



Recreation

Federal agencies and employees are partners in managing our public lands and waters and providing great recreational experiences. We are partners with volunteers ... State and local agencies ... outfitters and guides ... campground managers and concessionaires.

Secretary Gale A. Norton, October 9, 2004

Americans increasingly are turning to their public lands for solace, to enjoy the beauty of natural landscapes, and to improve their lives through exercise and outdoor experiences. Lands and waters managed by Interior offer unparalleled outdoor recreational opportunities for individuals – to marvel at the geologic rainbows at Arches National Park in Utah, explore mangrove thickets at Ten Thousand Islands National Wildlife Refuge in Florida, mountain bike up canyon trails around Moab, Utah, or simply take a short walk on a nearby greenway. Approximately 477 million people from all over the world visit Interior lands to hike, bike, canoe, camp, fish and hunt, and learn about the Nation’s great historic, cultural, and natural places.

RECREATION MISSION

**Provide recreation opportunities
for America**

The National Park Service, Bureau of Land Management, Fish and Wildlife Service, and Bureau of Reclamation manage an inspiring and diverse collection of natural and cultural wonders. Enjoyment of Interior lands and resources takes on many forms ranging from paying tribute to the Nation’s veterans at the newly opened World War II National Memorial in Washington, D.C., bird watching at Cape May National Wildlife Refuge in Delaware, trekking among the peaks and glaciers in the back country of Wrangell St. Elias National Preserve in Alaska, or boating on the Elephant Butte Reclamation reservoir in New Mexico.

As public interest in and demand for recreation opportunities grow, so does the complexity of managing the Nation’s 262 million acres of BLM public lands, 308 Bureau of Reclamation recreation sites, 545 national wildlife refuges, and the 388-unit national park system. Management decisions affecting recreation on public lands must often balance multiple activities. The Interior Department’s 2006 budget provides \$1.3 billion to advance its recreation mission. The budget proposes to:

- Improve visitor services at national parks, refuges, and other public lands.
- Increase hunting and fishing opportunities on national wildlife refuges.
- Transition from the Recreational Fee Demonstration program to fully implement the Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act.
- Fund State, tribal, local and Federal grant and land acquisition programs that expand recreation and conservation opportunities.
- Increase Take Pride in America funding, an integral component of the President’s USA Freedom Corps, and maintain successful volunteer programs in the land management agencies.

LAND MANAGEMENT OPERATIONS

Each of Interior's land management agencies, as well as the Bureau of Reclamation, provides outdoor recreation opportunities for the public. In 2004, lands and recreation sites managed by Interior experienced an overall increase of 26 million visitors. Approximately 280 million people visited national parks, 68 million visitors enjoyed BLM expansive landscapes and wide-ranging recreational opportunities, and 39 million visitors to wildlife refuges took pleasure in hunting, fishing, canoeing, and bird watching, among other activities. The Bureau of Reclamation had 90 million visitors who enjoyed assorted recreational activities such as boating on Lake Mead behind Hoover Dam.

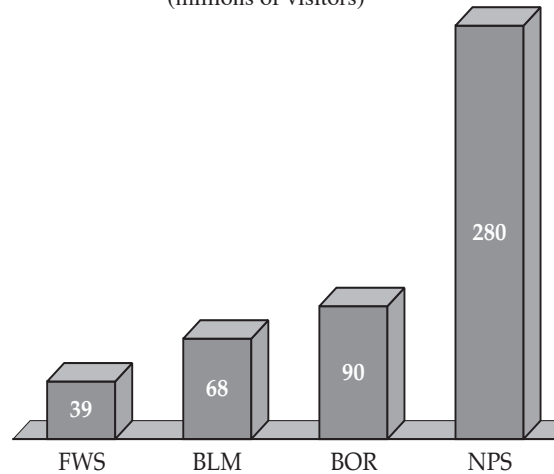
VISITORS AND SATISFACTION

The rate of visitor satisfaction with experiences on Interior's public lands remained high in 2004. The NPS reports that 96 percent of visitors to national parks were satisfied with their experience, while BLM satisfaction was reported at 94 percent. The FWS established a baseline for satisfaction with quality of experience in 2004 of 88 percent to better track the degree of satisfaction with visits to wildlife refuges in the future.

