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EXPLORING INNOVATIVE SOLUTIONS TO REDUCE THE DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR'S MAINTENANCE BACKLOG

OVERSIGHT HEARING

BEFORE THE

COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES
U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

ONE HUNDRED FIFTEENTH CONGRESS

SECOND SESSION

Tuesday, March 6, 2018

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OVERSIGHT HEARING ON EXPLORING INNOVATIVE SOLUTIONS TO REDUCE THE DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR'S MAINTENANCE BACKLOG

Tuesday, March 6, 2018
U.S. House of Representatives
Committee on Natural Resources
Washington, DC

The Committee met, pursuant to notice, at 10:03 a.m., in room 1324, Longworth House Office Building, Hon. Rob Bishop [Chairman of the Committee] presiding.

Present: Representatives Bishop, Lamborn, McClintock, Thompson, LaMalfa, Westerman, Hice, Bergman, Curtis; Grijalva, Bordallo, Costa, Sablan, Beyer, Torres, Hanabusa, Barragán, Soto, and McEachin.

The CHAIRMAN. All right. We welcome all of you here today for this particular Full Committee hearing. It is a significant issue, and that is why we are doing it at the Committee level.

We are here today to hear testimony on exploring innovative solutions to reduce the Department of the Interior's maintenance backlog—that is the official title.

Under Committee Rule 4(f), any oral opening statements at the hearing are limited to the Chairman, the Ranking Minority Member, and the Vice Chair. This will allow us time to actually get to our witnesses sooner, I hope.

Therefore, I am going to ask unanimous consent that all other Members' opening statements be made part of the hearing record, if they are submitted to the Subcommittee on Federal Lands Clerk by 5:00 p.m. today.

Without objection, that is so ordered.

Let me recognize myself for a very brief statement. I will put a longer opening in later on. It is a very brief statement.

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

The CHAIRMAN. We have problems. This Committee is hearing testimony because the Department of the Interior manages over 500 million acres of surface land. That is a huge amount. That is one-fifth of the land mass of the United States. We have Parks, we have Forest Service, we have Fish and Wildlife, we have BOR, all of whom have some kind of backlog in the maintenance that we have.

About a decade ago, we tried to just throw money at the situation, a big pile of money that went to the Interior Department, most of which was mismanaged, but it did not solve the problem. There has to be some kind of innovative and creative solution to actually solve the problem.

We are not going to be talking necessarily about the solutions today; that is going to be for next week. Today, we are going to explore the depth of the problem and find out where we are going, so we can then look at solutions. These are important and these are specific.

Because of that, let me reserve any other comments for writing or for later.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Bishop follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE HON. ROB BISHOP, CHAIRMAN, COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES

The Committee meets this morning to hear testimony on the Department of the Interior's maintenance backlog and innovative ways to finance and implement needed improvements with greater efficiency and effectiveness.

In total, the Department of the Interior manages more than 500 million acres of surface land, or about one-fifth of the land in the United States. The Department's three major land management agencies, the National Park Service, Fish and Wildlife Service, and Bureau of Land Management, maintain tens of thousands of diverse assets, including roads, bridges, buildings, and water management structures.

As the Federal estate expands, existing infrastructure ages, and visitation increases, these agencies are increasingly unable to fulfill basic updates and repairs to keep these assets accessible and in safe, functioning order for the public. As a result, the Department's deferred maintenance backlog currently exceeds $16 billion.

The National Park Service, which manages 417 diverse units covering more than 84 million acres, has an estimated backlog of $11.6 billion. Since 1999, 8,000 buildings and 2,000 miles of roads have been added to National Park Service infrastructure portfolio. The number of units that the National Park Service manages has grown from 390 in 2006 to 417 today.

The Fish and Wildlife Service, which manages more than 560 National Wildlife Refuges and thousands of small wetlands and other special management areas, has an estimated deferred maintenance backlog of $1.4 billion.

The Bureau of Land Management, which manages more than 245 million surface acres, has an estimated deferred maintenance backlog of $810 million, which represents a 65 percent increase over the past decade.

These figures represent serious deficiencies in the Department's ability to prioritize and manage our sprawling Federal estate. There is no question that decades of misplaced priorities in Congress and the executive have placed our Federal land management agencies in this position. Today, our objective is to better understand how we got here from both funding and management standpoints, and to chart a pragmatic path forward for the Department to carry out its management responsibilities with greater efficiency and effectiveness.

The President's Department of the Interior budget proposal for Fiscal Year 2019 put forward innovative ideas toward achieving this end, including the establishment of a Public Lands Infrastructure Fund. The proposal envisions using targeted revenue increases from Federal energy leases to provide a more stable funding source dedicated to the maintenance backlog. The Fund will be capped at $18 billion in total possible expenditures, and is designed to promote significant improvements to the country's most noticeable and frequently visited facilities.

I want to thank Secretary Zinke and the Department's leadership for their commitment to expanding public access to public lands and improving management of existing assets for the benefit of all Americans. Prioritizing our ballooning maintenance backlog is central to this effort. It is my hope that we can develop solutions on a bipartisan basis and move them expeditiously through Congress.

I look forward to today's discussion and I now yield to the Ranking Member for his opening statement.

The CHAIRMAN. I will yield to the Ranking Minority Member if he has some kind of statement to make.

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

Mr. GRIJALVA. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I, too, have a lengthy statement that I will submit for the record so that we can get testimony from the witnesses.

We have been grappling with this issue since I have been on this Committee, the issue of deferred maintenance on our parks and public lands. Over the last decade and a half, we have talked and put forward spending proposals and programs to leverage partnerships, private donations, and volunteers.

But the amount of deferred maintenance continues to grow or flatline, at best. Two years ago, the National Park Service celebrated its Centennial Anniversary, and all eyes were focused on our parks and public lands. We had a unique opportunity to make a stronger investment in their future. Unfortunately, I don't believe we seized that moment to right the ship and begin a pragmatic process.

I would like to acknowledge Chairman Bishop's hard work to get his vision of the National Park Service Centennial enacted into law. That bill creates new revenue streams and establishes new programs to leverage private investments to support our national parks. These are important tools that we should continue to support, although they are not enough to buy down deferred maintenance across the entire system. The Trump administration's proposed Public Lands Infrastructure Fund is not the answer, either.

While I am glad to see an interest in finding money to support our public lands, the proposal in the budget is backwards. Our most treasured places now depend on the fortune of the energy industry for their success and their failure: that is putting things backwards. We should not have to expand drilling in the Arctic, off the coast of Florida, or anywhere else to serve our parks. It is a false choice that the American public does not support.

And the list goes on. We have to address, and my colleagues in the Majority have to address, the backlog maintenance amounts. We don't have to risk destroying our parks in order to save them.

With that, Mr. Chairman, I will submit the rest for the record. Thank you and I yield back.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Grijalva follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE HON. RAÚL M. GRIJALVA, RANKING MEMBER, COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Congress has been grappling with strategies to address the issue of deferred maintenance on our parks and public lands the entire time I've served on this Committee. Over the last decade and a half, we have talked and talked, put forward spending proposals, and even enacted new programs to leverage partnerships, private donations and volunteers, but the amount of deferred maintenance continues to grow, or flatline at best.

Just 2 years ago, the National Park Service celebrated its Centennial Anniversary. All eyes were focused on our parks and public lands, and we had a unique opportunity to make a strong investment in their future. Unfortunately, we were not able to seize that moment and right the ship.

I would like to acknowledge Chairman Bishop's hard work to get his version of the National Park Service Centennial enacted into law. That bill created some new revenue streams and established new programs designed to leverage private investments to support our national parks. These are important tools that we should

continue support, but they are not enough to buy down deferred maintenance across the entire system.

The Trump administration's proposed Public Lands Infrastructure Fund is not the answer either.

While I am glad to see an interest in finding money to support our public lands, the proposal in the budget is backwards. Our most treasured places should not have to depend on the fortune of the energy industry for their success and failure. We don't have to expand drilling in the Arctic, off the coast of Florida, or anywhere else to save our parks. That is a false choice that the American public does not support.

There are 40 coastal units of the National Park System already at risk of flooding thanks to the fossil fuels we have already burned; my Republican colleagues now tell us that the only way to address the maintenance backlog is to burn more fossil fuels, faster, and to dramatically increase the risk of damage from an oil spill to these NPS units. In other words, the Republican plan to address backlogged maintenance amounts to: we have to risk destroying our parks to save them.

A need for consistent funding has been a dominant theme of all our conversations on this subject over the years; deferred maintenance will continue to grow if we do not head it off with consistent and dedicated funding. Any serious attempt to reduce deferred maintenance must be combined with a solid investment strategy from Congress. Our parks and public lands belong to all Americans, and it is our responsibility as their representatives to come up with a plan to ensure another 100 years of success.

Over half of the more than $11 billion of deferred maintenance at national parks is for roads, bridges, and transportation. This is American infrastructure that deserves a real investment strategy. Unfortunately, Republicans are more interested in undermining bedrock environmental laws than putting forward a legitimate infrastructure proposal.

A real infrastructure plan would identify investment opportunities, not slash agency budgets and push the burden of deferred maintenance onto the public by dramatically increasing entrance fees at iconic national parks. We can't expect shrinking or flatlined budgets to sustain America's Best Idea.

With that, Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you. And I appreciate your comments. I guess that is why you are going to withdraw your LWCF bill, aren't you?

OK. Let me introduce the guests that we have, the witnesses for today.

First of all, Mr. P. Daniel Smith, who is the Deputy Director of the National Park Service with the Department of the Interior.

Thank you for joining us here today.

Mr. Steve Guertin, who is the Deputy Director of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, once again, from DOI.

Thank you for coming up to the Hill.

Mr. Steve Iobst——

Mr. IOBST. Iobst.

The CHAIRMAN. Iobst, thanks, who is with the National Park Conservation Association, retired from the Park Service.

Thank you for being here, as well.

Mr. Dan Puskar.

Mr. PUSKAR. Puskar.

The CHAIRMAN. Puskar. You guys are going to have to put some emphasis lines on here.

[Laughter.]

The CHAIRMAN. OK. Mr. Smith—you are all Smith from here on out.

[Laughter.]

The CHAIRMAN. He is the Executive Director for the Public Lands Alliance. Thank you.

And Mr. Jason Rano. I got one right? One out of four isn't bad. The Vice President, Government Relations, for the National Park Foundation here in Washington, DC.

We thank you all. I am going to remind the witnesses that your written testimony is part of the record. The oral testimony is limited to 5 minutes. Those microphones have to be turned on themselves. You have a timer in front of you—green is OK, yellow means you better talk real fast because I will cut you off at 5 minutes. Not to be rude, but that is the only perk of this office I have.

[Laughter.]

The CHAIRMAN. So, I will gavel you down when 5 minutes is done.

With that, the Chair is recognizing Mr. Smith first for your 5 minutes. And thank you very much for being here again.

STATEMENT OF P. DANIEL SMITH, DEPUTY DIRECTOR, NATIONAL PARK SERVICE, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, WASHINGTON, DC

Mr. SMITH. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Grijalva, and members of the Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to present the Department of the Interior's views on potential solutions to reducing the deferred maintenance backlog. I would like to submit our full statement for the record, and summarize the National Park Service's views.

I am P. Daniel Smith, Deputy Director of the National Park Service. I have served with the National Park Service in a variety of capacities, most recently as superintendent of Colonial National Historical Park from 2004 to 2015. Before that, I served as Special Assistant to the National Park Service Director, and Assistant Director for Legislative and Congressional Affairs.

My colleague, Steve Guertin, Deputy Director of the Fish and Wildlife Service, will speak on behalf of his bureau.

Since Secretary Zinke's confirmation, tackling the deferred maintenance backlog has been a top priority. The Department manages roughly 500 million acres of land and possesses an infrastructure asset portfolio valued at over $300 billion. Roads, bridges, trails, water systems, visitor centers, bathrooms, campgrounds, and drinking fountains all are part of this critical framework. After years of increased visitation and use, aging facilities and other vital structures are in urgent need of repair.

The Department has a total of about $16 billion worth of deferred maintenance. Of that amount, the National Park Service has the largest share: $11.6 billion in 2017. Here are some examples:

Glacier National Park in Montana has more than $154 million in maintenance needs, including projects to repair bridges and culverts, roads, and employee housing.

Point Reyes National Seashore in California has roughly $99 million in deferred maintenance, including projects such as the historic platform bridge, built in 1927, $1.6 million is needed for this project, alone.

Colonial Parkway, part of Colonial National Historical Park, which I know very well, in Tidewater, Virginia, was designed in the 1930s to provide a scenic route between historic Jamestown,

Yorktown, and Williamsburg. Today, the parkway is an important commuter route, carrying between 1.9 and 2.2 million vehicles and large tour buses each year. The total cost to repair the parkway is $270 million.

Appropriated funds are currently the primary source of funding for deferred maintenance. However, we know that we cannot rely on appropriated dollars alone to address this problem, so we are looking at multiple avenues for making additional funds available through other means.

For example, the Department's Fiscal Year 2019 budget proposes to permanently authorize the Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act, which expires in September of 2019. New proposals, including the proposed Public Lands Infrastructure Fund outlined in the President's 2019 Budget, would address repairs and improvements in national parks, national wildlife refuges, and Bureau of Indian Education schools.

The Administration's proposal would set aside a portion of the unallocated Federal energy revenues for infrastructure needs. This bold investment would significantly improve the Nation's most visible and visited public facilities that support a multi-billion-dollar outdoor recreation economy.

We greatly appreciate the efforts of this Committee and your colleagues, who have sought to craft real solutions to our maintenance backlog. We look forward to continuing collaborative efforts that preserve and maintain our national treasures.

Mr. Chairman, this concludes my statements. I will be pleased to answer any questions.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Smith and Mr. Guertin, U.S. Department of the Interior appears on page 71.]

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD TO MR. P. DANIEL SMITH, DEPUTY DIRECTOR, NATIONAL PARKS SERVICE, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Questions Submitted by Rep. Bishop

Question 1. How much has the National Park Service spent on deferred maintenance each year for the past 3 fiscal years (combining all Federal fund sources)?

Answer. The NPS spent about $1 billion per year on all NPS maintenance including deferred maintenance (DM), cyclic maintenance, and day-to-day maintenance activities, in each fiscal year between 2006 and 2015. The NPS measures progress on reducing the deferred maintenance backlog not by dollars spent on projects, but by closed work orders. The table below shows the dollar value of DM work accomplished through DM work orders that are closed, as recorded in our Facility Management Software System and reported in the Department of the Interior Annual Performance Plan and Report (APP&R). This report can be viewed online at https://www.doi.gov/sites/doi.gov/files/uploads/doi_appr_-_final.pdf. Below are the totals for the last 3 fiscal years of retired DM work orders:

Value of NPS deferred maintenance work orders closed.[1,2]

2015	2016	2017
$508,000,000	$854,000,000	$664,000,000

[1] Amounts reflect DM that was retired and removed from the NPS DM backlog, but do not reflect the net change in backlog, due to new amounts of DM work orders being added.

[2] DM work orders can exist as a component of any project regardless of fund source, so this reflects projects from all sources of Federal funds.

Questions Submitted by Rep. Gallego

FULLY IMPLEMENTING THE NPS FOUR-TIER FEE STRUCTURE INSTEAD OF UNMANAGEABLE FEE HIKES

Question 1. The Administration proposed nearly tripling entrance fees in a handful of parks during peak season instead of fully implementing the existing fee structure the park service has.

Currently, 80 percent of fees collected at parks stay in the park where it is collected and 20 percent goes to a fund for other parks; 55 percent of this 80 percent of in-park fees collected goes to fund deferred maintenance projects. Fees increases should be a part of the conversation, but as part of a methodical and thoughtful structure that both benefits the parks and retains the accessibility of parks to all visitors. It is striking that this structure already exists within the park service but has not yet been fully implemented. Before we do something drastic, shouldn't we implement the well-thought-out, demographically-informed plan we have in place?

Answer. After carefully considering the public comments provided on the 2017 fee proposal, the NPS revised its proposal and developed a balanced plan that implements modest increases at the 117 fee-charging parks as opposed to larger increases proposed for 17 highly visited national parks. As part of this plan, the NPS will also fully implement the four-tier existing fee structure by 2020.

Question 2. Please detail how the four-tier structure is designed to work, and what factors it considers.

Answer. The four-tier structure groups units of the National Park System based on legislative designation and park attributes and sets fee rates to provide pricing consistency within each particular tier. There are four price points within each tier: per person, per vehicle, per motorcycle, and per park specific annual pass. The per vehicle rate is twice the per person rate and the park specific annual pass is twice the per vehicle rate. The motorcycle rate falls between the per person and per vehicle rate.

Question 3. How much revenue would be generated for deferred maintenance if all parks participating in the four-tier structure charged what is permissible under the existing regime?

Answer. We estimate that bringing all non-conforming parks into alignment with the four-tier structure would generate approximately $7.7 million in additional revenue. A little over half (55 percent) of that amount would be required to be spent on deferred maintenance.

Questions Submitted by Rep. Westerman

Question 1. Mr. Smith, the NPS FY 2017 report[1] on deferred maintenance lists the Arkansas total deferred maintenance at $37.6 million. Could you please provide a comprehensive breakdown of this total, including a delineation between structural and transportation deferred maintenance across all park units?

Answer. Attachment #1 contains two tables showing the asset count and deferred maintenance (DM), respectively, by asset category for each of the seven national park units in Arkansas as of the end of Fiscal Year 2017. The bottom row in each table provides a percentage breakout of Arkansas asset counts and DM by asset category. There are notes below the tables providing further detail on several asset categories.

Question 2. Additionally, for each individual park unit listed in the report, could you please provide the following statistics:

2a. Visitation numbers for each of the past 5 years

2b. Overnight stays for each of the past 5 years

2c. Current entrance fee

2d. Site net revenue over the past 5 years

[1] https://www.nps.gov/subjects/plandesignconstruct/upload/FY17-NPS-Deferred-Maintenance-by-State-and-Park_508.pdf.

2e. Total number of concession contracts, historic leasing contracts, and any other third-party use contracts at each site

2f. Total acreage of each site

2g. Number of structures at each site

Answer. Visitation numbers, overnight stays, total acreage, and a variety of other statistics are available for all NPS units separately or grouped by state can be viewed online at: https://irma.nps.gov/Stats/Reports/National. The information to your specific items are found in either the charts below or attachments to this question for the record.

The following charts include the statistics regarding sub-questions a–g:

a. Visitation numbers for each of the past 5 years

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Arkansas Post National Memorial	36,420	30,860	38,702	34,405	36,079
Buffalo National River	1,125,227	1,357,057	1,463,304	1,785,359	1,471,330
Fort Smith National Historic Site	69,584	88,790	111,469	163,636	141,914
Hot Springs National Park	1,325,719	1,424,484	1,418,162	1,544,300	1,561,616
Little Rock Central High School National Historic Site	114,144	115,908	125,956	129,540	170,413
Pea Ridge National Military Park	95,251	104,686	114,578	119,490	121,163
President William Jefferson Clinton Birthplace Home National Historic Site	9,838	11,113	10,463	10,468	10,177

b. Overnight stays for each of the past 5 years

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Arkansas Post National Memorial	0	0	0	0	0
Buffalo National River	66,578	92,414	101,545	98,413	105,334
Fort Smith National Historic Site	0	0	0	0	0
Hot Springs National Park	15,100	19,606	24,148	24,021	24,010
Little Rock Central High School National Historic Site	0	0	0	0	0
Pea Ridge National Military Park	0	0	0	0	0
President William Jefferson Clinton Birthplace Home National Historic Site	0	0	0	0	0

c. Current entrance fees

	Fee
Arkansas Post National Memorial	$0
Buffalo National River	$0
Fort Smith National Historic Site	$7 per person (age 16 and above) to view exhibits
Hot Springs National Park	$0
Little Rock Central High School National Historic Site	$0
Pea Ridge National Military Park	$15 per vehicle, $10 per motorcycle
President William Jefferson Clinton Birthplace Home National Historic Site.	$0

d. Site net revenue for the past 5 years for the two Arkansas sites which collect fees

	FY17	FY16	FY15	FY14	FY13	Average
Fort Smith National Historic Site	$64,717	$62,457	$56,909	$50,489	$53,305	$57,575
Pea Ridge National Military Park	$72,509	$81,778	$73,957	$74,361	$71,280	$74,777

e. Information on concession contracts, historic leasing contracts, and any other third-party use contracts at each site is included in Attachment #2.

f. Total acreage of each site

	Acres
Arkansas Post National Memorial	663.91
Buffalo National River	91,807.04
Fort Smith National Historic Site	37.96
Hot Springs National Park	4,998.10
Little Rock Central High School National Historic Site	2.22
Pea Ridge National Military Park	4,278.75
President William Jefferson Clinton Birthplace Home National Historic Site	0.68

g. Number of structures at each site

	Structures
Arkansas Post National Memorial	11
Buffalo National River	225
Fort Smith National Historic Site	4
Hot Springs National Park	65
Little Rock Central High School National Historic Site	2
Pea Ridge National Military Park	12
President William Jefferson Clinton Birthplace Home National Historic Site	3

Question 3. Mr. Smith, as you know, the National Park Service comprises only a portion of the deferred maintenance at the Department of the Interior. Could you please provide me a breakdown, much like the aforementioned report, of each of the deferred maintenance totals at each of the different Federal lands units within Arkansas? I'm eager to see the total number for my state, and the breakdown between the different land management agencies.

Answer. For Fiscal Year 2017, the following information is reported for the bureaus within the Department of the Interior:

- there is no Bureau of Land Management deferred maintenance in Arkansas;
- the total deferred maintenance for NPS sites in Arkansas is $37,617,654;
- the total deferred maintenance for U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service National Wildlife Refuges and National Fish Hatcheries is $28,402,983; and
- for information about deferred maintenance on lands managed by the U.S. Forest Service, we defer to the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

Question 4. Finally, can you provide detailed statistics on the success of the Historic Leasing Contracts at Hot Springs National Park, and other parks utilizing those contracts around the country? Have they reduced the overall maintenance backlog at their respective parks, and how much do each of those contracts contribute to the revenue of each individual park unit?

Answer. Currently, five buildings are leased at Hot Springs National Park. The park does not have statistics that would gauge the success of those leases in reducing the maintenance backlog, but the program has been successful in stabilizing, restoring, and utilizing the majority of structures in the park.

Servicewide, the NPS has approximately 350 facilities under lease agreements, and last year, over $9.3 million in revenue was generated through leasing. More information on the Servicewide leasing program may be found in Attachment #3, which is a letter sent to the Senate Appropriations Committee on March 29, 2018, containing a list of the currently leased buildings broken down by State, park, and facility name.

Questions Submitted by Rep. Don Young

Question 1. Historic leasing is a tool that can be used to lease structures to qualified non-Federal parties for a variety of uses, including for commercial, educational, and residential purposes. Under those leases, the lessee has the duty to restore, rehabilitate and maintain the buildings. Do you agree that NPS should be using this tool aggressively to reduce the maintenance backlog and to prevent structures from coming onto the backlog in the future?

Answer. The NPS authority to lease historic structures is a valuable tool to generate funding that can help reduce the maintenance backlog and to provide the preventive and corrective maintenance needed to avoid adding to the backlog. We are actively using this authority as allowed by our laws, regulations, and policies.

