

**FY 2013 BUDGET REQUESTS
FROM THE NATIONAL PARK
SERVICE AND THE BUREAU
OF LAND MANAGEMENT**

OVERSIGHT HEARING

BEFORE THE

SUBCOMMITTEE ON NATIONAL PARKS, FORESTS
AND PUBLIC LANDS

OF THE

COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES
U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

ONE HUNDRED TWELFTH CONGRESS

SECOND SESSION

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**OVERSIGHT HEARING ON “FY 2013 BUDGET
REQUESTS FROM THE NATIONAL PARK
SERVICE AND THE BUREAU OF LAND
MANAGEMENT.”**

**Tuesday, February 28, 2012
U.S. House of Representatives
Subcommittee on National Parks, Forests and Public Lands
Committee on Natural Resources
Washington, D.C.**

The Subcommittee met, pursuant to notice, at 10:08 a.m., in Room 1324, Longworth House Office Building, Hon. Rob Bishop [Chairman of the Subcommittee] presiding.

Present: Representatives Bishop, Rivera, Tipton, Amodei; Grijalva, Holt, and Sarbanes.

Also Present: Representative Pallone.

Mr. BISHOP. Apologies for being late. The hearing will come to order. The Chair notes the presence of a quorum. The Subcommittee on National Parks, Forests and Public Lands is meeting today.

Under the Rules, opening statements are limited to the Chairman and the Ranking Member. However, I ask unanimous consent to include any other Member’s opening statement in the hearing record if submitted to the Clerk by the close of business today, and hearing no objections, that will be so ordered.

Mr. BISHOP. I want to thank the two witnesses that we will be having here today, Jon Jarvis, who is the Director of the National Park Service, and Bob Abbey, who is Director of the Bureau of Land Management, who have agreed to testify.

Gentlemen, if you would like to come and take a seat at the table, we would be more than happy to do that right now.

I ask unanimous consent to allow members of the Full Committee to be allowed to join us on the dais. Without objection, so ordered.

I do want to know how Representative Amodei made it up here so quickly. I was in the elevator as it closed and you were still walking. How did you get here this fast?

Mr. AMODEI. I have nothing to add at this time.

[Laughter.]
Mr. BISHOP. All right. Fine.
[Laughter.]

**STATEMENT OF THE HON. ROB BISHOP, A REPRESENTATIVE
IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF UTAH**

Mr. BISHOP. Today, we are here to discuss the President's Fiscal Year 2013 budget request for the National Park Service and Bureau of Land Management.

While the President's 2013 NPS and BLM requests are nearly level with 2012, 2012 was still an exaggerated, bloated budget that was not sustainable and will destroy the country. Other than that, it was just fine.

It is a budget that is asking for \$237 million over the 2008 level for the Park Service and \$116 million more than they received for the BLM in 2008.

The proposed budget of these two bureaus also includes a number of what I believe to be misplaced priorities, unrealistic offsets and some things that I hope are definite non-starters.

The President's Fiscal Year 2013 budget request for the National Park Service and BLM is a clear indication of what I see as election year politics, placating special interest groups, that cannot be more important than what I hope would be rational and responsible management of our public lands.

The Administration continues to place a higher priority on acquisition of even more land instead of caring for the vast properties that are already in the national portfolio.

The Park Service has and continues to have a maintenance backlog that has been estimated between \$9 billion and \$11 billion, and BLM has a deferred maintenance backlog estimated at \$1 million for every one of those 245 million acres they are responsible for managing.

Despite this, this election year budget advances priorities that will significantly expand the Federal estate and reduce or eliminate multiple use policies that provide a reasonable economic return for the land.

BLM should be emphasizing sound scientific multiple use—again, multiple use—so the American people can get the full range of benefits from our vast system of public lands.

Only with well managed multiple use can our conservation, recreation, energy, mineral, food and other resources needs be met.

The BLM's multiple use mandate is under duress. It appears that special interest groups' litigation and conceived settlements, sometimes done in secret, are having more influence over land use decisions instead of consideration of the law or appropriate consultation with impacted agencies and stakeholders.

For example, the BLM is proposing to charge an administrative fee of \$1 per AUM to assist in processing the grazing permits. Currently by law, the BLM charges a \$1.35 fee per AUM for grazing permits.

This proposal is a 75 percent increase in fees out of pocket for those who graze, for those ranchers who have those permits.

If the true intent was to recoup actual costs and assist in the processing of grazing fees, why is the \$1 per AUM not \$1 per permit or per application?

Why also does the Interior budget say the fee will be used to mitigate proposed reductions in Rangeland Management Programs?

This is almost like looking at those information commercials in which a product that costs \$150 is going to be sold at \$19.95 as long as you pay shipping and handling charges, which are around \$130.

It is wrong. It is wrong, and needs to be re-looked at.

Last year, the Fish and Wildlife Service entered into a settlement agreement with the Center of Biological Diversity and the Wild Earth Guardians regarding the Endangered Species Act that expedited the time frame for consideration of listing the greater sage-grouse.

As a result of this secretly constructed settlement, the BLM decided to develop an interim management strategy that will subordinate nearly all other uses of public lands in preference for greater sage-grouse habitat conservation.

Finally, while the wild lands title may have disappeared from BLM talking points, and I thank you for that, a recent notice for the Carson City, Nevada District Resource Management Plan emphasized the BLM is seeking nominations for areas of critical environmental concern, and information on lands that may possess wilderness characteristics.

On February 6, 2012, the Federal BLM issued a notice in the Federal Register affecting 2.4 million acres of public lands in Colorado, Utah and Wyoming, that BLM wanted to take a fresh look at land use plans in the aforementioned states dealing with oil shale and tar sand leases.

Even though these announcements deal with energy related leases, the BLM will consider the wilderness characteristics in determining any future disposition of public lands in the affected areas.

Is the Department of the Interior and BLM resurrecting wild land policies with these notices?

I guess we now know why this Administration continues to request increased resource management planning. A \$4.4 million increase over last year will certainly help accelerate special interest groups' goals of creating de facto wilderness through administrative fees.

Those are all concerns that we have.

With that, I thank our witnesses for being here. I look forward, kind of, to hearing the testimony, and look forward to the questions that will be asked, and with that, I now recognize our Ranking Member for his opening remarks, if he would like to make any at this time.

Do you want to make some?

Mr. GRIJALVA. Yes, sure.

Mr. BISHOP. Do you want to re-think that?

STATEMENT OF THE HON. RAÚL M. GRIJALVA, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF ARIZONA

Mr. GRIJALVA. No. I just wanted to welcome Director Jarvis and Director Abbey. Welcome back. I want to thank you for being here and for all the thought, time and energy that you and your staff have put into this year's proposal.

We understood from Secretary Salazar's testimony that the Department had to make some very difficult choices in an attempt to create a very challenging balance to the Interior Department.

I want to point out that these cuts and reductions that we will be talking about today, also the cuts and reductions that will be proposed in this additional budget, these cuts to preservation, conservation, and land management to a great degree have nothing to do with the budget challenges that we face, and everything to do with persistent and pervasive anti-environmental politics that are part of the discussion and part of the work of this Subcommittee and the Full Committee.

We are talking today about starving popular Federal agencies, not by circumstance, but by design.

We are talking today about letting public land go unmanaged because some of my colleagues do not believe government has a role to play in the management and multi-use mandate for our public lands.

I think that is why we are here. I do not want there to be any confusion as to why we are here on some of the cuts and suggestions that you will see.

The prevailing thought has been to look not at the multi-use mandate or a balanced approach to our public land, but to view our public lands as a cash cow, and in doing so, forego preservation, conservation, and the right balance to the mandate.

I support the investments that you are proposing in science and research, support the National Landscape Conservation System, and the proposal to acquire key lands for the Ironwood Forest Monument in Arizona.

The reduced funding for the National Heritage Areas and construction programs are disappointing yet understandable.

I look forward to hearing from you today, discussing your plans for this year, and I yield back, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Grijalva follows:]

**Statement of The Honorable Raúl M. Grijalva, Ranking Member,
Subcommittee on National Parks, Forests and Public Lands**

Good Morning.

Director Jarvis and Director Abbey, welcome back to our Subcommittee.

I want to thank you for joining us today to discuss your agency's budget.

I applaud the thought, time and energy that you and your staff have put into this year's proposal.

I understand from Secretary Salazar's testimony that the Department made very difficult decisions regarding spending.

I commend you for being realistic about the budget situation while still remaining true to your missions.

I support the investment in science and research, the support of the National Landscape Conservation System, and the proposal to acquire key lands for the Ironwood Forest National Monument in Arizona.

Reduced funding for National Heritage Areas and construction programs are disappointing but understandable.

I look forward to hearing from you today as we discuss your plans for this year.

Mr. BISHOP. Thank you, Mr. Grijalva. We appreciate once again our guests being here. Do you have a preference on who goes first? We will do this alphabetically, Mr. Abbey from BLM, if you would first speak to us.

Obviously, your written statements are part of the record, adding anything to this in an oral statement, you know the drill, with the five minutes that are in front of you, and after Mr. Abbey, Mr. Jarvis.

If you would proceed. Welcome. Thank you. The time is yours.

**STATEMENT OF ROBERT ABBEY, DIRECTOR,
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT**

Mr. ABBEY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman and Ranking Member Grijalva. It is always a pleasure to appear before the Subcommittee and talk about issues that I care very deeply about, and that is public lands and the uses that are occurring on these public lands.

Today, we are here to discuss the President's Fiscal Year 2013 budget request for the Bureau of Land Management.

As many of you know, the Bureau of Land Management is responsible for managing 245 million acres of public lands, primarily in the 12 Western States, as well as approximately 700 million acres of on-shore subsurface mineral estate nationwide.

BLM's unique multiple use management of public lands includes activities as varied as energy production, mineral development, livestock grazing, outdoor recreation, and conservation of key national, historical, cultural and other important resources.

The BLM is one of a handful of Federal agencies that generates more revenue than it spends. BLM's management of public land resources and protection of public land values results in extraordinary economic benefits to local communities and to this nation.

It is estimated that in 2011, BLM's management of public lands contributed more than \$120 billion to the national economy and supported more than 550,000 American jobs.

BLM's total Fiscal Year 2013 budget request is \$1.1 billion, \$500,000 below the 2012 enacted budget.

The budget proposal reflects the Administration's efforts to maximize public benefits while recognizing the reality of the current fiscal situation.

The proposed BLM budget makes strategic investments in support of important Administration and Secretarial initiatives which will reap benefits for years to come.

I would like to highlight just a couple of those investments. First, the America's Great Outdoors initiative promotes BLM's multiple use mission by expanding opportunities for recreation, including hunting, fishing, and off highway vehicle use, while enhancing the conservation and protection of BLM managed lands and resources.

The BLM's Fiscal Year 2013 budget request calls for a \$6.3 million increase to support this initiative, and includes funds for managing national monuments, national conservation areas, national scenic and historic trails, wild and scenic rivers, as well as off highway vehicle use.

The New Energy Frontier initiative recognizes the value of environmentally sound and scientifically grounded development of both conventional and renewable energy resources on public lands.

Conventional energy resources on these lands continue to play a critical role in meeting the nation's energy needs.

During 2011, the BLM held 32 on-shore oil and gas lease sales, which generated around \$256 million in revenue. On-shore mineral revenues are estimated to be \$4.4 billion in 2013.

The 2013 budget strengthens the BLM's oil and gas inspection capability through a proposed fee on oil and gas producers. This will generate an estimated \$48 million in funds to improve safety and production inspections for oil and gas operations.

In addition, the budget also proposes \$13 million in increased funding to continue to implement leasing reform efforts.

President Obama, Secretary Salazar, and the Congress have stressed the critical importance of renewable energy to the nation's energy security and long-term economic development, and to the protection of the environment.

To date, Secretary Salazar has approved 29 commercial scale renewable energy projects on public lands, including 16 solar, five wind, and eight geothermal projects that represent more than 6,500 megawatts and 12,500 jobs.

BLM intends to reach its goal of permitting 11,000 megawatts in 2013. That is two years ahead of the congressional mandate.

