



Recreation

America is a land of majestic beauty, and we take pride in our wildlife, forests, mountains, lakes, rivers, and coastlines. Outdoor recreation is an important part of our Nation's heritage.

President George W. Bush, September 9, 2005

Department of the Interior lands boast a staggering array of recreational opportunities where Americans and people from all over the world seek inspiration, reflection, and exercise. In addition to managing magnificent landscapes ranging from the snow-capped peaks of Grand Teton National Park to the scenic vistas of El Camino Real de Tierra Adentro National Historic Trail, Interior also promotes recreational opportunities in local communities through a variety of cooperative grant and technical assistance programs.

The Department offers the recreating public a multitude of outdoor activities in areas as diverse as the deserts, rivers, valleys, and mountains it manages. Whether enjoying off-highway vehicles at Imperial Sand Dunes, kayaking through the maze of rivers at Okefenokee National Wildlife Refuge, or snorkeling among the coral reefs at Virgin Islands National Park, Interior offers unique recreation experiences. Interior offers accessibility solutions at its recreation sites that create inclusive recreation opportunities for people of all ages and abilities.

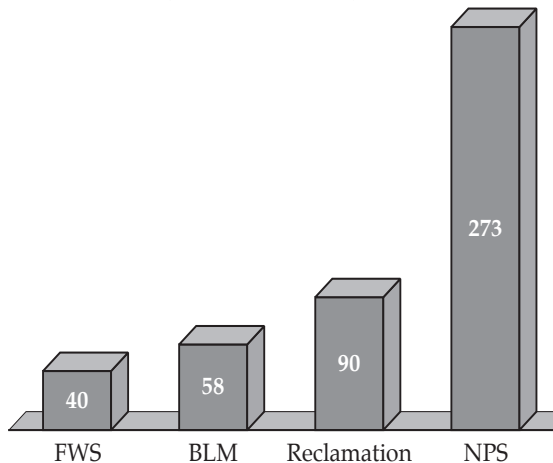
RECREATION MISSION

**Provide recreation opportunities
for America**

The Interior Department's 2007 budget provides \$1.2 billion to advance its recreation mission with an emphasis on increased access and improved visitor experiences. The budget proposes to:

- Improve the quality of the visitor experience at national parks by maintaining funding levels for visitor services.
- Improve the recreation experience on national wildlife refuges and public lands by providing increases for partnership activities and visitor services improvements.
- Use the Land and Water Conservation Fund to acquire the highest priority land tracts, including grants for Civil War battlefields.
- Work collaboratively with the U.S. Department of Agriculture through the Recreation Fee Council to implement the Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act and introduce the multi-agency public lands pass.
- Unveil the National Recreation Reservation System, the flagship of the Recreation One-Stop initiative, to improve dramatically the accessibility of recreation information and opportunities for the public.

2005 INTERIOR RECREATION VISITS
(millions of visitors)



LAND MANAGEMENT AGENCY VISITATION

Interior's land management agencies and the Bureau of Reclamation provide numerous outdoor recreation opportunities for the public. In 2005, Interior experienced 461 million recreational visits to national parks, wildlife refuges, and other Interior-managed public lands. In 2006, even more people will visit and benefit from the 3,496 recreational sites managed by the Bureau of Land Management, the 545 national wildlife refuges, the 388-unit national park system, and the 308 Reclamation sites. Increasing public recreation demands, urban growth, and fiscal realities have inspired Interior to seek innovative solutions to sustain and increase quality recreation experiences. Working with local communities and interested parties has helped Interior achieve enduring on-the-ground recreation results. The 2007 budget will enhance the effective and efficient fulfillment of Interior's recreation mission.

Visitors to Interior lands enjoy extraordinary recreational opportunities. Each year, Interior must balance providing increasingly diverse recreational opportunities with protecting the very cultural, natural, and historic resources that attract visitors to Interior lands and waters. For example, a major challenge for BLM is managing increased off-highway use on public lands. The BLM is responding to this challenge by working with the public to develop management plans that specifically address off-highway vehicles.

