

National Park Service



Roger G. Kennedy, Bureau Director
Ricardo Lewis, Bureau Editor

FY98 Budget Invests in Operations, Resource Protection, Maintenance

The Clinton Administration's fiscal year 1998 budget proposal of \$1.6 billion for the National Park Service, an increase of \$176 million over the FY 97 enacted budget, provides greater investments in each national park and a continuing commitment to preserving the nation's natural and cultural heritage.

This budget would provide money to preserve the wetlands, the only ecosystem of its kind in the world, restore the Elwha River ecosystem in Olympic National Park, and enable the Service to establish precise means to enhance the air quality in parks," said NPS Director **Roger Kennedy**. Additional money would restore and preserve historic buildings on black college and university campuses, and preserve prehistoric ruins in the "old west."

The largest increase is for the **Everglades Restoration Fund, at \$100 million**, which would provide \$76.1 million for federal and state land acquisition in South Florida to acquire properties critical to the long-term survival of the wetlands ecosystem. \$12 million is proposed for scientific studies of how the natural system originally functioned and in what ways it is now impaired.

To continue a project that has been underway for several years, \$11.9 million also is included in the wetlands Restoration Fund to assist in the water delivery improvement effort being undertaken by the Corps of Engineers to restore Everglades National Park's (Florida) natural hydrological conditions.

A total of **\$24.9 million is requested for land acquisition** (\$21.8 million) and construction (\$3.1 million) to restore the **Elwha River to Olympic National Park**, Washington, as authorized by the Elwha River Ecosystem and Fisheries Restoration Act of 1992. Environmental studies have proposed to fully restore the Elwha River ecosystem through the removal of the Elwha and Glines Canyon dams. With \$8 million appropriated in previous years, the funds requested in FY 1998 will allow purchase of the dams and initiate the planning and designing of their removal. The long-term benefits of this project include restoring native fisheries for both the Elwha Tribe and local communities, improving recreational opportunities and creating jobs during restoration.



Environmental Initiatives

To address air quality concerns, NPS requests \$1 million in 1998 to provide continuous ozone monitoring and increased parameter coverage at 24 trend sites. Increasing urbanization and industrialization near national parks threaten resources, increasing the need for research to identify air quality related values and to estimate critical loads of pollutants that can affect park resources. The funds also would help to develop an **Air Quality Information System** that would provide a data base of information on park and national wildlife refuge air quality related values; modeling to determine the critical loads of ozone

Construction, Land Acquisition

The NPS construction program would be funded at \$150 million. The request emphasizes rehabilitating existing facilities and correcting health and safety problems. For example, the budget proposes \$6 million for removing facilities and restoring Giant Forest at Sequoia National Park, California, and \$6.3 million for replacing utility systems and restoring resources at Independence National Historical Park, Pennsylvania.

The NPS request proposes funding necessary in future fiscal years to complete seven construction projects, including: replacement of Giant Forest facilities at Sequoia National Park, California; repairs to the Washington, Lincoln and Jefferson Monuments (District of Columbia); rehabilitation of utilities at Independence National Historical Park, Pennsylvania; repair of Battle Road trail at Minute Man National Historical Park, Massachusetts; rehabilitation of Jacob Riis Park at Gateway National Recreation Area, New York; and acquisition and removal of the Elwha River dams at Olympic National Park, Washington. The total requested for these projects in 1998 is \$51.7 million; in addition, proposed appropriations language would provide advance appropriations of \$128 million for these projects from 1999 through 2003.

The NPS Land Acquisition and state assistance program would be funded at \$70.9 million. Funds would be directed toward acquiring the Service's highest priority areas, including \$4.2 million for continuing acquisition on the Appalachian National Scenic Trail (running from Maine to Georgia), \$3.5 million for threatened land at Fredericksburg and Spotsylvania County Battlefields Memorial National Military Park (Virginia), \$8.5 million for the newly authorized Sterling Forest property, and \$21.8 million for the Elwha River restoration effort mentioned earlier.

and deposition of nitrogen, sulfur, and acids that affect park resources; and research to determine the effects of pollutants on sensitive ecological resources.

Resource managers also are concerned about 3,000 abandoned mineral land sites, including abandoned mines, at 145 NPS sites. Ten percent of these abandoned mines are believed to pose serious environmental threats to park water resources. The **Abandoned Mine Lands Program**—\$1 million for 1998—would support the Department's Western Mine Restoration Partnership with states, help to clean up high priority sites, and enable the NPS to join other watershed remediation partnerships with states. The NPS also requested \$2.5 million (up from the \$1.5 million previously authorized) for the **Volunteers in Parks** program. In 1996, 85,000 volunteers contributed 3.3 million hours valued at \$28 million.

A requested increase of \$9 million would provide matching grants to begin restoration and preservation of historic buildings at the **12 historically black colleges and universities** identified in Section 507 of the Omnibus Parks and Public Lands Management Act of 1996. The legislation authorized \$29 million for this effort.