BLM's 2013 budget proposal proposes a \$5 million increase for these efforts. Our budget proposes an increase of \$15 million to implement broad scale sage-grouse conservation activities to ensure the long-term sustainability of sage-grouse, and to help prevent the future listing of this species for protection under the Endangered Species Act, which will allow multiple use activities to continue on BLM managed lands.

Reforming the wild horse and burro program to make it fiscally sustainable is also one of our top priorities. To that end, the proposed 2013 budget includes \$2 million for efforts to research and improve herd fertility control.

The National Academy of Science report assessing BLM's management of wild horses and burros is expected to be completed in 2013.

Finally, the budget proposes legislative initiatives to reform hard rock mining, remediate abandoned mines, and encourage diligent development of non-producing oil and gas leases.

Our 2013 budget request provides funding for the agency's highest priority initiatives, maximizes public benefits, and reflects difficult choices.

Mr. Chairman, thank you again for the opportunity to testify.
[The prepared statement of Mr. Robert Abbey follows:]

**Statement of Robert V. Abbey, Director,
Bureau of Land Management, U.S. Department of the Interior**

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Subcommittee, thank you for inviting me to testify on the President's Fiscal Year (FY) 2013 budget request for the Bureau of Land Management (BLM).

The BLM, an agency of the U.S. Department of the Interior (DOI), is responsible for managing our National System of Public Lands, which are located primarily in 11 western States. The BLM administers over 245 million surface acres, more than any other Federal agency. The BLM also manages approximately 700 million acres of onshore subsurface mineral estate throughout the Nation. The BLM's unique multiple-use management of public lands includes activities as varied as energy production, mineral development, livestock grazing, outdoor recreation, and the con-

servation of natural, historical, cultural, and other important resources. The BLM is one of a handful of Federal agencies that generates more revenue than it spends.

Providing For Our Nation's Needs

The BLM's multiple-use management and protection of public land resources results in extraordinary economic and other benefits to local communities and to the Nation. The economic output associated with the public lands is considerable. Commodity, recreation, and conservation uses on the public lands generated an estimated combined economic output of more than \$120 billion nationwide and supported more than 550,000 American full and part-time jobs, according to the *Department of the Interior Economic Contributions* report of June 21, 2011.

One element of these economic benefits is the BLM's contribution to America's energy portfolio. During calendar year 2011, the BLM held 32 onshore oil and gas lease sales—covering nearly 4.4 million acres—which generated about \$256 million in revenue for American taxpayers. Onshore mineral leasing revenues are estimated to be \$4.4 billion in 2013. The 2011 lease sale revenues are 20 percent higher than those in calendar year 2010. There are currently over 38 million acres of oil and gas under lease, and since only about 32 percent of that acreage is currently in production, the BLM is working to provide greater incentives for lessees to make production a priority. In FY 2011, the Department of the Interior collected royalties on more than 97 million barrels of oil produced from onshore Federal minerals. Moreover, the production of nearly 3 trillion cubic feet of natural gas made it one of the most productive years on record. BLM-managed Federal coal leases, meanwhile, power more than 20 percent of the electricity generated in the United States.

The BLM also is leading the Nation on the new energy frontier, actively promoting solar, wind, and geothermal energy development. Under Secretary Salazar, BLM has approved permits for 29 commercial-scale renewable energy projects on public lands or the transmission associated with them since 2009. This includes 16 solar, five wind, and eight geothermal projects. Together, these projects represent more than 6,500 megawatts and 12,500 jobs, and when built will power about 1.3 million homes. In addition, the Department has identified more than 3,000 miles of transmission lines for expedited review. Enhanced development of wind power is a key component of our Nation's energy strategy for the future. There are currently 437 megawatts (MW) of installed wind power capacity on BLM-managed public lands, but there are 20 million acres of public lands with wind potential. Additionally, nearly half of U.S. geothermal energy production capacity is from Federal leases. The 2013 budget reflects a goal of permitting a total of 11,000 MW of clean renewable energy by the end of 2013.

The BLM contributes to local communities and the national economy in many ways other than energy production. The Department estimates that more than \$5 billion in annual economic benefits are estimated to result from timber- and grazing-related activities and non-energy mineral production from BLM-managed forest, range, and mineral estate lands. Conservation lands, meanwhile, are valued for their outstanding recreational opportunities as well as for their important scientific, cultural, and historic contributions. Protecting these places preserves the careful balance in management mandated by law, a balance that we need on our public lands. Public land recreational activities also provide major economic benefits to economies in nearby communities. Nearly 58 million recreational visits took place on BLM-managed lands in 2011 alone. In 2010, recreation on BLM lands supported an estimated 59,000 jobs and resulted in about \$7.4 billion in economic output. Recreational hunters, off-road vehicle enthusiasts, mountain bikers, backpackers, anglers, and photographers discover endless opportunities on BLM-managed lands. These and many other recreational opportunities are vital to the quality of life enjoyed by residents of the increasingly urbanized western states, as well as national and international visitors.

FY 2013 Budget Overview

The BLM's budget makes significant investments in America's economy, while making difficult choices to offset priority funding increases. Investments in this budget will promote America's energy production at home and grow America's outdoor economy. The budget request allows the BLM to advance a number of important initiatives, including America's Great Outdoors and the New Energy Frontier, and to implement a number of BLM priorities such as restoring landscapes and conserving habitat for sage grouse, expanding research into population controls for wild horses, and reforming hardrock mining on public lands.

The total FY 2013 BLM budget request is \$1.1 billion in current authority, which is essentially level with the 2012 enacted level. The budget proposes \$952.0 million for the Management of Lands and Resources appropriation and \$112.0 million for

the Oregon and California Grant Lands appropriation, the BLM's two main operating accounts. The budget makes strategic funding shifts to target high-priority initiatives, scales back on lower-priority programs, and sustains and expands energy program activities. The budget also includes several important legislative proposals linked to the uses of lands and resources, including proposals to fund the remediation of abandoned hardrock mines; to provide a fair return to the taxpayer from the production of several hardrock minerals on Federal lands; to encourage diligent development of oil and gas leases; to repeal a prohibition on charging oil and gas permitting fees along with associated mandatory funds; and to reauthorize the Federal Land Transaction Facilitation Act.

A crucial factor in the BLM's ability to fulfill its diverse mission and many responsibilities continues to be strong engagement with partner organizations and volunteers in the management of the public lands. Reciprocal partnerships and volunteer contributions are critical. Through partnerships with organizations and local communities, and through the generosity of volunteers, the BLM effectively leverages external resources, and expands its ability to meet public land management goals. Partnerships also foster an enhanced sense of stewardship and community for the people most closely connected to those lands.

Growing Our Outdoor Economy & Protecting Special Places—America's Great Outdoors

In the rapidly urbanizing west, over 40 million Americans living in more than 4,000 nearby cities and communities can access BLM-managed public lands right in their own backyards. Within a day's drive of 16 major urban areas there are over 100 million acres of BLM-managed public lands. Given the proximity of the public lands to these population centers, the BLM is in a unique position to contribute significantly in advancing the President's initiative to reconnect Americans and our youth to the great outdoors. The America's Great Outdoors (AGO) Initiative promotes the BLM's multiple-use mission by expanding opportunities for recreational activities—including hunting, fishing, and off-road vehicle use—while enhancing the conservation and protection of BLM-managed lands and resources. All of these activities have a place at the multiple-use table and strengthen the BLM's connection to western communities and to visitors to the public lands. The BLM's FY 2013 budget request includes \$6.3 million in program increases for various AGO-related programs in BLM's operating accounts. The 2013 budget also includes increases for programs funded through the Land and Water Conservation Fund, a vital component of the America's Great Outdoors initiative. The BLM's total 2013 budget request for the LWCF land acquisition program is \$33.6 million, an increase of \$11.2 million over the 2012 enacted-funding level.

National Landscape Conservation System—Acts of Congress and/or Presidential proclamations have designated more than 27 million acres of public land into the BLM's National Landscape Conservation System (NLCS). These areas are managed to conserve, protect, and restore the conservation values for which they are designated, while allowing for appropriate multiple uses. National Monuments and National Conservation Areas, Wilderness Areas, Wilderness Study Areas, Wild and Scenic Rivers, and National Scenic and Historic Trails are all included as NLCS units. These areas are amazingly diverse, ranging from broad Alaskan tundra to red-rock deserts and from deep river canyons to rugged ocean coastlines. While some of these special places are surprisingly accessible, many others remain remote and wild.

The NLCS units include over 2,700 recreation sites and 22 visitor centers that serve some 13 million visitors annually. Approximately one-fourth of recreation use of BLM lands occurs within units of the NLCS. Thus, the NLCS contributes to the sustainability of economies in local communities in a variety of ways. Near Las Vegas, Nevada, for example, the extremely popular Red Rock Canyon National Conservation Area is visited by over 1 million people each year. In FY 2011, visitors to this NCA generated nearly \$2 million in recreation fees that were re-invested in the area, directly contributing to the regional tourist economy and supporting 50 private-sector jobs. The BLM also emphasizes the creation of recreation facilities in nearby communities outside of NLCS units. Finally, in addition to recreation, the NLCS supports opportunities for scientific research, the protection of critical habitat for threatened and endangered species, and the protection of nationally-significant cultural resources.

The BLM's 2013 proposed budget includes a \$3.0 million increase for National Monuments and National Conservation Areas. The increase will allow the BLM to increase a variety of activities, including enhancing law enforcement, enhancing visitor safety and experiences, and expanding interpretation programs and products.

Recreation Management—Visitors to BLM-managed lands enjoy a broad range of recreation opportunities such as hunting, camping, fishing, hiking, horseback riding and shooting sports; many motorized activities such as boating and OHV riding; as well as extreme sports and special events. These activities are essential components of western communities' economies and quality of life. The BLM manages more than 600 Special Recreation Management Areas, along with 3,500 recreation sites, campgrounds, day-use areas and other facilities, and 40 major visitor centers and visitor contact stations. In addition, the agency provides recreation opportunities and protection of resource values on more than 10,000 miles of BLM-administered waterways, including over 2,400 miles in 69 designated Wild and Scenic Rivers. The BLM also manages 15,000 miles of recreation-use trails and another 98,000 miles of Back Country-Scenic Byways and public access roads and routes, and oversees 3,400 commercial and competitive use permits and concessions, supporting thousands of businesses and communities across the West. Most BLM-managed lands and recreational areas (over 95 percent) are free to the public.

In FY 2013, an increase of \$2.2 million in the Recreation Resources Management program is proposed to allow the BLM to continue to develop and implement more travel management plans (\$1.1 million) and also strengthen management of the National Scenic and Historic Trails (\$700,000) and the Wild and Scenic Rivers (\$400,000).

Cultural Resource Management—The FY 2013 budget proposes an increase of \$1.1 million for the inventory, protection, and interpretation of places of special meaning to the diverse communities of the American West, and will allow the BLM to conduct regional ethno-geographic landscape assessments; engage underrepresented groups in heritage resource stewardship; repatriate to Native Americans human remains and cultural items held in BLM collections; and implement the Paleontological Resources Preservation subtitle of the Omnibus Public Lands Act of 2009.

Land Acquisition—The 2013 Federal Land Acquisition program builds on efforts started in 2011 and 2012 to strategically invest in interagency landscape-scale conservation projects while continuing to meet agency-specific programmatic needs. The Department of the Interior and the U.S. Forest Service collaborated extensively to develop a process to more effectively coordinate land acquisitions with government and local community partners to achieve the highest priority shared conservation goals.

A portion of the funding allocated from the LWCF to each of the bureaus targets a collaborative effort to focus acquisition projects from each bureau in high-priority landscapes. This effort leverages acquisition funding for larger-scale goals of collaborative landscape management. The proposed budget funds two collaborative acquisition projects within the Department's high-priority landscape areas. The BLM's core acquisition program is aligned with the larger Departmental collaborative initiative; 97 percent of BLM's acquisitions in its core program in 2013 will occur in the Department-designated collaborative priority landscapes with two projects located in two of the three high-priority ecosystems. The budget funds 10 high-priority core land acquisition projects in seven states and includes \$2.5 million for acquisition of lands or interest in lands for hunting and fishing access on BLM lands. These projects will provide access to public lands; improve river and riparian conservation and restoration; conserve or protect wildlife habitat; preserve open spaces; provide for historic and cultural resources preservation; and create opportunities for public recreation at landscape or ecosystem levels.