Similarly, the National Park Service is developing air tour management plans to determine appropriate levels of access for commercial air tours over park units. The Fish and Wildlife Service seeks to balance resource protection goals along with recreation opportunities on refuges through its comprehensive conservation plans.

The Department's 2007 budget provides targeted increases to continue to meet the objectives of its recreation mission.

ENHANCING EXPERIENCES AT AMERICA'S NATIONAL PARKS

Park Base Funding — The Park Service enhances the public's experiences in parks each year by developing, enhancing, and providing interpretation and education programs; staffing visitor centers; ensuring appropriate levels of security and safety at parks; and maintaining facilities and resources in acceptable or good condition. A primary vehicle for improving visitor services is park base funding. Over the past two years, NPS has received a cumulative four percent increase in base funding.

In 2005, base funding increased by \$59.5 million, including across-the-board increases for every park in the system and programmatic increases of roughly \$12.5 million to enhance visitor services. Funding in 2006 built upon the record 2005 park base funding level with another net increase of \$24.6 million, including funding of most fixed costs, additional across-the-board increases for every park unit, and net programmatic increases of \$5.0 million. Surveys show visitor satisfaction



Our management approach is to take better care of our existing parks. We are setting priorities for our national parks that will preserve and protect the culture and breathtaking beauty of these special places.

Secretary Gale A. Norton, September 9, 2005

with their park experiences remains at high levels. Every year since 1998, about 95 percent of park visitors have rated the overall quality of services as good or very good.

The 2007 budget request for national parks will improve visitor services, meet growing requirements, and enhance administrative capabilities. The request continues to prioritize funding for fixed costs for NPS as a whole by providing an increase of \$22.3 million for parkbase fixed costs. Funding the majority of the fixed costs in 2007 will help NPS meet performance goals such as maintaining visitor satisfaction. At the 2007 request level, base funding totals \$1.1 billion. These funds will be managed using a host of financial and organizational management tools, including Core Operations Analysis, as a means of ensuring park funds are allocated to operations that support each park's primary mission and Service-wide priorities.

Air Tour Management Plans — Elk bugling in the cool autumn air of Rocky Mountain National Park, birds calling in the Everglades, waterfalls thundering into Yosemite Valley, the quiet reverence at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial—these are the sounds that help make a trip to the national parks an unforgettable experience. This symphony of natural sounds within the national parks is an important park benefit. Varying in their character from day to night and from season to season, soundscapes vary as a result of the presence of nocturnal and diurnal species, wildlife migration

patterns, changes in vegetation and foliage, and the numbers and activities of the many different visitors to the national parks.

In recent years, flights over parks have increased dramatically. They include commercial passenger flights, sightseeing tours, general aviation, park maintenance, and fire and emergency operations. In the 1990s, Congress began to address the audio impact of these



flights on park resources and visitor experiences. The National Parks Air Tour Management Act of 2000 requires that NPS and the Federal Aviation Administration work together to develop commercial air tour management plans for all parks with commercial air tours. Currently, commercial air tours fly over

120 NPS units. The plans will help resource managers minimize adverse impacts by specifying the number of flights as well as their routes, direction, minimum altitudes, and time of day.

The 2007 budget request for the Park Service includes a \$2.4 million increase to continue meeting its commitment under the Air Tour Management Act. This proposal includes funding for an additional two FTEs to oversee contracted National Environmental Policy Act work, assist parks in acquiring acoustical data, and provide scientific expertise for soundscape management. These plans will improve resource management and complement existing management planning processes for park facilities as well as natural and cultural resources.

Our national wildlife refuges are not only beautiful places where fish and wildlife can flourish, they are also economic engines for the local communities, providing jobs, customers for local businesses, and tax revenue for local governments... We are ensuring our refuges continue to be places of awe and wonder as well as economic vitality for local communities across the country.

