senator Burr for his questions. Again, thanks for the testimony.

Senator BURR. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Wenk, glad to have you here as always. Reid, I can't thank you enough for your willingness to come up here. I might say, for the chair's own knowledge, he has agreed to be with us today while his son's fifth grade class is in Washington, DC, and I think probably touring right now. So—

Mr. WILSON. They are in the Capitol somewhere.

Senator BURR. So I appreciate you breaking away to do this. Let me say for members and for staff, the Blue Ridge Parkway is a unique treasure. If this were an initiative today between the Congress and the Park Service, we would find that path of land. We would construct a road. There would be no spot on that that there was only 800 feet of protected land.

I think the one thing that we have seen with protection of our parks, we have gone back and we have added to, as we saw the value of a particular space and the need to preserve it. I think it is safe to say that the Park Service and the Blue Ridge Parkway have never gone through that process.

The exchanges that have taken place over time between the Park Service and private land owners was a convenience item. It was the trade of this acre for that acre, trying to make sure that both could coexist. With few exceptions, there have been efforts to bring more land under the Blue Ridge Parkway for the purposes of preservation. This is a real effort.

I think there is a way for us to find the right language to be able to do this. I think it is particularly special on the 75th anniversary that we would look at this as the single most used national park treasure that we have, and I might say it runs straight to the doorstep of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park, which is the most visited national park in the country.

I dare say if you put together the numbers, it may take the rest of the parks in total to equal the visitation—you like that, don't

you—of the Great Smokies. Now we have had the 75th anniversary of the Great Smokies, and we had a wonderful event with Secretary Salazar. The only thing that could diminish the greatness of the Great Smokies is to diminish the highway that a lot of people use where they enjoy both park entities to get there.

So, Reid, let me just turn to you. Talk to us just about the economic impact of the Blue Ridge Parkway.

Mr. WILSON. Sure. To stress again, it really is the economic lifeblood of the mountains these days in North Carolina, \$2.3 billion per year. What we are talking about in this bill is just providing \$15 million per year, which would help leverage keeping that \$2.3 billion going into local economies year after year by protecting the lands along the parkway.

Let me just give you an example of one place along the parkway that I think shows how important economically the parkway is to local communities. There is a place called the Orchard at Altapass. It is near 2 little towns of Spruce Pine and Little Switzerland, and it is a gorgeous little place. Not only is it an apple orchard with 75 different varieties, but it is sort of a country store and a gathering point for people throughout the hills and mountains nearby.

Nine months of the year, people come from nearby communities to listen to live music and clog and eat ice cream when it is hot out and just catch up with their neighbors. But in the fall especially, it is an amazing draw for tourists all over the place coming to see that spot. On a typical weekend in the fall, there are 6,000 people that go to this one apple orchard, on a given weekend in the fall.

They are spending their money not only at the orchard, but in restaurants and inns and hotels in nearby communities. Just this past year, after more than 6 years of work, our organization was able to help broker a deal between the CSX Railroad, which owns 1,500 acres next to this orchard, and the State of North Carolina to purchase a conservation easement on that property.

So now it is guaranteed forever that that 1,500 acres, which is this unbelievable backdrop from the orchard's patio, will be there and will continue to draw 6,000 people per weekend in the fall. There are stories like that up and down the Blue Ridge Parkway of these small towns that are just depending on tourists continuing to come to those attractions in the future. So you could tell that story in 100 different places.

Senator BURR. I appreciate that, and for purposes again of our members, even the Smithsonian recognized the value of the Blue Ridge Parkway and built a facility off of the parkway which houses the bluegrass museum or the bluegrass inventory of the Smithsonian. I think it certainly recognizes the historic nature of music in that Appalachian region, and the Blue Ridge Parkway is that conduit to get to it.

Dan, I know you mentioned in your testimony that you are sympathetic to the desire of supporters. There is a way to work this out, isn't there?

Mr. WENK. I think our concern is, first of all, many of the things that are in the bill already—for example, we can buy lands that are contiguous to the property. We have an unlimited authority to expend funds at the Blue Ridge Parkway on acquisition of lands.

There are some concerns in terms of the granting authority to an NGO, or not-for-profit organization to buy on our behalf. There is also some concern that we have in terms of the Land and Water Conservation Fund, for example, we cannot spend funds on “administrative expenses”.