Question 2. There is an old NPS attitude that the Service should not use leases or similar tools for any structure in a national park because it results in less than total control by the local park staff. Do you ascribe to that attitude?

Answer. The NPS supports the use of the leasing authority. There are cases where the NPS is unable to use this authority due to legal or financial viability reasons, however the NPS does not avoid its use because of any perceived loss of control.

Question 3. What is NPS doing to explore the use of historic leasing throughout the Park System? How many historic leases have been issued by NPS and for what parks and what uses?

Answer. We currently have approximately 350 facilities under lease agreements throughout the National Park System and we continue to identify new potential facilities on an ongoing basis. By law, a park has to determine, among other things, that a structure is not needed for park purposes before it can be offered for lease. Attachment #3 is a letter sent to the Senate Appropriations Committee on March 29, 2018, which contains a list of the currently leased buildings broken down by State, park, and the facility name.

Question 4. Are there any units of the National Park System where historic leasing is specifically prohibited or ruled out as an option by any rules, policies, or planning documents? If so, what is the basis for that action by NPS?

Answer. There are no units of the NPS that specifically prohibit or rule out the option of leasing. However, by law (54 U.S.C. 102102) and regulation (36 CFR 18) the NPS is prohibited from entering into a lease where the proposed activities are subject to authorization through a concession contract, commercial use authorization, or similar instrument.

Questions Submitted by Rep. Sablan

Question 1. In the Northern Marianas, American Memorial Park was badly damaged by Typhoon Soudelor in August 2015. It has been over 2 years and recovery work is still underway. Ongoing issues include debris removal, repair of the riprap at the marina, and replanting of trees that were uprooted by the storm. Can you provide a list of items still requiring repair/replacement and an action timeline?

Answer. Work to restore facilities and grounds of American Memorial Park is ongoing. Over $500,000 was expended in the first 18 months after the storm to accomplish the most urgent repairs including replacing lighting and walkways. Additional projects have been identified and are being reviewed for funding in future fiscal years. The American Memorial Park staff are continuing to clean up and dispose of the remaining vegetative debris. The Saipan Mayor's office has been providing support to the park to rehabilitate the area north of the pathway to Micro Beach. The NPS is very appreciative of the Mayor's continued support and assistance as the park continues to recover from the typhoon.

Typhoon-related repair/replacement items in progress and identified for American Memorial Park include:

- Replace Landscape Lighting Damaged by Typhoon Soudelor: New lights will be installed by park staff in early fall 2018.
- Replace Rusted Culvert & Concrete Walkway at Reconstructed Wetland with Bridge: Design underway, construction contract to be awarded in early 2019.
- Rehabilitate Walkway & Seating Area at Amphitheater to Improve Visitor Experience & Safety: Design underway.
- Resurface Tennis Court Play Surface.
- Install Roll-out pavers on unpaved Access Roads.
- Replace Four Flagpoles at the Court of Honor.
- Install Asphaltic Concrete Pavement on Micro Beach Loop Road.
- Repair Shoreline Barriers at Smiling Cove & Outer Cove.
- Rehabilitate/Seal Leaks in Concrete Structure at Administrative Offices.
- Revegetate Area North of Micro Beach Damaged by Typhoon Soudelor.

Question 2. At my request, and under P.L. 113–291, the Park Service is undergoing a study of the unique natural and cultural resources of the island on Rota in the Northern Marianas to determine the national significance of the area and the suitability and feasibility of designating the area as a unit of the National Park System. Public Meetings on Rota were held in February of last year. Can you provide an update on the progress of the study and a timeline for its conclusion?

Answer. The study team is preparing preliminary findings (resource significance, suitability, feasibility, and need for NPS management) for review by NPS. After this review, we will share the preliminary findings and any alternatives by NPS leadership, with local leadership and the people of Rota. After that, the study will be finalized, and then transmitted to Congress. We expect this process to take at least another year and a half.

Questions Submitted by Rep. Costa

Question 1. In 2017, Secretary Zinke indicated that the Department of the Interior (Department) would study allowing private enterprise to expand their current management of certain campgrounds throughout the National Parks System (NPS). Has the Department considered or modeled the impacts of the additional contract fees and/or additional revenues that could be gained through this modification of policy and how this might help address the issue of maintenance backlog?

Answer. Currently, analysis of campground management and decisions about contracting with concessioners for additional campground operations are made at the park level. NPS commercial services experts help individual parks determine whether converting an NPS-operated campground to a concessioner-operated campground would improve the facilities, financial sustainability, visitor experiences, etc. National Park System units that have recently converted NPS-operated campgrounds to concessioner-operated facilities include Denali National Park, Everglades National Park, and Olympic National Park.

Question 2. Secretary Zinke proposed increasing fees considerably at 17 highly visited national parks, including Yosemite National Park, during peak visitor seasons. There was an overwhelming outcry from the public opposing the proposed fee increases. Can you tell us the status of the analysis of those public comments and the Administration's next steps?

Answer. After carefully considering the public comments provided on the 2017 fee proposal, the NPS revised its proposal and developed a balanced plan that implements modest increases at the 117 fee-charging parks as opposed to larger increases proposed for 17 highly visited national parks. As part of this plan, the NPS will also fully implement the four-tier existing fee structure by 2020.

Questions Submitted by Rep. McClintock

Question 1. At its current capacity, how much annual funding could the National Park Service expend toward the completion of deferred maintenance projects?

Answer. The NPS Denver Service Center (DSC) provides project management, quality assurance, compliance, permitting, and technical support services for projects, which include deferred maintenance on existing facilities, historic structures, and infrastructure systems. In Fiscal Year 2017, the Design and Construction division managed 281 projects worth more than $1.7 billion, which is an indicator of NPS capacity to address maintenance needs under our current funding levels.

For transportation projects that involve roads, bridges, tunnels, etc., the NPS utilizes a 1983 Interagency Agreement with the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) to provide technical engineering services and project construction awards, and construction management through the Federal Lands Highway Program. Consequently, the NPS capacity to manage these projects also relies on that of the FHWA.

Question 2. With substantially more funding available through the Infrastructure Fund, how long would it take the park service to ramp up its project planning and operations capacity to take on more deferred maintenance projects?

Answer. To implement the Fund, the NPS would move quickly to leverage resources and expertise Department-wide to speed up construction capabilities. The number and type of FTE or contracted staff that would be needed to accomplish deferred maintenance projects would depend on the amount of additional funding made available, but the NPS would mobilize to strengthen short-term capacity in

procurement, project planning and project management. Several projects within the NPS 5-year plans could be accelerated if additional funds are available and the NPS is working to develop a longer list of shovel ready projects should the Fund be enacted. Typical recurring maintenance projects accomplished with 1-year funds can take up to a year to complete while larger projects through multi or no year fund sources can take up to 4 or more years to complete. Should legislation become law, the Park Service is confident that it can expend the increased resources in an efficient and capable manner to help resolve our maintenance backlog.

Question 3. Klondike Gold Rush National Historical Park in Skagway, Alaska is a successful example of the Historic Leasing Program. Historic buildings are leased to local businesses that provide visitor services. What steps can be taken to expand this revenue generating program to provide additional funding for the National Park Service that could be put to address the deferred maintenance backlog?

Answer. Attachment #3 is a letter to the Senate Appropriations Committee dated March 29, 2018, which discusses regulatory impediments to expanded use of leasing authority.

Question 4. One-half ofthe NPS maintenance backlog is paved roads, bridges, and tunnels (50.8 percent according to latest FY 2017 NPS report). Considering that some National Park Service owned parkways, such as George Washington Memorial Parkway, are essentially busy commuter highways, do you believe that tolling could play a role in generating funds to repair these roads and bridges?

Answer. The NPS does not currently have authority to levy tolls. Such authority would have to come from congressional action. A comprehensive analysis including mission, policy, cultural resource impacts, technology alternatives, staffing, and financial sustainability would be required to determine whether tolling would be a cost effective way to generate repair funds.

Question 5. Mr. Smith, NPS' contracting authority was expanded under recent law, which authorizes management contracts rather than the traditional concession contracting process in certain situations. We have heard concerns that such a move would be outside NPS' expertise, could expose the Federal Government to additional financial risk, and could exacerbate the current NPS capital funding problems.

Answer. The Visitor Experience Improvements Authority (VEIA), enacted in 2016 as part of the National Park Service Centennial Act (P.L. 114–289), provides the Secretary with additional flexibility to expand, modernize and improve commercial services contracts for the operation and expansion of commercial visitor facilities and visitor services programs in units of the national park system. To the extent that there are risks in using the VEIA authority, the risks are minimized by the fact that this authority is time-limited through 2023; it can only be used for contracts lasting 10 years or less; it cannot be used for contracts that have a preferential right of renewal or contracts for outfitter and guide services; and it will not provide any leasehold surrender interest or other compensation to the contractor at the termination of a VEIA contract. In addition, NPS has hired a consultant with expertise in this field to assist in the development and implementation of sound VEIA business models that would not create undue financial risks. The NPS intends to use the VEIA authority, as appropriate, in addition to continuing to use the concession authority provided by the Concessions Management Improvement Act of 1998 to provide the greatest benefits to the parks and visitors.

Question 6. Are you aware of ongoing work within NPS to move away from concession contracts?

Answer. The NPS is committed to using the range of authorities it has to provide the best visitor services possible. Using VEIA, along with traditional concession contracts, commercial use authorizations, and leasing, will allow the NPS to find the right tool to provide the best visitor experience.

Question 7. What is your position on a transition from concession contracts to the use of management contracts?

Answer. At this time, the NPS is developing operating procedures and regulations for VEIA and has not yet began to utilizing these types of contracts. However, we believe that management contracts have the potential to greatly benefit the NPS by increasing revenues, increasing competition for contracts, improving the quality of commercial services and improving customer service and satisfaction.

Additional Information Provided for the Record

Several questions were asked of Deputy Director Smith during the hearing that required follow-up information. That information is provided below.

Representative LaMalfa asked how many parks have had fires in the last 15–20 years.

Answer. Over the 20-year period of 1998–2017, 216 National Park Service (NPS) units have had at least one fire on lands within their park boundaries. This number includes both wildland fires and prescribed burns.

Representative McClintock asked how much of the backlog maintenance cost is due to regulations.

Answer. The current estimated $11.6 billion NPS maintenance backlog reflects the labor and material costs associated with maintenance work that has been deferred for at least 1 year. The costs for completing National Environmental Policy Act and National Historic Preservation Act (NEPA/NHPA) compliance, planning, design, construction management services, and construction contingency are not included in the $11.6 billion figure. These costs are developed at the project formulation stage and applied on a project-by-project basis.

The deferred maintenance backlog estimate also does not include non-deferred maintenance costs. Most projects, however, include both deferred and non-deferred maintenance components. Correcting code deficiencies is an example of a non-deferred maintenance activity. The activity does not relate to the failure to perform scheduled maintenance (resulting in a deferral), but relates to upgrades needed to meet evolving code compliance.

As an example, at Yosemite National Park, the Fiscal Year 2018 Line Item Construction (LIC) project to rehabilitate the Wawona Wastewater Treatment Plant includes both deferred maintenance and code compliance components. Much of the work involves constructing new systems needed to prevent effluent discharge in the Merced River as the State will no longer permit such discharge. The project's total net construction amount is $18.286 million, of which 20 percent is deferred maintenance. After construction contingency and construction management services are included, the Fiscal Year 2018 LIC budget request is $21.578 million.

As another example, at Mammoth Cave National Park, the Fiscal Year 2018 LIC project to Reconstruct Unsafe Cave Trails has a net construction value of $11.775 million, of which 90 percent is deferred maintenance. The only non-deferred maintenance component relates to the addition of handrails, stairs, and ramps in some areas to enhance safety. After construction contingency and construction management services are included, the Fiscal Year 2018 LIC budget request is $13.894 million.

The LIC program typically budgets 22 percent of the estimated net construction costs for compliance, and planning and design, which are ideally funded 1 to 2 years prior to the construction budget request. Because these costs are calculated for projects that combine deferred and non-deferred maintenance elements, we are not able to determine the portion of these costs that are associated only with the deferred maintenance components of NPS projects.

Delegate Bordallo asked about a requirement regarding local hiring in the enabling legislation for the War in the Pacific National Historical Park.

Answer. The requirement regarding local hiring is referenced in the Park's legislation and it directs the NPS to employ and train residents of Guam or of the Northern Mariana Islands to develop, maintain and administer the park. Delegate Bordallo was interested in what efforts the NPS has undertaken to meet this requirement in recruiting qualified Guam residents for vacancies at the War in the Pacific National Historical Park.

Employing residents is integral to accomplishing the mission for War in the Pacific National Historical Park. Residents know the local cultures and languages, which is critical to developing appropriate education and outreach programs. They also know local experts with whom the park can partner to accomplish projects. Of the 24 War in the Pacific National Historical Park employees on Guam, 18, or 75 percent of the park's workforce, are Guam residents.

The park has been very successful in using student-hiring authorities to recruit Guam's youth into the NPS and uses the Pathways program frequently, converting many student hires into permanent positions. Six employees (29 percent of the

park's workforce) began their careers as student interns and are now permanent employees. The park also uses the Veterans' Recruitment Appointment hiring authority, and presently has five veterans on staff, all of whom are Guam residents.

Although seasonal hiring authority is not used often, the park has hired local residents to help during the summer when education programs and other events are scheduled. The park has used temporary or term appointments to provide some flexibility in their staffing strategy for larger projects, such as facility repair or rehabilitation.

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Attachment 1

Table 1. Arkansas Assets by Park and Asset Category

Park	Buildings	Housing*	Camp-grounds	Trails	Waste Water Systems	Water Systems	Unpaved Roads†	Paved Roads‡	All Others§	Total Assets
Arkansas Post National Memorial (ARPO)	9	2	-	7	1	1	1	9	20	**50**
Buffalo National River (BUFF)	212	13	17	35	31	22	94	71	94	**589**
Fort Smith National Historic Site (FOSM)	4	-	-	1	-	-	-	8	8	**21**
Hot Springs National Park (HOSP)	64	1	1	25	1	6	4	37	36	**175**
Little Rock Central High School National Historic Site (CHSC)	2	-	-	-	1	1	-	2	3	**9**
Pea Ridge National Military Park (PERI)	12	-	-	4	4	1	5	16	23	**65**
President William Jefferson Clinton Birthplace Home National Historic Site (WICL)	3	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	5	**9**
Total Assets	**306**	**16**	**18**	**72**	**38**	**32**	**104**	**143**	**189**	**918**
% of Total Assets	**33%**	**2%**	**2%**	**8%**	**4%**	**3%**	**11%**	**16%**	**21%**	**100%**

* Housing is defined as buildings that are associated with the NPS Employee Housing Program/DOI Quarters Program, including support buildings (e.g., detached garages, shower and laundry facilities, storage).
† Unpaved Roads includes unpaved parking areas and unpaved roadways.
‡ Paved Roads includes bridges, tunnels, paved parking areas and paved roadways.
§ All Other assets include utility systems, dams, constructed waterways, marinas, aviation systems, railroads, ships, monuments, fortifications, towers, interpretive media and amphitheaters.

Table 2. Arkansas DM by Park and Asset Category

Park	Buildings	Housing*	Camp-grounds	Trails	Waste Water Systems	Water Systems	Unpaved Roads†	Paved Roads‡	All Others§	Total DM
Arkansas Post National Memorial (ARPO)	$266 K	$ 0	$ 0	$203 K	$497 K	$191 K	$ 0	$806 K	$986 K	**$2,948 K**
Buffalo National River (BUFF)	$1,748 K	$245 K	$762 K	$268 K	$1,106 K	$574 K	$2,808 K	$6,000 K	$1,072 K	**$14,585K**
Fort Smith National Historic Site (FOSM)	$1,775 K	$ 0	$ 0	$142 K	$ 0	$ 0	$ 0	$193 K	$529 K	**$2,638 K**
Hot Springs National Park (HOSP)	$3,732 K	$36 K	$228 K	$1,546K	$ 0	$943 K	$ 0	$3,370 K	$2,505 K	**$12,360 K**
Little Rock Central High School National Historic Site (CHSC)	$175 K	$ 0	$ 0	$ 0	$ 0	$ 0	$ 0	$109 K	$83 K	**$368 K**
Pea Ridge National Military Park (PERI)	$1,265 K	$ 0	$ 0	$11 K	$ 0	$318 K	$23 K	$2,376 K	$189 K	**$4,181 K**
President William Jefferson Clinton Birthplace Home National Historic Site (WICL)	$475 K	$ 0	$ 0	$ 0	$ 0	$ 0	$ 0	$ 0	$63 K	**$538 K**
Total DM	**$9,435 K**	**$281 K**	**$990 K**	**$2,170 K**	**$1,603 K**	**$2,026 K**	**$2,831 K**	**$12,854 K**	**$5,427 K**	**$37,618 K**
% of Total DM	**25%**	**1%**	**3%**	**6%**	**4%**	**5%**	**8%**	**34%**	**14%**	**100%**

* Housing is defined as buildings that are associated with the NPS Employee Housing Program/DOI Quarters Program, including support buildings (e.g., detached garages, shower and laundry facilities, storage).
† Unpaved Roads includes unpaved parking areas and unpaved roadways.
‡ Paved Roads includes bridges, tunnels, paved parking areas and paved roadways.
§ All Other assets include utility systems, dams, constructed waterways, marinas, aviation systems, railroads, ships, monuments, fortifications, towers, interpretive media and amphitheaters.

Attachment 2

Park Unit	Authorzation Type	Operator	Servcies
Arkansas Post National Memorial	Coop. Ass., Concession	Eastern National	Interpretative merchandise, convenience items
Buffalo National River	Concession	Buffalo Point Concession	Lodging, food and beverage, convenience items and merchandise retail, catering services
Buffalo National River	Concession	Lost Valley Canoe and Lodging, Inc.	Canoe rental and transportation, kayak, raft and tube rental and transportation
Buffalo National River	Concession	Gordon Motel, Inc.	Canoe rental and transportation, kayak, raft and tube rental and transportation
Buffalo National River	Concession	Silver Hill Float Service	Canoe rental and transportation, kayak, raft and tube rental and transportation
Buffalo National River	Concession	Buffalo River Outfitters	Canoe rental and transportation, kayak, raft and tube rental and transportation
Buffalo National River	Concession	Buffalo River Outdoor Center	Canoe rental and transportation, kayak, raft and tube rental and transportation
Buffalo National River	Concession	Riverview Motel Canoe Rental	Canoe rental and transportation, kayak, raft and tube rental and transportation
Buffalo National River	Concession	Crockett's Canoe Rental	Canoe rental and transportation, kayak, raft and tube rental and transportation
Buffalo National River	Concession	Buffalo Camping and Canoeing, Inc.	Canoe rental and transportation, kayak, raft and tube rental and transportation
Buffalo National River	Concession	Buffalo River Float Service, Inc.	Canoe rental and transportation, kayak, raft and tube rental and transportation
Buffalo National River	Concession	Buffalo River Canoes, LLC	Canoe rental and transportation, kayak, raft and tube rental and transportation
Buffalo National River	Concession	Dirst Canoe Rental	Canoe rental and transportation, kayak, raft and tube rental and transportation
Buffalo National River	Coop. Ass., Concession	Eastern National	Interpretative merchandise, convenience items
Buffalo National River	CUA	Arkansauce	Retail Sales
Buffalo National River	CUA	Buffalo River Float Service	Fishing - spin or fly
Buffalo National River	CUA	Camp Sabra	Camping - backcountry
Buffalo National River	CUA	Cotter Trout Dock	Fishing - spin or fly
Buffalo National River	CUA	Crockett's Country Store	Food and Beverage
Buffalo National River	CUA	Dally's Ozark Fly Fisher	Fishing - spin or fly

Buffalo National River	CUA	Explore Austin	Other - describe in comments
Buffalo National River	CUA	Harmony	Retail Sales
Buffalo National River	CUA	Kanakuk Kamps Ministries	Other - describe in comments
Buffalo National River	CUA	Leader Treks	Camping - backcountry
Buffalo National River	CUA	Leader Treks	Other - describe in comments
Buffalo National River	CUA	Mary's Little Lambs	Retail Sales
Buffalo National River	CUA	Meramec Adventure - Great Circle	Camping - backcountry
Buffalo National River	CUA	Misty's Shell	Food and Beverage
Buffalo National River	CUA	National Park Radio	Retail Sales
Buffalo National River	CUA	Newland's Float Trips	Fishing - spin or fly
Buffalo National River	CUA	Outdoor Leader Trainers of America	Camping - backcountry
Buffalo National River	CUA	Ozark Mtn Takers Hiking Adventures	Hiking - backcountry
Buffalo National River	CUA	Ozark Society	Other - describe in comments
Buffalo National River	CUA	Paddle Arkansas	Retail Sales
Buffalo National River	CUA	Rose Trout Dock	Fishing - spin or fly
Buffalo National River	CUA	Ruby's Diner	Food and Beverage
Buffalo National River	CUA	Sierra Club	Other - describe in comments
Buffalo National River	CUA	SOAR	Other - describe in comments
Buffalo National River	CUA	Texas A&M University	Other - describe in comments
Buffalo National River	CUA	Tim Ernst	Photography Instruction
Buffalo National River	CUA	Townhouse Café	Food and Beverage
Buffalo National River	CUA	Western Kentucky University	Environmental Education - birding classes, biology courses, etc.
Buffalo National River	CUA	White Buffalo Resort	Fishing - spin or fly
Buffalo National River	CUA	Wild Bill's Outfitter	Fishing - spin or fly
Buffalo National River	Lease	Boxley Valley Grist Mill	Science Education
Fort Smith Historic Site	Coop. Ass., Concession	Eastern National	Interpretative merchandise, convenience items
Hot Springs National Park	Concession	HSMT, LLC	Observation tower access with interpretation, merchandise retail and limited food and beverage snack items, coin-operated scenic viewers and special events
Hot Springs National Park	Concession	Buckstaff Bath House Company	Traditional bathhouse, massage therapy, spa services, merchandise retail,

Hot Springs National Park	Coop. Ass., Concession	Eastern National	Interpretative merchandise, convenience items
Hot Springs National Park	CUA	Dexter Williams - Dogs on the Run	Food and Beverage
Hot Springs National Park	CUA	Hollie Henderson Photography	Photography - portraits
Hot Springs National Park	CUA	Hot Springs Taxi	Transport (non-tour) - road, air, water based
Hot Springs National Park	CUA	Pam Hayes - Fitness	Fitness
Hot Springs National Park	Lease	Quapaw Bath House	Bathhouse
Hot Springs National Park	Lease	Medical Doctor's House	Office Space
Hot Springs National Park	Lease	Hale Bath House	Boutique Hotel
Hot Springs National Park	Lease	Superior Bath House	Brewery / Restaurant
Hot Springs National Park	Lease	Headquater's Building, Second Floor	Office Space
Pea Ridge National Military Park	Coop. Ass., Concession	Eastern National	Interpretative merchandise, convenience items
Pea Ridge National Military Park	Lease	Storage facility and hay	Agricultual Lease (Hay)

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Attachment 3

United States Department of the Interior

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
Washington, DC 20240

March 29, 2018

The Honorable Lisa Murkowski
Chairman, Subcommittee on Interior,
Environment, and Related Agencies
Committee on Appropriations
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Murkowski:

This letter is in response to the Subcommittee's request to provide a report on the National Park Service's use of leasing authority for historic structures. Language contained in House Report 114–632 accompanying the Department of the Interior, Environment and Related Agencies Appropriation Bill, 2017 (H.R. 5538) is included in the Joint Explanatory Statement that accompanied the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2017. The language from House Report 114–632 is as follows:

> *Leasing of Historic Buildings.—Leasing of historic park buildings has proven to be an effective public-private partnership that has brought private investment to the repair and maintenance of historic park resources. In previous Committee reports, the Committee has encouraged the Service to make expanded use of leasing authority. The Committee commends the Service for recent steps it has taken to increase the utilization of this tool, including establishing a leasing manager to oversee and expand the historic leasing program. The Committee renews its previous request that directs the Service to provide a report, within six months of enactment of this Act, detailing its progress toward expanding use of this authority. Included in this report should be (1) a list of structures the Service considers high-priority candidates for leasing, (2) a list of structures currently under a lease arrangement, (3) an estimate of the number of leases that have enabled private sector investments using the Service-administered historic tax credit, and (4) any statutory or regulatory impediments that now inhibit the enhanced use of leasing of historic structures.*

The National Park Service (NPS) has authority to lease historic and other buildings and associated property under the National Historic Preservation Act and the National Park Omnibus Management Act of 1998. The NPS continues to make progress toward increasing the number of public-private partnerships through leasing. In the last 18 months the NPS has executed a master residential lease at First State National Monument; a lease with Navajo Nation Hospitality Enterprises, a wholly owned subsidiary of the Navajo Nation, at Canyon De Chelly National Monument; and executed an Inter-Agency Agreement with the United States Forest Service to lease two buildings at Fort Vancouver National Historic Site.