Secretary Gale A. Norton, October 6, 2005

IMPROVING THE NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE EXPERIENCE

The national wildlife refuge system hosts nearly 40 million visitors annually. Wildlife-dependent recreation is a priority public use of the refuge system when compatible with the purposes and management of the refuge. The FWS has developed a wide array of facilities on many refuges to enhance each visitor's wildlife-dependent recreational experience, including hunting, photo, and observation blinds; fishing piers; boat launches; nature and interpretive trails; observation towers; boardwalks; auto tour routes; visitor centers; and educational exhibits.

Hunting and fishing, two traditional recreational opportunities on many refuges, continue to be extremely popular. The refuge system provides high-quality big game, upland game, and migratory bird hunting, often in places where other Federal lands are scarce. Hunting and sport fishing occurs at 317 and 271 national wildlife refuges, respectively. The refuge system also manages 37 Wetland Management Districts open to hunting.



Since 2001, FWS has opened 34 refuges to hunting and 24 refuges to fishing, creating recreation opportunities and stimulating local economies. Together with the many other recreational activities available to the public on refuges, these activities generated almost \$1.4 billion in total economic activity during the 2004 fiscal year. In 2004, nearly 40 million people visited national wildlife refuges, creating



almost 24,000 private-sector jobs and producing about \$454 million in employment income. Additionally, recreation spending on refuges generated nearly \$151 million in tax revenue at the local, county, State, and Federal level.

In 2007, the budget includes an increase of \$1.0 million for improving refuge visitor services. The budget requests an additional \$1.9 million for visitor services projects as part of the \$4.3 million challenge cost share increase. This increase will fund operational projects that will result in an estimated 67,000 additional hunting visits, 180,000 additional fishing visits, and 969,000 additional visits to participate in wildlife observation activities, such as bird watching. The increase in this matching program will also create more opportunities for local citizens, friends' organizations, and others to participate in community conservation stewardship programs on refuges and adjacent lands.

THE FEDERAL LANDS RECREATION ENHANCEMENT ACT

Enacted in 2004, the Recreation Enhancement Act gives Interior and the Forest Service a long-term tool to improve recreation and visitor amenities on public lands. The REA provides for a nationally consistent interagency program; enhanced visitor services at recreation sites; a new interagency national pass for use across Federal recreation sites; and more local community and public involvement in the program. Participating agencies include BLM, FWS, NPS, Reclamation and the Forest Service.

Unlike the Fee Demonstration program, which provided broad authority to charge fees, the REA limits fees to sites that meet specific criteria. The REA also creates Recreation Resource Advisory Committees for BLM and the Forest Service to ensure careful consideration of fee proposals and strengthen public participation opportunities for the recreation programs of all participating agencies.

Implementing a well-run recreation fee program that maximizes benefits to the visiting public remains a top priority for the Departments of the Interior and Agriculture. On December 17, 2004, nine days after the REA was signed into law, the Recreation Fee Leadership Council convened and approved an implementation plan. Comprised of key Interior and Agriculture officials, the Recreation Fee Council facilitates coordination and consistency among agencies on recreation fee policies. The implementation plan includes the creation of a steering committee to oversee day-to-day implementation, as well as several technical working groups for each of the key areas. The Fee Council created four technical working groups: the All America Lands Pass; Fee Collections and Fee Expenditures; Recreation Resource Advisory Committees; and Communications.

With introduction of a new interagency public lands pass scheduled for introduction in 2007, an

interagency team is coordinating listening sessions to receive public input on implementation processes; conducting studies and surveys on the price, use, and benefits of the pass; and completing the contracting process for its implementation.

The Fee Collections and Fee Expenditures team has defined terms in the REA and has developed a set of guidelines for use by field staff. In addition, agency representatives have received approval from the U.S. Treasury to establish a simplified account structure.

The Recreation RAC team has drafted interagency guidelines for public involvement, which were published in the Federal Register on September 28, 2005. Agencies are expected to develop additional guidelines tailored to their individual missions and management needs.