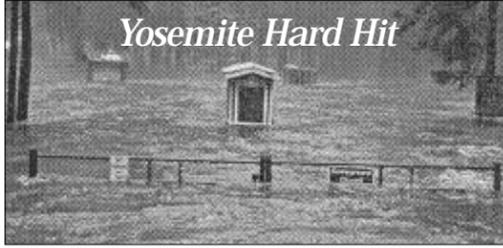
Park Operations

"In a climate where tough decisions are having to be made to reduce federal agency budgets, I'm very pleased to say that modest increases are proposed in FY 1998 for park operating budgets," Kennedy said. "These increases will be supplemented by new fee revenues through the congressionally authorized 3-year fee demonstration program, providing additional funds to repair visitor facilities, rehabilitate campgrounds, maintain trails, and strengthen park-based education and resource protection programs." The NPS is instituting these higher entrance and recreation fees at 100 parks. Most of the increased income—an estimated \$48 million in 1998—will remain in the park system.

The budget requests an **additional \$66 million for basic operations**. Each park would receive, at a minimum, a 1 percent across-the-board increase over the past year's operating budget and funds to cover pay and benefit increases. \$16.3 million of the requested increase would allow 63 parks to fund additional responsibilities or address and correct more complex and deeply-rooted budgetary problems.

\$9.5 million would go to parks that have had boundary expansions through recent legislation, those that face significantly increased costs due to the construction or acquisition of new facilities, as well as parks that are new to the system. The new sites include Tallgrass Prairie National Preserve, Kansas; Nicodemus National Historic Site, Kansas; Washita Battlefield National Historic Site, Oklahoma; New Bedford Whaling National Historical Park, Massachusetts, and Boston Harbor Islands National Recreation Area, Massachusetts.

Of the proposed increase, **\$6.8 million would address high priority resource or visitor protection issues** at selected parks. Smaller parks slated to receive this funding include Moores Creek National Historic Site, North Carolina; Prince William Forest Park, Virginia; Florissant Fossil Beds National Monument, Colorado, and Coronado National Memorial, Arizona. Larger parks include Yellowstone National Park, Idaho, Montana and Wyoming; Denali National Park and Preserve, Alaska, and Cape Hatteras National Seashore, North Carolina.



Yosemite Hard Hit

Yosemite National Park, California, has released a preliminary report on damage sustained by the early January floods and on recovery, repair costs, and upcoming needs. The overall price tag has been placed at \$178 million. The text of the report is available on the Internet at www.nps.gov/yose/whalhap.htm. An article on the damage to the park is on page 5. At left, the Lower River Campground in Yosemite Valley is covered by floodwaters.

Partnership Saves Rail Corridors

Thanks to an "early warning system" nearly 1,500 miles of rail corridors proposed for abandonment in the past year have been preserved and may be developed as public trails. The notification process, a joint effort of the Rails-to-Trails Conservancy and the Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance Program of the National Park Service, alerts communities to impending rail abandonments and encourages their conversion to trail use.

"In many cases, the early warning system is the only way that local officials and trail activists find out about proposed rail abandonments and opportunities for new trails," said **David Burwell**, President of the Conservancy. "Without it, many of these rail corridors would be lost forever."

Most abandonment regulations allow only 20 days for communities to express interest in acquiring a corridor for a trail and to request railbanking. In the past year, the Conservancy and the NPS's Conservation Assistance Program have notified more than 1,000 community officials and activists of rail abandonments. Of the 1,920 miles proposed for abandonment (140 corridors), 1,450 miles (82 corridors) are now rail-trail projects.

Since the NPS Conservation Assistance Program was created in 1988, the two groups have worked together to help communities with rail-trail



Corridors such as the one above between Laramie, Wyoming, and the Wyoming-Colorado state line have been successfully railbanked by a partnership between the Rails-to-Trails Conservancy and the Park Service's Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance Program.

conversions. Joint projects have included a case-study evaluation of how local initiative and federal support launched the rails-to-trails movement and a series of one-day instructional seminars in 15 cities on how to create rail-trails in communities.

An agreement signed in May 1996 calls for short and long-term actions in priority areas. It is the cornerstone on which the Conservancy and the NPS Conservation Assistance Program will continue to build their relationship. "The collaboration is an excellent example of a government agency and a non-profit group working together to further opportunities for trails and greenways," said **Tom Ross**, NPS program manager. "We've been able to accomplish much more by working together."

The Conservation Assistance Program facilitates partnerships and planning for trails, greenways, river corridors, watersheds, and heritage areas. NPS staff have helped more than 500 local projects and dozens of rail-trail conversions, including the 43-mile Youghiogheny River Trail in Pennsylvania and Utah's 30-mile Historic Union Pacific Rail Trail.

100-Year Old Bones Tell a Tale

A forensic anthropologist at the Smithsonian Institution's National Museum of Natural History has concluded that the bones recovered from the Gettysburg Battlefield, Pennsylvania, during a National Park Service excavation, are those of a Civil War soldier. "The bones are those of a young adult male, aged 20-25 years," according to **Doug Owsley** of the Smithsonian, who examined the remains.