BLM Public Lands – The 2006 budget proposes \$960.2 million for BLM operations, an increase of \$15.9 million above 2005. The operational increase includes \$5.9 million to provide services responsive to the public's growing demand for recreational opportunities on public lands and to protect natural and cultural resources under BLM stewardship. Of this funding increase, \$2.2 million is requested in the Challenge Cost Share program and, with matching funds, will provide over \$4 million in program benefits.

The BLM will focus a significant portion of the \$5.9 million increase on travel and transportation planning and management. Travel, transportation, off-highway vehicle use, and public access have been identified as key issues to be resolved in virtually all new planning efforts, in part because of the dramatic growth in off-highway vehicle use on BLM lands. As BLM updates resource

2004 INTERIOR RECREATION VISITS (millions of visitors)



management plans, travel management plans will need to be developed and implemented to address resource issues such as maintaining public safety, minimizing and avoiding damage to cultural resources, and mitigating habitat fragmentation. The BLM will conduct road and trail inventories and identify optimal travel and transportation networks to guide future efforts to reroute, restore, or alter existing roads and trails, and restore damaged resources or mitigate impacts to acceptable levels. These planning efforts will be conducted in partnership, collaboration, and cooperation with the public.

Funds will also be used to address facility and infrastructure needs and enhance visitor services.



NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE SYSTEM HUNTING AND FISHING PROGRAMS

The national wildlife refuge system offers some of the finest hunting and fishing opportunities in the Nation. There are 308 national wildlife refuges that are open to hunting and offer a wide variety of hunting programs. There are 270 national wildlife refuges open to sport fishing. Each year, FWS looks for opportunities to add new public hunting and fishing programs. New hunting and fishing programs are opened through a regulatory process where the public is able to review and comment on proposed new hunting and fishing programs. These proposals and the final decisions to open new hunting and fishing programs are published in the Federal Register.

Additionally, there are 37 wetland management districts, which include waterfowl production areas and easements. By regulation, waterfowl production areas are open to hunting, fishing, and trapping.

Bombay Hook National Wildlife Refuge— Along the shores of the Delaware Bay hunters with disabilities, many of them veterans, welcomed the new year with what is for them a unique and rare waterfowl hunting trip. Refuge personnel at Bombay Hook National Wildlife Refuge, along with professional waterfowl guides and volunteers from the National Wild Turkey Federation, joined more than one dozen hunters with disabilities to welcome the new year during a morning filled with camaraderie, duck and geese calling from world champion waterfowl callers, and thousands of ducks and geese that winter on the refuge. This event was the result of a ground breaking partnership between the national wildlife refuge system and the National Wild Turkey Federation's Wheelin' Sportsmen Program. This partnership develops new opportunities for people with disabilities to enjoy the outdoors.

Hunters across America have enjoyed national wildlife refuges for more than one hundred years and we are proud to extend this opportunity to hunters with disabilities.

Fish and Wildlife Service Director Steve Williams, January 2005

The BLM will complete projects to update facilities and infrastructure, improve trail conditions, and enhance site security. The funds will also support BLM efforts to expand and improve signing, mapping, and travel information; expand stewardship education and outreach efforts; enhance interpretative information and programs; leverage partnerships and increase gateway community support.