The Recreation RAC team conducted 11 listening sessions across the country but primarily in the West to request feedback from the public on how Recreation RACs might be organized. Based on these listening sessions, the Departments have decided to utilize existing Resource Advisory Councils, with some adjustments, to fulfill

Recreation RAC duties. In areas where Resource Advisory Councils currently do not exist, new Recreation RACs will be created. The areas not currently covered by existing Resource Advisory Councils include Wyoming, Nebraska, eastern Washington, and western Oregon. An interagency Recreation RAC agreement between the Departments has been developed and is undergoing final review. Once the agreement is finalized, the existing Resource Advisory Councils can begin to assume their new responsibilities as Recreation RACs. For areas not covered by the existing Resource Advisory Councils, the Departments are preparing a charter to serve as the basis for establishing new Recreation RACs.

The Department has taken other steps to ensure compliance with the Act, resulting in several changes at fee sites across applicable Interior bureaus. For example:

FEDERAL LANDS RECREATION ENHANCEMENT ACT GOALS

- Implement a well-run and streamlined recreation fee program that maximizes benefits to the visiting public.
- Work cooperatively with the public to ensure outstanding recreation opportunities for public lands visitors.
- Ensure the establishment of a transparent and effective recreation fee program.

- The BLM eliminated fees at Imperial Sand Dunes overlooks in California and at an undeveloped site at Orilla Verde Recreation Area in New Mexico; increased the number of sites that accept national passes from 12 to 28; added facilities to meet standard amenity fee requirements at Lower Colorado in Arizona and Gunnison Gorge in Colorado; and discontinued youth fees at Piedras Blancas visitor center in California and at Cape Blanco Lighthouse in Oregon.
- The Park Service completed a review of all 12,000 previously approved spending projects. Regions and parks evaluated approximately 1,500 projects to ensure that expenditures for each project did not include unauthorized spending, such as employee bonuses. The NPS is currently reviewing newly submitted projects to ensure compliance with the new law, appropriate levels of visitor access, and to ensure that recreation fee projects will improve the visitor experience in the national parks.
- The FWS eliminated entrance fees at Gavins Point National Fish Hatchery in South Dakota.

THE LAND AND WATER CONSERVATION FUND

The Land and Water Conservation Fund helps conserve, develop, and utilize outdoor recreation resources for the benefit and enjoyment of the American people primarily through conservation partnerships with local communities, private citizens, conservation groups, Tribes, and States.

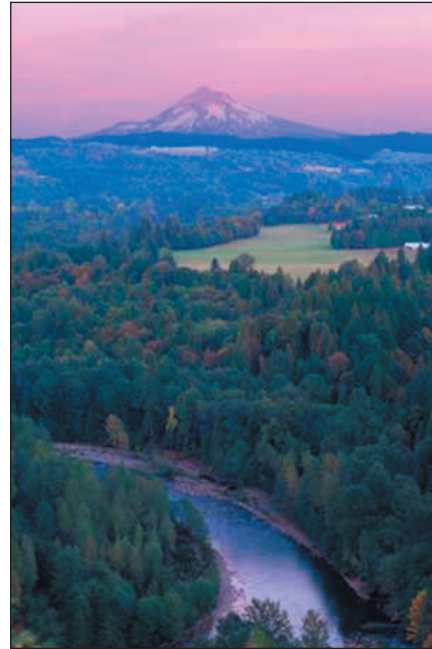
The Fund's cooperative conservation component helps Federal managers partner with others to protect natural resources and improve recreation opportunities. Linking cooperative conservation on public lands to nearby private lands enhances conservation, intensifies community participation, and leverages the funding dedicated to these activities.

A significant number of species currently protected under the Endangered Species Act reside for all or a portion of their lives on private lands. Cooperative conservation projects that transcend Federal, State