Federal Land Transaction Facilitation Act Reauthorization—The President's budget also includes a legislative proposal to reauthorize the Federal Land Transaction Facilitation Act (FLTFA), which expired in July of 2011. Under the FLTFA, the BLM was able to sell public lands identified for disposal through the land use planning process prior to July 2000, and retain the proceeds from those sales in a special account in the Treasury. The BLM then used those funds to acquire, from willing sellers, environmentally sensitive land inholdings with exceptional resources. During FLTFA's 11-year history, the BLM sold approximately 27,000 acres under this authority and acquired approximately 18,000 acres of remarkable landscapes.

The 2013 budget includes a proposal to reinstate the FLTFA and allow lands identified as suitable for disposal in recent land use plans to be sold using the FLTFA authority. FLTFA sales revenues would continue to be used to fund the acquisition of environmentally sensitive lands and the administrative costs associated with conducting sales. The Department strongly urges the Congress to reauthorize this important tool which provides for a rational process of land disposal that is anchored in public participation and sound land use planning, while providing for land acquisition to strengthen our Nation's most special places.

Promoting American Energy Production at Home

The Secretary's New Energy Frontier Initiative emphasizes the value of scientifically-based, environmentally-sound development of both renewable and conventional energy resources on the Nation's public lands. The BLM's proposed FY 2013 budget advances the goals of the initiative by including priority funding for both renewable and conventional energy development on public lands.

Renewable Energy—President Obama, Secretary Salazar, and the Congress have stressed the critical importance of renewable energy to the future of the United States. Success in attaining the Nation's goals to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, mitigate climate change, and protect the global environment relies on sustained efforts to develop renewable energy resources. Renewable energy production is vital to our Nation's long-term economic development and energy security. The development of renewable energy creates American jobs and promotes innovation in the United States while reducing the country's reliance on fossil fuels.

The BLM continues to make significant progress in promoting renewable energy development on the public lands in 2012, including working to approve additional large-scale solar energy projects and complete a draft Solar Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement to provide for landscape-scale siting of solar energy projects on public lands. The agency is working on wind development mitigation strategies with wind energy applicants and other Federal agencies, and is currently reviewing over 45 wind energy applications. Additionally, the transmission infrastructure required to deliver renewable energy from production facilities to major markets relies on corridors across BLM-managed lands.

The 2013 budget request includes a total program increase of \$7.0 million in the Renewable Energy Management program, including \$5.0 million in new funding. This will support additional environmental studies to accelerate the identification of prime areas for utility-scale renewable energy project development. It will also enable the BLM to continue ongoing program management responsibilities associated with geothermal energy development by replacing mandatory funding previously provided by the Geothermal Steam Act Implementation Fund, for which new deposits have ceased. The remaining \$2.0 million increase is a transfer of geothermal funds from the oil and gas management program to the BLM's renewable energy program.

Conventional Energy—Secretary Salazar has emphasized that conventional energy resources on BLM-managed lands continue to play a critical role in meeting the Nation's energy needs. Conventional energy development from public lands produces 41 percent of the Nation's coal, 13 percent of the natural gas, and 5 percent of the domestically-produced oil. The Department's balanced approach to responsible conventional energy development combines onshore oil and gas policy reforms with effective budgeting to provide appropriate planning and support for conventional energy development.

The President's FY 2013 budget proposes \$13.0 million in oil and gas program increases to provide industry with timely access to Federal oil and gas resources, backed by the certainty of defensible environmental analysis. Of that increase, a \$5.0 million program increase will restore the BLM's leasing and oversight capacity to the 2011 enacted level. An additional \$3.0 million will be used for large, regional-scale studies and environmental impact statements for oil and gas leasing and development issues. Finally, an additional \$5.0 million programmatic increase will allow the BLM to fully implement its leasing reform strategy without sacrificing other important program goals.

An additional \$10 million, to be offset by new industry fees, is requested to ensure that oil and gas production is carried out in a responsible manner as a primary BLM commitment. The BLM conducts inspections to confirm that lessees meet environmental, safety, and production reporting requirements. The BLM recently initiated a program using a risk-based inspection protocol for production inspections, based on production levels and histories. Success realized in this program will support expansion of this risk-based strategy to the other types of inspections the BLM performs. The risk-based strategy will maximize the use of inspection staff to better meet BLM inspection goals and requirements in the future.

The 2013 budget proposes to expand and strengthen the BLM's oil and gas inspection capability through new fee collections from industry, similar to the fees now charged for offshore inspections. The fee schedule included in the budget is estimated to generate \$48.0 million in collections, which would offset a proposed reduction of \$38.0 million in BLM's appropriated funds, while providing for a net increase of \$10.0 million in funds available for this critical BLM management responsibility. The increased funding is aimed at correcting deficiencies identified by the Government Accountability Office in its February 2011 report, which designated Federal management of oil and gas resources including production and revenue collection as

high risk. The \$10.0 million increase will help BLM achieve the high priority goal of increasing the completion of inspections of Federal and Indian high risk oil and gas cases by nine percent over 2011 levels. The BLM will also complete more environmental inspections to ensure environmental requirements are being followed in all phases of development. Fee levels will be based on the number of oil and gas wells per lease so that costs are shared equitably across the industry.

To encourage diligent development of new oil and gas leases, the Administration is proposing a per-acre fee on each nonproducing lease issued after enactment of the proposal. The \$4-per-acre fee on non-producing Federal leases (onshore and offshore) would provide a financial incentive for oil and gas companies to either put their leases into production or relinquish them so that tracts can be re-leased and developed by new parties.

Sage-Grouse Conservation

The 2013 BLM budget proposal includes an increase of \$15.0 million to implement broad-scale sage-grouse conservation activities to ensure the long-term sustainability of sage-grouse and to help prevent the future listing of this species for protection under the Endangered Species Act. The BLM—which manages more habitat for the Greater sage-grouse than any other Federal agency—has been working proactively on this issue on a number of fronts, including issuing guidance to its field offices that calls for expanding the use of new science and mapping technologies to improve land-use planning. With the increase, the BLM will strengthen its regulatory mechanisms for managing the sage grouse habitat. The increase will also support monitoring and restoration efforts. To better focus its sage-grouse habitat conservation efforts, BLM has partnered with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS), the Natural Resource Conservation Service, the Agricultural Research Service, and State fish and wildlife agencies to share information and develop better management strategies.

Two-thirds (\$10.0 million) of the requested increase will support regulatory certainty for future land-use planning. Through 2015, the BLM will put in place the necessary mechanisms, through the agency's land-use planning process, to address conservation of sage-grouse. This will require the incorporation of conservation measures into as many as 98 land use plans in 68 planning areas within the range of sage-grouse to designate priority sage-grouse habitat. Within these priority areas, the BLM will set disturbance thresholds for energy and mineral development, develop and implement specific best management practices for livestock grazing, establish restrictions for OHV use and other recreational activities, and implement aggressive fire suppression and post-fire restoration tactics. Amending these land use plans will provide the regulatory certainty requested by the FWS and will involve the following actions: land-use plan amendments (\$6.5 million); landscape-level project environmental assessments (\$2.0 million); travel management planning (\$1.0 million); and candidate conservation agreement development (\$500,000), for a total of \$10.0 million. The remaining \$5.0 million would be spent in the following manner: \$2.5 million for habitat restoration and improvement projects and \$2.5 million for habitat mapping, assessment, and monitoring. The BLM will implement monitoring activities to ascertain the effectiveness of habitat management and the effect of various land-use authorizations. This new broad-scale monitoring effort will fill critical data and information gaps necessary for sage-grouse habitat protection and restoration. Conservation efforts implemented on BLM-managed land will be of limited benefit if conservation practices are not monitored and applied uniformly across jurisdictional boundaries.

Managing Across Landscapes—Cooperative Landscape Conservation Initiative

Unprecedented, widespread environmental and human influences are shaping ecological conditions across the public lands. Major large scale stressors include the effects of climate change, catastrophic wildland fire, invasive species, population growth, and conventional and renewable energy development. The Secretary recognizes the need to understand the changing conditions of BLM-managed landscapes on a broad level and continues to promote the Cooperative Landscape Conservation initiative. Working with State, Federal, and non-governmental partners, the BLM is developing a landscape approach to better understand these challenges and support balanced stewardship of the public lands. The BLM is coordinating its efforts with other DOI bureaus and partners through its participation in the network of Landscape Conservation Cooperatives (LCCs).

The BLM's FY 2013 budget request of \$17.5 million, while unchanged from the 2012 enacted level, continues to support the work of its resource managers through the LCCs. Funding will enable managers to conduct additional eco-regional assess-

ments to provide a better understanding of adverse impacts to the health of BLM lands and the larger western landscapes of which they are a part, and to implement various land health treatments to help combat the effects of these impacts. A landscape approach fosters broader understanding of the environment to inform, focus, and integrate the BLM's national and local resource management efforts. This offers a framework for integrating science with management; for coordinating management efforts and directing resources where they are most needed; and for adapting management strategies and actions to changing conditions and new information. It also provides an important foundation for developing coordinated management strategies with partner agencies, stakeholders, and American Indian Tribes.

Other Priority Increases

Wild Horse & Burro Program—Reforming BLM's Wild Horse and Burro Management program to make it fiscally sustainable is one of Secretary Salazar's and the BLM's top priorities. To that end, the 2013 budget includes a program increase of \$2.0 million over the 2012 enacted level for efforts to research and improve herd fertility control. The goal of the research will be to develop additional methods to minimize wild horse population growth and maintain herd health. The increase, a result of the tough choices made in the 2013 budget, invests in R&D to protect the health and environment of the Nation.

In FY 2013, the BLM intends to remove 7,600 animals from the range, consistent with FY 2012, and to continue to pursue public-private partnerships to hold excess horses gathered from Western public rangelands. The current strategy also aims to significantly increase the number of mares treated with fertility control, from 500 in 2009 to a target of 2,000 in 2012 and in 2013, and to remove additional mares to adjust herd sex ratios in favor of males. The long-term goal is to slow the annual population growth rate for wild horses, while at the same time maintaining herd health, in order to decrease or eliminate the need to remove excess animals. The BLM is awaiting the results of a study by the National Academy of Sciences (NAS) to review previous wild horse management studies and make recommendations on how the BLM should proceed in light of the latest scientific research. The NAS expects to provide its report in early 2013. Congress has asked the BLM to find ways to manage these much-loved symbols of the West in a cost-effective, humane manner, and the Bureau is committed to accomplishing this goal.

Resource Management Planning—The BLM's FY 2013 budget proposal includes an increase of \$4.4 million to support high-priority land-use planning efforts, including the initiation of several new plan revisions in 2013. The planning process encourages collaboration and partnerships which help the BLM determine how to manage public lands to balance the needs of adjacent communities with the needs of the nation.

Secretary's Western Oregon Strategy—The 2013 budget proposal also includes an increase of \$1.5 million in the O&C Forest Management program to increase the volume of timber offered for sale through support of timber sale planning, layout and design, engineering, and sale appraisal; support key resource management planning objectives; increase surveying for rare, uncommon, or endangered species; provide for landscape-level timber sale project environmental analysis; and facilitate joint development and implementation of a revised recovery plan for the northern spotted owl.

Abandoned Mine Lands & Hardrock Mining Reform Proposals

The budget includes legislative proposals to address abandoned mine land (AML) hazards on both public and private lands and to provide a fair return to the taxpayer from hardrock production on Federal lands. The first component addresses abandoned hardrock mines across the country through a new AML fee on hardrock production. Just as the coal industry is held responsible for abandoned coal sites, the Administration proposes to hold the hardrock mining industry responsible for abandoned hardrock mines. The proposal will levy an AML fee on all uranium and metallic mines on both public and private lands that will be charged on the volume of material displaced after January 1, 2013. The receipts will be distributed by BLM through a competitive grant program to restore the Nation's most hazardous hardrock AML sites on both public and private lands using an advisory council comprising of representatives of Federal agencies, States, Tribes, and non-government organizations. The advisory council will recommend objective criteria to rank AML projects to allocate funds for remediation to the sites with the most urgent environmental and safety hazards. The proposed hardrock AML fee and reclamation program would operate in parallel to the coal AML reclamation program, as two parts of a larger effort to ensure that the Nation's most dangerous coal and hardrock AML sites are addressed by the industries that created the problems.