FWS National Wildlife Refuges— President Theodore Roosevelt created the first national wildlife refuge at Pelican Island, Florida, in 1903. Today, the national wildlife refuge system includes 545 wildlife refuges and hundreds of waterfowl production areas covering approximately 96 million acres. A wildlife refuge can be found in every State and several U.S. Territories, often within an hour's drive of major cities. Refuges protect wildlife habitat and offer Americans the opportunity to pursue such outdoor activities as hunting, fishing, photography and wildlife viewing, and studying

the natural world. The 2006 budget proposes \$393.9 million for the refuge system, an increase of \$12.9 million over 2005. Programmatic increases within this total include \$7.7 million for the challenge cost share program, and \$2.1 million for refuge law enforcement. Refuges also provide high quality



big game, upland game, and migratory bird hunting, often in places where other Federal lands are scarce. By law, hunting and fishing are two of the six priority wildlife-dependent recreational uses on national wildlife refuges, and individual refuges are encouraged to provide opportunities to hunt and fish when compatible with the refuge's conservation goals.

Athletic pursuits are also popular recreational activities at refuges, including hiking, biking, and canoeing. These activities generate substantial economic activity for local communities. The most recent data available suggest that in 2002 visitors to refuges generated \$809.2 million in sales for regional economies. In addition, visitation at refuges helped employ nearly 19,000 people, with an estimated \$315.2 million in employment income.

Enhancing Visitor Services in America's National Parks – The National Park Service provides recreational opportunities for the Nation, offering interpretive ranger programs, staffing at visitor centers, daily maintenance activities, and other programs designed to enhance visitor services.

To continue enhancing basic visitor services, maintain and improve administrative capacity, and meet growing visitor requirements, the Department's 2006 budget request provides increases of \$40.0 million in pay and benefits and other fixed costs for Operation of the National Park System, \$5.4 million for the challenge cost share program, and \$3.4 million for repair and rehabilitation of historical buildings. This request fully funds additional pay and benefits allowing parks to maintain current capacity.

The 2006 budget request maintains the funding levels provided in the 2005 appropriation, which included a net increase of more than \$60.0 million over 2004 recurring park base funding.

Parks operate in a dynamic context with changing priorities, the emergence of new technologies, and evolving public expectations. This dynamic context requires that the park service, like all Federal agencies, periodically evaluate its management

practices and organization structures to ensure that available funds are effectively and efficiently used for priority purposes. The NPS is identifying management improvements and efficiencies that will result in enhanced visitor services and cost-effective operations.

The NPS has developed a park scorecard, an indicator of park financial, operational, and managerial health, to help managers identify and evaluate park funding needs and the allocation of resources to individual park units. Consisting of five categories with 24 equally weighted measures, the scorecard will be used in conjunction with park performance information to determine and prioritize park funding needs and the potential for individual parks to improve performance with additional funding. The scorecard was used to help allocate \$12.5 million provided in 2005 to bolster visitor services. With time, the scorecard will be more instrumental in selecting and validating regional requests for park base increases.



In addition, regional offices have been focusing on strategic planning to streamline processes, lower costs, and increase productivity. Many of these innovations are yielding improved effectiveness and efficiency gains that have helped parks maintain or enhance performance capacity. A few notable accomplishments include:

Right now, the funding for national parks is at a record level... The Park Service has more money per employee, per acre, and per visitor than ever before in its 88 year history.

Secretary Gale A. Norton, August 25, 2004

- The Intermountain Regional Office is currently working on standardizing its mission critical workforce management analysis. The process ensures that the best management practices are implemented, and provides an approach for park units to establish priorities as they relate to each individual park unit's mission. Mission critical and position management reviews are generating savings of approximately ten percent for each park unit. The NPS is exploring the feasibility of implementing this process service-wide by the end of 2006.

- In the Pacific West Region, managers undertook a strategic review to achieve operational efficiencies by reshaping the role and mission of the regional office in response to the park and program managers it served. The result of this process was the identification of a Most Efficient Organization that eliminated two levels of management, eliminated four encumbered positions, and projected the elimination of at least one more high-level position. Estimated annual savings of over \$300,000 will be reinvested in rebuilding service capacity. Stabilizing and streamlining the organizational structure for the region also permitted a reassessment of space requirements for offices maintained in Oakland, California; Portland, Oregon; and Seattle, Washington. Reduced office space needs are expected to save an additional \$486,000 beginning in 2005. The NPS has decided to apply the Pacific West model across the national park system.