However, there is an appropriation or there is a provision in this that would allow up to \$250,000 to be granted, if you will, to not-for-profit organizations. Within the spirit of the law, they could use that for “administrative expenses” to acquire lands under Land and Water Conservation Fund. So I think that is conflict, if you will, with the spirit of the law.

So we are very, very happy to work with you and your staff. We have the same goals, and that is to ensure the protection of the lands along the Blue Ridge Parkway and the scenic vistas that people do go to visit.

Senator BURR. I think all would agree that in some cases, an 800-foot swath is not protecting. More importantly, if you have encroachment on the area, there is a greater likelihood of the erosion that we have seen frequently along the parkway. When that road is shut down because of a rock slide or the loss of part of the road, it is a devastation to the local economy. So we want to make sure that there is as much protection as we can.

If I could ask for the chair’s indulgence, just real quickly, I am going to go over to Dan to S. 1018, the center for Cane River Creole National Historic Park. Can you tell me whether this type of arrangement to build a national park facility on a non-Park Service land is common practice?

Mr. WENK. It is not unprecedented. I can think of, for example, in Colorado at Dinosaur National Monument with Utah, with the State of Utah, we have a joint facility there. We have one at New Mexico, I believe, that is a facility that would house curatorial facilities.

So it is not uncommon. It is not common, but there are examples of it in the system.

It is the intention of the National Park Service to try to consolidate our museum collections wherever we can because we believe there is cost and power efficiencies to do that.

Senator BURR. Are there benefits realized by having the center located on the university grounds versus on Park Service grounds?

Mr. WENK. I think it is the synergy, if you will, between the 3 organizations being able to combine their collections for scholarly work, for research, and the university has indicated that they have the space. The construction cost, we have done the preliminary design. The construction cost of the facility is about \$12.5 million.

The nominal cost that they were looking to charge for the lease, we understand to be \$1-a-year. We believe it should be extended to a 40-year term to fully amortize the construction cost.

Senator BURR. Does the university pick up any of that \$12 million cost?

Mr. WENK. My current understanding is no. That would be a construction cost borne by the National Park Service.

Senator BURR. Then there would be a 40-year lease and a charge for the—

Mr. WENK. One dollar a year for 40 years is my understanding of the nominal cost.

Senator BURR. OK. Let me switch, if I could, very quickly to S. 1017, the Cane River National Heritage Area Commission. Can you elaborate on the role of the Cane River National Heritage Area Commission?

Mr. WENK. This commission, just as other commissions throughout the country at heritage areas, plays a critical role in the planning for and the administration of the national heritage area. This commission does expire, I believe, in August 2010. The legislation currently looks at a 15-year extension.

I would just say, Senator, that if we were to do this the same as we did the areas that were established in 1996, included those a 5-year extension. So we do have some concern about a 15 year extension because the goal of this commission is to literally make themselves self-sustaining and to really take over the full management responsibilities within the period of time allotted.

Senator BURR. Does the Park Service provide funds for the operation of the commission?

Mr. WENK. The Park Service provides a limited amount. We have a limited amount of funding that is distributed between all the national heritage areas. That is, some of it is a base amount, and they can compete for more of those funds, but there is limited funding. I cannot tell you precisely what was provided to Cane River Creole last year or this year.

Senator BURR. OK. For the record, could you supply that number for us?

Mr. WENK. Yes.

Senator BURR. I would appreciate it.

Last thing, if I could, Dan, sort of going back to the Blue Ridge possible acquisition. There are some concerns regarding the loss of lands for recreation and hunting purposes if a bill were to pass. It is not the intent of the bill to limit hunting on acquired lands. Can you assure me that there would be no net loss of hunting land through land acquisition proposed within this bill?

Mr. WENK. Senator, I am not totally familiar with the law as it reads pertaining to hunting at the Blue Ridge Parkway. I cannot provide you that assurance sitting here today, but I will look at what the law says in terms of if those lands came within the boundary of Blue Ridge Parkway, I would believe that they would come in under the same conditions of the rest of the land of the Blue Ridge Parkway.

So I need to determine exactly what that is.