In addition, the NPS is currently preparing to enter into negotiations with a potential lessee for the Riis Beach Bathhouse at Gateway National Recreation Area; is working on an agreement with the Bureau of Indian Affairs to occupy one of the buildings at Fort Vancouver National Historic Site; and recently issued a request for proposal for the Maurice bathhouse at Hot Springs National Park. The leasing program staff is also continuing to develop formal training for NPS staff to expand capacity across the NPS to initiate and manage park-level leasing programs. As part of that effort, the NPS has integrated a leasing section into the annual Commercial Services Training for Superintendents curriculum.

House Report 114–632 requested that the following information be included as part of this report:

- **A list of structures that the Service considers high-priority candidates for leasing**

See enclosed list. The NPS prioritizes eligible properties for leasing based on knowledge that park staff have regarding local market demand for facilities, along with direction from the servicewide leasing program office. The enclosed list reflects those properties for which parks and regions are actively working on leasing. The list contains properties under a range of situations, including those for which the NPS expects to issue a Request for Proposal within the next 2 years, those for which a Request for Proposal received no responses, and those that were under life tenancy and have recently transferred to NPS control.

- **A list of structures currently under a lease arrangement**

See enclosed list, which includes properties reported by parks through regional leasing and concession staff. This information has been checked against the NPS facility management database.

- **An estimate of the number of leases that have enabled private sector investments using the Service-administered historic tax**

While the NPS does not include language in its leases that would prevent a lessee from taking advantage of the historic preservation tax credit, there are requirements for obtaining historic preservation certification from the National Park Service and the State Historic Preservation Office, as well as Internal Revenue Service regulations governing the tax credits for rehabilitation that must be met before the tax credit can be utilized by the lessee.

The NPS is currently aware of three lessees that have taken advantage of the benefits offered by this program: Cavallo Point Lodge at Fort Baker, the Argonaut Hotel in Golden Gate National Recreation Area, and the Quapaw Bathhouse at Hot Springs National Park. It is possible that other lessees have used the historic tax program previously, but NPS records do not cover a number of the early years of the tax-credit program.

- **Are there any statutory or regulatory impediments that now inhibit the enhanced use of leasing of historic structures?**

The NPS has authority to enter into a lease with any ". . . person or government entity . . ." (54 U.S.C. § 102102(a)). Other agencies, with some exceptions, generally do not have such authority, which is instead vested with the General Services Administration (GSA) (40 U.S.C. § 585). Therefore, other federal agencies are often reluctant to execute agreements with the NPS to occupy facilities that are administered by the NPS without going through the General Services Administration. So, while the NPS is authorized to lease structures to any governmental entity, other agencies do not have clear, specific authority to enter into a lease with the NPS without going through GSA. However, under the Service First authority (43 U.S.C. § 1703), the NPS can enter into leases with other agencies within the Department of the Interior and the Department of Agriculture, without consultation of GSA.

In general, market conditions and demand pose the greatest challenge to expanding the current leasing program. Investors are often more interested in purchasing

outright 'fee title' property, rather than investing in the rehabilitation of a property that is owned by, and possession of which will eventually be returned to, the federal government. Also, the lease opportunities available within parks may not provide a viable business opportunity given the higher costs associated with the restoration or rehabilitation of the structures compared to the relatively low rents available in local areas, many of which are rural and sparsely populated. In more urban areas, there appears to be a greater demand from the public to lease facilities in parks for residential use, office space, or other commercial activity.

Additionally, NPS has limited resources available to conduct the up-front planning necessary to determine fair market value rent, and to develop the required Request for Proposal to lease historic facilities. Without such work, the NPS cannot accurately gauge the level of private sector interest in its properties.

The NPS greatly appreciates the Committee's support throughout the appropriations process and looks forward to collaborating to find creative ways to utilize public-private partnerships to help preserve and maintain historic assets for future generations to use and enjoy.

A similar letter has been sent to the Honorable Tom Udall, Ranking Minority Member, Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies, Committee on Appropriations, U.S. Senate; the Honorable Ken Calvert, Chairman, Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies, Committee on Appropriations, House of Representatives; and the Honorable Betty McCollum, Ranking Minority Member, Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies, Committee on Appropriations, House of Representatives.

Sincerely,

OLIVIA B. FERRITER,
Deputy Assistant Secretary
Budget, Finance, Performance, and Acquisition

Enclosures

Enclosures

High Priority Candidates for Leasing		
State	**National Park System Unit**	**Facility Name**
Arkansas	Hot Springs National Park	Maurice
California	Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area	Peter Strauss Ranch House
Texas	Amistad National Recreation Area	Diablo East Marina Store
		Diablo East Marina
		Maintenance Yard
		Maintenance Building
		Rough Canyon Marina
	San Antonio Missions National Historical Park	Kuntz Store and Saloon (Sisson House)
Illinois	Lincoln Home National Historical Site	Robinson House
		Shutt House
Kentucky	Mammoth Cave National Park	General Store and Service Station Building
Massachusetts	Minute Man National Historical Park	Gowing-Clark House
Michigan	Keweenaw National Historical Park	Quincey Mining Company Pay Office
	Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lake Shore	Sleeping Bear Inn
		Sleeping Bear Inn Garage
Mississippi	Natchez Trace Parkway	101 Drive 665
		106 Drive 665
		116 Drive 665
		140 Drive 665
		152 Drive 665
		168 Drive 665
		House #7 Drive 665
		186 Drive 665
Pennsylvania	Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area	Zimmerman House
	Gettysburg National Military Park	Bushman House
	Valley Forge National Historical Park	Maurice Stephens House
New Hampshire	Saint-Gaudens National Historical Park	Blow Me Down Farms
New Jersey	Gateway National Recreation Area	Fort Hancock-Captains' Quarters 09
		Fort Hancock-Captains' Quarters 10
		Fort Hancock-Captains' Quarters 11
		Fort Hancock-Captains' Quarters 13
		Fort Hancock-Captains' Quarters 14
		Fort Hancock-Captains' Quarters 15
		Fort Hancock-Commanding Officer's Quarters 12
		Fort Hancock-Lieutenants' Quarters 02
		Fort Hancock-Lieutenants' Quarters 03
		Fort Hancock-Lieutenants' Quarters 04
		Fort Hancock-Lieutenants' Quarters 05
		Fort Hancock-Lieutenants' Quarters 06
		Fort Hancock-Lieutenants' Quarters 08
		Fort Hancock-Lieutenants' Quarters 16
		Fort Hancock-Lieutenants' Quarters 17

High Priority Candidates for Leasing (continued)		
State	**National Park System Unit**	**Facility Name**
New York	Gateway National Recreation Area	Jacob Riis Park - Bathhouse - Beach Pavilion
		Jacob Riis Park - Bathhouse - Entrance Pavilion
		Jacob Riis Park - Bathhouse - West Wing Pavilion
Washington	Ebey's Landing National Historical Reserve	Farmland & Other
	Fort Vancouver National Historical Site	BLDG 728 Finance Office East

Facilities Currently Leased by the NPS		
State	**National Park System Unit**	**Facility Name**
Alaska	Klondike Goldrush National Historical Park	Lynch & Kennedy
		Verbauwhede Bldg
		Hern Clipper
		Red Front
		Boas Bldg
	Wrangell St. Elias National Park & Preserve	Recreation Hall
Arizona	Canyon De Chelly National Monument	Motel Units (42 Rooms) - CACH 001 343 CPSO
		Cafeteria - CACH 001 350 CPSO
		Office & Curio Shop - CACH 001 353 CPS
		Motel Units 24-35 - CACH 001 343 CPSO
		Managers Residence
		Residence/ House # 2
		Residence/ House # 3
		Residence/ House # 1
		Lodge Rooms 6 & 8 - CACH 001 295 CPSO
		Lodge Room 9
		Lodge Room 10 & 11
		Motel Units 14-23
		Maintenance and Laundry Building
		Passenger Loading Shelter
Arkansas	Buffalo National River	Boxley Valley Grist Mill
	Pea Ridge National Military Park	Storage facility and hay
	Hot Springs National Park	Quapaw Bathhouse
		Medical Director's House
		Hale Bathhouse
		Superior Bathhouse
		Headquarters building, 2nd Floor
California	Golden Gate National Recreation Area	Quarters 607 FB-607 FBRG
		Quarters 549 FB-549 FBRG
		Quarters 547 FB-547 FBRG
		Quarters 546 FB-546 FBRG
		Post Hospital Garage FB-556 FBRG
		Post Headquarters FB-603 FBRG
		Post Exchange & Gymnasium FB-623 FBRG
		Officers Quarters FB-629 FBRG
		Officers Quarters FB-606 FBRG
		Officers Quarters FB-605 FBRG
		NCO Quarters FB-530 FBRG
		NCO Quarters FB-529 FBRG
		NCO Quarters FB-523 FBRG

Facilities Currently Leased by the NPS (continued)		
State	**National Park System Unit**	**Facility Name**
California (continued)	Golden Gate National Recreation Area (continued)	Warehouse Laundry FB-407 FBRG
		Hospital Stewards Quarters FB-522 FBRG
		Hospital FB-533 FBRG
		Guardhouse, Fort Baker (FB 615) FBRG
		Garage FB-564 FBRG
		Garage FB-545 FBRG
		Garage FB-543 FBRG
		Garage FB-534 FBRG
		Enlisted Men's Barracks (FB-601) FBRG
		Commanding Officers Quarters (FB-604) FBRG
		Chapel, (FB-519) FBRG
		Building 602, Restaurant FBRG
		Officers Quarters 631 (FB-631) FBRG
		Building 568 (FB-568) FBRG
		Building 1562 West #16 (FB1562) FBRG
		Building 1561 West #16 (FB1561) FBRG
		Building 1560 West #12 (FB1560) FBRG
		Building 1550 East #12 (FB1550) FBRG
		Building 1552 East #10 (FB1552) FBRG
		Building 1553 East #9 (FB1553) FBRG
		Building 1554 East #8 (FB1554) FBRG
		Building 1555 East #7 (FB1555) FBRG
		Building 1556 East #6 (FB1556) FBRG
		Building 1557 East #5 (FB1557) FBRG
		Building 1558 East #4 (FB1558) FBRG
		Building 1559 East #3 (FB1559) FBRG
		Renegade Ranch
		Horse Barn - Renegade Ranch
		Water Distribution System - Renegade Ranch
		Waste Water System - Renegade Ranch
		Electrical System - Renegade Ranch
		Moss Beach Ranch
		Water Distribution System - Moss Beach Ranch
		Waste Water System - Moss Beach Ranch
		Electrical System - Moss Beach Ranch
		Ocean View Farms
		Horse Barn- Ocean View Farms
		House - Ocean View Farms
		Water Distribution System - Ocean View Farms
		Waste Water System - Ocean View Farms

Facilities Currently Leased by the NPS (continued)		
State	**National Park System Unit**	**Facility Name**
California (continued)	Golden Gate National Recreation Area (continued)	Electrical System - Ocean View Farms
		Ember Ridge Equestrian Center
		Horse Barn - Ember Ridge Equestrian Center
		Water Distribution System - Ember Ridge Equestrian Center
		Waste Water System - Ember Ridge Equestrian Center
		Electrical System - Ember Ridge Equestrian Center
		Golden Gate Dairy Hay Barn MB-102 MB Stables
		Golden Gate Dairy Sanitary Barn MB-104 MB Stables
		Golden Gate Dairy Shed MB-105 MB Stables
		Barn TV-21
		Miwok Covered Riding Ring TV-109
		Miwok Horse Stalls and Storage TV-105
		Miwok Sanitary Barn TV-106
		Miwok Stable TV-107
		Miwok Residence #1 TV-101
		Miwok Residence #2 TV-102
		Stable (PRC) East FA-902
		Stable (PRC) West FA-901
		Officers Club (FM-1) FMC
		Chapel (FM-230) FMC
		Building A, Lower Fort Mason (FM-308) FMC
		Building B, Lower Fort Mason (FM-310) FMC
		Building C, Lower Fort Mason (FM-312) FMC
		Building D, Lower Fort Mason (FM314) FMC
		Guard Station (FM303) FMC
		Pier 2 Shed, Lower Fort Mason (FM-319) FMC
		Pier 3 Shed, Lower Fort Mason (FM-321) FMC
		Provost Marshalls Office (Gatehouse) (FM-0302) FMC
		Fire Station & Transformer Vault (FM309) FMC
		Fort Mason Storage Shed (FM305) FMC
		Sutro Historic District Restaurant
		Quarters 2 (Brooks House) (FM-2) Residential Lease
		Quarters 3 (Haskell House)(FM-3) Residential Lease
		Quarters 4 (Palmer House) (FM-4) Residential Lease
		Garage (FM-5)
		Quarters 7 (FM-7) Residential Lease
		Quarters 9 (FM-9) Residential Lease
		Brooks House Garage (FM-11)
		Quarters 231 (FM-231) Residential Lease
		Quarters 232 (FM-232) Residential Lease

Facilities Currently Leased by the NPS (continued)		
State	**National Park System Unit**	**Facility Name**
California (continued)	Golden Gate National Recreation Area (continued)	Quarters 234 (FM-234) Residential Lease
		Quarters 235(FM-235) Residential Lease
		Quarters 238 (FM-238) Residential Lease
		Quarters 239 (FM-239) Residential Lease
		Building 36 (FM-36) Residential Lease
		Building 38 (FM-38) Residential Lease
		Building 39 (FM-39) Residential Lease
		Quarters 41 (FM-41) Residential Lease
		Quarters 42 (FM-42) Residential Lease
		Quarters 43 (FM-43) Residential Lease
		Quarters 44 (FM-44) Residential Lease
		Quarters 46 (FM-46) Residential Lease
		Quarters 47 (FM-47) Residential Lease
		Quarters 48 (FM-48)
		Quarters 49 (FM-49) Residential Lease
		Quarters 50 (FM-0050) Residential Lease
		Fort Barry 955
		Fort Barry 956
		Quarters 17 (PB-008) Residential Lease
		Quarters 18 (PB-009)
		Quarters 19 (PB-010)
		Garage (PB-6)
	San Francisco Maritime National Historical Park	Haslett Warehouse
Delaware	First State National Historical Park	100 Ramsey Road Garage
		137A Beaver Valley Rd Spring House
		140 Beaver Valley Rd Barn
		400 Ramsey Rd Garage
		404 Ramsey Rd Garage
		406 Ramsey Rd Barn
		4700 Thompson Bridge Rd Shed
		4700 Thompson Bridge Rd Bank Barn
		4700 Thompson Bridge Rd Garage
		4700 Thompson Bridge Rd Pole Barn
		500 Woodlawn Garage
		502 Woodlawn Garage
		800 Beaver Valley Garage
		800 Beaver Valley Rd Spring House
		810 Beaver Valley Rd Spring House
		100 Ramsey Road
		137 Beaver Valley Rd

Facilities Currently Leased by the NPS (continued)		
State	**National Park System Unit**	**Facility Name**
Delaware (continued)	First State National Historical Park (continued)	140 Beaver Valley Rd
		400 Ramsey Rd
		404 Ramsey Rd
		406 Ramsey Rd
		4700 Thompson Bridge Rd
		498 Woodlawn
		500 Woodlawn Rd
		502 Woodlawn Rd
		503 Beaver Valley Rd
		601 Beaver Valley Rd
		601A Beaver Valley Rd
		701 Beaver Valley Rd
		800 Beaver Valley Rd
		810 Beaver Valley Rd
		Ramsey House
District of Columbia	Chesapeake & Ohio Canal National Historical Park	Washington Canoe Club
Georgia	Fort Pulaski National Monument	Cockspur Island Pilot House
	Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site	445 Edgewood Ave. NE
		53 Blvd
		55 Blvd
		54-A Howell St
		54B Howell St
		54C Howell St
		472 Auburn Avenue
		474 Auburn Avenue
		476 Auburn Avenue
		478 Auburn Avenue
		480 Auburn Avenue
		484 Auburn Avenue
		488 Auburn Avenue
		492 Auburn Avenue
		506 1A Auburn Avenue
		506 2B Auburn Avenue
		506 3C Auburn Avenue
		506D Auburn Avenue
		509 1A Auburn Avenue
		509 2A Auburn Avenue
		509 3A Auburn Avenue
		509 4A Auburn Avenue
		509 5B Auburn Avenue

Facilities Currently Leased by the NPS (continued)		
State	**National Park System Unit**	**Facility Name**
Georgia (continued)	Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site (continued)	509 6B Auburn Avenue
		509 7B Auburn Avenue
		510 Auburn Avenue
		514A Auburn Avenue
		514 B Auburn Avenue
		522 Auburn Avenue
		535 Auburn Avenue
		540-A Auburn Avenue
		540-B Auburn Avenue
		546-A Auburn Avenue
		546B Auburn Avenue
		550-A Auburn Avenue
		550B Auburn Avenue
		550C Auburn Avenue
		550 D Auburn Avenue
Hawaii	Hawaii Volcanoes National Park	1877 Volcano House
Illinois	Lincoln Home National Historic Site	Sarah Cook House
Indiana	Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore	Armco-Ferro
		Cypress Log Cabin and Guest House
		Florida Tropical House
		Lindstrom/Wahl Farm
		House of Tomorrow
		Jacob Luston House
		Oscar and Irene Nelson Site
		Wiebold-Rostone
Iowa	Herbert Hoover National Historical Site	Post Office
Kansas	Brown v. Board of Education National Historical Site	Former Monroe Elementary School
Maryland	Antietam National Battlefield	Piper Farm Part 1
	Chesapeake & Ohio Canal National Historical Park	West House Site
		Cooper House
		Reitzell House
		Myers House Stable and Barn
Ohio	Cuyahoga Valley National Park	Point Biro Farm House
		Point Biro Farm Garage
		Point Biro Farm Barn
		Point Biro Farm Shed
		Welton Farm House
		Welton Farm Barn
		Welton Farm Shed
		Schmidt-Foster Farm House

Facilities Currently Leased by the NPS (continued)		
State	**National Park System Unit**	**Facility Name**
Ohio (continued)	Cuyahoga Valley National Park (continued)	Schmidt-Foster Farm Barn
		Edgar Farm
		Holland Farm House
		Martin Farm House
		Martin Farm Shed
		Benedict
		Happy Days, Hines Hill Conference Center and Stone Cottage
		Vaughn Farm
		Wallace Farm-Inn
		Conrad Botzum Farmstead
		Garvey Farm House
		Grether Farm House
		Gleeson Farm House
		Parry Farm
Maine	Acadia National Park	B-299C Bear Island Light Station - Boat House
		B-299 Bear Island Light Station - Keepers House
		B-299A Bear Island Light Station - Light Tower
		B-299B Bear Island Light Station- Barn
		Bear Island Historic Landscape
Massachusetts	Boston National Historical Park	Building 32
		Building 125
		Constitution Museum-Gift Shop
	Cape Cod National Seashore	Kugel-Gips House
		Ahearn House
		Higgins House
		Rider House
		Hatch House
		McKay House
		Boule House
		Sirna House
		Fluerent Dune Shack
		Watson-Schmid Dune Shack
		Weidlinger House
		Bartlett
		Driver-Brady
		Highland House Museum
		Pamet River Coast Guard Station
	Lowell National Historical Site	Market Mills
		Old City Hall
	New Bedford Whaling National Historical Park	21-25 Water Street

Facilities Currently Leased by the NPS (continued)		
State	**National Park System Unit**	**Facility Name**
Massachusetts (continued)	Minute Man National Historical Park	Elisha Jones House
		Swartz House
Michigan	Keweenaw National Historical Park	Quincy Mine Office
		Quincy Mining Company Pay Office
New Jersey	Gateway National Recreation Area	Building 335
		Sandy Hook Building 21
		Sandy Hook Building 22
		Sandy Hook Chapel
		Sandy Hook Theater
	Morristown National Historical Park	Reynolds House
New York	Federal Hall National Memorial	Federal Hall (EVENTS)
	Martin Van Buren National Historical Site	Roxbury Farm
		Farm Cottage
	Statue of Liberty National Monument	Laundry/Hospital Outbuilding
	Home of Franklin D Roosevelt National Historical Site	Drive In
		Red House
	Fire Island National Seashore	Bay and Garbo Houses
	Gateway National Recreation Area	Building 74 - Land Lease
		Hangars 1 and 2
		Fort Tilden T-4 Theatre
		Rockaway Little League (Building T-158)
		JABA BU-NSFB-C Riding Academy Main/Arena Bldg
		JABA BU-NSFB-C Riding Academy Isolation Bldg
		Bergen Beach Stables
		JABA BU-BP-P-RPYC Rockaway Point Yacht Club
		D-BP-P RPYC Rockaway Point Yacht Club Dock
		JABA PK-BP-P RPYC Rockaway Point Yacht Club Parking Lot
		GR-BP Rockaway Point Maintained Landscape
		BU-BP-P-RPYC Rockaway Point Shower House
		BU-BP-P-RPYC Rockaway Point Oar House
		BU-BP-P-RPYC Rockaway Point Gazebo
		Riis Beach Bay 9 West Mall Building, Suite 1
		Riis Beach Bays 2
		Riis Beach Bays 14
		Riis Beach Suite 3

Facilities Currently Leased by the NPS (continued)		
State	National Park System Unit	Facility Name
Pennsylvania	Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area	Cliff Park Buchanan Clubhouse
		Cliff Park 2 story Maintenance Building
		Cliff Park 1 story Maintenance/Mower Shop
		Cliff Park Maintenance Building
		Concrete Shed
		Dutch Reform Church
		Altman House
		Virginia Kidd House
	Independence National Historical Park	Thomas Bond House
		2nd St Parking Garage
		IVC Parking Garage
		314/316 Market St
	Gettysburg National Military Park	Sherfy House
	Johnstown Flood National Memorial	Annex Building, Apartment 1
		Annex Building, Apartment 2
		Annex Building, Apartment 3
		Annex Building, Apartment 4
	Valley Forge National Historical Park	David Walker - Main House
		David Walker - Barn
		David Walker - Root Cellar
		David Walker - Cottage
		Kennedy Supplee Carriage House
		Log Cabin and School House
		Philander Chase Knox
		Post Office
Virginia	Fort Monroe National Monument	Bay Breeze
		RV Park
	Colonial National Historical Park	Somerewell House
Washington	Ebey's Landing National Historical Reserve	Ebey's Landing
	Fort Vancouver National Historic Site	Pearson Airfield
		East and South Vancouver Building 404
		Building 987
West Virginia	New River Gorge National River	Camp Brookside

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you. I appreciate that.