The budget also includes a legislative proposal to institute a leasing process under the Mineral Leasing Act of 1920 for certain minerals (gold, silver, lead, zinc, copper, uranium, and molybdenum) currently covered by the General Mining Law of 1872. After enactment, mining for these metals on Federal lands would be governed by a leasing process and subject to annual rental payments and a royalty of not less than five percent of gross proceeds. Half of the royalty receipts would be distributed to the states in which the leases are located and the remaining half would be deposited in the Treasury. Pre-existing mining claims would be exempt from the change to a leasing system, but would be subject to increases in the annual maintenance fees under the General Mining Law of 1872. However, holders of pre-existing mining claims for these minerals could voluntarily convert their claims to leases. The Office of Natural Resources Revenue in the Department of the Interior will collect, account for, and disburse the hardrock royalty receipts.

Grazing Administrative Processing Fee

The Budget includes proposed appropriations bill language authorizing a three-year pilot project to allow BLM to recover some of the costs of issuing grazing permits/leases on BLM lands. BLM would charge a fee of \$1 per animal unit month, which would be collected along with current grazing fees. The budget estimates the fee will generate \$6.5 million in 2013, and that it will assist the BLM in processing pending applications for grazing permit renewals. During the period of the pilot, BLM would work through the process of promulgating regulations for the continuation of the grazing administrative fee as a cost recovery fee after the pilot expires.

Reductions

The BLM's FY 2013 budget proposal reflects many difficult choices in order to support priority initiatives and needs. The following are among the program reductions in the proposed budget:

- **Rangeland Management Program**—A \$15.8 million decrease in funding is proposed to be partially offset by a 3-year pilot program to recover some of the costs of issuing grazing permits/leases permit and lease renewals through a \$1 per animal unit month administrative processing fee levied upon grazing permittees.
- **Alaska Land Conveyance Program**—A reduction of \$12.4 million is proposed in an effort to reevaluate and streamline the Alaska land conveyance process. Interim or final conveyance is complete for approximately 96 percent of the original 150 million acres, and the BLM continues to explore opportunities to further streamline the program and to focus applicable resources on completing the final transfers.
- **Public Domain Forestry**—A general program decrease of \$3.3 million would reduce lower-priority activities and an additional reduction of \$150,000 is proposed for healthy landscapes restoration projects in lower priority public domain forested areas.
- **O&C Reforestation**—A general program decrease of \$1.2 million would reduce lower priority forest vegetation inventories, reforestation treatments, stand maintenance and improvement treatments, monitoring, and inventory for the presence of noxious or invasive weed species. The reduction would not affect the Secretary's Western Oregon Strategy for forest management.
- **Abandoned Mine Lands**—In 2013, the BLM is requesting a decrease of \$2.0 million for its abandoned mine lands program. The BLM will continue to fund the highest priority sites, as determined through its ongoing ranking process. Red Devil Mine reclamation activities remain a high priority.

Conclusion

The BLM's Fiscal Year 2013 budget request provides funding for the bureau's highest priority initiatives, and reflects the need to make tough choices at a time when Federal spending must be restrained. Our public lands and resources play an important role in American lives, economies, and communities and include some of our Nation's greatest assets. Under this budget proposal, the BLM is targeting investments to advance the bureau's mission of protecting these lands for multiple uses, including recreation, conservation, and safe and responsible energy development.

Thank you for the opportunity to present this testimony on the proposed FY 2013 BLM budget.

Mr. BISHOP. Thank you for being here.
Mr. Jarvis?

**STATEMENT OF JON JARVIS, DIRECTOR,
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE**

Mr. JARVIS. Mr. Chairman and members of the Subcommittee, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today to talk about the Fiscal 2013 budget request for the National Park Service. My full testimony is submitted for the record.

We appreciate this committee's support for the work that we do as stewards of our nation's most cherished natural and cultural resources, and we look forward to working with you as the National Park Service prepares for our second century of stewardship beginning in 2016.

National parks are best known for their incredible beauty and preservation of America's historical legacy, but they are also significant economic engines for local communities and our nation. They stimulate both spending and job creation.

Today, I am pleased to announce the release of our new economic impact report that shows that visitor spending in national parks in 2010 generated more than \$31 billion in sales and supported 258,000 jobs in the U.S. economy.

This job generation extends beyond our own organization. We have recently hired Andrew Goodrich, a six year veteran of the United States Marine Corps and a wounded warrior, who comes to us through the Operation War Fighter Program.

Andrew is assisting the National Park Service in developing a program designed to transition and hire more young returning veterans from the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.

The Fiscal 2013 budget supports continued stewardship of our nation's most cherished resources through the Administration's America's Great Outdoors initiative, through partnerships with states and others, AGO is a landmark investment and engaging people and expanding opportunities for recreation and for conservation of our nation's natural and cultural heritage.

The NPS will continue to carry on its stewardship of these resources and to provide enriching experiences and enjoyment for all visitors.

In addition, NPS has begun a strategic approach to prepare for our centennial. Our initiative is called "A Call to Action," and is a re-commitment to the exemplary stewardship and public enjoyment of our national parks for our first 100 years.

It calls upon our employees and partners to commit to specific actions that will advance the service toward a shared vision in 2016 and beyond.

The Fiscal 2013 budget request contains limited strategic increases along with necessary selective reductions that were proposed only after serious and careful deliberation.

For discretionary appropriations, there is a net decrease of \$1 million below Fiscal 2012 to \$2.6 billion. For mandatory appropriations, primarily the revenue from fees, there is an estimated increase of \$3.5 million.

The Fiscal 2013 budget proposes \$2.3 billion for operations of the NPS, a net increase of \$13.5 million.

Within the total requested, there are specific increases, mostly fixed costs, and offsetting decreases, including a decrease of \$21.6 million for operations at parks.

That will undoubtedly have impact on the level of services provided to visitors and the level of operational maintenance at parks, but by ensuring flexibility in the implementation of reductions, park managers will be able to develop cost saving measures that minimize the impacts to our visitors.

The request proposes \$119 million for Federal land acquisition and state conservation grants, a net increase of \$17.5 million above Fiscal 2012.

Of that amount, \$59.4 million is proposed for land acquisition projects and administration, including \$9 million to provide grants to protect Civil War battlefield sites outside of the NPS.

Land acquisition projects requested for national park units will result in over 27,100 acres of the highest priority lands within authorized park boundaries.

Beginning in 2011, the Department instituted a coordinated process for prioritizing Federal land acquisition projects among the three departmental land management bureaus and the U.S. Forest Service.

The cross bureau criteria emphasize opportunities to jointly conserve important large scale landscapes. The National Park Service has proposed two acquisitions in this collaborative landscape planning list.

We also propose \$60 million for state conservation grants and administration. \$36.5 million for traditional state conservation grants to be apportioned in the states in accordance with a long-standing formula, and a \$20 million competitive grant program that would target community parks, green spaces, landscape level conservation, and recreational waterways.

The competitive grants component was developed to more specifically address the public's concern about the lack of open space in outdoor recreation areas.

The national recreation preservation appropriation funds that support local and community efforts to preserve natural and cultural resources, these programs will be reduced by \$7.8 million below the Fiscal 2012 levels.

The Historic Preservation Fund appropriation supports HPFs in states, territories and tribal lands, and it is proposed at the same level of Fiscal 2012 at \$55.9 million.

For conservation construction appropriation, the request proposes a funding level of \$131 million, a reduction of \$24 million below Fiscal 2012. Within that amount, \$52 million is proposed for line item construction, and there is a list of projects that are focused on critical life, health, safety and emergency projects.

In formulating the 2013 budget, the NPS used a variety of tools to evaluate spending and to incorporate performance results into decision making.

Given the far reaching responsibilities in the NPS, we must support the efforts of the entire Federal Government to regain a balanced budget while strategically focusing our efforts and resources on those functions critical to the protection of resources and visitors and employees, and on the experience at the core of every visit.

This concludes my remarks, and I would be glad to take any questions.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Jon Jarvis follows:]

**Statement of Jonathan B. Jarvis, Director,
National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior**

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

Introduction

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

The 2013 budget supports continued stewardship of the Nation's most cherished resources through the Administration's America's Great Outdoors initiative. Through partnerships with States and others, America's Great Outdoors is a landmark investment in engaging people in the outdoors and expanding opportunities for recreation and conservation of our Nation's natural and cultural heritage. The NPS will continue to carry on its stewardship of these resources of national significance and to provide enriching experiences and enjoyment for all visitors.

Sustaining funding for park operations is a key component of this initiative. In these tough economic times we recognize the value the 397 national parks provide all Americans—as places of introspection and recreation and as economic engines that create jobs and help our gateway communities thrive. Today, I am pleased to announce the release of a new economic impact report that shows visitor spending in national parks in 2010 generated more than \$31 billion of sales which supported more than 258,000 jobs in the U.S. economy. The people and business owners near national parks have always known their economic value. In many communities, especially in small, rural communities, national parks are the clean, green fuel for the engine that drives the economy. The President's budget will ensure that national parks continue to serve the 281 million visitors who come every year to relax and recreate in America's great outdoors and learn about the people and places that make up America's story.

In addition to this important initiative, the NPS has begun a strategic approach to prepare for our Centennial year in 2016. The National Park Service's "A Call to Action" is a recommitment to the exemplary stewardship and public enjoyment of our national parks, calling upon NPS employees and partners to commit to actions that advance the Service toward a shared vision for strengthening our parks through 2016 and into our second century.

Budget Summary

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

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

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

The budget sustains funding for the Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance (RTCA) program at the 2012 level, which will help communities promote their own vision of livability, sustainability, and responsibility and assist partners in successfully utilizing the array of resources and tools available through Federal agencies and nongovernmental groups. RTCA helps promote the values of health, conservation, and enjoyment of our Nation's resources with a valuable return on investment through on-the-ground projects, such as river restoration and the creation of walk-

ing and biking trails. Funding is also sustained for American Battlefield Protection Program Assistance Grants, which assist partners with the preservation of non-Federal historic battlefields at the local level, and for the Historic Preservation Fund, which supports Historic Preservation Offices in States, Territories, and tribal lands for the preservation of historically and culturally significant sites and other responsibilities defined under the National Historic Preservation Act.

Operation of the National Park System

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

Of the program reductions, park base operations are reduced by \$21.6 million and servicewide programs are reduced by \$1.0 million. These reductions would be applied strategically to minimize the impact on the visitor experience and park resources. This reduction would have impacts on the level of services provided to visitors and the level of operational maintenance parks are able to achieve; however, by ensuring flexibility in the implementation of reductions, park managers would be able to develop cost saving measures that minimize the impact of these reductions on park visitors to ensure their safety and that of our employees and the protection of park resources. All specific reductions in budgetary resources and the areas of reduction would be determined based on a park's mission, goals, and operational realities.

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

Land Acquisition and State Assistance

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

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

The budget also proposes \$60.0 million for State Conservation Grants and administration. Of this total, \$36.5 million is proposed for traditional State Conservation Grants, to be apportioned to the States in accordance with the long-standing formula. An additional \$20.0 million would be allocated to States based on a competitive process targeting priority projects that support the America's Great Outdoors

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

National Recreation and Preservation

The National Recreation and Preservation appropriation funds programs that support local and community efforts to preserve natural and cultural resources. The 2013 includes \$52.1 million, reflecting increased fixed costs of \$0.3 million and a programmatic reduction of \$8.1 million for funding for National Heritage Areas (NHAs), for a total net change of \$7.8 million below 2012. The proposed reduction supports the directive in the 2010 Interior Appropriations Act for the more established NHAs to work toward becoming more self-sufficient, yet still promotes the long-term sustainability of NHAs and the continued importance of Federal seed money for less mature areas.

The budget sustains funding for the Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance Program, which assists and empowers communities to protect their own special places and enhance local outdoor recreation opportunities; and American Battlefield Protection Program Assistance Grants, which provide grants to assist partners with the preservation of threatened historic battlefields not on NPS lands. Both programs are key components of the America's Great Outdoors initiative.