LAND AND WATER CONSERVATION FUND	
(dollars in thousands)	
	2007 Request
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR	
Cooperative Conservation Programs	
BLM	
Challenge Cost Share.....	9,357
FWS	
Refuge Challenge Cost Share	8,559
Partners for Fish and Wildlife	42,660
Coastal Programs	12,984
Migratory Bird Joint Ventures.....	11,835
NPS	
Challenge Cost Share.....	2,380
DM	
Take Pride in America	<u>499</u>
Subtotal.....	88,274
State and Other Grant Programs	
FWS	
State and Tribal Wildlife Grants..	74,666
Landowner Incentive Grants	24,400
Private Stewardship Grants	9,400
Coop. Endg. Species Grants	80,001
NAWCF Grants	<u>41,646</u>
Subtotal.....	230,113
NPS	
State Assistance	1,625
Federal LWCF	
BLM.....	8,767
FWS.....	27,079
NPS	22,718
Appraisal Services	<u>7,416</u>
Subtotal.....	65,980
Subtotal, Interior.....	<u>385,992</u>
U.S. FOREST SERVICE	
State LWCF Programs	
Forest Legacy	61,515
Forest Stewardship	33,880
Urban and Community Forestry	26,846
Federal LWCF Land Acquisition	<u>25,075</u>
Subtotal, Forest Service.....	147,316
TOTAL	<u>533,308</u>

SANDY RIVER-OREGON NATIONAL HISTORIC TRAIL

The 2007 budget includes \$750,000 for the Sandy River BLM land acquisition project on the Oregon National Historic Trail. The bureau is working with Portland General Electric to remove the Bull Run hydroelectric project, including dams on both the Sandy and Little Sandy Rivers. Dam removal will restore the free-flowing character of the Sandy River and result in the eventual transfer of 1,272 acres of PGE lands within the Sandy River project area into Federal ownership. A breathtaking scenic corridor immediately east of metropolitan Portland, the Sandy and Salmon River canyons descend from the forested slopes of Mount Hood, harboring a rich diversity of animal and plant populations within secluded riparian wetland areas. This project offers excellent recreational opportunities for fishing, hiking, wildlife viewing, nature study, and non-motorized boating or floating. The project is easily accessible from the Portland metro area, the northwest's second largest population center. It will provide for a quality recreation experience on Interior-managed and partnered lands and waters.



and private lands better protect endangered species and migratory wildlife and fish. In addition, cooperative conservation programs promote the achievement of recreation goals while promoting species and habitat conservation, as exemplified by the Sandy River Project.

Conservation partnerships that transcend Federal and State boundaries create opportunities to tap into the knowledge and resources of neighboring communities and enlist their support in long-term

CIVIL WAR BATTLEFIELDS: PART OF OUR NATIONAL HERITAGE

Well over half of the 384 principal Civil War battlefields have been lost. Today, an estimated 30 acres of Civil War battlefield land are transformed through development every day. These battlefields are part of our national heritage, scenes of struggle and sacrifice where American soldiers lost their lives. The 2007 NPS budget includes \$4.0 million in grants to States and local communities to acquire lands to preserve and protect Civil War battlefield sites. The grants will be matched, leveraging \$8.0 million.

conservation and recreation goals. In addition to expanding opportunities to meet the goals of LWCF, these partnerships leverage funds through partnerships that yield at least a one-to-one match. In 2007, the Department proposes funding \$386.0 million in LWCF programs. Of this total, \$318.4 million would fund cooperative conservation programs that expand opportunities for partnership projects that pay dividends in conservation, achieve recreation results, and leverage funding. The remaining \$67.6 million would fund Federal land acquisition by the Department's land management agencies.

LWCF Stateside Grants — Nearly \$3.9 billion has been appropriated through 2006 for the LWCF State Assistance Grant program, including \$312.0 million in the last four years, providing significant resources to States to develop recreation programs and acquire land. Many of these grants support State and local parks that have alternative sources of funding through State revenues or bonds. In addition, a PART review in 2003 found the current program could not adequately measure performance or demonstrate results. The NPS LWCF State assistance is funded at \$1.6 million, \$27.9 million below the 2006 enacted level.