We will now turn to Mr. Guertin, who is recognized for 5 minutes for your opening testimony.

STATEMENT OF STEVE GUERTIN, DEPUTY DIRECTOR, U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, WASHINGTON, DC

Mr. GUERTIN. Good morning, Chairman Bishop, Ranking Member Grijalva, and members of the Committee. I am Steve Guertin, Deputy Director of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. I previously served as Regional Director for Mountain Prairie Region based out in Colorado and, before that, as the budget officer for the

Service here in headquarters. I appreciate the opportunity to testify about the Service's maintenance backlog.

The Service manages 566 national wildlife refuges and 72 national fish hatcheries. We are responsible for over $46 billion in constructed real property assets that include over 40,000 structures, roads, bridges, dams, and water control structures. Our estimated deferred maintenance backlog is $1.4 billion.

National wildlife refuges are vitally important to conserving the wildlife heritage of America, and are also valued destinations for local residents, as well as vacationers. Every state and territory has wildlife refuges, and over 50 million Americans visit these sites each year. They generate over $2 billion for local economies, and support tens of thousands of private-sector jobs.

A refuge that could benefit from infrastructure funding is Big Oaks Refuge in Indiana. This is an especially important place for migratory birds, and it is home to more than 200 bird species. Access is impaired because a bridge on the refuge has been closed since 2001.

Wallkill River Refuge in New Jersey is home to many grassland birds, migratory water fowl, wintering raptors, and endangered species. Public access to this refuge is significantly reduced because one of its trails is closed due to extensive dangerous degradation.

Besides infrastructure funding, another way to reduce the maintenance backlog is to grant the Service the authority to use compensation obtained from responsible parties to directly repair damages to refuges. Under current law, when our resources are injured, the costs of repair are added to our maintenance backlog and must come from our appropriated budget. Congress can help by enacting the Administration's legislative proposal to give the Service this needed authority.

Thank you for your interest in addressing the Service's maintenance backlog, and the opportunity to testify today. I will be glad to answer any questions the Committee has. Thank you for your time.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Smith and Mr. Guertin, U.S. Department of the Interior appears on page 71.]

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you. And I appreciate the Administration's testimony being extremely brief, too.

Mr. Iobst, you are now recognized for 5 minutes.

STATEMENT OF STEVE IOBST, NATIONAL PARK CONSERVATION ASSOCIATION, NATIONAL PARK SERVICE, RETIRED, FORMER CHIEF OF FACILITY MANAGEMENT FOR YELLOWSTONE NATIONAL PARK, DRIGGS, IDAHO

Mr. IOBST. Chairman Bishop, Ranking Member Grijalva, and members of the Committee, thank you for inviting me to testify at this important hearing. I am Steve Iobst, and I worked for the National Park Service for 43 years. I retired as Deputy Superintendent of Yellowstone National Park in 2016, after several assignments in parks in the Denver Service Center.

Relevant to this hearing, I was responsible for planning, design, rehabilitation, construction, and historic preservation projects, as

well as facility maintenance and park operations that totaled nearly $1 billion. I testify today in my capacity as the member of the Northern Rockies Regional Council, the National Parks Conservation Association, an organization that represents more than 1.2 million members and supporters across the country. I am also affiliated with the Coalition to Protect America's National Parks, a membership of over 1,200 former National Park Service employees.

The NPCA, the Coalition, the Pew Charitable Trust, and the National Trust for Historic Preservation are among the many public interest groups throughout the country dedicated to addressing this issue, and we are grateful for your attention to the need.

Increasing current funding sources is critical, including philanthropic giving and appropriated fee revenue to address the full scope of the maintenance backlog. In this regard, we commend Senators Warner and Portman, as well as Representatives Herb Kilmer, Reichert, and Hanabusa for introducing the National Park Service Legacy Act.

My first career assignment in the Park Service was as a design engineer completing projects in over 40 parks, and with Yellowstone in 1979 as the park engineer. At the Rocky Mountain National Park, I was Chief of Facility Management, then appointed Deputy Superintendent of Grand Teton. I returned to Yellowstone in 2003 as Chief of Facility Management, and was promoted to Deputy Superintendent.

During my time with the National Park Service we struggled to address park maintenance needs that were constantly falling behind in making repairs. Currently, the backlog is estimated at a half-a-billion dollars. This may be a staggering total, but it is not only the restrooms, there are trails that need repair. It is also many large projects that are tens and even hundreds of millions of dollars. At Yellowstone, the largest need is for road reconstruction.

During my time, appropriating funding was not sufficient for reaching maintenance. Caring for the inventory of assets only second to the Department of Defense requires consistent and sufficient funding. At Yellowstone we consistently ran at a maintenance funding of about 40 percent of what was needed, just to keep the deferred maintenance backlog from growing. Revenue certainly helps, and a lot of that is dedicated to deferred maintenance. However, the recently proposed fee hike would address less than 1 percent of the backlog.

Deferred maintenance also addresses many significant historic structures across our great Nation. We do have a number of questions and look forward to greater clarity of the Administration's proposed Public Lands Infrastructure Fund. We note that any fund to address maintenance should not be or not rely on any energy initiatives that threaten the health of our public lands, waters, our parks and ecosystems that we rely on.

The revenue sources cannot just be dedicated funds. It must also be reliable and dependable. Construction projects rely on multiyear funding that is known and dependable. Consider the Yellowstone Road program, a program of projects identified well into the future. Project development often starts 5 years before construction. Document preparation, as well as contracting, starts 2 to 3 years out. Yellowstone's road program has been successful for 30

years, due to multiple-year programs and projects with reliable and predictable funding stream.

Addressing park maintenance is critical. Americans and international visitors are coming in more numbers every year—2017 saw 330 million visits to our park system, equal to the Centennial year of 2016.

In conclusion, the National Parks Conservation Association and our many partners concerned with the park funding crisis are grateful for the Administration and Members of Congress on both sides of the aisle for now prioritizing public lands infrastructure. We also commend the Administration for now supporting the concept of dedicated funding. We urge the Administration and members of the Committee to work with the bipartisan champions of the National Park Service Legacy Act.

I ask that you consider that national parks are precious to America as pristine watersheds and carbon sinks. The parks represent America's natural and cultural heritage. Our parks reflect who we are, as Americans. If we don't care for them and restore them, it reflects poorly on us, as a people.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify and for the Committee's consideration of our views.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Iobst follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF STEVEN F. IOBST, NORTHERN ROCKIES REGIONAL COUNCIL MEMBER, NATIONAL PARKS CONSERVATION ASSOCIATION

Chairman Bishop, Ranking Member Grijalva, and members of the Committee, thank you for inviting me to testify at this important hearing. I am Steven F. Iobst. I worked for the National Park Service for 43 years in many different assignments. I retired as Deputy Superintendent of Yellowstone National Park in 2016 after several assignments in parks and the Denver Service Center. Relevant to this hearing, I was responsible for planning, design, and construction as well as facility maintenance and park operations over those 43 years. I am a civil engineer.

I testify today in my capacity as a member of the Northern Rockies Regional Council of the National Parks Conservation Association (NPCA), an organization that represents more than 1.2 million members and supporters across the country who care deeply about our national parks. I am also affiliated with the Coalition to Protect America's National Parks, a group of over 1,200 former National Park Service (NPS) employees who continue to support the parks. That group has testified before this Committee as to the urgency of addressing park maintenance needs and I appreciate the opportunity to build on those observations and recommendations. NPCA, the Coalition to Protect America's National Parks, the Pew Charitable Trusts, and the National Trust for Historic Preservation are among the many public-interest groups throughout the country dedicated to addressing this issue, and we are grateful for your attention to the need.

Through my testimony I hope to convey the scope of the national park deferred maintenance needs and the urgency of addressing the need through a robust, consistent and dependable funding source. Increasing current funding sources is critical, as are supplemental funding sources including philanthropic giving and appropriate fee revenue. However, what is ultimately needed to address the full scope of the maintenance backlog is dedicated funding. We commend the bipartisan interest in Congress, in particular the sponsors of the National Park Service Legacy Act, for recognizing this need, and now the Administration for supporting a dedicated funding approach to public lands infrastructure.

During my time at NPS, we struggled to address park maintenance needs and were constantly falling behind in making repairs. My first career assignment was as a civil engineer in design at the Denver Service Center. Design and construction assignments included projects in over 40 parks, including Shenandoah, Yosemite, Acadia, St. Gaudens, Gateway, Fire Island, Virgin Islands, and National Capital Sites. In 1979, I moved to Yellowstone where I began my career in park operations as an engineer in Maintenance and Concessions Management as well as working directly for the Superintendent to guide Planning, Compliance, and Development.

Rocky Mountain National Park pulled me away from Yellowstone in late-1988 where I served as Chief of Facility Management which included a special assignment as Acting Chief of Park Facility Management in Washington, DC, where I worked with a team to develop today's Asset Management Program. In 1997, I returned to the greater Yellowstone area serving as Deputy Superintendent at Grand Teton National Park and Acting Superintendent from November 2000 to February 2002. I returned to Yellowstone in April 2003 to serve as Chief of Facility Management for Yellowstone National Park until August 2011 when I was promoted to Deputy Superintendent. I am proud to say that I have extensive experience in facilities maintenance, rehabilitation, design, engineering, construction, and contracting. In 43 years I directed or provided indirect oversight of nearly $1 billion in rehabilitation, new construction, replacement, or historic preservation.

My experience at the park service was one of countless NPS staff who have long struggled with the reality that park assets are aging and have not received the capital investment they require. This is posing serious threats to the ability of parks to meet their mission, preserve our natural and cultural heritage, and bolster the visitor experience on which countless local economies rely.

Currently, Yellowstone National Park, where the bulk of my NPS career was, is estimated to have at least $497 million in repair needs, as of September 30, 2017, according to the NPS online database. This may be a staggering total but one thing that is important for Congress to understand is that overdue repair projects are not only the leaky roofs, degraded trails and pathways, and bathrooms that need repair. These projects certainly add up, but there are also many large projects at Yellowstone and throughout the country that are each dozens and even hundreds of millions of dollars each. At Yellowstone, the largest need is for major road repairs and reconstruction after many years during which there have not been available funds to address the need. NPS highlighted the large scope of the Yellowstone roads need at https://www.nps.gov/transportation/pdfs/Yellowstone_Roads_Reconstruction-022016.pdf among numerous other park transportation "megaprojects" outlined at https://www.nps.gov/transportation/transportation_needs_beyond_core_program.html.

While philanthropy and fee revenue have been critical to Yellowstone and other parks, it is not realistic to expect that such funding sources could cover projects of this magnitude. And of course for needs such as the many large water and wastewater infrastructure projects, there is simply no appeal for philanthropists who expect the government to do its share to care for its assets.

In my career I do not recall a time when funding matched need, with "need" being defined as the amount of funding required to perform routine repairs and preventive maintenance as well as cyclic maintenance to keep all assets in good condition. What I experienced firsthand each year was that the chief cause of the growth of the maintenance backlog was insufficient funding to maintain, repair, and in some cases, reconstruct park assets. Caring for an inventory of assets second only to the Department of Defense requires consistent and sufficient funding. Unfortunately, the Park Service has not been receiving this funding. My analysis at Yellowstone, utilizing the Park Asset Management Planning Tool, was that we consistently ran a routine maintenance program as I just described with 40 percent of the funding required to just keep deferred maintenance from growing.

Parks throughout the system face a diversity of maintenance needs, from roads and buildings to trails, water systems, docks, parking lots and more. Examples include:

- **Roads:** Kolob Canyon Road, a popular 5-mile scenic drive at Zion National Park, needs $15 million in repairs—an amount that is nearly equal to the entire value of the road itself;
- **Trails:** Also at Zion, among millions of dollars in trail needs are the Overlook Point Trail, the famed Angel's Landing Trail and the West Rim Trail. Walking, hiking, and biking trails at Yosemite are in disrepair or closed. More than $17 million in deferred maintenance affects these systems, including the Yosemite Bike Path, the Stubblefield Canyon Trail, and the Clark Point Spur Trail;
- **Historic buildings:** At San Antonio Missions National Historical Park, nearly $400,000 is needed to repair the office and sacristy of the Franciscan father-president, who oversaw development of these historically important missions. A compound where Native Americans lived, and the walls that encircle it, also requires restoration at a cost of $600,000;

- **Campsites:** At Voyageurs National Park, campsites have more than $1 million worth of deferred maintenance. This includes restoring and improving tent sites, maintaining fire rings, and repairing and installing new bear-proof food storage lockers;
- **Water Systems:** At Rocky Mountain National Park, the primary water system at the park's headquarters, where the Beaver Meadows Visitor Center is located, has 50- to 70-year-old pipes that need to be replaced. The cost estimate for this work is nearly $5 million;
- **Historic landscapes:** At Gettysburg National Military Park they comprise by far the largest investment need to restore the park to its original appearance, including addressing invasive plants.

These and other needs are highlighted by the Pew Charitable Trusts on its website at http://www.pewtrusts.org/en/research-and-analysis/fact-sheets/2017/05/national-park-case-studies. Included with my testimony are several of these case studies we ask to be submitted for the record.

Park infrastructure needs are not only facilities that promote and enhance the visiting experience. The maintenance problem includes projects that help protect natural resources, such as channel markers in the Everglades that prevent boaters from harming sensitive seagrasses. It also includes many historic structures of national significance. From the inspiring civil rights movement history shared at Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historical Park's historic buildings to the several hundred Native American cultural sites and cliff dwellings at Mesa Verde National Park, these world-renowned places tell the diverse stories of our Nation. Unfortunately, according to FY 2016 data, historic assets represent 45 percent of the maintenance backlog and without dedicated funding to address these needs, conditions will continue to deteriorate and risk permanent loss of these resources.

There are several ways these diverse repair needs can be addressed. I've briefly noted the importance and limitations of philanthropy, and my colleagues on the panel offer great insight into this issue. Notably, matching philanthropic funds with Federal dollars is critical. A successful program in this regard has been the Centennial Challenge, which now thanks to the support of this Committee, enjoys a dedicated funding source through senior pass revenue. Importantly, this program should continue to receive appropriated funding, as there is tremendous philanthropic interest in this program, beyond what can be matched through the senior pass alone. We urge the Administration to propose appropriations for this important program in future budgets.

Fee revenue, too, is critical, but can only be increased so much without becoming prohibitive. Even the recently proposed fee hike for the peak visiting season at 17 parks throughout the system would only address less than 1 percent of the NPS backlog, and that proposed fee hike is one we and others oppose because we fear it is too much and threatens to price Americans out of their parks. Fees play an important role, particularly in parks such as Yellowstone, but are not a realistic or appropriate source to provide the level of funding needed to address the bulk of park maintenance needs.

We know that in recent years, NPS has explored avenues for greater efficiencies and cost savings such as improvements in energy efficiency. We know that technology improvements are among the avenues NPS can continue to explore to identify savings that can help with maintenance costs. However, these and other supplemental funding sources cannot cover the scope of the backlog problem. They cannot alone be relied on to address park needs; a serious Federal investment is needed.

Appropriations for day-to-day, cyclic maintenance and larger repair projects for non-transportation assets have long been insufficient. Appropriations should be increased to better meet these needs. We commend the appropriations committees for increasing funding for the NPS, including for its maintenance needs, over the last 3 fiscal years, with a particularly helpful boost in FY 2016. We urge Congress to build on these investments.

On this subject, I must note that the Administration's FY 2018 and FY 2019 budget proposals for appropriated funding are unhelpful and in many ways, damaging. We urge the Administration to do better in future budgets, and for upcoming FY 2019 budget hearings in this Committee to address national park funding needs including but not limited to the deferred maintenance challenge.

At this moment, members of this Committee are positioned to advocate for improved funding for NPS in both FY 2018, given the recent budget deal, and FY 2019. NPS transportation assets that comprise half of the backlog should also receive increased funding through appropriations for the Nationally Significant Federal Lands and Tribal Projects Program in the Transportation, Housing and

Urban Development Appropriations Subcommittee, as well as in the next transportation bill. We're grateful the last transportation bill, the FAST Act, increased funding for park transportation infrastructure, but funds remain vastly insufficient.

We are dismayed that in the current budget climate, and for the foreseeable future, the constraints on these funding sources, including through the Budget Control Act, will make difficult securing the robust level of funding that is needed to address the national park repair backlog, despite the commendable bipartisan support Congress has shown—and must continue showing—for park funding through current transportation and non-transportation revenue sources.

Thus a dedicated, robust funding source to address the large scope of the backlog is needed. In this regard, we commend Senators Warner and Portman and Representatives Hurd, Kilmer, Reichert, and Hanabusa for introducing the National Park Service Legacy Act (S. 751/H.R. 2584), as well as the many bipartisan Members of Congress who have thus far agreed to co-sponsor this important bill. The bill would dedicate more than $11 billion to the parks backlog over 30 years through receipts from onshore and offshore energy development not otherwise dedicated to other purposes.

We also commend Congressman Simpson for his commitment to the public lands backlog, as well as to the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF), through the LAND Act. The concept of addressing both the parks backlog and LWCF needs is one NPCA wholeheartedly supports. In this regard, we also commend Senators Murkowski and Cantwell for their commitment to both of these important needs in the energy bill currently before Congress.

In this context, we feel it is important for the Administration to not only express support for and provide its own recommendations for addressing park infrastructure, but to work with both parties in Congress to arrive at legislation that dedicates reliable revenue to the backlog problem through a dedicated funding source. In this regard, the Administration's recent proposal is very helpful.

We do have a number of questions about, and look forward to greater clarity of, the Administration's proposed Public Lands Infrastructure Fund, which deposits "half of additional receipts generated by expanded Federal energy development" to address the backlog on Department of the Interior (DOI) lands, as well as for Bureau of Indian Education schools.

We must note that any fund to address maintenance should be sure to not rely on any energy initiatives that threaten the health of our public lands and waters, our parks and the ecosystems on which they rely. NPCA urges Congress to recognize that explicitly linking infrastructure funding to environmentally threatening and damaging energy production proposals would not only threaten the integrity of our land, air, water and wildlife but also compromise the bipartisan support that's needed to pass a bill to address public lands maintenance.

Critically, the revenue source cannot just be a dedicated fund; it must also be a reliable and dependable one. Legislation that dedicates funding to the deferred maintenance problem should include several components:

Reliable Funding: Any funding source for national park repairs must have certainty. If a funding source relies on projected revenue as the Administration's proposal appears to, then those projections must be sound such that there is a high level of confidence that there will be sufficient funds to address parks' billions of dollars in repair needs. As this Committee knows well, passing legislation is very difficult, so it is important that legislation will actually address the problem with realistic and reliable funds.

Certainty of Funding Stream: Any funding source must be dependable. As I experienced during my time at the Park Service, construction projects rely on multi-year funding that is known and dependable at the outset, which in part helps NPS to stage projects and work with contractors who need funding certainty.

Consider the Yellowstone Road Program, something I have extensive experience with and without question the best inter-agency partnership (with the Federal Highway Administration) I have ever experienced. It is a program of projects identified well into the future. Scoping, permitting, compliance and surveying often start 5 years before construction; design, leading to contract documents usually takes 2 to 3 years. Once construction begins, the project has been in the queue for 3 to 5 years. Yellowstone's Road Program has been successful for 30 years due to multiple 6-year programs of projects with a reliable, and predictable, funding stream.

We fear that without a specific, known amount each year, the uncertainty of the funding available would challenge NPS' capacity to engage in the procurement and contracting that is needed for successful repair and reconstruction projects. The backlog includes many projects such as water systems that require at least tens of millions of dollars for each project; these projects need multi-year funding.

Legislation to address the repair backlog must be designed in such a way as to provide a dependable revenue stream in this regard.

In addition to consistent and robust dedicated annual funding, legislation to address deferred maintenance should consider:

- Funding parity between transportation and non-transportation deferred maintenance needs;
- A public-private partnership component to leverage non-Federal funds for projects that can attract philanthropic interest, while still dedicating robust funding to the many projects that cannot receive philanthropic support;
- Giving appropriators discretion with the list of priority projects while still ensuring a dedicated funding stream.

Addressing park maintenance is critical in part because our national parks resonate so deeply with the American public, frequenting our parks like never before. The National Park Service celebrated its Centennial in 2016. Americans and international visitors participated by visiting in record numbers, with more than 330 million visits last year, an all-time record. While the data released last week indicate on-average essentially flat 2017 visitation compared to 2016, visitation clearly remains high. Notably, in some parks to the extent that it is further challenging the ability of park superintendents to meet needs with insufficient staffing and other resources.

While last year's crowds stressed the capacity of the Service to meet the demand, public reaction remained high, topping 90 percent satisfaction. Similarly, the private businesses that support and accommodate park visitors saw record years. During peak visitor season, these businesses employ more people than the National Park Service. As a result of visitor spending in surrounding communities, many of them rural, national parks support $32 billion in economic activity nationally and nearly 300,000 jobs. The existence value of our heritage has significant value to Americans: a recent economic study done by Harvard University and the University of Colorado concluded that the American public values the services of the National Park Service at $92 billion.

Addressing the maintenance backlog also creates jobs. A recent study, *Restoring Parks, Creating Jobs: How Infrastructure Restoration in the National Park System Can Create or Support Jobs*, commissioned by The Pew Charitable Trusts and conducted by the independent firm Cadmus Group, found that more than 110,000 jobs could be created or supported if funds were invested to resolve the NPS maintenance backlog.

On the subject of infrastructure, we must also note before concluding this testimony our deep concern with many provisions in the Administration's *Legislative Outline for Rebuilding Infrastructure in America*. The proposal seeks to undermine fundamental environmental laws, dispose of the NPS-managed George Washington Memorial Parkway, allow for expedited construction of pipelines through national parks, and otherwise threaten the cultural and natural resources central to the preservation of our national parks and their ecosystems. As the Administration and Congress work together to address infrastructure, we urge these concepts be left out of any legislative package. Such provisions would not only threaten public lands and the broader environment, but would also compromise needed bipartisanship to move such a package to the President's desk.

In conclusion, NPCA and our many partners concerned with the park funding crisis are grateful that the Administration and Members of Congress on both sides of the aisle are now prioritizing public lands infrastructure. We also commend the Administration for now supporting the concept of a dedicated funding stream for public lands maintenance needs. Legislation addressing the maintenance backlog must have a realistic and dependable funding stream. And such legislation should not rely on undermining the integrity of our land, air, water and wildlife protections.