THE FEDERAL LANDS ENHANCEMENT RECREATION ACT

Passed by the 108th Congress and signed into law by the President on December 8, 2004, the Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act will enable Interior land management agencies to improve recreation and visitor amenities on public lands. The Act provides a ten-year extension of the program, which was piloted with the Recreational Fee Demonstration program. The Act establishes important parameters for the program to ensure that

fees are charged only in appropriate locations and revenues are appropriately spent on infrastructure and services that directly benefit the public.

The Department is working collaboratively with the U.S. Department of Agriculture on key implementation issues such as development of long-term, multi-agency fee guidance, and the creation of the new America the Beautiful Pass, which will cover entrance and standard amenity fees for the five agencies authorized under the Act. The Departments are committed to creating a dynamic program responsive to the public and the Congress during the implementation process.



In 2006, the Interior Department will continue to transition from the Recreational Fee Demonstration program to the provisions of the new Act. Working with the Congress, the Department has established a set of principles to guide the program during the transition period, including:

- No new fee areas will be created.
- Agencies will conduct an interim evaluation of existing fee sites based on the new criteria and prohibitions.
- The Golden Eagle, Golden Age, Golden Access, and the National Park Passes will continue until the America the Beautiful Pass is available.
- All of the existing Golden Eagle, Golden Age, Golden Access, and the National Park Passes will be grandfathered under

existing benefits and will remain valid until expired.

- Specific site, forest, and regional passes, such as southern California Forest Service Adventure Pass, will continue.

The Act includes criteria and direction that address issues raised by the public and members of the Congress regarding recreation fees. For example, the Act prohibits fees for BLM and the Forest Service for general access to national forests and grasslands, access to overlooks and scenic pullouts, and areas with low or no expenditures for facilities or services. The use of Recreation Resource Advisory Committees required by the Act will ensure public input on decisions about expanding the fee program by providing the public and local communities an opportunity to make recommendations to BLM or the Forest Service on specific recreation fee sites and fees. Public notice and participation provisions will guide Interior's efforts to conduct a program that is accountable and transparent. Under the Act, the vast majority of recreation sites will continue to be free.

THE LAND AND WATER CONSERVATION FUND

The Land and Water Conservation Fund—established in 1965 to conserve, develop, and utilize outdoor recreation resources for the benefit and enjoyment of the American people — has largely achieved those goals through land acquisition. Over the life of the program, over \$14.5 billion has been appropriated from the Land and Water Conservation Fund. Of this amount, \$10.5 billion, or 72 percent, has been provided for Federal land acquisition. Nearly \$3.8 billion has been appropriated to grant programs for State and local land acquisition and recreational programs.

Two factors underlie a shift in strategies for achieving the goals of the Land and Water Conservation Fund. First, Federal and State managers are balancing the workload and funding requirements for operation and maintenance of lands already under their management with the effects of adding more lands to their land management portfolios. Second, tools other than land acquisition continue to demonstrate significant recreation and conservation benefits. Specifically, partnerships and cooperative conservation leverage funding, help build a Nation of citizen stewards, and improve

LAND AND WATER CONSERVATION FUND (dollars in thousands)