UPPER SNAKE-SOUTH FORK SNAKE RIVER

Born of snowmelt and springs among high ridges of Yellowstone country, the 42,900-acre Upper Snake-South Fork Snake River project is unique. The BLM land acquisition budget includes \$1.5 million for this project, where BLM and partners are conserving and enhancing significant scenic, recreational, and wildlife resources within the Snake River corridor, predominately through the acquisition of conservation easements. The riparian corridor, lined with commanding cottonwood galleries and lush shrub understory, sustains a broad variety of plants, fish, birds, and wildlife populations. The first World Fly Fishing Championship in North America took place on the South Fork in 1997. The area provides important habitat for 126



bird species, including much of Idaho's bald eagle population, great blue herons, and the yellow-billed cuckoo. Diverse recreational opportunities account for 335,000 recreational visits per year.

VOLUNTEER PROGRAMS

The Department's land management agencies have close ties to the American people and sustain long-standing relationships with communities and individuals. The many historic, cultural, and natural resources accessible throughout lands managed by the Department provide public opportunities for respite, reflection, and outdoor recreation. The connection of people to these special places provides a rich context within which to engage the public, establish partnerships, and promote volunteerism in America.

Each year, Interior receives tremendous contributions as a result of long-term relationships with volunteers. Through a variety of volunteer programs, individuals of all ages with differing levels of experience and educational backgrounds contribute valuable time to help the Department fulfill its recreation mission. These volunteers bring their knowledge of local places and people and provide unique insights for visitors to parks, refuges, and public lands. In return, volunteers benefit from many learning experiences, new relationships, healthy lifestyles, and dynamic recreational opportunities. In 2006, volunteers are expected to contribute over 9.1 million hours of their time to the Interior Department at a value of \$153.0 million.

New legislation signed into law by President George W. Bush on December 7, 2005 allows increased use of volunteers in Interior's agencies. This law furthers the reach of the President's USA Freedom Corps, created in 2002 as part of his call to all Americans to volunteer in their communities. The law will ensure that all of Interior's bureaus have authority and resources to work with volunteers. It allows Interior to recruit and use volunteers in the Bureau of Indian Affairs and the Office of the Secretary and to strengthen existing volunteer authority at Reclamation and the U.S. Geological Survey.



Volunteers across America help public land managers fix fences and trails, restore historic buildings, teach kids to fish, monitor bird populations, and perform many other functions. They provide hands, eyes, and smiles to help our dedicated workforce serve the American public.

Secretary Gale A. Norton, December 7, 2005

TAKE PRIDE IN AMERICA

The new law will boost the Take Pride in America initiative, the public lands component of the President's USA Freedom Corps. Take Pride in America, a national, multi-agency partnership, empowers volunteers to participate in enhancing parks, refuges, recreation areas, and cultural and historic sites. This initiative successfully garners support by leveraging private funding and thousands of volunteer hours to further stewardship and other efforts on Interior and other public lands. Across the country, States and communities are implementing the Take Pride initiative in ways that best suit local needs and interests, but the message is the same—we have a duty to care for the public lands we use and enjoy. Each of us can find a way to take pride in America by lending a hand.

TAKE PRIDE IN AMERICA SUCCESS STORIES

- In May 2005, the Take Pride School program was introduced to the Carmel River School in Carmel, California, the first Take Pride in America school. Since then, 22 more schools have joined the program, committing to two on-the-ground volunteer projects per school year. Additionally, the Walt Disney Company, a Take Pride Charter Partner, mailed 111,000 "Take Pride in America Schools" inserts to every school principal in the Nation.
- Take Pride in America teamed with the Ford Motor Company and BLM to initiate the Save the Mustangs Fund. This program allows the public to contribute to the long-term care and placement of the wild horses and burros. Since May 2005, over \$23,000 has been donated by 346 donors to the Fund.
- Throughout 2005, Take Pride in America Partners continued to host volunteer events. The number of participants in these events continues to grow. In July, over 400 volunteers from Pricewaterhouse-Coopers participated in a clean up and beautification at Anacostia Park in suburban Washington, DC. National Public Lands Day took place across the country in September, with 800 events nationwide, resulting in 90,000 volunteers collecting 380,000 pounds of trash, building or maintaining 550 miles of trail, planting 4,500 trees and shrubs, and pulling 8,000 invasive plants. Also in 2005, 1,600 Take Pride Gardens were planted utilizing more than 20,000 pounds of donated seed.