We urge the Administration and members of this Committee to work with the bipartisan champions of the National Park Service Legacy Act, appropriators, party leadership and other Members of Congress to support a dedicated, robust funding stream for national park repair needs.

I am encouraged by the paradigm shift that could lead to a transformational change in funding deferred maintenance projects on National Park Service lands. I ask that you consider that national parks are national, regional, and local economic engines; that national parks are precious to America as pristine watersheds and carbon sinks; that park sites represent America's natural and cultural heritage; and that they are our national identity and irreplaceable.

Our national parks reflect who we are as Americans. From Yellowstone to the Everglades and the Statue of Liberty to the Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial Site, these places are our heritage. If we don't care for them and restore them, it reflects poorly on us as a people. We have an opportunity before us to do right for our parks and the Americans who own and have a deep connection with them.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify and for the Committee's consideration of our views.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Now, Mr. Puskar. Did I get the emphasis right this time?

Mr. PUSKAR. Perfect.

The CHAIRMAN. All right. It will be the last time I do it correctly. [Laughter.]

The CHAIRMAN. You are recognized for 5 minutes.

STATEMENT OF DAN PUSKAR, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, PUBLIC LANDS ALLIANCE, SILVER SPRING, MARYLAND

Mr. PUSKAR. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Mr. Ranking Member, and to all members of the Committee for being here.

The Public Lands Alliance was created 40 years ago by and for the non-profit partners of America's public lands. Our 135 member organizations are truly operational partners, not just of national parks and wildlife refuges, but also national conservation areas, forests, and more that this Committee oversees.

Ours are the folks helping to staff visitor centers. They are hiring and managing conservation corps. They are providing educational programs, they are managing volunteers, they are supplying interpretive and educational materials. And they are not doing these things on the ground in these public lands, they are funding it.

Over $250 million annually is given to these public lands through gifts, through in-kind services to help save and leverage the other dollars that Congress and others are providing to the parks, refuges, and more. And it is because of these investments in the visitor experience that we are helping to create jobs in local communities to enhance tourism.

Our members, therefore, rely on and support the infrastructure in all of these important places. And deferred maintenance drags down or makes impossible the visitor experience they want to have, and can create unsafe conditions for those working there, whether our esteemed colleagues at the agencies or folks like ours on the ground working there day to day.

When we look at places just down the road like Prince William Forest, where Nature Bridge is doing an incredible job bringing hundreds and thousands of youth from around the DC area to have a residential learning experience, they should not be worried about the 1930s-era pipes that are keeping the cabins that those kids are staying in working. They should be worrying about tick season, not worrying about sewage spilling over. We need to get more kids there, and these kinds of deficiencies are preventing that from happening.

At places like Red Rock Canyon National Conservation Area, the Southern Nevada Conservancy would love to be doing more educational programs on their boardwalks, one of the few ADA-compliant areas to go into the most built core of the national

conservation area, but they have had to curtail those tours, they have had to curtail the ability to go there, because of the maintenance problems.

Partners are working to solve these issues. We are not just there hoping that the government will take care of us.

At Rocky Mountain National Park, the Rocky Mountain Conservancy partnered through a Centennial Challenge Grant to help repair the Alluvial Fan Trail, bringing on their conservation corps, matching one-to-one with the government and their own private funds to get work done.

At St. Mark's National Wildlife Refuge in Florida, the Friends of St. Mark's are helping to restore a historic lighthouse that can barely get a visitor in it. They open it once a year, just so people can see it is still there. There is predicted 40,000 visitors a year would go into this historic structure, and they can't because there is no money available. Partners are raising funds to make that happen.

As my colleague, Jason Rano, will be talking about as well, private philanthropy, non-profit support is a key piece of making this solution happen. We can raise money for historic structures. We can invest in the visitor experience, in recreational opportunities.

But it is not possible and unlikely that you would get donors interested in paving your roads, rebuilding your sewage systems. They are not going to be able to do bridges. And, if you can imagine a group like Jason's, the National Park Foundation, sending out a letter to their donors saying, "Hey, can you help us build a road," he is not going to get as many supporters as you want him to have.

We need, as everyone has said on this panel already, dedicated, reliable, sizable funding. We need to think big. We need to take ideas like the National Park Service Legacy Act that the Public Lands Alliance fully supports. We need to think big, like the Public Lands Infrastructure Fund proposal, both of which, at their core, look to the possibility of taking revenue from energy that is happening on our public lands, and reinvesting it in infrastructure. That is a great idea. We shouldn't just do it in national parks, we shouldn't just do it in parks and wildlife refuges. We should do it across Department of the Interior lands.

We should invest in things like the Centennial Challenge, not just in the Park Service, but give other lands the opportunity to have those matching funds, as well. Together, with things like fees and others, we can solve this.

Thank you so much for your time.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Puskar follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF DAN PUSKAR, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, PUBLIC LANDS ALLIANCE

Chairman Bishop, Ranking Member Grijalva, and members of the Committee, thank you for inviting me to testify today on this critical issue.

I serve as executive director of the Public Lands Alliance (PLA), an organization created 40 years ago by and for the non-profit partners of America's public lands. Our 135 member organizations are operational partners of more than 600 parks, refuges, conservation areas, lakes, and forests with an on-the-ground presence in every U.S. state and territory. They staff visitor centers, hire and manage youth and veterans corps, conduct educational programs, and provide interpretive materials. Not only do PLA members save and leverage government funds when providing these services, they also annually contribute more than $250 million to our public

lands through their philanthropic grants, programs and services. By enhancing the public lands visitor experience, PLA members create jobs and support national and international tourism.

The vast majority of PLA members rely on public lands infrastructure to operate their organizations and programs. PLA commends this Committee, the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, and the Administration for its focus on enhancing public lands infrastructure, especially those assets that have fallen into disrepair after years of neglect. Deferred maintenance is an overall drag on the visitor experience as facilities become worn or less reliable.

Through the examples and discussion below, PLA will encourage the Committee to:

- Create a dedicated, reliable, and sizable funding source for all DOI public lands that eliminates the existing maintenance backlog while providing necessary routine and cyclic maintenance funding to prevent future backlogs.
- Incentivize philanthropy and non-profit support for appropriate maintenance projects and other visitor experience enhancements by expanding matching fund programs, like the NPS Centennial Challenge, to other DOI agencies.

IMPACT OF THE BACKLOG ON NON-PROFIT SUPPORT

The deferred maintenance backlog has direct and indirect impacts on non-profit public lands partners. Consider the following examples:

- **Prince William Forest Park, VA (NPS):** Congress designated the park during the Great Depression as a retreat where urban youth could immerse themselves in nature. The park welcomed thousands of children, who slept in cabins built by the Civilian Conservation Corps and the Works Progress Administration. Non-profit partners like NatureBridge continue this legacy by bringing children and teens from the DC metro area for daytime and overnight environmental education programs. Unfortunately, the park's plumbing rests on the original pipes from the 1930s, which are not properly insulated and have a high risk of bursting in the winter. Consequently, buildings used for youth programs are closed from December through March. Additionally, the old pipe system has issues with backing up, which limits the number of youth who can participate during the already truncated season.
- **Red Rock Canyon National Conservation Area, NV (BLM):** Red Spring Boardwalk is in dire need to replacement. Not only is Red Spring Boardwalk one of the most family friendly destinations in Red Rock Canyon, it should be used regularly for school field trips and is perhaps the most significant ADA compliant trail. The old wooden decking is dry-rotted through in many places and creates a serious safety hazard. Patchwork repairs have been attempted, but the condition has deteriorated to the point of partial closure and one of its non-profit partners, Southern Nevada Conservancy, is no longer able to take groups there for educational programming. Without a complete replacement, the boardwalk may be closed in its entirety.
- **Shenandoah National Park, VA (NPS):** As the philanthropic partner to the park, the Shenandoah National Park Trust is charged to provide a margin of excellence to park programs, not to support fundamental park functions. However, due to a more than $79 million backlog and uncertainties in appropriated funds, NPS in recent years has asked the Trust to redirect its philanthropy. Over the past 3 years, the Trust has therefore provided over a quarter-million dollars of our philanthropy to trail maintenance. As a "hiker's park" with over 500 miles of trails, routine trail maintenance should be supported by base funding. This has distracted the Trust from achieving other core mission goals, shared with the NPS, including field trips to our park for Title I schools and critical natural resource research and management programs.

Directly and indirectly, the backlog is detrimentally effecting these non-profit organizations capacity to provide educational and experiential learning to young visitors due to a higher-order need for visitor access and safety. PLA believes that barriers to access and safety on public lands are a core responsibility of the Federal Government and should not be pushed on to non-profit or other partners.

A DEDICATED, RELIABLE, AND SIZEABLE FUNDING SOURCE

Whether it is a deteriorating road or bridge or a crumbling historic structure, neglected built assets on America's public lands can have a detrimental impact on

the experience of visitors as well as the employees of land management agencies, non-profit partners, concessioners and others whose jobs rely on them. Non-profit partners are unable to assist with fixing roads—the primary source of deferred maintenance across Federal public lands—or baseline assets like wastewater and sewer systems. Philanthropy is unavailable and inappropriate for these core Federal Government responsibilities.

Yet there are examples of infrastructure—such as a resource for which a public land was preserved (e.g. the Statute of Liberty or a historic lodge) or a source of recreation and enjoyment (e.g. a hiking trail)—for which private support can be marshalled. Take, for example, the Golden Gate National Recreation Area, managed by the NPS in California. The maintenance backlog had resulted in unsafe and deteriorating buildings on Alcatraz Island. The conditions threaten the island's ability to host visitors including the declining fixed wharf on Alcatraz. Maintenance backlog on trails, historic buildings, waterfront wharfs and restrooms erode the visitor experience. Because of the historic nature and private interest in Alcatraz, the Golden Gate National Parks Conservancy has provided a tremendous investment of more than $10 million toward its historic buildings and grounds, and yet much more funding is required. NPS currently estimates the deferred maintenance needs of Golden Gate National Recreation Area at more than $325 million. The private sector, even if led by an organization as sophisticated as the Conservancy, cannot be expected to tackle this massive charge.

PLA calls on the Committee to identify a dedicated, reliable, and sizable funding source that can meaningfully tackle the more than $20 billion of deferred maintenance on all Federal public lands, including those managed by DOI.

PLA supports the bipartisan National Park Service Legacy Act (H.R. 2584/S. 751) as one innovative solution. The bill provides more than $11 billion to the NPS backlog over 30 years through receipts from onshore and offshore energy development that are not dedicated to other purposes. It scales this funding up gradually so that the NPS and its partners have time to prepare for larger, more complicated projects. Importantly, it also leverages philanthropy and non-profit support by enabling projects with private funding matches to rise higher in priority.

PLA also welcomes the Administration's outline of the Public Lands Infrastructure Fund, which is funded by 50 percent of increased Federal energy leasing and development activities over Fiscal Year 2018 budget projections. PLA looks forward to seeing a complete bill or proposal to understand more clearly how the Infrastructure Fund would achieve its revenue target.

Though using different mechanisms, both the Legacy Act and the Infrastructure Fund rely on monies generated annually through the production or sale of energy on Federal public lands should be invested in deferred maintenance projects on public lands. This basic premise is the underpinning of the Land and Water Conservation Fund, as well as $50 million provided by the Helium Stewardship Act of 2013 for NPS deferred maintenance projects. PLA supports this general approach, with the caveat that the revenue stream must be predictable and meet its multi-year targets.

In a final bill, PLA further urges the Committee to:

- Broaden the approach to all DOI public lands, including the National Park Service, Fish and Wildlife Service, and Bureau of Land Management. Although beyond the scope of this hearing, the needs of the U.S. Forest Service are also significant.
- Maintain an incentive for public private partnership, like the Legacy Act's use of matching funds to effect prioritization.
- Institute a gradual increase of available annual funds so that land management agencies can scale up their maintenance, contracting, or other staff to efficiently put these funds to use. Similarly, once the deferred maintenance backlog has been reduced to a manageable level, taper but do not eliminate these annual funds to avoid a new backlog increase in the future.
- Pair this focus on the deferred maintenance backlog with continued, coordinated investments in regular and cyclic maintenance and line item construction funding. Without these investments, the backlog will continue to grow, increasing in the long term both public and private costs.

INCENTIVIZE PHILANTHROPY AND NON-PROFIT SUPPORT

As their budgets tighten, land management agencies increasingly have called upon non-profit partners to fund deferred maintenance projects directly. Congress too has looked to non-profit partners to tackle the backlog in recent legislation, especially the Helium Stewardship Act of 2013 and the National Park Service

Centennial Act of 2016, by making new funding available for deferred maintenance in the National Park Service if matched at a minimum of 1:1 by private funds. Non-profit partners have stepped up, delivering more than $77 million in matching funds to Centennial Challenge funds alone since 2015.

Yet opportunities for leverage are uneven across DOI public lands. Consider the following:

- **Rocky Mountain National Park, CO (NPS):** Secretary Zinke recently visited the park to announce combined $400,000 by way of a public-private partnership with the Rocky Mountain Conservancy to rebuild the Alluvial Fan Trail, which sustained serious damage during the 2013 Colorado Floods and remains among the disaster's most visible marks within the park. The money—a Centennial Challenge project that matches $200,000 from the NPS with an identical amount from the Conservancy—will fund Conservation Corps hired and managed by the Conservancy, building skills in youth while simultaneously restoring a popular trail.
- **St. Mark's National Wildlife Refuge, FL (FWS):** The refuge is the home of an iconic Gulf Coast lighthouse, which the Coast Guard transferred to FWS with a leaky roof, rotten floors, and more. Due to unsafe conditions, the site can only be visited once annually by the public. However, the Friends of St. Mark's National Wildlife Refuge has worked with partners to fund a structural assessment that estimated $1.6 million would be needed to fully restore and open it to a projected 40,000 annual visitors. To date, the Friends have raised more than $725,000 and, with contributions from partners and the state of Florida, the tower and keeper house are being restored now. The Friends have also restored the lantern room and the light's lens; a late spring opening is anticipated. FWS has not been able to contribute any funds to this project.

In addition to highlighting the incredible impact of conservation corps on deferred maintenance, the Rocky Mountain National Park example underscores the value of the Centennial Challenge to national park partners. However, as this program is limited to the NPS, national wildlife refuges cannot partake in it and organization's like the Friends of St. Mark's must seek leverage outside the Federal Government.

Given the success of the Centennial Challenge, PLA strongly recommends that the Centennial Challenge program should scaled up and embrace other land management agencies. Although the tradition of private philanthropy is not as long in FWS or BLM as it is in the NPS, the example of the Friends of St. Mark's highlights its new emphasis, as does this Committee's long-standing support for a congressionally chartered Bureau of Land Management Foundation.

PLA believes there is a compelling need to supplement to the dedicated, reliable, and sizable funding source with matching funds that can be used not only to tackle the deferred maintenance backlog, but also projects worthy of philanthropy that will grow the backlog if not addressed in a timely manner. Programs like the Centennial Challenge that can be used on deferred maintenance yet also tackle a broader array of educational and conservation needs give land managers in the field and their partners greater flexibility to deliver a meaningful visitor experience.

ENHANCING ACCESS AND THE VISITOR EXPERIENCE

The vast majority of deferred maintenance backlog issues can be attributed to a need to increase access to public lands and then to improve the experience of those who do visit these special places. Non-profit organizations that partner with DOI bureaus like the National Park Service, Fish and Wildlife Service, and Bureau of Land Management share that mission and are eager to work with this Committee and their agency colleagues where appropriate and useful. As a representative of these partners, PLA stands ready to assist the Committee in any way it can to develop a long-lasting solution for the deferred maintenance backlog in all DOI managed lands.

Thank you again for the invitation to testify.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

And finally, Mr. Rano.

STATEMENT OF JASON RANO, VICE PRESIDENT, GOVERNMENT RELATIONS, NATIONAL PARK FOUNDATION, WASHINGTON, DC

Mr. RANO. Chairman Bishop, Ranking Member Grijalva, and members of the Committee, thank you for inviting me to testify at today's important hearing. My name is Jason Rano. I am the Vice President of Government Relations at the National Park Foundation, the congressionally chartered philanthropic partner of the National Park Service.

As you know, 2016 was the 100th anniversary of the National Park Service. NPS and the Foundation worked together to take advantage of this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to bring Americans together to celebrate, and look forward to the second century of our national parks through our Find Your Park public awareness campaign.

Thanks in part to these efforts, 2016 saw a record 331 million visits to our parks. And just last week, NPS released 2017 visitation numbers, which showed a similar number of visits to our 417 national parks. That visitation has risen and maintained these levels is a testament to the love and importance of our national parks.

However, increased and sustained visitation to our national parks increases the already high strain on them. Secretary Zinke and many members of this Committee have made tackling the $11.6 billion deferred maintenance backlog a priority.

The focus of my testimony today is the role of philanthropy in reducing the backlog, what can philanthropy do, and what is best done with Federal dollars.

NPF's centennial campaign for America's national parks began in 2016 with a $350 million goal. As of today, the Foundation has raised $494 million toward our new $500 million goal. Working together with NPS, this money has been spent with an eye toward improving the visitor experience through the rehabilitation and repair of trails and facilities, protecting and restoring wildlife habitat, and supporting the work of youth and veterans corps to enhance our parks.

The deferred maintenance backlog is a top priority for anyone who loves our national parks. As we see increased visitation, we see increased strain on the facilities, the trails, the roads, the bridges, and the staff, all of which can have a negative impact on the visitor experience.

Imagine being a first-time or infrequent visitor and encountering closed bathrooms, washed out trails, and impassible roads. Needless to say, that may impact whether you return to the park. And it doesn't just impact the park, it also plays a role in the financial health of the hundreds of gateway communities that rely on park visitors for survival. In fact, in 2016 the 331 million visits to our national parks resulted in $18.4 billion in spending, and supported 318,000 jobs.

As the conversation has increased around how to tackle the deferred maintenance backlog, there has been more discussion about what role philanthropy can play in helping to do so. Philanthropy can play a role, but it is limited to specific areas. Philanthropy is not a panacea for deferred maintenance.

Through our fundraising campaign, the Foundation has found that donors are enthusiastic about projects in national parks that rehab, repair, and build trails, as well as restoring historic buildings and memorials. What we haven't found is donors who are willing to support roads, bridges, sewer systems, water pipes, or other hard infrastructure. This type of maintenance is viewed by donors as an inherently governmental responsibility that should be funded by Congress. Donors prefer to provide the margin of excellence that NPF can't, because of lack of funds or because of the length and uncertainty of the appropriations process.

The National Park Foundation is committed to continuing our work with Congress and our partners at NPS to do what we do best: raise philanthropic funds for our parks that match donor interest with Park Service need, including the backlog.

It is important to note, though, that while NPF and local friends groups around the country have raised hundreds of millions of dollars for projects and programs, and while philanthropic enthusiasm for our parks has never been higher, philanthropy is not a panacea for deferred maintenance.

Thank you. I look forward to answering your questions.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Rano follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF JASON RANO, VICE PRESIDENT, GOVERNMENT RELATIONS, NATIONAL PARK FOUNDATION

Chairman Bishop, Ranking Member Grijalva, and members of the Committee, thank you for holding this hearing on "Exploring Innovative Solutions to Reduce the Department of the Interior's Maintenance Backlog" and inviting me to testify. My name is Jason Rano and I am the Vice President, Government Relations at the National Park Foundation, the congressionally chartered philanthropic partner of the National Park Service.

Chartered by Congress in 1967, the National Park Foundation was founded on a legacy that began more than a century ago, when private citizens from all walks of life acted to establish and protect our national parks. As we celebrate our 50th anniversary throughout this year, the National Park Foundation carries on that tradition as the only national charitable non-profit whose sole mission is to directly support the National Park Service.

As you know, 2016 was the 100th anniversary of the National Park Service. The National Park Service and National Park Foundation worked together hand-in-hand to take advantage of this 'once in a lifetime' opportunity to bring Americans of all ages, races, genders, ethnicities, sexual orientations, and political affiliations together to celebrate the Centennial and look forward to the second century of our national parks.

Thanks in part to these efforts, 2016 saw a record level of visitation to our parks with 331 million visits. Just last week NPS released visitation numbers for 2017, which showed a similar number of visits to our 417 national parks. In fact, according to NPS, there were only 88,000 fewer visits to our parks in 2017 from the record setting number we saw in 2016.

That visitation has risen and maintained these levels is a testament to the love and importance of our national parks for Americans and people from around the world. Our national parks tell the story of America—including important and difficult stories in our history.

However, increased and sustained visitation to our national parks increases the already high strain on the facilities, roads, bridges, trails as well as hurting the visitor experience by creating traffic jams and not having enough staff to effectively interact with visitors.

Secretary Zinke and many members of this Committee have made tackling the nearly $11.6 billion deferred maintenance backlog (as of September 30, 2017) a priority.

The focus of my testimony today is the role of philanthropy in tackling the maintenance backlog—basically what can philanthropy do and what is best done with Federal dollars.

CENTENNIAL CAMPAIGN FOR AMERICA'S NATIONAL PARKS

As many of you are aware, one of the National Park Foundation's priorities over the several years has been to capitalize on the philanthropic enthusiasm for our parks as part of our Centennial Campaign for America's National Parks. Launched in February 2016 with an initial goal of $350 million, the campaign has raised $494 million to date toward a goal of $500 million. We look forward to reaching this historic goal in the next several months.

This money has been spent with an eye toward improving the visitor experience through the rehabilitation and repair of trails and facilities, protecting and restoring wildlife habitat, connecting 4th graders and their families to parks, and supporting the work of youth and veterans corps to enhance our parks.

Deferred Maintenance

The deferred maintenance backlog is a top priority for anyone who loves our national parks. As we see increased visitation we see increased strain on our parks—the facilities, the trails, the roads, the bridges, and the staff—all of which can have a negative impact on the visitor experience.

The National Park Foundation's Find Your Park/Encuentra Tu Parque campaign targeted the millennial generation as the next generation of park visitors, many of whom may be first time or infrequent visitors. Imagine being a first time visitor to a park and encountering closed bathrooms, washed out trails, and impassable roads. Needless to say that may impact whether you return to the park. And that doesn't just impact the park. It also plays a role in the financial health of the hundreds of gateway communities that rely on park visitors for their survival.

In 2016 the 331 million visits to our national parks resulted in $18.4 billion in spending and supported 318,000 jobs.

PHILANTHROPIC ROLE IN DEFERRED MAINTENANCE

As the conversation has increased around how to tackle the deferred maintenance backlog there has been more discussion about what role philanthropy can play in helping to tackle the deferred maintenance backlog. Philanthropy can play a role but it is limited to specific areas and often provides the margin of excellence. Philanthropy is not a panacea for deferred maintenance.

Through our fundraising campaign, the Foundation has found that donors are enthusiastic about projects in national parks that rehabilitate, repair, and build trails as well as restoring historic buildings and Memorials—like the Lincoln Memorial and Washington Monument.