Historic Preservation Fund

The Historic Preservation Fund appropriation supports Historic Preservation Offices in States, Territories, and tribal lands for the preservation of historically and culturally significant sites and to carry out other responsibilities under the National Historic Preservation Act. For 2013, the budget requests \$55.9 million, with no change from 2012 levels. This provides \$46.9 million for Grants-in-Aid to States and Territories, and nearly \$9.0 million for Grants-in-Aid to Tribes.

Construction

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

Line item construction is requested at \$52.4 million, and includes only the highest priority construction projects to address critical life, health, safety, resource protection, and emergency needs, and does not propose funding any new facility construction. The request funds ten projects including continuation of ecosystem restoration at Olympic and Everglades National Parks and critical new repair projects at parks such as Yellowstone, Dry Tortugas, and Denali. Consistent with the Administration's Campaign to Cut Waste, the budget proposes funding for demolition and removal of unoccupied, excess structures at Blue Ridge Parkway.

Performance Integration

In formulating the 2013 budget request, the NPS used a variety of tools to incorporate performance results and other information into the decision-making process. These tools include the Budget Cost Projection Module, the Business Planning Initiative, and the NPS Scorecard, as well as continued program evaluations. These tools are used to develop a more consistent approach to integrating budget and performance across the NPS, as well as to support further accountability for budget performance integration at all levels of the organization. We also continue to exercise strict controls on travel costs as we improve oversight over our limited budgetary resources. Given the far-reaching responsibilities of the NPS, we must support the efforts of the entire Federal government to regain a balanced budget while strategically focusing our efforts and resources on those functions critical to the protection of resources, visitors, and employees, and on the experience at the core of every visit.

Mr. Chairman, this concludes my summary of the 2013 budget request for the National Park Service. We would be pleased to answer any questions you or the other members of the subcommittee may have.

Mr. BISHOP. Thank you, both of you, for your presentations here, your written testimony. Just for the record, at the end of this, if

there are still questions that are required, we will send those to you in writing and we would ask for a prompt response.

I am going to go last as far as the questions here, so I will start on our side by turning the time to Mr. Tipton if he has any concerns or questions for these gentlemen.

Mr. TIPTON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to thank Mr. Jarvis and Director Abbey for being here.

Mr. Jarvis, I would like to ask if you have been aware that the National Park Service proposed rules for a wilderness and back country management plan in regard to the Black Canyon of Gunnison. Are you familiar with that?

Mr. JARVIS. Yes, sir. I am.

Mr. TIPTON. Were you aware that your agency admitted in that plan that the guides who provide these services would experience long-term reductions in revenues associated with those services provided in the Black Canyon and likely lose their jobs in the community?

Mr. JARVIS. Well, I have just come up to speed on this issue, that there has been a proposal in the draft—it is not final, so there is no final decision here—there is a proposal by the Park to eliminate commercial guiding services within Black Canyon.

I know it is very controversial within the climbing community. We are not at a final decision on that. I would be glad to come up and talk to your office about your concerns on that.

Mr. TIPTON. That is my home area, a largely rural area. We have been devastated by unemployment and the impact of losing even more jobs in our area when it comes to the Black Canyon.

I would like to have just a little bit of the thought process. People have the freedom to go in and climb without a guide now. Why would you want to restrict the option for citizens to be able to have a professional guide?

Mr. JARVIS. I really do not know the background on this issue and why the Park has concluded that this is in the draft. I do plan to investigate it and understand why they are making this proposal, and I would be glad to come up and talk to you about it once I find out.

Mr. TIPTON. I appreciate that. I know both of our Senators as well as myself have written you a letter, and we will look forward to your correspondence on that. We do want to work with you. We want to be able to protect our jobs in that particular area.

Director Abbey, according to the BLM's February 13 press release, the Fiscal Year 2013 budget would reduce funding for the public domain forest management programs by \$3.5 million.

That is almost a 40 percent reduction in funding for forest management at a time when the agency is increasing spending on further land acquisition.

What effects would this 40 percent reduction have on the numbers of forest management personnel, the volume of timber sold, number and size of stewardship contracts, number of firewood permits for personal use, and businesses and jobs in rural communities?

Mr. ABBEY. That is a good question, Congressman Tipton. As you know, any reduction does have adverse effects on the programs

that we have been managing for a number of years and the public domain forestry program is no exception.

There will be some reductions in forest relative to the number of personnel that would be lost as a result of that proposed reduction.

We would intend to absorb those reductions through attrition, which means through retirements or other people leaving.

We would continue to offer timber materials through stewardship contracting. We believe we could continue to maintain the status quo of the number of stewardship contracts that could be offered, working very closely with other partners to make those materials available.

We would also continue to look toward some of the hazardous fuels reductions money that we have in the fire program to help us achieve some of our forestry objectives out there.

Mr. TIPTON. Given the bark beetle epidemic, and I am sure you are well aware of that, particularly in Colorado, this has devastated entire forests, is this really the time to be making cuts in those areas?

Mr. ABBEY. It would certainly be a priority for us to look at those types of areas for fuels reductions and to alleviate some of the risk associated with wild land fires.

Mr. TIPTON. Do you know exactly—not exactly—a guess of how many acres are affected on BLM land in Colorado by the bark beetle?

Mr. ABBEY. I do not know specifically, but we can certainly provide that information to you.

Mr. TIPTON. I think that is going to be very important. We have a tremendous concern in Colorado in terms of fire hazard. We have had light snow pack this year. It is not typically a question of if but when that catches fire, the impacts on our watersheds going through the areas, the devastation for all of our economies throughout the entire West will be greatly impacted.

Have you evaluated the potential for increasing public domain timber sale programs in order to ramp up the response to the beetle kill?

Mr. ABBEY. Our priorities certainly would be based upon demand. As you probably have heard or assessed through your own reviews of our programs, the public domain forestry program provides little timber for commercial purposes.

It provides a good source for firewood and other type of biofuels commodities, but it does not necessarily provide a lot to the commercial timber industry.

Mr. TIPTON. If I may, just a little bit—I guess we are done.

Mr. BISHOP. Yes, you are out of time. We will have other rounds. Mr. Grijalva?

Mr. GRIJALVA. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Jarvis, the National Heritage Areas, they are key partners for historic areas across this country. Communities continually come to Members of Congress as they begin to put their collaborative's together for designations.

The shortfall from the budget you are recommending, and quite frankly, also the continued challenges with congressional re-authorizations on the issue, how do you see this program, very popular across the country, continuing in the future?

Mr. JARVIS. Thank you for that question. I really appreciate it because I am a big fan of the Heritage Areas. I think they do an extraordinary job in leveraging what little Federal funding they do get to assist communities in preserving their lifestyle, promoting their heritage, and drawing visitors.

I think it is a new concept, a relatively new concept, about two decades old, and some of them are facing the loss of funding.

I believe there needs to be enabling legislation, organic legislation, for the Heritage Areas so they can have some long-term sustainability rather than each year having to come in for an appropriation.

We had to make hard budgetary decisions this year, in that the focus was on our base operations in the parks, and unfortunately, the Heritage Areas fall in a lower priority for us in terms of those hard decisions.

Mr. GRIJALVA. Thank you. Director Abbey, the BLM estimates that 20 million people visited the conservation system in 2010. If funding were to be cut from this system, how would this affect visitorship and resource safety?

Mr. ABBEY. It would certainly adversely affect our abilities to provide the services that the public are expecting and demanding within the units of the national landscape and conservation system.

Congressman Grijalva, as you know, we are asking for a slight increase for the management of the units within the national landscape conservation system, and I think they are deserving of that increase.

The American public are rediscovering their public lands and they are rediscovering their lands for purposes other than just commodity extraction. They are using these lands for conservation and for recreation, and they are looking to make sure they continue to have access to their lands.

Again, any reduction in any of our programs, as I mentioned to Congressman Tipton, would have adverse effects on the abilities for the Bureau of Land Management to continue to deliver the services that the public expects and are demanding and quite frankly deserve.

Our hope is that Congress will look at our budgetary proposal and will provide us the funding that we are requesting in this particular program activity.

Mr. GRIJALVA. For both of you gentlemen, can you both discuss your individual Land and Water Conservation Fund, land acquisition plans, and how you came about these priorities?

Mr. ABBEY. Jon, would you like for me to start?

Mr. JARVIS. Go ahead.

Mr. ABBEY. Congressman Grijalva, again, there is quite a bit of competition because there are so many deserving projects, and again, our projects are based upon willing sellers.

For the Bureau of Land Management, our acquisition projects occur within or adjacent to nationally designated areas, like our national monuments, national conservation areas, wilderness, national scenic trails, national historic trails, and wild and scenic rivers, as well as some of the special recreation management areas that we also manage.

We do have criteria that we use to evaluate each of the proposals that we receive from our field offices. We rank those proposals based upon that established set of criteria that we have been using for a number of years.

At the end of the day, based upon the rankings, we compete with other bureaus within the Department of the Interior, as well as the U.S. Forest Service, and the Department of Agriculture for the limited dollars that are being requested for land acquisitions.

Mr. JARVIS. For Fiscal 2013 for the National Park Service, there are two components to our LWCF program. One is the Federal side and one is the state side.

Very similar to Director Abbey, we have a set of criteria that we go through. Of course, with the National Park Service, we are limited on the Federal side of acquiring lands to only within authorized park boundaries, which Congress has granted us that authority.

We focus on hardships or top priority acquisitions of willing sellers within park boundaries.

We do have some grant making that goes outside, specifically to Civil War battlefield sites.

On the state side, we are asking for something a little different this year than in the past, and that is the authority to use \$20 million for a competitive grant program that would be transferred directly to the states and local governments for acquisition of open space, access to waterways, and urban parks in particular.

It is a little bit different than in the past. The only significant increase that we are asking for over 2012 is on the state side of the program.

Mr. BISHOP. Thank you. Mr. Amodei?

Mr. AMODEI. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Jarvis, we have not met. I just have one request. Your folks administer the Devils Hole pupfish area in my state.

In a recent conversation with the State Engineer's Office—and I do not know if this is true, if it is not, I look forward to talking to you about it, that is kind of the subject of the request, to meet with you later.

The State Engineer's Office indicated that some of the folks in management there have been in the process of using the state water rights' process and its protest abilities to represent to people if they purchase three times the water that they need for their proposed use and dedicate two times what they purchased to the Park Service there, they will not protest their water rights' application.

I want to stress I do not know if that is true, but I would appreciate the opportunity to interact with the appropriate person on your staff to ascertain whether that is or not, and if so, to discuss the issues related to that, and if it is not, it will be a short conversation, and I look forward to having it in your office, if that is acceptable.

Mr. JARVIS. We will set that up. I do not know whether that is true.

Mr. AMODEI. I would not expect you would. Thank you very much.

Good to see you, Bob. I want to thank you and your folks in Nevada for their reception of me. Amy Ludders has been great in the

five-and-a-half months I have been there. I have been to all your district offices in the state. I really appreciate the professional welcome. We have had some great discussions on a lot of topics.

I want to cover a couple of things if I could, Bob.

Mr. ABBEY. OK.

Mr. AMODEI. The per yard fee on mining proposed in the budget, tell me what I am missing there. When you are attaching a fee per yard, it sounds to me like an assault on surface mining.

What did I miss there? The more dirt you move, the more it costs? It sounds like a surface miner's nightmare.

Mr. ABBEY. Well, it is not intended to be. Congressman, as you are well aware, being from Nevada, and with the number of abandoned mine sites located in Nevada, nationally, we do have an issue, a safety issue.

We have identified some 37,000 abandoned mine sites with over 74,000 features, such as open entryways and piles of contaminated materials and other physical hazards.

The whole purpose of the fee that we are proposing to assess existing mining operations would be to—I think it is like 14 cents per ton of materials that would be moved from the location, the mining operations.

The intent is to use those fees that would be collected to reclaim the abandoned mines.

Mr. AMODEI. I get that. I appreciate that. As you are aware from your time in Nevada, you have a pretty good program in that state through the State Minerals Office and the Mining Association, which has gone out and done—I do not know how it compares to other states—some pretty good work.