	2006 Request
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR	
Cooperative Conservation Programs	
BLM	
Challenge Cost Share.....	19,996
FWS	
Refuge Challenge Cost Share	12,000
Partners for Fish and Wildlife	52,197
Coastal Programs	14,900
Migratory Bird Joint Ventures.....	12,900
NPS	
Challenge Cost Share.....	12,787
DM	
Take Pride in America	1,000
Subtotal.....	125,780
State and Other Grant Programs	
FWS	
State/Tribal Wildlife Grants	74,000
Landowner Incentive Grants	40,000
Private Stewardship Grants	10,000
Coop. Endg. Species Grants	80,000
NAWCF Grants	49,949
Subtotal.....	253,949
NPS	
State Assistance Grants	1,587
Subtotal, Cooperative Conservation	381,316
Federal LWCF	
BLM.....	13,350
FWS.....	40,992
NPS	52,880
Appraisal Services	7,441
Subtotal.....	114,663
Subtotal, Interior.....	495,979
U.S. FOREST SERVICE	
State LWCF Programs	
Forest Legacy	80,000
Forest Stewardship	37,099
Urban and Community Forestry	27,475
Federal LWCF Land Acquisition	40,000
Subtotal, Forest Service.....	184,574
TOTAL	680,553

results for the American public by addressing cross-jurisdictional issues and needs.

The Department's challenge cost share programs give Federal managers an opportunity to partner with non-governmental organizations, corporations, sporting groups, private citizens, and others to achieve conservation results that benefit Federal lands, natural resources, local communities, and improve opportunities for recreation. The 2006 LWCF request includes \$125.8 million for cooperative conservation programs that expand opportunities for partnership projects that pay dividends in conservation and achieve recreation results and leverage funding.

The cooperative conservation programs, which are a part of the 2006 LWCF proposal, allow Federal managers to link their efforts to private lands and those of local communities. Linking the conservation and recreation approaches on public lands to adjacent and nearby private lands expands opportunities for more significant results and community participation. 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 to restore and protect habitat in conjunction with expanded recreation is key to the protection of endangered species as well as migratory wildlife and fish that know no boundaries.

Partnerships in conservation that extend beyond the boundaries of Federal and State lands create unique opportunities to tap into the knowledge and resources of neighboring communities and



FLIGHT 93 NATIONAL MEMORIAL

The National Park Service is working in concert with the Flight 93 Memorial Task Force, the Flight 93 Advisory Commission, and the Families of Flight 93 to acquire land and to preserve for future generations a site that honors the passengers and crew of Flight 93, who gave their lives thwarting a planned attack on Washington, D.C., on September 11, 2001. The Conservation Fund is assisting with the protection of lands at the National Memorial and has received donations of 29 acres from PBS Coals and 140 acres from CONSOL Energy.

With the \$4.3 million in requested funds in 2006, NPS would acquire 1,556 acres in ten high-priority tracts that include portions of the impact site and several buildings used by the FBI and State police during the investigation of the event.

enlist their support in long-term 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.

The 2006 Interior budget request of \$496.0 million provides additional opportunities for conservation and recreation partnerships with citizens, organizations, Tribes, and communities throughout the Nation. Combined with the Forest Service request of \$184.6 million, the LWCF request totals \$680.6 million for 2006, matching the 2005 funding level provided by the Congress.

The request includes \$381.3 million for cooperative conservation programs and \$114.7 million for Federal land acquisition, including \$44.0 million for the acquisition of inholdings, emergency acquisitions, exchanges, acquisition management, and appraisal services. The request also includes \$70.7 million for line-item acquisition projects.

Federal Land Acquisition – The LWCF funds are used to acquire interests in land for national parks, wildlife refuges, and other public lands that enhance recreational opportunities, protect cultural and biological resources, and improve operating efficiencies in the management of public lands. The Department's land acquisition programs fol-

low a set of guiding principles that assure integrity, accountability, and transparency in land transactions. The acquisition programs promote the use of easements, donations, and other alternatives to fee title acquisition when appropriate and adhere to a policy to work only with willing sellers and promote private stewardship. In formulating the 2006 budget, a Program Assessment Rating Tool evaluation of land acquisition programs pointed to the need to better integrate land acquisition priorities with program goals. A cross-Departmental team is developing common performance measures and uniform approaches for prioritizing acquisition needs.