A few projects include:

- $189,885 to date to support restoration and preservation of Grand Canyon National Park's historic Train Depot. This ongoing project will address accessibility to the Depot for people with disabilities and support structural repairs to the Depot's foundation.
- $2 million in matching funds for a 2016 Centennial Challenge project to restore the Drakes Estero marine wilderness at Point Reyes National Seashore. NPF's partnership with Point Reyes National Seashore allowed NPS to clean up 5 miles of oyster racks and remove more than 500 tons of aquaculture debris.
- $303,034 to Sequoia & Kings Canyon National Parks and Sequoia Parks Conservancy to fund the parks' 21st Century Conservation Service Corps since 2015. The Corps recruits disadvantaged young adults from Fresno and Los Angeles to work in the front and back country of Sequoia & Kings Canyon National Parks. Corps members gain a deep connection to the park and valuable training while completing projects such as wilderness trail maintenance, watering and care of restoration area plantings, interpretive services for visitors, boundary fencing assessment and repair, exotic vegetation removal, and more.
- $26,000 for a 2015 Centennial Challenge project at Florissant Fossil Beds National Monument. NPF's support was matched with $26,000 in Federal funds to help the park establish an interdisciplinary Youth Conservation Corps crew. The crew consisted of nine underserved youth from Colorado Springs who developed skills in trail maintenance, trail design and safety features, and protecting and monitoring paleontological sites.

- $150,000 to restore the helical staircase and replicate and install the original light fixtures at Glacier National Park's historic Many Glacier Hotel. In partnership with Glacier National Park Conservancy, NPF's funds helped restore the lobby to its historical significance.
- Over $110,000 to support work on highly trafficked trails at Glacier National Park, including funding for a 21st Century Conservation Corps to reconstruct the park's iconic Hidden Lake Trail at Logan Pass in 2016.
- $121,250 to support a 5-year grant for Yellowstone National Park's Youth Conservation Corps in partnership with Groundwork USA. In August 2017, participants created 60 feet of buck and rail fence, built and installed 20 bumper guards, revitalized four campsites, maintained 6 miles of trail, revegetated 50 yards of steep mountain, and installed and maintained 47 bear proof boxes.
- $18.5 million for the rehabilitation and restoration of and expanded public space at The Lincoln Memorial.
- $12.35 million for the full restoration of Arlington House, The Robert E. Lee Memorial.
- $5.3 million to renovate and rehabilitate the Marine Corps War Memorial (Iwo Jima).
- $3 million to renovate the elevator at the Washington Monument.

What we haven't found in our fundraising is donors who are willing to support roads, bridges, sewer systems, water pipes or other hard infrastructure. This type of maintenance is viewed by donors as inherently governmental responsibilities that should be funded by Congress.

Donors understand that our parks need their support but also understand that our parks belong to all of us and that the government has a responsibility to fund them. Donors prefer to provide that margin of excellence that NPS can't provide because of lack of funds or because it will take too long.

Another important note on the role of philanthropy's limitations is the overall dollars raised. NPF is very proud of our Centennial Campaign for America's National Parks, which upon its completion will have raised $500 million over 5 years (including the quiet phase of the campaign). In contrast, the Fiscal Year 2018 Interior Appropriations bill passed by the House last year provides $2.9 billion for the National Park Service. Even if donors were willing to fund hard infrastructure, the dollars aren't there to cover the needs.

CONCLUSION

The National Park Foundation is committed to continuing to work with Congress and our partners at the National Park Service to raise philanthropic funds to support key projects and programs throughout the park system including those that help with the deferred maintenance backlog.

It's important to note though that while NPF and local friends groups around the country have raised hundreds of millions of dollars for projects and programs and while philanthropic enthusiasm for our parks has never been higher, philanthropy is not a panacea for deferred maintenance.

There are a lot of tools that must be utilized to begin the process of improving the visitor experience for everyone.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

The CHAIRMAN. I thank our witnesses for your oral testimony. Thank you all for staying within the time limit. We will now turn to questions from Committee members.

I remind the Committee members also that we are on the 5-minute system here, so you have 5 minutes to ask the questions and have them answered. I am asking the Committee to be kind enough not to ask a question if there is not enough time to actually get an answer back, because I will still cut you off at 5 minutes.

Mr. Lamborn, we come to you first.

Mr. LAMBORN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you for having this important hearing. Thank you to all of the witnesses for being here.

I would like to follow up on what you were just talking about, Mr. Smith. And Mr. Rano, thank you. Thank you. I couldn't see the tag from here.

But for both of you, we talk about philanthropy as having a role—not a panacea, but having an important role to play—and, I hope, an increasing role. What are the policies, and do we need to look again at the policies concerning giving recognition to that person? Without maybe billboards and over-commercialization, but a tasteful and reasonable recognition that I think is a legitimate and proper thing, especially if it keeps those contributions coming further. Could you both comment on that, please?

Mr. RANO. I think that is absolutely right. And Director's Order 21, which was finalized a few years ago, made incredible progress in doing that. It has played a huge role in the Foundation being able to partner with corporate partners, and the recognition has been something that they have really appreciated.

So, throughout the Find Your Park campaign, which actually continues in another form today, there was recognition of our premiere level corporate partners. And that is something that has helped bring in about $90 million in corporate donations to the Foundation, which has helped.

Mr. LAMBORN. What about signs on the project itself? A sign saying this building was contributed through the funds of XYZ Corporation.

Mr. RANO. I would have to defer to my Park Service colleague on that.

Mr. LAMBORN. Mr. Smith?

Mr. SMITH. The Park Service has come a long way with Director's Order 21, and many of the philanthropic partners understand the limitations that have been put on donor recognition. Many of them are now fully aware that recognition on a donor board inside a visitor center or whatever else is a very substantial way to recognize this. To start to put nomenclature on every single thing that gets done, a walkway or bridge or whatever else, is problematic.

In my short time back, I am hearing that the donor community understands the limits that we have on this, but understands that the recognition that we do now provide under Director's Order 21 does meet their needs. If it is more of a problem, certainly we can have that discussion. But I believe we have come a long way to addressing that issue, Congressman.

Mr. LAMBORN. Well, I think we have come a long way, also. I would like to keep looking at that. Recognition is important, as long as we are striking the proper balance.

And Mr. Smith, I have you talking here. I would like to follow up with a different question. The Committee recently passed the 21st Century Conservation Service Corps Act, by unanimous consent. Secretary Zinke was a supporter of this bill when he was on this Committee. This bill would engage more corps and thousands of young people and veterans who serve in the corps, like in Colorado, to help address more high-priority projects, including backlog maintenance.

Can you talk about the impact that getting thousands of more young people and veterans working on these projects would have?

Mr. SMITH. Congressman, it is one of the most thrilling things that I can deal with, coming back, to get youth to participate on the land, to realize stewardship, to get an understanding that these public lands are important to the American public. Fully, the Department and I, as Deputy Director of the Park Service, fully support getting as many of our youth on our Park Service sites nationwide through all the corps responsibilities, through the Student Conservation Association, through YMCAs, whatever.

To connect young people and veterans back to these public lands is one of the best things we can do to support the National Park Service. And the Department is moving in that direction, certainly, to support that legislation and to get people on the ground. I have been signing grants to accomplish just that in the national parks for this coming year, involving all of those types of youth groups and veterans groups who will provide that on-the-ground stewardship this year.

Mr. LAMBORN. So, these plans are coming along?

Mr. SMITH. Yes. Yes, they are.

Mr. LAMBORN. OK, I appreciate that.

My time is drawing to a close, so I will yield back the balance of my time.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you. You are doing really well. I am proud of you.

[Laughter.]

The CHAIRMAN. Mr. Grijalva, match that.

Mr. GRIJALVA. I hate the unattainable goals that you set for me, Mr. Chairman.

[Laughter.]

Mr. GRIJALVA. Mr. Iobst—and I am sorry if I didn't say that correctly—one of the deep concerns about the Fiscal Year 2019 budget for the Department of the Interior is it basically eliminates all funding for Federal land acquisition. The budget document justifies this massive elimination and cut as an opportunity to then focus on deferred maintenance and other land management priorities. It undermines 50-plus years of success of the Land and Water Conservation Fund. And land acquisition, I think, is an important tool that makes management more efficient and does increase access to our public land.

In your experience, sir, does land acquisition contribute to the deferred maintenance across the National Park System?

Mr. IOBST. If I understand your question, does land acquisition contribute to the deferred maintenance backlog?

Mr. GRIJALVA. Yes.

Mr. IOBST. My experience is very little in holdings that are purchased, which actually reduce maintenance costs and operations costs in certain parks that I have worked with, like Rocky Mountain and Grand Teton.

Mr. GRIJALVA. And yes, you just mentioned what the importance is in promoting access to public lands and acquisition. Do you have to eliminate, as is proposed in the budget, land acquisition to focus on deferred maintenance?

Mr. IOBST. I don't believe that it is something that is mutually exclusive. I think the Park Service and other agencies in the

Department of the Interior, based on my experience, need both emphases in order to carry out their mission.

Mr. GRIJALVA. Yes. Again, sir, if I may, the other concern is the lack of dependability and certainty of the funding stream in the President's proposed Public Lands Infrastructure Fund.

Construction projects, as mentioned, rely on multi-year funding that is known and dependable at the outset. It helps the National Park Service and other agencies to stage their project work with contractors. The uncertainty of available funding would create difficulty for National Park Service to engage in procurement and contracting that is needed to successfully repair these reconstruction projects that are run multi-year.

In your perspective, and in your experience, with many different positions in the National Park Service that you have had, can you speak about the importance of that dependability of funding, particularly for multi-year projects?

Mr. IOBST. Yes, sir, thank you. My experience, and not just large construction projects, but also programs like the repair rehab program and cyclic maintenance program that are part of the National Park Service appropriate—when I, as a park manager and as a chief of facility management, knew what a multi-year program looked like, there is a certain amount of preparation to take place at the park and through centralized contracting offices with project managers to anticipate and even do pre-planning for certain projects.

Therefore, the more successful programs in the National Park Service, based on my experience, are those where there is a known and reliable funding source well into the future.

Mr. GRIJALVA. Yes. Do you have concerns, I mentioned two about the Administration's proposal to fund deferred maintenance. Do you have other concerns that you would like to address at this point?

Mr. IOBST. If I may, I am very encouraged by the idea of a dependable, reliable funding source that is significant in dollars to address what is approaching a $12 billion backlog in the Park Service. I do have concerns regarding operating funds and the fact that diminishment of operating funds in the Fiscal Year 2018 and Fiscal Year 2019 budgets, as examples, do nothing more than contribute to that deferred maintenance backlog, because that is why we are in the condition we are, if you will, with annual funding and operational funding never meeting the need, just to keep that deferred maintenance backlog from growing.

Mr. GRIJALVA. And a self-fulfilling prophecy, which I think, in the course of the budget reductions across this area in the last decade and a half, has contributed to that backlog. And no investment that we can see, other than a wish and a hope that energy production is so robust, so huge, that it begins to deal with deferred maintenance.

I appreciate your answer, and I yield back.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Mr. McClintock.

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Smith, what regulatory hurdles have you encountered in addressing these deferred maintenance needs?

Mr. SMITH. One more time, Congressman.

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. What regulatory hurdles have you encountered?

Mr. SMITH. Certainly in some of the ones that we do for our major projects, the Park Service, because of our historic buildings and because of the nature of our land holdings, we always have the National Environmental Policy Act to have to consider. And that is a process. The Secretary of the Interior has instructed us to streamline that process and not have it take years when we do environmental impacts.

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Yes. I was going to say it is a big process. It goes on for many, many years, and runs up enormous costs. Does it not?

Mr. SMITH. Yes.

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. And how much does that add to our maintenance costs? This simply filling bureaucratic regulatory needs?

Mr. SMITH. It is certainly part of the cost.

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. How big a part? Would you hazard a guess?

Mr. SMITH. I would not want to hazard a guess, but it is certainly—just in time, to get these projects on line—and then certainly there is a dollar amount, but I would not——

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Would you have your folks look into that and get back to this Committee? I would like to know. Of these $12 billion or so of deferred maintenance needs of the National Park Service, how much of it is the actual reconstruction of a bridge or repaving of a road, and how much of it is simply meeting all of these regulatory demands that we placed in your way.

Mr. SMITH. We will provide that for the record, Congressman.

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. I think that would be very enlightening for all of us.

Mr. Rano, have we taken on too much public land? I am from California. We own 48 percent of California, 93 percent of my county of Alpine in the Sierra Nevada, 85 percent of the entire state of Nevada, 65 percent of Utah, 62 percent of Idaho and Alaska.

A few years ago, Mr. Gohmert on this Committee compared the Federal Government to the old miser whose mansion is the city eyesore, the windows broken, paint peeling, weeds growing in the yard, because he spends all of his time and money plotting how to buy his neighbor's properties.

What is your viewpoint on this?

Mr. RANO. Thank you, Congressman. The Foundation does not have a stance or a view on new units or purchasing too much land. We are asked from time to time by the Department and the Service to support new units with philanthropic money, which we are happy to do.

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. But we can't take care of the land we have. And as I look at these numbers, it looks like we have an awful lot.

Mr. Puskar, what are your views on the subject?

Mr. PUSKAR. The Public Lands Alliance very much supports the fact that so many visitors want to experience these public lands. And there is a distinction, we think, between the amount of public

land and what kind of built assets we need to create to make sure that the American public can really experience them.

So, I absolutely believe that investing in roads so there is easier access to get into these places is——

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. We had the National Park Service Director here a few years ago. I asked him, "What would be your preference, as far as prioritizing money, maintenance or acquiring new land?" He said maintenance.

Mr. PUSKAR. I think, given the substantial hurdles that exist for it, I would agree with him.

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Mr. Puskar, I want to go on to another question, and that is that concessionaires seem to take care of their facilities much more efficiently than the land management agencies. Should we be looking at more concession contracts as a better way to manage campsites, trails, restrooms, and other facilities?

Mr. PUSKAR. There are certainly many ways in which the private sector can be supportive of those kinds of efforts.

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. I am not talking about being supportive. I mean hiring to take care of the stuff that we can't take care of.

Mr. PUSKAR. Absolutely. And there are many non-profits across the system, as well, through historic leasing agreements, that are able to provide similar kinds of changes to the maintenance, to rehabilitate and ensure that those places can be used by the public. Historic leasing is one of those areas we think the Park Service can expand its work.

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Thank you.

Mr. Rano, you mentioned record visitation of the national parks. But doesn't that include visits to Washington, DC memorials, and the like? If I walked down the Capitol Mall and I just drop in to see the Lincoln Memorial, the Washington Monument, the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, the Korean War Memorial, does that count as five visitations?

Mr. RANO. It does.

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Because I am killing an hour on the Mall.

Mr. RANO. Yes, but also——

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. OK, what concerns me, though, is that number, I think, is very misleading. What is going to happen to overnight stays? It is the overnight stays that I think better represent the use of our national parks as planned destinations for visitors.

The CHAIRMAN. You will get a chance to——

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Up or down? Is it going up or going down?

Mr. RANO. I don't have that number.

The CHAIRMAN. OK. Ms. Bordallo.

Ms. BORDALLO. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Smith, the 1978 Federal law that establishes the War in the Pacific National Historic Park directs the National Park Service to employ and train residents of Guam and the Northern Marianas Islands to develop, maintain, and administer the park. The directive reflects the fact that locally hired staff have less turnover, especially in remote but very important national park units like Guam's War in the Pacific National Park.

Can you please speak to the National Park Service's efforts to meet this congressional directive? I have heard numerous

complaints from my constituents that the National Park Service does not attempt to recruit Guam residents for staffing vacancies at the War in the Pacific National Historic Park. I have seen this, myself, so Mr. Smith, could you answer that?

Mr. SMITH. Yes, Delegate. I am not personally aware of the situation, but I certainly will look into it. With that kind of direction, and especially with the location of Guam, I don't know why we wouldn't consider residents of Guam for those positions. But sitting here today, I do not have a definitive answer on that.

I will look into it. Again, with that congressional direction, we certainly will look to see what that situation is on Guam.

Ms. BORDALLO. Mr. Smith, can you then get that report back to my office?

Mr. SMITH. Yes, I will get something back to you very shortly.

Ms. BORDALLO. Thank you. I appreciate that. My next question is for Mr. Guertin.

As this Committee examines how best to eliminate the maintenance backlog, we should also look at how agencies within the DOI budget for and prioritize projects.

I understand that the Fish and Wildlife Service gives significant deference to its regions in how resources are allocated among the national wildlife refuge units during the annual budgeting process. My question to you is, some regions appear to link the amount budgeted for operations and maintenance to the number of full-time employees assigned to each refuge. This effectively short-changes refuges that are under-staffed, but have substantial needs.

Mr. Guertin, can you please confirm whether Region 1, which includes the Pacific territories and Guam National Wildlife Refuge, engages in this budgeting practice?

Mr. GUERTIN. Thank you for your question. We have about a $40 million allocation we ship out to the eight regions of the Fish and Wildlife Service for deferred maintenance. We tier those allocations off the Secretary's priorities of sportsmen's access, taking care of habitat, health and safety, and eroding the high-priority maintenance backlog as the national level drivers.

There is some discretion given to the eight operating units at the regional level to sub-allocate, based on regional priorities. I am not completely aware of the specifics of your question on the specifics of Region 1. We would be glad to provide an update for you after the hearing and give you a more detailed answer on what happens between Portland, Oregon and the field station out there.

Ms. BORDALLO. Thank you. A quick question here. My concern is that linking budgeting to the number of full-time employees does not reflect accurately the unique maintenance public safety needs at our refuges.

So, Mr. Guertin, will the Fish and Wildlife Service commit to make the Service's standard guidance for regional budgeting available to the members of this Committee?

Mr. GUERTIN. Yes, we certainly will.

Ms. BORDALLO. All right, thank you.

Mr. Chairman, I yield back.

The CHAIRMAN. Will you yield for 1 second?

Ms. BORDALLO. Yes.

The CHAIRMAN. Put 1 minute back out there. That is how much time you didn't use. I like the question you asked.

Mr. Guertin, would you give her a direct answer? Is the number of employees a precondition or a condition that is used in allocation of the budget, which is what she was asking?

Mr. GUERTIN. Yes, Mr. Chairman. I can fully brief you on what we do at the national level. I am not 100 percent personally confident of what happens at the regional level to drive their allocations. That is why I am asking if we can brief you back after I do the due diligence and research for the benefit of the leadership here.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you. That was a unique question. I appreciate you getting back with us on that answer.

Ms. BORDALLO. Please get back to us. It is important.

Mr. GUERTIN. Yes, ma'am. You bet.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

All right. We are done? Ms. Bordallo, you have more?

Ms. BORDALLO. I yield.

The CHAIRMAN. We are done?

OK. Mr. LaMalfa.

Mr. LAMALFA. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And our witnesses, for your time and testimony today and expertise. Again, I will come back to Mr. Smith. I also wanted to follow up Mr. McClintock on NEPA.

It is interesting. Some hearing meetings we hear the statements that NEPA never costs or delays any project that we are trying to do in this country. What kind of things do you see, Mr. Smith, when you are trying to renovate a building sometimes already existing in a park 50 or 60 or more years, what do you learn from having done the NEPA study about that renovation that causes a different effect than what you would have just done if you had just redone that piece of infrastructure, building a road, a trail, what have you?

Does NEPA cause you to have to do different things to that infrastructure that you would not have done, had you just gone out and done it?

Mr. SMITH. NEPA can, depending on where the structure is and what you are doing.

But in the case of historic buildings, we have to deal with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. And that is a shorter process, but it does require coordination with the state historic preservation officer, which then requires certain public hearings and that type of thing.

Mr. LAMALFA. Is that a conflict?

Mr. SMITH. It is not a conflict. We have tremendous coordination with the state historic preservation officers.

Mr. LAMALFA. I mean does it conflict with NEPA goals by having that goal? Does that mean you cannot restore historically, because NEPA is causing you to do something else?

Mr. SMITH. It doesn't prevent us, but you do go through the process to get to a final decision that you can take actions on buildings or roads. You do have those processes to consider.

Mr. LAMALFA. And does that change the nature of building the road from its intention or from how it historically really was?

Mr. SMITH. No. Usually, it gets you to where you need to be to be accurate, as far as your historic preservation, or——

Mr. LAMALFA. The NEPA process means you don't have to tear out a road, tear out a fence, tear out a building, or make it smaller, or something on that order?

Mr. SMITH. No, NEPA would not——

Mr. LAMALFA. So, what do you actually learn from going through the NEPA process about restoring something that has already been there?

Mr. SMITH. Well, that is, again, more of the historic preservation process, rather than NEPA.

Mr. LAMALFA. But you are still required to do a NEPA, which takes how long and how much cost? On average, who knows? It doesn't really matter right now for this Committee, other than it takes a lot of time and extra cost.

What do you learn from going through a NEPA that really helps you in the process? See, to me, it seems like it just slows you down and helps the $12 billion, or whatever the number is, get larger, and the list get longer and older.

Mr. SMITH. In my experience as a superintendent, when I dealt with my historic buildings, it was with the National Historic Preservation Act, not so much NEPA. NEPA comes into effect on these big projects such as sewer systems and that type of thing that do affect the environment around the project.

I may be slightly missing your context, Congressman. But those two Acts, the regulations from those, are used in determining what we do on projects within the parks. It is a process that does require time, but in the final analysis, we do get to answers.

I will say again that Secretary Zinke has streamlined the process and we are now shortening our NEPA process. He is stating that we need to do those within a year, and we are moving to do those time frames.

Mr. LAMALFA. And I appreciate he is doing that. He has been in place a little over a year. Has this process actually played out? Have you had a chance to do it in practice, and then not been sued over having a shortened process yet?

Mr. SMITH. There is always a chance to be sued, Congressman.

Mr. LAMALFA. Have you been sued yet over the shortened process?

Mr. SMITH. To the best of my knowledge, we have not. And I have sent the guidance to the National Park Service, within the past 4 weeks that I have been in the Department, of our streamlining procedures.

Some of that decision will be that we will go to environmental assessments, rather than full-blown EISs. In that case, you do sometimes leave yourself vulnerable for lawsuits. But if an EA is done properly, it cuts that time limit down dramatically, and you can get to the goals that we hope to get to and be sensitive to the environment.

Mr. LAMALFA. I am short of time here. Let me ask. What is your inventory of dead or dying trees in your western states' parks, especially?

Mr. SMITH. I don't have a definitive answer on that, but it certainly is a problem in our national parks.

Mr. LAMALFA. Would you believe that having a process where you could be thinning out and removing some of this material might make our parks safer? How many of your parks have been burned out in the last 15 or 20 years because of this?

Mr. SMITH. I can certainly provide that number for the Committee. And, yes, the Secretary again has sent instructions that we need to be looking at various ways to manage these lands and to remove that stored up fuel source in these parks to hopefully——

Mr. LAMALFA. How bold are you willing to be to actually do something about it, instead of continuing to look at it?

Mr. SMITH. I believe we are moving to remove materials, not just look at it, under the Secretary's plan to take action on these parks.

Mr. LAMALFA. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Mr. Beyer.

Mr. BEYER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thanks all of you for being here.

I really want to thank Deputy Director Smith for working with me and my office on the GW Parkway South, the speeding problems, the accident problems. All of our constituents are very grateful.