When I see a proposal that although there is a little bit of mention about coordination, it is like hey, if they have a good method there that is working, creating a Federal program to duplicate that, and I do not know if it duplicates it or works in conjunction, but I would appreciate the opportunity to maybe have a little more discourse on that.

I want to move, if I could, to the sage-grouse stuff. I appreciate the Secretary's presentation earlier and yours.

When I look at \$15 million and I talk about—I know these things are necessary. Science, mapping, technology, regulatory mechanisms, managing/monitoring information to develop management strategies.

In discussions with the Fish and Wildlife Service, all of this is for agriculture, mining, OHV, all the things, the major danger to the sage-grouse is fire.

When I look at the fire budget and I look at this and I see no fuels—maybe I missed it. Maybe it is just buried in the nomenclatures. There is nothing in here to say we are going to manage—we are going to do fuels management around those areas.

We are going to do something that is aggressive—unless I have been talking to the wrong people—when you talk to your folks in the state, when you talk to the State Director of Fish and Wildlife, we are burning the habitat up.

I am not saying that is anybody's fault. The history is clearly the threat to the habitat is wild land fire. I look at this and I do not see a lot of wild land fire stuff in here.

Have I missed it? Tell me what I have missed or how do we—I see the challenge for the sage-grouse, at least part of it, we can regulate all the manmade activities, but wild land fires is what burned that habitat up, and I see a very light stroke on that in terms of what is being proposed in this budget.

Mr. ABBEY. You have missed it a little bit, Congressman. You are absolutely correct. The biggest threat to sage-grouse is habitat fragmentation. The biggest threat to habitat fragmentation is wild land fire, especially in the Great Basin states.

As we look toward to the actions that we are taking on the ground, we are not only going through the process of amending 68 land use plans based upon input from the state gaming and fish agencies as well as other public land stakeholders and members of the public, to help us identify best management practices across the full spectrum of multiple use management and incorporate those into our land use plans, so that we can protect those core sage-grouse habitats similar to what the State of Wyoming has already done at the state level.

As it relates to wild fire, we are not only highlighting and prioritizing fuels reduction, but we are also highlighting and prioritizing suppression activities around those core habitat areas.

By that, I mean during the fire season, we will be pre-positioning fire crews near those core areas so that if a fire does break out, we can respond immediately and try to control the spread of that fire.

Mr. BISHOP. OK, Mr. Abbey. Mr. Holt?

Dr. HOLT. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, Mr. Abbey and Mr. Jarvis for all the important work that your agencies do.

Let me follow on the question of Mr. Grijalva about the Land and Water Conservation Fund.

I cannot emphasize too strongly how important this is for the irreplaceable lands in New Jersey and across the nation. You know how hard I have worked to try to find ways to stop this siphoning off of the LWCF's \$900 million in annual revenues.

How does this year's budget fit into the Department's and the President's declared goal of fully funding LWCF by 2014? It sounds to me like this is—

Mr. JARVIS. An incremental step toward that, I would say. Recognizing the economic situation of the country and that full funding of the Land and Water Conservation Fund in this economic decline was probably unreasonable or not achievable.

What we have done is looked to work together, the Bureau of Land Management, Fish and Wildlife Service, the Park Service and the Forest Service to figure out how we can leverage our LWCF investments and create the best effect both for the American public in terms of recreation as well as conservation on the ground.

That has been our focus.

Dr. HOLT. Mr. Abbey, I wanted to turn to the Mining Act and R.S. 2477. I do not need to go through how we got here and how grandfathered road use is determined.

I wanted to point to the real challenges, legal challenges, that are being mounted now. I would like to know whether the Bureau intends to vigorously defend against this attack.

Anti-wilderness folks have said roads are the anecdote to wilderness, as if wilderness is something to be stamped out. Believe me, roads are a pretty effective way of degrading wilderness.

Will the Bureau vigorously defend preservation of the wilderness areas?

Mr. ABBEY. We intend to do so. As you know, there have been several lawsuits that have been filed, primarily in the State of Utah, regarding R.S. 2477 roads.

At the same time, we are working very closely with the State of Utah and with county governments in that particular state, as well as other counties across the Western United States to try to provide for legitimate roads that exist, to make sure the public has access to the areas they want access to.

Certainly, where we have proposals on trails within designated wilderness areas, we have already declared those are not roads or they would never have been designated as wilderness study areas or designated as wilderness.

As we continue to defend in a court of law our position, we are also seeking alternative approaches to authorize under the Federal Land Policy and Management Act right-of-ways that would provide for that type of access to the areas that the public would like to have access to, and to accommodate transportation—

Dr. HOLT. Let me just say, please be vigorous. Mr. Jarvis, there are a number of really important Civil War battlefield sites that have been preserved. It is very important to our heritage.

If we provide you the authorization, can we expect the same kind of vigorous attention to battlefields of the Revolution and the War of 1812?

Mr. JARVIS. Yes, sir. The biggest threat to all of our battlefields is that they get developed and you lose that sense of place. Obviously, since we are right now in the middle of the Sesquicentennial of the Civil War, we had a lot of focus on that, but the War of 1812 recognition is coming up very quickly as well, and we have had some focus on that and are putting some specific funding into it, but we would appreciate your support for the recognition of these very important historical components.

Dr. HOLT. Let me also just add a comment to Mr. Grijalva's question. I do think the reduction in the Heritage Areas' program funding is a serious problem. These are really shoestring operations in so many cases and so valuable, the Crossroads of the American Revolution in New Jersey is just getting on its feet. It is terribly important, I think, for our heritage, our history, our education, not to mention local tourism.

I hope we can find a way to restore that funding and have a commitment of vigorous defense of those programs.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. BISHOP. Thank you, Mr. Holt. Maybe if you can help me get my access, I can help you get your battlefields.

Dr. HOLT. Noted.

Mr. BISHOP. Mr. Rivera?

Mr. RIVERA. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you gentlemen for being here today.

I am going to start with Mr. Abbey. I recently read in Florida Trend Magazine that the Department was claiming ownership of uninhabited Wisteria Island in Key West Harbor.

The article stated that the Monroe County Property Appraisers' records say a private company has owned the Island since 1967.

I have also been informed that your agency is the one that has put in this claim. If this is accurate, I would like to request at least a briefing by your staff either here in Washington or in South Florida, to better familiarize myself with that matter, if that would be all right.

Mr. ABBEY. You bet. Let me just say initial adjudication of the records performed by our employees in the Eastern State's Office located in Springfield, Virginia indicated there were some title issues down there.

I have yet to be briefed myself. I have asked them to provide me background and what facts they have to come to that type of conclusion.

We would be happy to provide that briefing to you after I receive it.

Mr. RIVERA. I appreciate that very much.

Also, almost four months ago, I asked that you and Secretary Salazar provide a list of all foreign government owned energy companies, foreign government owned energy companies incorporated in the United States, that hold leases on Federal lands and the OCS.

I am still waiting for that list. I think the fact that it has taken this long to produce the list highlights that we have a problem of easily identifying what foreign governments are operating on our public lands, which could be a matter of national security.

Again, I would reiterate I would like to have that list as soon as possible.

Mr. ABBEY. We will get that to you.

Mr. RIVERA. Thank you. Mr. Jarvis, with respect to Everglades restoration, I know it is important to you, and as you know, it is important to Florida and to the United States.

I want to thank you for the leadership that you provided on this issue.

On the image you see on the screen, this is a part of my congressional district. The orange line is the boundary of Everglades National Park. The Tamiami Trail Bridge, the green in the image, which is expected to be finished soon, and the other Public Works being built to restore more natural flows to the Everglades, need a 7.5 mile swath of Florida Power and Light or FPL owned land that runs through the middle of Everglades National Park, and that would be the pink line that you see there.

The FPL swath is about as wide as a football field side line to side line.

The Park Service and Congress both know this, and in 2009 Congress passed bipartisan legislation that enabled a land exchange between the Park and Florida Power and Light.

Florida Power and Light would receive those lands where the blue line touches the orange on the eastern edge of the Park, and the net gain to the Park was an additional 60 acres of land, and FPL would have a corridor to put power lines outside of that Park.

I am sure you share my concern about all the taxpayer dollars spent, and it simply is not working because of a hold up with this land exchange.

The schedule the Park Service itself publicly posted for the project shows the agency publishing a draft environmental impact study or EIS last month. That did not happen.

I am wondering when we can expect that.

Mr. JARVIS. The team in Florida is working very diligently to get this done. We were briefed on it just in the last week or so that to facilitate the exchange and to move the power line corridor to the eastern boundary, there will be some environmental concerns. However, I think they can be identified and managed and, certainly, we need the current FPL corridor in order to allow overflow easements when the water begins to flow under the Tamiami Bridge Project.

We see it as an essential component, and we are working very, very hard on it.

I do not know off the top of my head when we will get it to you, but I will get that right to you.

Mr. RIVERA. Thank you very much. I hope you will expedite that.

Speaking of the project, is there any funding requested in the President's Fiscal Year 2013 budget for bridging or related work on the Tamiami Trail?

Mr. JARVIS. There is \$8 million requested in the Fiscal 2013 in our construction program, but that is inadequate to do the next phase of the Tamiami Trail.

Mr. RIVERA. \$8 million?

Mr. JARVIS. Yes.

Mr. RIVERA. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. BISHOP. Mr. Sarbanes?

Mr. SARBANES. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you all for being here.

Director Jarvis, I wanted to ask you a couple of questions. You mentioned a moment ago the bicentennial celebration that is coming up on the War of 1812, and it will not surprise you to learn I am very focused on that myself right now.

The first question relates to the Star Spangled Banner National Historic Trail. I know the Park Service is currently reviewing a comprehensive management plan for that Trail.

I wanted to know if you are confident that this review will happen with all deliberate speed so that the plan is done and the Trail is ready to go and be accessed as we head into the bicentennial celebration?

You are going to have thousands of visitors, obviously, coming through the area and the region who are going to want to follow along the points of that Trail.

Mr. JARVIS. Yes, sir. I just made a point to travel over to the office on the Chesapeake Bay where we manage both the Chesapeake, Captain John Smith, and the Star Spangled Banner Trail activities, as well as conversations with the Northeast Region.

I do believe it is on track. I think it is very exciting. I know the communities along the route are looking very much forward to this, so I think it is coming along quite well.

We just hired a new coordinator for the War of 1812 celebrations as well.

Mr. SARBANES. Thank you. I will apologize now for being a pest in the coming months on this, as we kind of keep checking in with you to make sure that is staying on track.

The second thing, obviously, Fort McHenry is going to be really at the center of this celebration over the next two years. I know the budget is largely flat for the foreseeable future.

I am concerned that there is going to be this huge influx of visitors. We expect this to happen not just from within the region, but from across the country and even international visitors coming, as we celebrate this bicentennial event.

I wondered if you could speak to whether the Park Service is kind of leaning into the bicentennial and thinking about how maybe some additional resources can be marshaled toward Fort McHenry to make sure the Fort Visitor Center and everything that goes with it is well positioned to handle this significant increase in interest and tourism?

Mr. JARVIS. We appreciate your attention to this. I think the Park will be ready. We have identified about \$750,000 out of recreation 20 percent fee funds and repair/rehab to complete the exhibits at the Visitors Center.

We are ensuring that the staff is ready for the celebration.

As I mentioned, we put together a team on this, and Gavitsky, who you know well, has been leading that for the Northeast Region. We have just again hired a new coordinator. I think things are coming together quite well, and I think the Park will be ready and looking spiffy.

Mr. SARBANES. Great. We look forward to working with you on this as it comes to past. Thank you very much. I yield back.

Mr. BISHOP. Mr. Pallone, do you have questions?

Mr. PALLONE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, Mr. Grijalva, also for letting me join you.

I just wanted to say my question is to Director Jarvis. I know that in difficult economic times, families all over the Nation are relying on our national parks for family vacations, daily recreation, and education.

I think it is important that these natural wonders be accessible to everyone.

In my district, we have Sandy Hook, part of the Gateway National Recreation area, and one of the important attractions that the public has access to at Sandy Hook is the beaches.

While many of the surrounding beaches remain prohibitively expensive for families, Sandy Hook remains an affordable location.