Senator BURR. Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator UDALL. So, Mr. Wenk, you took that for the record, and I assume you will respond to Senator Burr's comments?

Mr. WENK. Yes.

Senator UDALL. Let me follow up on Senator Burr's questioning on the Cane River National Heritage Area. Do you have any concerns with the commission and its operation that would be reauthorized by this bill?

Mr. WENK. No. We believe that the commission is an effective commission as any in the National Park System around the national heritage areas. Our only concern is the length of the term.

Senator UDALL. The length. As I understand it, the commission has prepared a management plan, which the Park Service and the Governor of Louisiana both approved. If implementation of the approved plan is still underway, why wouldn't the Park Service want the commission to continue its work?

Mr. WENK. It is not that we don't want them to continue the work. We are asking for program legislation, and we believe that program legislation will put all national heritage areas under the same basis of operation, and we believe that we should defer action on any of these until we have that program legislation, which we hope to get up to Congress for consideration soon.

Senator UDALL. So, in part, this is about consistency and—

Mr. WENK. Correct.

Senator UDALL [continuing]. Similar management approach and applying the same criteria to heritage areas across the country?

Mr. WENK. The same criteria to establish them as well as for their continued management.

Senator UDALL. In your view, is extending the authorization for the Cane River National Heritage Area Commission the same as extending the authorization of the heritage area itself?

Mr. WENK. No, I don't believe it is the same. I don't think the heritage area itself is affected. The heritage area will still be there, but the management entity is what we are talking about with the commission.

Senator UDALL. OK. Let me move to S. 1537, the Norman Borlaug National Historic Site. As we know, it would establish a new national historic site. Given the significance of Dr. Borlaug's scientific and humanitarian achievements and since the property would be donated to the National Park Service, why is a formal study necessary?

Mr. WENK. A formal study will do 3 things. It will determine the national significance and the suitability and feasibility of that site coming and being able to be effectively managed by the National Park Service.

It will also look at what other options might be available for the preservation of that area. Is there a more appropriate entity that should perhaps have the jurisdiction over that area? So we really would have the test of national significance, suitability, and feasibility through a special resource study.

Senator UDALL. That is fair enough. I look forward to hearing more about Dr. Borlaug. He sounds like quite an American story. I think it is appropriate that we are considering acknowledging his contributions.

Mr. Wilson, I might turn to you. Senator Burr has a busy day. I know his staff are here. I just—I wanted to acknowledge the important work that the land trust world does in Colorado and in the West. Of course, we have seen an explosion of land trusts, who have this marvelous capacity to bring public and private sector viewpoints and resources together.

Certainly, the advent of conservation easements and other tools to leverage dollars as well as work with fixed assets and illiquid

assets has really been a success story. So congratulations to you, and I know you work with your compatriots all over the country.

Mr. WILSON. Thank you.

Senator UDALL. We continue in the national park world to look for ways in which to create more buffer areas. I know, Mr. Wenk, you know this is a challenge that we face, and 100 years ago, 150 years ago, those who had the first ideas about national parks didn't realize the kind of pressures that might develop, although they did sense them. That was the very reason to create national parks. In effect, I think that is what you are asking to do is create more buffer zones.

I was curious, you said this wonderful apple orchard, 9 months of the 12 months, the 3 months in the winter, is it closed?

Mr. WILSON. They close it up because it is cold.

Senator UDALL. It is cold. Is there snow on the ground?

Mr. WILSON. Yes. Often the roads, especially the parkway is closed off when there is snow.

Senator UDALL. The parkway is actually closed off. That area you mentioned, do Virginia and North Carolina compete for the business of those tourists that travel—

Mr. WILSON. Yes, but it is a friendly competition.

Senator UDALL. Friendly competition, which I noted both Virginia Senators and both North Carolina Senators were supportive, as well as House members from both States. So that underlined the importance of working together to see if we can bring this legislation to fruition.

Again, thank you both for your time and your testimony. I would like to thank both of you for your testimony.

Some members of the committee may submit additional questions in writing. If so, we may ask you to submit additional answers for the record. We will keep the hearing record open for 2 weeks to receive any additional comments.

With that, the Subcommittee on National Parks is adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 4:30 p.m., the hearing was adjourned.]