



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

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President's Budget Requests \$3 billion for National Park Service

Innovative Centennial Initiative Proposes Robust Investment to Revitalize National Parks and Public Lands for the Next Century

WASHINGTON – President Obama's budget request for fiscal year 2016 – the centennial year of the National Park Service – includes \$3 billion for the bureau's critical conservation, preservation, and recreation mission. The budget boosts the National Park Service's essential programs and operational needs by \$432.9 million.

"In 2016, the National Park Service will celebrate its Centennial by inviting hundreds of millions of Americans to find their park by visiting a park and sharing their favorite park story," said National Park Service Director Jonathan B. Jarvis. "This budget will prepare the National Park Service to ensure that every one of those visitors has a wonderful and safe experience."

Jarvis said, "This is an investment in America's Best Idea" that pays dividends in gateway communities across the nation. For every dollar appropriated to the National Park Service in the President's 2016 Centennial budget, \$10 is returned to the American economy in the form of visitor spending, travel and tourism and construction jobs.

"The President's request contains all the elements necessary for those of us who tend to America's Best Idea to repair an ageing infrastructure, respond to climate change, host school field trips, and provide rangers to greet nearly 300 million visitors with the highest standard of public service," Jarvis said.

The budget proposal would provide targeted increases for the National Park Service Centennial Initiative, a multi-year effort to support the preservation of America's natural, cultural and historic treasures, invest wisely in the National Park System's most important assets, expand the use of parks for informal learning and recreation, engage 600,000 volunteers, and enhance the National Park Service's ability to leverage partnerships to accomplish its mission. It also proposes funds to celebrate civil rights in America through targeted investments to highlight the struggle undertaken by Americans to secure civil rights and liberties; actions that inspired many groups in America and around the world to continue to pursue progress for civil rights.

The Centennial Initiative includes discretionary increases of \$326.3 million, including \$8 million to restore seasonal capacity – putting hundreds more rangers on the ground to support

interpretation, law enforcement, and facility operations. It also proposes \$11.5 million to transport more than one million students from urban Title I elementary schools to nearby national parks; \$13.5 million to support new parks and critical responsibilities; \$2 million to provide volunteer coordinators; and \$8.5 million to support Youth coordinators.

Of the \$326.3 million increase requested for the Centennial Initiative, \$242.8 million is requested across the operations and construction accounts to restore and maintain all 6,735 highest priority non-transportation assets in good condition over 10 years, complemented by a mandatory proposal to provide \$300 million annually over three years for deferred maintenance projects.

Finally, the Centennial Initiative includes a discretionary increase of \$40 million to provide the federal match for NPS Centennial Challenge projects and programs at national parks to catalyze creative initiatives to improve visitor services, support outreach to new audiences, and leverage partnerships to reinvigorate the parks while forging connections with communities. This will build on the 2015 appropriation of \$10 million for matching projects. This is also complemented by a mandatory proposal to provide \$100 million annually over three years for the Centennial Challenge to complete signature projects and programs with partners.

The budget proposes increases of \$50 million for the Civil Rights initiative, including \$10.0 million to provide the necessary resources to improve high priority facility projects at NPS sites associated with the Civil Rights movement; \$6 million to fund projects to document, interpret, and preserve civil rights history in the national park system; and \$1.5 million to address critical base operating needs at park sites that maintain and interpret aspects of the Civil Rights movement.

Also included in the Civil Rights initiative is \$30 million for competitive historic preservation grants to preserve the stories and sites associated with the Civil Rights movement, and \$2.5 million for grants-in-aid specifically to Historically Black Colleges and Universities to document, interpret and preserve the stories and sites associated with the progression of civil rights in America.

Other increases in the President's Budget for the National Park Service:

- \$4.7 million to support the Cultural Resource Challenge, including \$700,000 to digitize the National Register, \$1 million to provide grants in aid to tribal historic preservation offices, and \$3 million to complete baseline documentation at parks to ensure informed management decisions.
- \$16 million for Natural Resource Stewardship and Science, including \$3.5 million for climate change adaptation projects, \$1.3 million for oceans and coastal resource stewardship, \$1.2 million for coordinated science based response to energy development, and \$10 million for climate change resiliency projects to be matched on a 50:50 basis with non-federal partners under the Challenge Cost Share authority.
- \$18.3 million in discretionary increases from the Land and Water Conservation Fund to support federal land acquisition projects, including recreational access, and both traditional and competitive state conservation grants. This is complemented by a legislative proposal to provide mandatory funding from the LWCF. In 2016, if enacted by Congress, this would provide an additional \$106.7 million for federal land acquisition, \$47 million for state grants, and \$25 million for Urban Parks and Recreation Fund, which assists economically distressed urban communities with the revitalization and improvement of recreation opportunities.

As the keeper of 405 national parks, 23 national scenic and national historic trails, and 60 wild and scenic rivers, the National Park Service is charged with preserving these lands and historic features for their cultural and historic significance, scenic and environmental worth, and educational and recreational opportunities. Additionally, National Park Service grant and technical assistance programs help revitalize communities and expand local recreation opportunities across the country.

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Tallgrass Prairie National Preserve is located two miles north of Strong City on Kansas State Highway 177 (the Flint Hills National Scenic Byway) and is a unique public/private partnership between the National Park Service and The Nature Conservancy. For more information, visit the preserve's Facebook page at <http://www.facebook.com/NPS.TallgrassPrairie>, website at www.nps.gov/tapr, email tapr_interpretation@nps.gov, or call the preserve at (620) 273-8494. To learn more about The Nature Conservancy in Kansas, visit the Conservancy's website at www.nature.org/Kansas or Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/TNCKansas>.

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