However, the National Park Service has proposed raising the fees 100 percent for vehicles going to the beach. I think this is going to be put access to Sandy Hook's beaches out of reach for many families struggling during these difficult economic times. I just do not want that to happen.

You know, Director Jarvis, I have had dialogue with you about these proposed fee increases at Sandy Hook, and you have been willing to keep an open mind.

You also know, I think, that I am very strongly opposed to it. We are talking daily now for a vehicle is \$10. It goes to \$20 for two days, but a lot of people just come for the day. That is double.

Season pass goes from \$50 per vehicle to \$100 per vehicle, oversized from \$25 to \$50.

My question is have you made any determination as to whether these fee increases at Sandy Hook will be implemented, and if not, when can we expect that decision?

Mr. JARVIS. We are still in continuous dialogue with the staff in the Northeast Region about these fee proposed increases. They do have to come in for approval here in Washington. For any of the fee increases we are taking them case by case. They have to make their case that it is not deterring the public, and it is reasonable and justified, and particularly in the amount of the increase, as you indicated. This is a doubling of the existing fees.

We are still in the process. We do not have a final decision.

Mr. PALLONE. You do not have a time line at this point?

Mr. JARVIS. No, sir.

Mr. PALLONE. As I said, I know I am being repetitive and you have heard me before, but it is tough times. Some of the people at the Park Service—we had a hearing, and I appreciated the fact that you had a hearing—came in and said well, this is comparable to area beaches.

The problem is a lot of people cannot afford the area beaches. This was the cheap alternative for a day.

I hope this notion that because other beaches are more expensive that means we should be more expensive does not influence your opinion too much.

My understanding also is that part of the reason that the Service is proposing a fee increase at Sandy Hook is because they have some difficulty funding operations and maintenance at the Park.

Where in the Park Service budget could Congress ensure that adequate funds are included so that the financial burden is not put on the middle class?

In other words, can we do something so that we can avoid the fee increases by providing more money for certain things, if possible?

Mr. JARVIS. The operations of any park come directly from the Federal appropriations process. The interesting thing about the Federal budget for the National Park Service is that every park in the system is identified for its base operations. You would be able to find Gateway and Golden Gate, any park in the system exactly.

As we have proposed for Fiscal 2013, there is actually a reduction of about 1.5 percent to the operating budgets of the park system across the system, and that will impact their ability to do maintenance, to provide basic services.

Increasingly, we have to rely on our fee program to provide basic services, particularly on the maintenance side of the program.

Mr. PALLONE. Let me just say that I want to mention Fort Hancock. The buildings that make up Fort Hancock require a lot of investment. There was a private developer who basically was a failure. I do not want to see that repeated.

I would like to see some funds dedicated for historic preservation at Fort Hancock, and that be prioritized, because then the need for additional private developers or private development is less so.

I am just hoping I can get an assurance from you that we will work together to try to get some of these buildings preserved through the Federal Government if possible.

Mr. JARVIS. The key to Fort Hancock, I think, as we found in many of these things, is to find the right partner and then couple our investment in the infrastructure with their investment in creating some sort of viable opportunity there.

If you time that perfectly, I think you can have a success. That is what we are looking for.

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Chairman, I know my time has expired. I think that we can get some individual non-profits and other groups that would come there and fix up some of the buildings, but we are going to need some Federal help as well.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. BISHOP. That is OK. Everyone has gone over so far, so you can complete the circle.

Let me ask a couple of questions. May I start with you, Mr. Abbey. Let's go back to the sage-grouse that Mr. Amodei started.

Obviously, the Center for Biological Diversity and Wild Earth Guardians recently made a settlement agreement with the Fish and Wildlife Service.

Were you personally consulted about the terms of that settlement prior to the agreement?

Mr. ABBEY. I was not.

Mr. BISHOP. Was anyone from BLM present or consulted prior to the terms of that agreement?

Mr. ABBEY. I am not aware of anyone from BLM participating in that negotiation. I do know there is information that we have shared relative to the number of acres that we manage that are considered to be sage-grouse habitat.

Mr. BISHOP. Do you have personally within BLM any preliminary economic analysis or estimate of the cost or the impact of this settlement?

Mr. ABBEY. I do not.

Mr. BISHOP. Do you have any information as to what counties may lose revenue with the impact of this settlement?

Mr. ABBEY. I do not.

Mr. BISHOP. What is the statutory authority for saying that grouse creek surface habitat trumps legal mineral rights in these areas?

Mr. ABBEY. First, the species is not listed, as you are well aware.

Mr. BISHOP. One of the concepts was that the surface rights will trump the legal mineral rights. Is there statutory authority for that?

Mr. ABBEY. I am not familiar with what you are quoting, what document you are referencing, Congressman.

Mr. BISHOP. Is there statutory authority for saying the surface rights will trump mineral rights?

Mr. ABBEY. No.

Mr. BISHOP. OK. Is there any authority that says surface rights would trump mineral rights?

Mr. ABBEY. No, what we would try to do is mitigate any impacts to the core sage-grouse habitats through our actions.

Mr. BISHOP. We do not have any analysis of that yet?

Mr. ABBEY. We would do the analysis through NEPA.

Mr. BISHOP. OK. If and when that actually happens, if you would share that, I would appreciate it.

Mr. ABBEY. You bet.

Mr. BISHOP. I do want to say one thing. I feel sorry for you as far as the wild horse and burro issue.

Mr. ABBEY. Thank you.

[Laughter.]

Mr. BISHOP. What Congress has done in all sincerity is really hamper you and tie your hands in many areas. How are you going to be able to reduce the herd with an inadequate habitat that is available for the numbers that are there?

Mr. ABBEY. It is going to be a challenge. That is the reason why we contracted out with the National Academy of Sciences to try to help us use the best available information in science that is out there so that we can incorporate different actions because the status quo is not working.

Mr. BISHOP. I wish you well on that. I hope that works well for you.

Mr. Jarvis, can I go through a couple of quick questions with you at the same time? Can you give me the status on the upkeep of the work at the Jimmy Carter Historic Site? Is the Park Service still mowing the lawns and doing the pool service?

Mr. JARVIS. I cannot give you an update. I was not briefed on that, so I do not know. I will find out for you.

Mr. BISHOP. That is one of the questions. What about the Presidio Trust that was supposed to be self sufficient? Are they going to be able to meet the 2012 deadline for being self sufficient?

Mr. JARVIS. I think they are.

Mr. BISHOP. Has any Heritage Area, if we can hit on that for a second, shown the ability to become self sufficient?

Mr. JARVIS. We have done some economic evaluations, reviews of them, and I think some of them actually are economically self sufficient. Yes, sir.

Mr. BISHOP. Currently?

Mr. JARVIS. Yes.

Mr. BISHOP. Can you give me a list of those that are?

Mr. JARVIS. I can get that to you.

Mr. BISHOP. Thank you. You are budgeting \$9 million for Heritage Areas. How many seasonable employees would that hire?

Mr. JARVIS. I am not very good at that kind of math. A seasonable employee for the National Park Service, about 800.

Mr. BISHOP. 800? Thank you.

The Coburn Amendment over in the Senate, Mr. Jarvis, still implemented with regards to the Second Amendment rights on Park Service land. Have you seen any increase in gun violence or poaching attributable to that law change?

Mr. JARVIS. No, sir. We have not.

Mr. BISHOP. Thank you. Mr. Abbey, let me ask one question for Mr. Tipton. He wanted to ask if the BLM has done any cost/benefit analysis on grazing. Have you placed any value on the contribution

grazing makes to management of these lands? Especially as we are talking about sage-grouse with wild fire.

Mr. ABBEY. We have. We went back last year because of the criticism that was provided to us or presented to us by the industry itself regarding what they perceived to be a slight in our economic analysis.

We went back based upon the information they were able to provide us, which we validated, and changed those figures.

Mr. BISHOP. Great. I appreciate that. I have questions about the grazing but my time is about up, and I am going to beat the clock and yield back. I will wait for the next round.

Mr. Grijalva, do you have more questions?

Mr. GRIJALVA. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just a couple. Mr. Abbey, the point that Mr. Holt brought up about the claims and R.S. 2477, let me ask specifically about law enforcement in the areas where these claims have been placed.

They have been thrust into the spotlight as a consequence of those claims, so are you seeing a greater need for protection, a greater need for rangers' presence as a consequence of the whole discussion about the claims?

Mr. ABBEY. No, we really are not, Congressman. Again, our law enforcement folks within the Bureau of Land Management work very well for the most part with local law enforcement officials.

We are not seeing really any increase in incidents as a result of some of the contentious issues related to R.S. 2477 claims.

As I mentioned earlier in my testimony, we are working very closely with county governments to resolve some of these issues.

Our hope is that they would accept right-of-ways that would be issued under the authority of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act, and avoid pursuing litigation, asserting R.S. 2477 jurisdiction.

We are not totally successful along those lines.

Mr. GRIJALVA. Thank you. For both of you gentlemen, how will the re-authorization of the Federal Land Transaction Facilitation Act help your particular agencies?

Mr. ABBEY. Let me take that one, Jon. First, we really are big proponents of seeing that Act re-introduced and passed.

As you know, Congressman Grijalva, it expired in July of 2011. What this Act has allowed us to do is under the decisions that we reached through a very public land use planning process and where we have identified public lands for disposal, we have been able to dispose of those public lands and use the revenues that are generated from the sales of those lands for the acquisitions of environmentally sensitive lands for not only the Bureau of Land Management but the U.S. Forest Service, Park Service, Fish and Wildlife Service.

Prior to the expiration of the Act in July, we had sold 27,000 acres of public lands and acquired 18,000 acres of remarkable landscapes.

Mr. GRIJALVA. Sir?

Mr. JARVIS. I would agree. The Bureau of Land Management and Director Abbey have been excellent to work with in the collaborative approach to application of the FLTFA funds to acquire criti-

cally sensitive lands, and the Park Service has benefitted from that.

Mr. GRIJALVA. Thank you. The Archaeological Resources Protection Act of 1979 is significant for people that appreciate history and appreciate the preservation of that history.

Have the violations of this Act increased with the economic hardships that we are seeing out there, and what is being done to protect some of those? There are many in my district, many in Arizona, of these very important archeological sites.

Mr. JARVIS. I think archeological resources continues to be a concern on all public lands, national parks, and BLM lands as well. We work collaboratively with state enforcement as well to try to protect these sites.

These are big areas, difficult, remote in many cases. I cannot say that I have seen a growth in the activity, but certainly it continues to be a law enforcement concern.

Mr. GRIJALVA. OK. Thank you. I yield back, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. BISHOP. Thank you. Mr. Amodei? I will note you also had a surplus from the last time we had a hearing as far as your time is concerned.

Mr. AMODEI. Thank you for your accounting courtesies, Mr. Chairman.

Bob, you had referenced this plan about the sage-grouse stuff, so I would appreciate a copy of that, which I am assuming shows the areas, reduces fuels around those, talks about assets pre-positioned.

Is there an element of that plan that also talks about sheep grass and PJ, or is that a different document, or is that to be generated? How does that work?

Mr. ABBEY. That type of information will be generated and included as part of our land use plan amendments.

Invasive species in the Great Basin, especially sheep grass, destroys core sage-grouse habitats, and it continues to be a problem and it becomes an increasing problem every time we have large scale fires.

Mr. AMODEI. I guess a pretty important ingredient in terms of fire management, obviously.

Mr. ABBEY. Definitely.

Mr. AMODEI. That would be great. The other things already exist in the plan or did I misunderstand you?

Mr. ABBEY. As far as our fire suppression tactics and strategies, that already exists. We have incorporated that into our annual fire plans, where we are giving priorities to protecting those types of core areas.

Mr. AMODEI. That exists at the state level or the district level?

Mr. ABBEY. It would exist at the state level.

Mr. AMODEI. I will get that from Amy. Thank you.

Also, I was wondering if there was an analysis on the relation of material move to cost to remediate abandoned sites in Nevada. You have picked this management technique.

Knowing the permitting process that people go through with your agency, with the state DEP, how many of those areas are in areas that were previously disturbed or formerly abandoned because you go to where the mineral is?