Mr. Iobst, you write that a fee revenue is critical. But it can only be increased so much without becoming prohibitive, and even the recently proposed fee hike for the peak visiting seasons would address less than 1 percent of the National Park Service backlog.

I am really concerned about the tripling of fees at a number of parks like Shenandoah National Park during peak season for two reasons. Number one, is the price elasticity of demand, are you actually going to raise more or less? And Number two, not only is it chasing away potential visitors, but the fact that places like Shenandoah are weekend retreats for local residents, rather than destinations like Yosemite or Yellowstone.

I understand there is also a four-tier fee structure that the Park Service has in place. How much revenue will be generated for deferred maintenance if all the parks that are authorized to use the four-tier structure actually use it? And is this a better alternative than tripling the fees at places like Shenandoah?

Mr. IOBST. Thank you very much for your question. Early in my career, I spent 2 years in Shenandoah National Park, so I am very familiar with that place.

Mr. BEYER. Lots of bears.

Mr. IOBST. And beautiful valley. So, I guess I would agree with your comments. My concern, both professionally and personally, is I don't know what the price point is. I am not sure if the National Park Service has ever studied what the price point is today versus 5 years ago versus, you know, 5, 10 years into the future, with regard to appropriate fees for entry to the national parks.

Again, my quick analysis that was performed for my testimony with regard to the current proposed doubling of fees in, I think, 17 parks in the Service during the 5-month or 7-month—I can't remember whether it was 5 or 7—main visitor season, again, the amount of revenue that that would contribute, as I said in my testimony, was about 1 percent of what that backlog is.

So, what is the cause and effect here? And what we don't know is who does that prohibit from coming to parks? I believe, personally and professionally, that it would prohibit some people from coming to parks. If you compare a trip to Disneyland or a movie and a pizza or whatever it is, I don't think those are very good comparisons.

The fact of the matter is that the difference is that these were created mostly by the Congress. There is a responsibility through the appropriation process to properly fund these parks. What is before us is a significant effort in that direction. And my concern is that the intent may be good, but the effect of that may prevent those, especially from diverse parts of our Nation, from coming to our parks.

Mr. BEYER. My concern is it is now $70 to take your family for a hike in Shenandoah Park.

Mr. Iobst, again, you wrote and I am going to edit, "we commend Senator Warner et al. for introducing the National Park Service Legacy Act. . . . The bill would dedicate more than $11 billion to the parks backlog through receipts from onshore and offshore energy development not otherwise dedicated to other purposes."

Then a page later you talk about worrying about explicitly linking infrastructure funding to environmentally threatening and damaging energy production, et cetera. How do you link those two? And is there a danger of ramping up fossil fuel, ramping up the climate change, danger to the parks in putting those two together?

Mr. IOBST. That is specifically the concern of the National Parks Conservation Association, who I represent, that the interest in energy development, how close is that going to be to public lands. And then how much of it takes place on public lands? Certainly there are public lands where oil and gas development and coal mining and other mineral extraction take place.

The concern is how much of that is directly related to damaging air quality, water quality, scenic vistas in as well as out of national parks, specifically, to other public lands. In other words, at what cost to the environment, to the quality of life, would that increased extraction cause in order to fund the deferred maintenance backlog? And that is a concern.

Mr. BEYER. Thank you.

Mr. Guertin, a very short answer. I will not ask my whole question. Elephant importation. You changed your mind from where the President was. What is the current state in Zimbabwe, Zambia?

Mr. GUERTIN. Congressman, we are continuing to work with the White House and DOI political leadership on a new vision to govern the importation of all sport-hunted trophies. We have announced—should I keep going, sir?

The CHAIRMAN. No. You are right to stop. Give them time to get the answers in.

Mr. Westerman.

Mr. WESTERMAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you to the witnesses for being here today. I am from Hot Springs, Arkansas, where Hot Springs National Park is located. Some people may not realize, but the thermal waters there were discovered in the 1500s by DeSoto and had been used, estimated, thousands of years before by indigenous peoples. The park was first set aside in 1832 by an

Act of Congress, before Arkansas was even a state, and long before the National Park System was ever in existence. So, there is a long history of recreation and protection there in the thermal waters of Hot Springs.

In the 1800s, spring baseball was invented in Hot Springs National Park because the baseball teams came there to take the waters, as they would say, and they started doing spring practice. It was a very popular tourist destination for a long time. But as time went on, less people used the park, and there were these magnificent bathhouses there that began to sit idle.

So, in Hot Springs the Park Service started doing these long-term leases. It was a pretty innovative process that they developed there, where they would do the lease and, instead of the Park Service having to keep these historic buildings maintained and keep the heating and cooling on the building, they would get tenants that would come in and remove that maintenance cost, but also generate a little bit of income through the lease, and also create a lot of economic develop there, with tourists coming in.

They even have now, it is the only one in the Park Service that has a brewery that uses the thermal waters to make beer in one of the bathhouses. Pretty creative and innovative.

Mr. Smith, are historic property leasing contracts like the ones going on in Hot Springs an innovative method for addressing Interior maintenance backlog?

Mr. SMITH. Congressman, I believe so. And I dealt with those bathhouses back as far as the 1980s, when I was at the Department. So, I am familiar with that unbelievable history at Hot Springs.

Historic leasing is certainly something in the Park Service that we have in policy. Each one is a case-by-case. For me to hear that you have one that is very successful and very innovative is certainly the way that the Agency is moving. I don't know what the rest of your question is, except that that is a very positive sign.

Historic leases are difficult in some ways because of the investment that we require for those properties. And if you have gotten over that hump, then obviously it is something that we should look at in other areas.

Mr. WESTERMAN. Yes. Out of all the bathhouses there, there is only one that is not currently in use or under lease. They just created a new lease to make a boutique hotel and a destination getaway in one of the bathhouses.

But my question is are there other places in the Department of the Interior where leases are being utilized like that, or where they could be used to remove some of the maintenance backlog?

Mr. SMITH. There certainly are. Right now none come to my mind, but I could certainly provide those for the record. And we do look for those. They are not as easy in some areas as others, because of the amount that is required to go in and take over those properties. But in dealing with some of our non-profits and some of our other people who have testified today, those are the innovative ways to now address these problems through historic leasing.

Mr. WESTERMAN. Yes, I know that in Hot Springs the maintenance backlog is about $12 to $13 million, and most of that is in

roadways. From looking at the data, I believe across the national parks, well over half of the maintenance backlog is in roadways.

We have already talked about private-public partnerships, the issues that you face trying to get private donors to fund roadways or sewer systems or other parts of the infrastructure that are critical, but might not look quite as good in an advertisement to say you supported that.

I am running out of time, but as far as the roadways, are we seeing more and more transportation systems degrading, or is there any kind of improvement? Have you been able to stabilize that over the years?

Mr. SMITH. We certainly have degrading systems. I believe that about 5,000 of our 70,000 roads are in deferred maintenance at this time.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Mr. Costa.

Mr. COSTA. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. I think the oversight hearing exploring innovative solutions to reduce the Department of the Interior's maintenance backlog on our parks and our recreational facilities throughout the country is appropriate. And I think we all know what the challenge is.

This backlog has not happened yesterday or the day before. It has accumulated over decades. And when we look at just the National Park Service, we are talking about 417 units covering more than 84 million acres. The deferral backlog there is $11 billion of the $16 billion in totality that there is estimated to be when we include all of the other refuges, wetlands, and special management areas that are a part of Interior's overall responsibility.

I have been one of those that has been critical of the Secretary's proposal to simply try to deal, at least with a part of this backlog, through increase in fees for parks across the country, or some of the major parks, because I think that is an uneven way to handle it, and does not really get to the heart of the problem. And it certainly, I think, creates tremendous disadvantages for Americans who want to enjoy their parks, whether people are going for a destination vacation, or whether people are nearby.

Let me use, as an example, one of the glamour parks, for lack of a better term, but certainly one of America's great national parks, Yosemite, that is in my backyard. Yosemite's maintenance backlog is estimated to be over $550 million. A lot of us who are in the area like to think it is our park. But King's Canyon is also a part of that, as well.

They have a maintenance backlog of buildings, $107 million; campgrounds, $4 million; housing, $16 million; paid roads, which is access to the park, $269 million is the single largest deferred; $17 million in trails; $3 million in unpaved roads; $73 million in water systems. So, you add it all up, it is $555 million.

Because it is a legacy park, and because it has an international reputation as well as a national reputation, there is a lot of support. The Yosemite Conservation Foundation, that I support, and many other people have raised over $100 million in recent years. That $100 million distributed about $6 to $10 million annually. And they get about $20 million in donations because it is such a

high legacy park and there is a lot of attraction to it. But private sector donations literally by itself is not enough to deal with $555 million in backlog.

So, I think we have to look at some other areas that provide support for not only the high profile parks in this country that get the most amount of usage, but also all of the other park units, and wetlands, and other areas. I think the National Park Service Legacy Act that Congressman Will Hurd has that is a bipartisan bill, one that I am a co-sponsor, that is a companion measure to the Warner bill on the Senate side, is the way to do it. It would provide $11 billion over 30 years to address maintenance backlog through receipts of offshore and onshore energy development already dedicated to other important purposes, like the Land and Water Conservation Fund.

I think this is an area that we can and should have bipartisan support, unlike other issues in this Committee, where we tend to have a more partisan perspective. The fact of the matter is that so many of our national parks throughout the country need the support.

This money, that would be generated over a period of time, would provide backlog for transportation projects that Congress needs. We also need to look at challenges to the Highway Trust Fund. For many of these parks, the challenge is access. So, I think that we can and should do something about this, not just for our legacy parks, but the other units.

So, I would hope, Mr. Chairman, that we could kind of focus our time on a bipartisan bill that could provide real money to do this. Certainly I think raising the fees is not the answer to addressing this issue. I yield back the balance of my time.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you. We will have a bipartisan bill. Just keep doing what I tell you to do, and everything is OK.

[Laughter.]

The CHAIRMAN. Mr. Thompson.

Mr. THOMPSON. Thank you, Chairman. Thanks, members of the panel, for being here. A very important topic, dealing with our maintenance backlog.

Mr. Smith, there is a 2016 Government Accountability Office (GAO) report on the National Park Service asset maintenance prioritization. And it noted that "the Park Service does not have a plan or time frame for evaluating whether the capital investment strategy has been successful."

Has the National Park Service leadership made efforts to examine the strategy since the study's release, to ensure that taxpayer dollars were being directed in the most effective and efficient manner regarding deferred maintenance?

Mr. SMITH. Congressman, yes. I have been briefed in my short time back that we are looking at the actual management system, managing the assets to really make that process make more sense to the field, to get numbers that we actually can rely on.

Then, through the capital investment strategy, we are looking at ways to make that more transparent to where we are actually putting our assets. And that is a ground-up type of review. It is not top-down.

Mr. THOMPSON. Very good. Well, I wanted to follow up on the capital investment strategy. It doesn't seem like it has been successful, or maybe just minimally so, because the deferred maintenance backlog has grown by almost $2 billion over the past decade.

Do you think the capital investment strategy is successful? And if so, what are your measures of success?

Mr. SMITH. The last 4 years especially, Congressman, the deferred maintenance is, basically we are keeping it level. I hope Congress realizes we will never get to zero on deferred maintenance. But it would be very important to get it down to a much lower number in the billions of dollars.

Again, being back just this short time, I probably need to get more information on the strategy, and I certainly will provide that to the Committee.

Mr. THOMPSON. As we have seen, the National Park Service has certainly been particularly popular in the past few years, which is great. Has the Park Service taken any steps to leverage this newfound interest, and create new streams of revenue to help with addressing some of the backlog issues?

Mr. SMITH. You have heard from our partners that have appeared today as witnesses that those efforts—obviously, the Secretary is looking at fees, we do have a fee structure, and he is coming at it in a different angle. We are working with him on options to look at the best way.

But the fee structure, whether you deal with it on a local level or a state level, fees are part of what you do to keep these areas that are so important to people available. And the fee structure that we have in the Park Service has been an important element in that.

I believe last year it was $318 million that was derived from that system. I remember in the mid-1980s, we actually endeavored to come to Congress to establish a fee program, so it has been tremendously successful in generating those funds.

What is before the Committee today in concept with this new infrastructure fund is a way to look at this. And we hope that, in coordination and cooperation with the Committee, we will get to a bill that will provide this type of funding for deferred maintenance. We don't have all the answers, but we are trying to find solutions.

Mr. THOMPSON. Thank you.

Mr. Guertin, thanks for testifying before the Committee. I appreciate your kind of focus, your emphasis on collaborative efforts. I have always believed one-size-fits-all solutions rarely work. And in this case, Federal funding is certainly necessary to help eliminate the Department's backlog, but it is not the final and only solution.

You had mentioned a number of collaborative efforts between the Department and outside organizations that have created opportunities to improve Federal lands. How can we create more of these opportunities, moving forward, and leverage the Federal dollars with local, with non-profits, with all the different places that we see when we do collaboration?

Mr. GUERTIN. Thank you for your question, Congressman. Secretary Zinke is really stressing the idea of conservation without conflict and collaborating across landscapes in developing a shared vision amongst the partners. Certainly that drives the Fish and

Wildlife Service, our refuge system hatcheries and our other Federal agencies to partner with groups like these, the private sector, the all-important relationship with the state fish and game agencies and the state parks departments and the other Federal agencies to develop this shared vision, go after these bundled or larger program implementation schemes, and leverage all of our dollars against these shared objectives.

Mr. THOMPSON. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Ms. Hanabusa.

Ms. HANABUSA. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My question is to Steven, is it Iobst?

Mr. Iobst, thank you, first of all, for your 43 years of service to the Park Service. I would like to ask you. Can you distinguish between yearly maintenance and deferred maintenance? At what point does it become deferred maintenance? And what is the problem? Is the problem the way the National Park Service looks at maintenance, is it that we have this huge deferred maintenance backlog, and we are meeting our yearly maintenance requirements?

Mr. IOBST. Thank you for the question. I should also say, and I said earlier, thank you very much for your support of the National Park Service Legacy Act.

Ms. HANABUSA. Thank you.

Mr. IOBST. The deferred maintenance begins on a facility, whether it is a road or a trail, the day it is constructed. It is man-made or human-made, and if the funding is not there year after year to do the routine maintenance, replace critical components, re-roof buildings, re-paint, do renovations and restoration, as necessary, on buildings that are maintained into perpetuity, which is our mission, then there becomes this gap between annualized funding, if you will, through appropriations, donations, and other fund sources, and the real need, so that every year that—40 percent in Yellowstone—my experience in Yellowstone was annual funding or routine maintenance funding met about 40 percent of the need that was determined by the park asset management planning process, which is a very reliable process of understanding what the need is. That gap will grow every year, because your 40 percent, 40 percent of the 100 percent that is necessary.

Ms. HANABUSA. So, in other words, 60 percent every year is falling into this category called deferred maintenance.

Mr. IOBST. Yes, that is a simplistic way to look at it, ma'am, but yes, that is essentially what is happening.

Ms. HANABUSA. And when we introduced the legacy fund, our intent was to figure out some independent funding source that would sort of assist in making up the difference, because clearly the annual appropriations are not going to do it. And even if we try to get some sort of partnership, that is not going to do it, because that amount is a huge amount.

What would you say is the deferred maintenance now at Yellowstone? You said about $400-something million?

Mr. IOBST. It is close to half-a-billion dollars.

Ms. HANABUSA. Half a billion? And the total amount for the whole Park Service is amounting to what? How much would you say?

Mr. IOBST. The report that came out in I think it was late January or February of this year for 2017 puts it at about $11.6 billion, service-wide.

Ms. HANABUSA. Do you know how the National Park Service prioritizes who will get the funds?

Mr. IOBST. Well, there was never enough for Yellowstone.

[Laughter.]

Ms. HANABUSA. Of course, I expected you to say that.

Mr. IOBST. Or other parks I worked at.

Yes, I do understand. And there are different fund sources. There is the operation of the National Park System, which includes, with regard to routine maintenance dollars, repair, rehab, other programs that are an annual appropriation, those are somewhat based on history, if you will.

However, our science, as I call it, for facilities, the asset management plans, the system that we have used for a number of years, it generates priorities based on how important that asset, whether it is a road or historic structure, concession operated facility, is to the significance of that park, and how it serves visitors.

So, the assets are prioritized and then, depending on the size of the project that is necessary, there is a competition that takes place. However, it is based on need, and it is park need, and then against the needs of other parks in that region and then, ultimately, against all the parks in the system.

Ms. HANABUSA. So, would it be a correct statement to say that a popular park, which is used more than another esoteric park, for example, would probably get the maintenance funds before that park that is not in such a demand?

Mr. IOBST. No, that is not true. It depends on the significance of the asset.

Ms. HANABUSA. Thank you very much. And I hope you call upon your, I think it is about 1.2 million, members of the National Park Conservation Association to assist us with getting the legacy fund bill through. Thank you very much and I yield back.

The CHAIRMAN. Mr. Bergman.

Mr. BERGMAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And thanks to all of you for being here. You learn never say always and never say never, because Murphy will make a liar out of you real quickly. I saw a flag quilt downstairs in the Capitol a month ago that said, "Freedom is always worth fighting for." So, I have changed my mind on there is one always.

In addition to the Natural Resources Committee, why I bring that up at this point is I also serve on Veterans Affairs. As a veteran, honoring our military service members' sacrifices to our country is very important, not only to me, but to all of us, and I know you, as well.

More than one-third of our national parks commemorate and interpret military history. These parks have roughly $6.2 billion—with a B—in deferred maintenance, roughly half of the total backlog, I understand. In addition to these military heritage parks, parks in general offer places of restoration and of healing to our returning vets of all ages.

Mr. Smith, what is the Department's plan to ensure that these park sites are in good repair and honor the memory and the service

of our veterans, and still provide a place of positive refuge for them when they seek it?

Mr. SMITH. Congressman, as a veteran and the son of a veteran, I would certainly associate myself with your remarks. And, as you know, part of those units that you are talking about came to us in the 1930s, all the national cemeteries came to us, the battlefields came from other departments. Those are certainly in line with our operations of the National Park System, all of those parks certainly are in that mix for annual funding.

We also, for the Civil War parks, we have wonderful partners, Civil War Trust, who is out there, working with us on land issues at those parks, and bringing money outside the government to take care of preserving those types of areas that you have mentioned.

I must admit that I have never heard that breakout that you just gave, of there being that many of the units of the National Park System that have that theme. But I believe we are very responsive in those historic areas to make sure that we tell that history, from the Mall here, with all of the monuments that have been built, to the battlefields around the country, such as Gettysburg or Manassas.

Mr. BERGMAN. Thank you. This is a question for any or all of you to respond to. When you have deferred maintenance you are probably going to have a combination of materials, whether it be things like asphalt or gravel or fertilizer or building materials, whatever, but something that is a physical material that you have to purchase or grow or whatever, and you are going to have labor. And you may have a third cost in your equation.

In your numbers, is there a breakdown of half of it is labor, half of it is materials, 70 percent, whatever? Anybody? Could you give me an idea of what the breakdown of that money is?

Mr. IOBST. I would be happy to answer that question. It is a field-driven system of need and project that is based on the very simple work order. It can be a whole building or a component of a building. Within that work order are estimated costs for labor, for materials. There are equipment costs. Different specialized equipment may be necessary on that project. There is a breakdown on the individual work order or activity or specific project that then works its way up through the system, so that that information is provided on any specific project.

Mr. BERGMAN. Let me ask you a question. Are these contracts let to a vendor to perform the work that includes the labor and the materials in it? Or do you purchase separately? In other words, let's say if there was not enough money to go around, and we know there is not enough money to go around. OK? Materials you have to have. Wherever you buy them, hopefully, best practices are going to get you the best quantity, price. But labor could come from different sources.

Are we able to do that, if we got money and said, OK, we are going to put it all in materials, but oh, by the way, here is what we are going to do with labor. Have you done that before? Or have you considered that?

Mr. IOBST. We have done projects like that, based on my experience, where it may all be contract, where all the costs are covered by a contract, whether certain overhead costs and things like that.

However, there have been projects where government has supplied——

Mr. BERGMAN. I see my time has expired, Mr. Chairman. I yield back. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Mr. Soto.

Mr. SOTO. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Director Guertin, we have a relocation permit in Winter Haven, Florida for the sand skink. The initial approval has been approved, but there has been quite a delay in getting the publication. This is in an area, a socio-economically depressed status that, we have a community center. So, I hope that your office can look into that for us.

Mr. GUERTIN. Thank you for your question, Congressman. I am aware of this project. We have been working very closely with the municipal government. We have allowed them to move forward with about 98 percent of the footprint of the entire project period to work on construction. We have asked them to buffer about 2 percent for the skink population down there.

We are required to go through some additional steps, including a 30-day public comment period, but this is an enormous priority for our office down there, the region. And from the Director's Office we will keep it pedal to the metal, and check back with your office with further progress updates.

Mr. SOTO. Thank you. This is an important project in our district.

I wanted to also reach out about the status of the Florida manatees. What is the current endangered status? Is it threatened now? And is there any additional movement that we may see on the Florida manatee?

Mr. GUERTIN. We have downgraded them, Congressman, to a threatened status. This is a success story, working in partnership with the Florida Game and Fish Commission, with the recreational boating community, and with a lot of the youth groups and other industry and community groups down there who are all very interested in the ongoing status of manatee populations. They are a beloved animal in Florida and the rest of the country, and we are all very hopeful that we can ultimately move toward recovery of that species.

But I come back to, this is an enormous partnership effort and a shared vision with the great people of Florida and recreational boaters out there.

Mr. SOTO. I just want to express my concern of shifting it further than that, because we have a large shift in population based upon if we have a cold winter. We could have hundreds of Florida manatee die, so I just want you to be aware of the erratic nature of the population there.

Mr. GUERTIN. Yes, sir. And a lot of that is contingent on how they over-winter each year. Disease comes in, red tide, other external impacts. But the proactive nature of conservation, of everybody pulling together toward this shared objective is really helping all of us keep an eye on the fate of this beloved species.

Mr. SOTO. I also wanted to reach out about the Florida panther. I know there have been ample studies in Florida universities about how this is a subspecies and warrants protection. And right now

it is protected. Is there any push to try to change that now or in the near future?

Mr. GUERTIN. We are currently just evaluating the status of the species throughout Florida. My wife is from Okeechobee, Florida, so I am pretty familiar with a lot of those animals and habitat down there. But we are a science-driven agency, sir. We are working very closely with State Fish and Game to keep an eye on an ultimate path toward recovery. A lot of this is going to be corridors for them to move from safe zones to others. We also have a lot of potential conflict issues we have to work with: agriculture, landowners, and even homeowners and pets. But we are working very closely with our state counterparts on that front, sir.

Mr. SOTO. And we are certainly sensitive to the balance. We just want to make sure it is no longer deemed a subspecies when there is ample scientific basis from some of our local universities.

I next want to turn to what Congressman Beyer started talking about, the trophies of African elephants from Zimbabwe and Zambia. As you know, there has been a 30 percent decline in the African elephant population from 2007 to 2014. And I see, in the case-by-case, this is going to be ESA findings and scientific-based assessment.

My question is, when do you make an assessment for the whole species, rather than an individual elephant basis, since all of them would be in a similar risk? How would it work with a case-by-case assessment?