Several features indicate that the individual was a young man, including the fact that his teeth were not diseased. The report also draws some conclusions about the possible cause of death. The Smithsonian found skull fracture patterns and x-ray evidence of lead particles that are consistent with head trauma in the form of a gunshot wound to the head. The findings will be published in a report available in March, 1997.

The remains will soon be returned to Gettysburg National Military Park for burial in the National Cemetery. "The interment will be in the spring or summer of 1997, during a public ceremony befitting a soldier who gave his life for his country," said **John A. Latscher**, superintendent of Gettysburg National Military Park.

Official Handbook

Charlestown Navy Yard

The latest official NPS park handbook, called **Charlestown Navy Yard**, tells the story of the historic Massachusetts' shipyard that was located across the Mystic River from Boston. One of six original naval shipyards established in 1800-1801, Charlestown had a distinguished 174-year career before closing in 1974. It is now part of Boston National Historical Park. The Navy's oldest commissioned warship, the U.S.S. Constitution, is berthed at the yard.

"We're proud of this book. It's handsome, well-written, and accurate," said Director Kennedy. It chronicles the major events in an important shipyard's history and examines how changing technology and naval policy affected the yard and the lives of its workers.

Primarily a repair, outfitting, and supply operation, Charlestown kept naval vessels ready for duty at sea. The yard also built more than 200 warships from early 19th century sailing frigates to 20th century steel warships. In its final decades, the facility, known as a destroyer yard, serviced and built a large number of the Navy workhorses, especially during World War II.

Maps and contemporary and historical photographs complement the 88-page text. Illustrations by **John Batchelor** and **Louis Glanzman** depict shipyard artisans at work and clarify points of naval and shipyard technology. The guide section of the book, which includes a map of the site, describes the yard's major structures and exhibits. This publication is available from the U.S. Government Printing Office, Superintendent of Documents, P.O. Box 37194, Pittsburgh, PA 15220-7954. Title: Charlestown Navy Yard; Stock Number: 024-005-01155-2; Price: \$4.75. Send check, VISA, or Master Card number and expiration date.

Helping Mesa Verde

On August 17th, lightning ignited a fire and caused nearly 5,000 acres within Mesa Verde National Park to burn. After controlling the fire, a multi-disciplinary team composed of employees from several Interior agencies assisted the park with fire damage assessments. As of November 25th, the team had surveyed eighty sites within the burn and found another ninety-two new sites which will need to be surveyed. These sites include a tower and kiva complex surrounded by several room blocks and previously unrecorded alcove or cliff dwelling sites. There may be as many as 300 undocumented sites in the burned area. The team assessments will help in determining appropriate erosion treatments to avoid damage or destruction to sites, since any newly uncovered sites are at high risk from further damage or burial by eroding materials.

All of the burned area must be surveyed as soon as possible so that the maximum amount of new site information may be acquired. This will avoid potential loss of site data from erosion or burial, and from new vegetation obscuring small sites or artifact scatters. Due to winter snows, the project has been halted until next spring or summer. Funding is only available at present for the assessment and rehabilitation of previously recorded sites. A donation account has been set up so that funds can be designated to assess new sites found. Donations may be sent to National Park Service, Mesa Verde National Park, Colorado 81330; they should be labeled "Chapin #5 Fire Rehabilitation Fund."

Bighorn Sheep

...Doing Well in Utah

In the second phase of a three-part effort to restore bighorn sheep to their historic habitat, 20 desert bighorn sheep from the Island in the Sky district at **Canyonlands National Park**, Utah, were captured and relocated on January 21 and 22 to the Capitol Gorge area of **Capitol Reef National Park**, Utah. Employees from Canyonlands and Capitol Reef and the Utah Division of Wildlife Resources participated in the capture and relocation, and reported that following the release all of the animals were doing well. Bighorn sheep were last seen in the park in the 1940s. The NPS wants to re-establish them to their natural habitat where they once roamed before hunting and disease brought them near extinction. The Capitol Reef re-establishment project also is part of an effort to restore the sheep to historic ranges on the Colorado Plateau.

...and in South Dakota

Monitoring continues at **Badlands National Park**, South Dakota, as more than 16 relocated Rocky Mountain Bighorn Sheep adapt to their new habitat within the park. Part of a Natural Resources Preservation Program's bighorn sheep initiative, research on the population home range, habitat utilization, demographics, foraging ecology, disease ecology, and genetics of Rocky Mountain bighorn sheep was conducted in the park between 1991 and 1995. In 1995, a management decision was made, based on the data and research, to restore bighorn sheep to large areas of unoccupied but suitable habitat. The first re-introduction took place last October 12th, when a dozen ewes and four young rams were radio-collared and transported by ground to a release site about 18 miles from their original location. By mid-November, the sheep shifted their location about four miles west of the release site, where they have since remained. Monitoring will continue to assess the viability of the new band, as well as the effects on the original herd.

NPS is re-establishing Rocky Mountain Big Horn Sheep to their natural habitats in Utah and South Dakota.