I would like to see if this has some sort of direct relation to where those sites are, where permits are being issued, and what the mission is, if you will, in Nevada versus the number of tons that are expected to be moved, if that sort of analysis exists, please.

Mr. ABBEY. We have used USGS information to identify the volumes, the estimated volumes of materials that are used.

As you may know, a similar program exists in the Coal Program, where coal mines are actually paying a fee to the Office of Surface Management to reclaim abandoned coal mines.

What we are trying to propose and implement would be a program that is currently in place for coal with hard rock mines.

Mr. AMODEI. OK. If there is a connection there, that is fine. I would just like to see the data that backs it up.

In coming up with this, did you coordinate with Minerals in DEP in Nevada, with the state folks? Were folks in that district consulted? Is this something that came strictly from the Federal level?

Mr. ABBEY. This is the same proposal that we included in last year's budget request, so it is not new. It is the second year in a row that we have requested this.

Let me just say, Congressman, any fee that would be collected under this proposal would not only be available to clean up abandoned mines on Federally managed lands, but also private lands and state managed lands.

Mr. AMODEI. I get that. The answer to my question of was it coordinated with the state folks who are already doing this in Nevada is?

Mr. ABBEY. I did not reach out to them, no.

Mr. AMODEI. OK. Thank you. Finally, on the grazing fee increase, we are cutting \$15 million. We are imposing a fee that generates half that. What my take-away from that in terms of—by the way, we are going to increase service in that area.

It looks to me like a net reduction of 50 percent, and that is only because you have a fee increase.

If you could, and because Mr. Bishop adds and subtracts very well, just give me the short version, please. I would like to do one more.

Mr. ABBEY. The issue with the grazing fee and one of the rationales behind our proposal is that the Bureau of Land Management spends around \$38 million each year evaluating rangeland health and monitoring permits and the uses that are occurring under the permits.

We collected around \$12.4 million in revenue. That revenue is then distributed 50 percent to state and local governments with 50 percent going into the Range Improvement Plan or Range Improvement Fund.

We really are not offsetting the administrative costs of administering grazing permits on these public lands.

There are benefits. There are benefits to grazing on public lands. We recognize those benefits.

Mr. AMODEI. If I could, Bob, I am not trying to cut you off, but I will get with you to take that off line. Final one.

Gross proceeds, tax, minerals extractions on gross proceeds instead of net. Why gross? What was the deal, not to take into account cost of production?

Mr. ABBEY. Well, it was rationale that we have used and it was one of the proposals that had been considered both by the Bureau of Land Management and others within the Department of the Interior and the Office of Management and Budget.

I think it has a lot to do with it is an easier way to account for the revenue.

Mr. AMODEI. Thank you.

Mr. BISHOP. Let me follow up, start with the grazing fees again. If indeed this \$1 is to assist in recouping actual costs, why is it not per permit or application? Why is it per AUM?

Mr. ABBEY. Let me begin by explaining what is the potential impact of a grazing permittee. Congressman, as you may know, 83 percent of the permittees on public lands graze 1,000 AUMs or less.

The actual impact to a permittee at the end of the year is probably going to be \$1,000 or less on their permit.

Mr. BISHOP. OK. Let's go back to the question. If this is administrative costs, why is it not per permit instead of per AUM?

Mr. ABBEY. We could issue—we could do per permit. It would not be \$1 per permit. It would be much more.

Mr. BISHOP. That would be intellectually honest anyway. The same thing, if the fee is for administrative costs, why are you connecting it to the Rangeland Management Program?

That is probably a rhetorical question. If you are putting that fee money into the Rangeland Management Program, it is obviously not just administrative costs that is there.

What is the specific statutory authority you have to actually administer that fee?

Mr. ABBEY. It would be cost recovery for the implementation of the work that is done in support of that program.

Mr. BISHOP. But you do not have an one to one relationship with that. Our staff has asked repeatedly for specific references in statute to where you have that authority.

Will you provide that to them?

Mr. ABBEY. We would be happy to provide that. I can tell you right now that we believe we have the authority under the Federal Land Policy and Management Act to do this.

Mr. BISHOP. I need the specifics of that, and once again, if it is going to be true, I need to have an one to one correlation between the assessment of that fee versus the cost to you to manage that process, and not being stripped off and going into another one of your funds here.

Otherwise, that simply is a raising of the revenue, but the staff has repeatedly asked the BLM Office to do that and we have yet to receive that specific statutory authority.

I also would like you to see what kind of analysis you have done to see what impact that raising of the fee would be on grazing.

It goes back to what Mr. Amodei was talking about when it comes simply to sheep grass. All grazing specifically helps sheep grass suppression, which helps in fire prevention.

If this fee is going to have a negative impact on the overall grazing, and there are groups out there that want that, then it is going

to have an impact on the wildlife, on the sheep grass, on the fire suppression, and everything else that takes place.

I specifically want the authority in great detail. We have some problems with this going forward, specific problems going forward.

I will reiterate, once again, rhetorically, when some of that fee is used to mitigate a proposed reduction in the Rangeland Management Fund, it destroys your argument that this is an administrative cost.

I have some other questions, too. In the Federal Registry, it states "BLM will also seek nomination of areas of critical environmental concern and information on the lands that may possess wilderness characteristics."

My concern is that is almost verbatim of the language you used when you came up with the wild lands proposal, which I thought was going to go away.

The question I have, and I am going to ask you to specifically notify my staff every time this request is made in the context of a proposed RMP revision, mandate or other, BLM publicly or privately seeking this type of information.

Can I make that request of you?

Mr. ABBEY. You can make the request.

Mr. BISHOP. Will you honor that request if I make it?

Mr. ABBEY. We will look into your request and respond accordingly.

Mr. BISHOP. Not quite the same thing as what I was requesting, but I will take that for where we are going from here.

Mr. Jarvis, can I ask you very simply how much it cost you to clean up from the Occupy Wall Street?

Mr. JARVIS. You mean Occupy D.C.?

Mr. BISHOP. Yes.

Mr. JARVIS. The clean up we anticipate will be \$8,000 in terms of re-sodding at McPherson.

Mr. BISHOP. What about manpower, trash pick-up and the other stuff?

Mr. JARVIS. The total cost to date that we have accumulated is around \$900,000, for all of the operations, law enforcement, clean up, trash pick-up. A few U.S. Park Police and our Mall operations staff.

Mr. BISHOP. I asked Mr. Salazar the question the other time he was here if you are raising the \$10 overnight camping fee in that special recreation management area in Colorado, if those people were to object to that fee and occupy it under their First Amendment rights, would you still charge them the fee, and Mr. Salazar said yes.

If they were to occupy that area under their First Amendment rights, can you give Mr. Abbey some advice on how he could handle that?

Mr. JARVIS. I do not have any advice for Director Abbey on how to deal with it. I would say the National Park Service has learned a lot in this process about dealing with this basically unprecedented approach to the First Amendment.

Mr. BISHOP. Thank you. I went over. I apologize. Mr. Grijalva, do you have more?

Mr. GRIJALVA. Yes, just a couple of quick ones. Mr. Abbey, let's try to put something in perspective on grazing fees.

State fees are per AUM on state lands, and let me see if these sound accurate. \$13.10 per AUM in Utah. \$13 in Nevada. \$15.30 in Colorado. \$9 in Arizona. \$14.50 in Idaho. \$13 in New Mexico.

Do those sound somewhat accurate?

Mr. ABBEY. I do not have the list in front of me, Congressman Grijalva, but I will say that sounds similar to what I have seen that is being charged on private lands within those states; yes.

Mr. GRIJALVA. It is good we are not talking about a double standard. It is always good to clarify that.

Go through some fee structures that mining claims pay on public lands.

Mr. ABBEY. Mining claims, they pay a per claim fee every time they record their claims each year. Nationally, we have over 400,000 mining claims that have been filed on public lands that are managed by the Bureau of Land Management as well as the U.S. Forest Service.

They do pay a filing fee.

Mr. GRIJALVA. How much is that?

Mr. ABBEY. I am sorry?

Mr. GRIJALVA. How much is that filing fee?

Mr. ABBEY. Congressman, could we get back with you on that particular fee?

Mr. GRIJALVA. Sure. One other question. My colleague from Colorado asked about factoring in for reclamation—the reclamation fee factoring in the cost of production in a mining operation.

Is there any factoring in on the value of the product on public land?

Mr. ABBEY. No. As you know, there are no royalties that are collected from any kind of extraction of minerals under the 1872 mining law.

Mr. GRIJALVA. Value is not a consequence of any evaluation?

Mr. ABBEY. No. It would be based upon the tonnage of materials that are used or removed.

Mr. GRIJALVA. OK.

Mr. ABBEY. Congressman, I do have that figure now. It is \$140 per claim.

Mr. GRIJALVA. One last and then I will yield back. The costs with the reclamation fee we were talking about, can you give me an average?

Let's say there is an abandoned claim that then goes under, extraction has been done, the mining operation closes, leaves, still on public land, that converts back to you. What is the average cost of doing reclamation or safety adjustments regarding an abandoned claim or abandoned mine operation? Is there an average?

Mr. JARVIS. Are you addressing me?

Mr. GRIJALVA. Either one.

Mr. JARVIS. In the National Park Service, we have some abandoned mines. They are legacy mines because we do not have much active mining except in a few places. It can be hundreds of thousands of dollars if not millions of dollars to do restoration.

Mr. ABBEY. It can be millions of dollars to clean up abandoned mines. Again, we are talking about legacy mines that were built

years and years ago. We are not necessarily talking about modern mining today because they are fully covered through bonds.

Mr. GRIJALVA. Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I yield back.

Mr. BISHOP. I have one Member who is jogging over here as we speak. We will see if I can stretch one question out long enough to see if he can make it or not, unless you have other questions, Mr. Grijalva.

Mr. GRIJALVA. No.

Mr. BISHOP. Let me try this one, and it is probably for Mr. Abbey.

A couple of weeks ago, the National Park Service objected to a planned coal mine that was on BLM property over a dozen miles from Bryce Canyon. It was outside the boundaries of the Park Service.

At the same time, I read in the L.A. Times there was a solar project that was authorized within 18 months, and it covered 3,000 acres including desert tortoise habitat that the National Park Service gave its strongest complaints against because of the scale of it. That was done at the same time that Utah's oil shale was being rejected because the National Park Service objected, and that was the rationale that was used.

As I look at what was happening down by Bryce, in Eastern Utah, and then down with the solar project, what is the policy of the BLM toward the Park Service when it has complaints that reach outside its statutory boundaries?

How do you handle that?

Mr. ABBEY. We take their concerns to heart. Again, they were a cooperating agency relative to the NEPA process, along with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and also the local and state government.

We have received several concerns that have been expressed as part of the public comment period. We are taking those comments. We are doing further analysis to see what actions we could approve that would mitigate the concerns that have been expressed by all parties who have provided those types of criticisms.

At the end of the day, we will make a decision based upon the best information that is available.

Mr. BISHOP. Do you have a specific policy on how you do that matrix or is that on a case by case basis?

Mr. ABBEY. It is based upon the specific project and on a case by case basis.

Mr. BISHOP. I hope you can understand at least why I look at some of the case by case basis especially when I see the solar project in California that there were strongest complaints against versus other ones. I recognize this seems to be a policy or a practice or decision making concept that is not necessarily the same in each one of those situations.

It presents a great deal of concerns.

Mr. ABBEY. The process is the same. It is the matter of whether or not we can mitigate the concerns that have been expressed.

Mr. BISHOP. I just need you to make better decisions. Is that what you are saying?

Mr. ABBEY. A lot of people are saying that.

Mr. BISHOP. Amen. All right. With that, I am going to have to tell my colleague that he did not make it over here in time.

We do appreciate very much your willingness to be here and going over the budget requests. We will be talking about this obviously at length as time goes on here.

As I said earlier, there are Members, and indeed, I have some questions, that we will submit in writing. Your responses would be greatly appreciated.

Thank you, Mr. Jarvis, Mr. Abbey, for your time, as well as for your efforts. I do appreciate it, even though I do not say that very often, we do appreciate what you are doing.

With that, unless Mr. Grijalva has something else before he runs away, this committee meeting is adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 11:35 a.m., the Subcommittee was adjourned.]