Mr. GUERTIN. Sure, Congressman. We had a response to a recent D.C. Circuit Court opinion, and we are trying to balance the mandates of that opinion with our responsibilities. We are revising our procedures and assessing applications for these findings on an application-by-application basis, rather than on a country-wide basis. We are always willing to be driven by the science, the larger status of these species.

This comes back to the larger argument—what role does hunting play in species conservation? What role does the dollars sportsmen invest in guides, permits, outfitters, the rates that they are paying——

Mr. SOTO. Would elephants in each of these countries be equally at risk?

Mr. GUERTIN. We have to take a look at the larger trends and the dynamics of management and the specific threats in each of those. It is not a common set of threats across the entire range of their distribution. Some countries have stronger frameworks, higher hunting culture. Others have more poaching.

Sorry, sir.

The CHAIRMAN. That is OK.

Mr. Hice.

Dr. HICE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Director Smith, let me just begin with you. In 2001, when President Bush came to office, the National Park Service had a backlog of roughly $4.9 billion. And from our research, that backlog appears to have increased by about $2 billion throughout his presidency, and about the same throughout Obama's administration.

So, the question is why. Why the backlog? Would you attribute it for maintenance primarily to the Park Service increasing its

assets, and the public lands, monuments, that you have a bigger footprint now? Or is it due to aging, the aging process, or some other reason, or all of the above?

Mr. SMITH. Congressman, it is basically both of those. When you have a system that is aging like ours, and the fact that Congress keeps adding to our system, those are all factors that either affect operational budgets, which affect cyclic maintenance, or they affect deferred maintenance in these units when you have as many assets as we have to deal with.

Dr. HICE. OK. As I understand, you have—well, a general rule of thumb, I think, for most homeowners and so forth, is about 1½ percent of the value of the home to be set aside for annual maintenance and that type of thing. Of course, the older it gets, then it goes up anywhere from 3 to 5 percent.

As I understand, you are close to that range. Do you have enough now to take care of the backlog issues?

Mr. SMITH. No, we certainly do not at this time. That is why we are here looking at other possibilities of funding, to reach back and take care of that deferred maintenance.

Dr. HICE. What percentage of the overall infrastructure portfolio is needed, based on the value of the assets? Do you have any idea?

Mr. SMITH. We are somewhere between 40 and 45 percent of our assets that are in deferred maintenance right now, with others catching up to that.

And we touched on, in one of the questions today, the difference between cyclic maintenance and deferred maintenance. A perfect example would be, we have done cyclic maintenance on a huge HVAC system. It eventually will have a life cycle, and then it will have to be replaced. So, it moves from where you can deal with it in cyclic maintenance. You have to deal with it by replacing it, and that becomes a deferred maintenance issue.

Dr. HICE. Tell me again what that 40, 45 percent is.

Mr. SMITH. Half of it is roads, bridges, things to do with our transportation systems. I think our latest number on that is $5.9 billion of the $11.6 billion is dealing with roads and bridges. The other would be dealing with our assets, which would include buildings, campgrounds, trails, all of the above that we——

Dr. HICE. That 45 percent, though, would be 45 percent of the total assets?

Mr. SMITH. Yes.

Dr. HICE. That are in backlog?

Mr. SMITH. Yes, and especially those that are aging. For those of you who cross Memorial Bridge every day, if you come from Virginia, that is a 75-year-old bridge, and it needs to be replaced.

Dr. HICE. All right. Assuming that we arrive at some sort of solution, how do you assure this Committee and the American people that we don't get in this mess again?

Mr. SMITH. There will always be some deferred maintenance, because of all the assets that we have. But certainly, once we are on top of it, it will help us prioritize much more of those things that are aging, or those things that we need to take care of. But it will never be a zero, as far as deferred maintenance, just because we have so many assets that annually go into meeting some type of maintenance.

Dr. HICE. Well, I understand that. But how can you assure us that we are not going to get in another situation where we have 45 percent in a backlog of maintenance issues?

Mr. SMITH. Well, I can assure you that if we can find steady funding sources, we will tackle this issue, which has been around since the 1980s, and which we have not caught up to.

One reason why we have so many more exact numbers on what the backlog is is that during the Bush administration we developed the process that we now use to ascertain all of these numbers. So, the issue probably was bigger than we knew back then. We now have a system of looking at these assets that really gives us these numbers that we brought before Congress that need to be addressed.

Dr. HICE. OK. Thank you very much. I yield back.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Mr. Curtis.

Mr. CURTIS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am pleased to represent a district that has two national parks: Arches and Canyonlands. And if you haven't been to Arches, this is my formal invitation to have you come personally visit.

We are here to talk about creative solutions to some of these funding problems. Mr. Smith, at Arches, you may be familiar, we have a unique problem where we are loving our parks to death. And on site they are looking at one possible solution, which is a reservation system. That is meeting with quite a bit of angst in the community, from an economic development, there are many layers.

If we have long lines of people waiting to pay fees to enter these parks, which we need, can we spend a little bit more time in this creative mode seeing how we can accommodate the visitors into the park, without it being an overload? And that is what the locals are asking. Have we looked at enough solutions?

I don't know how personally familiar you are with that particular issue. If you are not, I would love to invite you to get involved. And I am not sure, I was just down there this last weekend, the locals clearly don't feel like we have explored all the options. Do you have any comments on that, or are you close enough to that to know?

Mr. SMITH. Two things, Congressman. Thank you for your question. When I worked on staff here for Congressman Hanson, I certainly visited Red Rock country. So, I am very familiar with all of your wonderful parks, not only in your district, but in the state of Utah.

Mr. CURTIS. Right.

Mr. SMITH. We are looking at reservation systems as one answer to where we have so much visitation. I don't know the particulars of what we looked at at Arches, but I definitely will look at that when I get back. But we have the situation in Yosemite, we have the situation in other parks, and we are trying to make it so that our visitors are accommodated without the long waits and that type of thing which ruin their experience.

But I will look into that situation, Congressman, and get back to you on that.

Mr. CURTIS. Thank you. There are good models. Zion is not perfect, but they, of course, accommodate a lot more because of their transportation system there. The locals on the ground would have

us look at another mode of entrance into the park. There is a high percentage of that park that is not visited because of access, so thank you for your willingness to do that.

I also might mention I had the delight to serve as the mayor of my city before Congress, and dealt with a lot of these maintenance issues and not enough funds and that constant battle which you all are experiencing. And I learned and found that there are different types of different maintenance. A parking lot that doesn't get a crack and seal becomes a far more expensive repair if we don't spend that money now, versus other projects. Does your system take that into account? And is there a factor that you are applying to things that actually cost us more money if we don't address them right now?

Mr. SMITH. Yes, it does. And those are driven from the park up, not from anywhere above down, but they are taken in priority in each park.

Then, as far as the funding, it does have to go through a process with the region to look back at what we are doing. The need is so great, and the money is such that we have to make priority decisions in the parks, and that occurs every year as we look at our budgets.

Mr. CURTIS. Let me go back to that bottom up, because I also would applaud that, and found once again, as mayor, that generally, those that were right there knew the most. How much input do they have on the park level that is coming up and being filtered and listened to?

Mr. SMITH. Well, they have a lot. And I have let it be known that I have come back to Washington after retiring for 3 years, that I am coming back with a superintendent's hat, and not a Washington bureaucratic hat. I have said I don't know how long that will last, but it is my intent right now.

The parks are listened to. And I will certainly, serving as Deputy Director, will make sure that they are listened to, because they do know what is happening on the ground more than we do here in Washington.

Mr. CURTIS. Thank you. If you attempted to remove that hat, I am sure we will help remind you how important that philosophy is. I appreciate that.

Mr. SMITH. And Congressman, the Secretary of the Interior will remind me of that, too. He wants us to deal with all these issues from the front, in the parks, and he has made that very clear to me.

Mr. CURTIS. Yes, I applaud that. Thank you.

I yield my time, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you. Let me ask a couple of questions, if I could. Let me start with Mr. Guertin.

The Administration's proposed public lands infrastructure funding includes your agency, the Park Service, as well as the Bureau of Indian Education. Can you speak to why the five other departments within Interior were not included in that, specifically BLM, which has 245 million acres?

Mr. GUERTIN. Yes, Mr. Chairman. My understanding is that the three agencies selected for the initial deployment of the Act, if it is enacted by the Congress, are largely those aligned around the

Secretary's initial guidance to us to promote the outdoor recreation, the access areas, the parks and refuges, get a preponderance of the visitation, get a preponderance of the visiting public.

The other Interior agencies were not ranked as high in that initial cut of which agencies to propose, going forward. But it comes back to the role the Service and Park Service play in outdoor recreation and access. And for the Bureau of Indian Affairs, the needs are very dire there for societal reasons, as well as health and safety in the schools, and programs like that.

The CHAIRMAN. Not a whole lot of visitation in those schools. We will look at that again one time.

Mr. Rano, if I could talk to you, I appreciated working with you on the Centennial Act. I am assuming that you accept that those proposals so far have been successful?

Mr. RANO. Absolutely, sir.

The CHAIRMAN. Are there any additional revenue sources that we didn't make into that bill that you believe we should be considering as a Committee?

Mr. RANO. Absolutely. There is a proposal in the bill—and thank you again for your leadership in ensuring its passage—that would have dedicated money, another dedicated revenue stream of overnight fees in lodging in National Park Service lodges. And we believe there is an opportunity to revisit that at this point.

I think we ran out of time and lacked consensus, and I think there is an opportunity to revisit that and make it fair and bring on all parties.

The CHAIRMAN. There may be some other areas we can look at for all these purposes, even for BLM purposes, so we can reach some of the maintenance.

Both Mr. Costa and Mr. Beyer were talking about fees. I think there is some point where we need to talk about fees to make sure those fees are going back to the areas in which they are generated and we are not having a lot of that fee money being used elsewhere, or coming back here to Washington.

I think we need to look at—there are a lot of groups out there that actually make a whole lot of money on the using of our public lands, but put very little back into the maintenance of those public lands. Maybe we should be looking at some innovative ways of doing that, at the same time.

Also, some of the Members have brought up some other issues. Mr. Smith, let me ask you. Are there other areas that we should be talking about to you that are an impediment to prioritizing your efforts or tackling this backlog that prohibit you from having greater efficiency and effectiveness?

Mr. SMITH. Mr. Chairman, thank you for that question. One that comes to mind immediately in my short time back is concessions policy. I actually dealt with it on this Committee back in 1998, when we passed the Concessions Policy Act.

There seems to be, because of the need for infrastructure at such high dollar amounts, that if the 20-year limit could be raised to 30, we would have a lot more success in the concessions type of contracts. That one would require an Act of Congress, and that one comes to mind immediately in my short time back because it has

come up in situations all over the country already. So, that is one that I am certainly familiar with.

The CHAIRMAN. I know Congress sometimes, in our effort to be helpful and effective—for example, the McKinney-Vento Act requires that any time you have any kind of change into a housing or building structure, that you have to ensure that you do a study to see if they are suitable for homeless facilities. That is a cost that probably has very little value to it. Sounded good at the time. But we need to look at some of those practices that are impeding efforts to go into it.

I know people have said that we don't need innovation and that these are gimmicks. But what the Administration is proposing here is definitely more than that. We are trying to look at some kind of permanent fund that goes through there.

Mr. Guertin, maybe I could ask you the same thing. Are there things other than just the revenue that we are talking about that streamline that cumbersome process of Federal acquisition or contracting, hiring, or planning?

Mr. GUERTIN. Thank you for the question, Mr. Chairman. We have requested similar authority to the National Park System, where we can collect and keep any damages that come from some of the vandalizing, destroying, or otherwise harming the National Wildlife Refuge System. While not big money, this could be hundreds of thousands to $5 or $6 million a year. These damages, under current authorizations, go right onto our maintenance backlog, so that is part of the President's request for appropriations.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you. Let me cut myself off. I appreciate the Committee being here, and being here perhaps a little bit longer than we anticipated. I appreciate the witnesses coming here and testifying at the same time.

I think, as we go through this process, we will identify in the coming weeks other ways in which we can come up with a permanent fund that can assist in the backlog. We will be creative in those type of efforts. Maybe there is some other revenue sources that need to be added or considered as we go through that.

I realize the one thing I don't want to do, as has happened some times in the past, is the idea of helping to solve the problem of funding of our public lands. It is just keeping people off of the public lands, and therefore you don't have to fund them. There are some people that actually look at that as a proper policy. If people are not engaged in public lands, our park systems and the fish and wildlife refuges, if they are not visiting there, there is no reason to have them in the first place. So, that is the one thing we will never go back to, at least that approach to it.

I would remind the witnesses, as well as the Committee, that there may be some further questions people have, as well as some statements. You have already said you would provide us with information later on. If there are other questions coming from this Committee, they will be sent to you in writing within 3 business days. We would ask for your response at that particular time.

With that, once again, our great appreciation for you being here. As we look forward, we said this is like a twofold process. Today, we are dealing with the problem. Next week, we start dealing with the solutions to those problems. We will be coming back to you

again. Thank you for your participation, thank you for the testimony you have given. Anything else you wish to add to the record will be added to the record, as well.

With that, the hearing is adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 11:49 a.m., the Committee was adjourned.]

[ADDITIONAL MATERIALS SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
ON BEHALF OF
MR. P. DANIEL SMITH, DEPUTY DIRECTOR, NATIONAL PARK SERVICE AND MR. STEVE GUERTIN, DEPUTY DIRECTOR, U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

Chairman Bishop, Ranking Member Grijalva, and members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to present the Department of the Interior's (Department) views on potential solutions to reducing the deferred maintenance backlog of the Department of the Interior. Representing the Department at today's hearing are P. Daniel Smith, Deputy Director of the National Park Service, and Steve Guertin, Deputy Director of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Since Secretary Zinke's confirmation, tackling the Department's deferred maintenance backlog has been one of his top priorities. The Department manages roughly 500 million acres of land and possesses an infrastructure asset portfolio valued at over $300 billion. Roads, bridges, trails, water systems, visitor centers, and student dorms—even bathrooms, campgrounds, and drinking fountains—are all part of this critical, but often unnoticed, framework. After years of increased visitation and use, aging facilities and other vital structures are in urgent need of restoration.

The Department has a total of about $16 billion worth of deferred maintenance. Of that amount, the National Park Service (NPS) has the largest share—$11.6 billion in 2017.

Here are just a few examples of needed repairs in our Nation's national parks. Glacier National Park, one of the NPS' crown jewels, is home to the headwaters for streams that flow to the Pacific Ocean, the Gulf of Mexico and Hudson's Bay. This popular Montana park has more than $154 million in maintenance needs alone, including projects to repair bridges and culverts, roads, and employee housing.

In California, Point Reyes National Seashore is home to majestic marine mammals and multi-generational beef and dairy ranches. The park has roughly $99 million in deferred maintenance, including single projects that include the historic Platform Bridge. This bridge, built in 1927, carried both people and automotive traffic, but due to the lack of ongoing necessary rehabilitation work, $1.6 million is needed for this project alone.

Roads and other transportation assets account for $5.9 billion—about half—of the NPS deferred maintenance backlog. The NPS maintains over 5,500 miles of paved roads, including historic routes such as the Blue Ridge Parkway, Natchez Trace Parkway, and Skyline Drive in Shenandoah National Park. Congress provides for a significant portion of transportation maintenance and repair through the Department of Transportation, primarily through the Federal Lands Transportation Program, which includes $292 million for NPS projects in FY 2019 alone. Additional funding for maintaining transportation assets is provided through NPS operations and construction appropriations.

Just like some of its other more famous parkway sites, Colonial Parkway in Tidewater, Virginia was designed in the 1930s to provide a scenic, pleasurable driving experience between historic Jamestown, Yorktown, and Williamsburg. Today, the parkway is an important commuter route with the busiest sections carrying between 1.9 million and 2.2 million vehicles per year. In addition, large tour buses use the route, adding weight and capacity that was not envisioned when it was designed. The total cost to repair the parkway is $270 million.

Known for its scenic views and vibrant autumns, Great Smoky Mountains National Park welcomes millions of visitors each year. The park has $215 million in deferred maintenance needs. A key destination for park visitors, Sugarlands Visitor Center houses exhibits on wildlife, geology, and history, and is in need of total reconstruction that will cost roughly $25 million. The park is also well known for its historic buildings—from churches, barns, and smokehouses to a working grist mill—but many of them need rehabilitation to ensure they remain safe and welcoming destinations.

Appropriated funds are currently the primary source of funding for deferred maintenance. However, we know that we cannot rely on appropriated dollars alone to

address this problem, so we are looking at multiple avenues for making additional funds available through other means.

For example, the Department's Fiscal Year 2019 budget proposes to permanently reauthorize the Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act (FLREA), which expires in September 2019. As a precaution, the budget also proposes appropriations language to provide a 2-year extension of FLREA through September 2021. The revenues collected from these recreation fees across several DOI bureaus—$318.8 million in 2017—are an important source of funding for land management operations, maintenance, and improvements to recreation facilities on public lands.

Most importantly, we are looking at a new proposal to raise funds for this purpose by dedicating a portion of Federal energy revenues to address this problem. The proposed Public Lands Infrastructure Fund (Fund) outlined in the President's 2019 budget would address repairs and improvement in national parks, national wildlife refuges, and Bureau of Indian Education (BIE) schools. The Administration's proposal would set aside for infrastructure needs a portion of unallocated Federal energy revenues exceeding FY 2018 Budget baseline projections. These receipts would be derived from Federal energy revenues, including mineral leasing, e.g., oil, gas and coal, under the Mineral Leasing Act and Outer Continental Shelf Lands Act, as well as solar, wind, and geothermal development. While the budget estimate assumes this initiative would result in $6.8 billion in expenditures from the Fund over 10 years, the proposal allows for as much as $18 billion to be available through this legislation. The Department would distribute funds using established criteria, such as consideration of asset condition and mission criticality, and would measure and report on agency-wide progress. This bold investment would significantly improve the Nation's most visible and visited public facilities that support a multi-billion dollar outdoor recreation economy.

While the NPS is the focus of this proposal, the Fund would also be used for deferred maintenance at Bureau of Indian Education (BIE) schools and national wildlife refuges. The Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs and its bureaus have maintenance responsibilities for over 169 elementary and secondary schools and 14 dormitories which service nearly 47,000 students. The estimated deferred maintenance backlog for BIE schools is $634 million, which does not include the cost for school replacement projects. Major projects to address deferred maintenance are reviewed by the Indian Affairs Construction Investment Review Board and are prioritized as part of the Five-Year Deferred Maintenance and Construction plan.

Schools that could potentially benefit from these investments would include the BIE operated Cheyenne Eagle Butte School, which is one of the largest schools serving Indian tribes in South Dakota. The school promotes academic achievement along with traditional Lakota cultural, language, and extracurricular activities in two of the poorest counties in the state and Nation. Cheyenne Eagle Butte is in urgent need of a variety of repairs, especially structural. For example, classrooms have been closed due to the presence of dangerous mold, numerous roof leaks allow water to seep through three floors of classrooms, and repetitive heating system failures have caused 2 weeks of lost instruction during the current academic year. Kindergarten students alone have been displaced from their regular classrooms for 3 years.

Deferred maintenance issues are not unique to Cheyenne Eagle Butte School. As reported in a 2016 Government Accountability Office (GAO) report, the Department's ability to adequately address maintenance issues have been inhibited, even for those schools which pose great risk to the health and safety of students. Highlighted in the same GAO report is a frightening example where 7 of a school's 11 boilers failed inspection due to natural gas leaks and elevated carbon monoxide levels. The boilers were in such bad condition that the school was evacuated for approximately 2 weeks to conduct emergency repairs. Overall, the Department, the Bureau of Indian Affairs, and the BIE are working closely to address outstanding GAO recommendations and improve operations and service delivery in BIE-funded schools.

The Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) manages 566 national wildlife refuges and 38 wetland management areas and operates national fish hatcheries, fish technology centers and fish health centers. FWS is responsible for over $46 billion in constructed real property assets that include over 25,000 structures (e.g., buildings and water management structures) as well as nearly 14,000 roads, bridges, and dams. The estimated deferred maintenance backlog for FWS facilities is $1.4 billion.

National wildlife refuges are a hub for outdoor recreation and conservation and are valued destinations for local residents as well as vacationers. Every state and territory has wildlife refuges, and over 50 million people visit FWS refuges and hatcheries each year. They are places where families go on a weekend day to spend quality time outdoors, through activities such as hunting, fishing and birding. FWS lands generate over $2 billion for local economies and support tens of thousands of

private-sector jobs. Examples of refuges that could benefit from the Fund include Big Oaks refuge in Indiana and Wallkill River refuge in New York and New Jersey. Big Oaks is home to more than 200 species of birds and 46 species of mammals, and the refuge has been designated as a "Globally Important Bird Area" because of its value to migratory birds. However, public access to Big Oaks is impaired because a deteriorated, unsafe bridge with trees growing through it on the refuge has been closed since 2001. Wallkill River refuge has many grassland birds, migrating waterfowl, wintering raptors, and endangered species. Public access to this refuge is also significantly reduced because its Papakating Valley Rail Trail has been closed since 2010 due to extensive, dangerous degradation. Rehabilitating it will expand 9.5 miles of former railroad beds into multi-purpose public trails.

Another way Congress can help reduce the FWS' maintenance backlog—in addition to enacting the proposed Fund—is to enact the Administration's 2019 Budget legislative proposal to provide FWS with authority to seek compensation from responsible parties who injure or destroy national wildlife refuges or other FWS resources. This new authority would be similar to that of the NPS and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. Under current law, when FWS resources are injured or destroyed, the costs of repair and restoration must be addressed through appropriations and are added to the FWS' maintenance backlog. These damages are not uncommon. Each year vandalism, trespassing, and other violations damage FWS assets. One example is a case of illegally created roads through Sequoyah refuge, Oklahoma, causing over $175,000 in estimated damages; another is a trespass and illegal excavation of a pipeline at San Bernard refuge, Texas, with estimated response and repair costs of $7.5 million.

As Secretary Zinke said when announcing the 2019 budget, "President Trump is absolutely right to call for a robust infrastructure plan that rebuilds our national parks, refuges, and Indian schools, and I look forward to helping him deliver on that historic mission. Our parks and refuges are being loved to death, but the real heartbreak is the condition of the schools in Indian Country. We can and must do better for these young scholars. This is not a Republican or Democrat issue, this is an American issue, and the President and I are ready to work with absolutely anyone in Congress who is willing to get the work done." Whether it is our national parks, national wildlife refuges, or BIE schools, we have a responsibility to be good stewards of the land and resources we manage. The Department's needs span all the way from Massachusetts to Alaska to Guam. We greatly appreciate the effort of this Committee and your colleagues in Congress who have sought to craft real solutions to our maintenance backlog. We look forward to continuing those efforts by working with each of you in a collaborative manner that preserves and maintains our national treasures.

Mr. Chairman, this concludes the Department's statement. We would be pleased to answer any questions you or other members of the Committee may have.

[LIST OF DOCUMENTS SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD RETAINED IN THE COMMITTEE'S OFFICIAL FILES]

—The Pew Charitable Trusts, Statement for the Record.

—List of national and local organizations, cities/counties, and elected officials who support addressing the multi-billion dollar backlog plaguing our National Park System.

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