The \$114.7 million Federal LWCF request includes \$13.4 million for BLM, \$41.0 million for FWS, \$52.9 million for NPS, and \$7.4 million for appraisal services. Examples of proposed land acquisition projects include:

- Increasing public recreational access to Westwater Canyon on the Colorado River in Colorado, which attracts approximately 10,000 annual rafters.
- Restoring wetlands at Upper Klamath Lake NWR in Oregon to improve habitat for wildlife and fisheries.
- Protecting historic park lands and resources from intense development pressures at the sight where Lewis and Clark camped near the mouth of the Columbia River at Fort Clatsop in Oregon in the winter of 1805-06.

The Department of the Interior will continue discussions with the Collier family regarding a possible acquisition of mineral rights to Big Cypress Natural Preserve. In the event that an agreement



is reached, the Department's land acquisition priorities could be reordered.

LWCF Stateside Grants – Nearly \$3.8 billion has been appropriated through 2005 for the LWCF State Assistance Grant program, including over \$417.1 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. As the Nation strives to trim the Federal deficit, focusing Federal funds on core Federal agency responsibilities and on activities that do not duplicate State and local programs is imperative.

Appraisal Services – Interior's Appraisal Services program provides independent, objective market-value appraisals and appraisal services, including reviews, consulting, and concessions valuations to support bureau land management, acquisition, and other programs. Creation of an independent appraisal function at the Departmental level in 2004 consolidated expertise and reformed business practices, resulting in improved effectiveness and efficiency. To date the program has implemented consistent and transparent appraisal processes, established valuation methods that comport with



nationally applicable standards, provided rigorous review requirements for third party appraisals, and significantly improved the internal process to ensure accountability for land exchanges. The 2006 budget includes \$7.4 million for appraisal services in Departmental Management, which were previously funded from BLM, NPS, FWS, and Reclamation programs.

Between November 2003 and September 30, 2004, Appraisal Services completed 480 appraisals and 1,182 appraisal reviews. In addition, 557 consultation assignments were completed involving scope of work, market studies, and highest and best use and larger parcel analyses; 387 contracts for appraisal services were managed; and oversight was provided on 93 appraisals from third parties. The backlog of 940 appraisal assignments was reduced by approximately 600 by the end of 2004.

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 2005, volunteers are expected to contribute over 7.8 million hours of their time to the Interior Department at a value of \$139.6 million.



TAKE PRIDE IN AMERICA

Take Pride in America, the public lands component of the President's USA Freedom Corps, is a national, multi-agency partnership that empowers volunteers to participate in enhancing parks, refuges, recreation areas, and cultural and historic sites.

This initiative has successfully garnered support by leveraging private funding and thousands of volunteer hours to further stewardship and other efforts on Interior lands. In its second year of operation in 2004, the Take Pride in America program continued to build support. Governors from all 50 States and Guam, representing the Council of Governors, joined the program. More than 100 charter partners joined the program in 2003-2004, offering support by sponsoring events, donating materials, and lending resources for the Take

INTERIOR VOLUNTEER PROGRAMS				
	BLM	FWS	NPS	Total
Hours donated (<i>thousands of hours</i>)				
2004 Actual.....	1,553	1,253	5,000	7,806
2005 Estimate	1,584	1,125	5,100	7,809
2006 Estimate	1,615	1,068	5,200	7,883
Value of volunteer time (<i>dollars in millions</i>)				
2004 Actual.....	26.7	21.3	85.9	133.9
2005 Estimate	28.5	19.3	91.8	139.6

Pride program. For example, the Take Pride in Florida State program was established with volunteers pledging more than 400,000 service hours to help with public land projects in the wake of hurricanes in 2004.

Take Pride in America activities planned for 2005 include a meeting in Salt Lake City, Utah, in February where representatives will gather to share ideas for establishing new Take Pride programs and events throughout the country. Interior will

develop and distribute outreach materials to encourage growth in the program and for an enhanced website that would make information on volunteer opportunities more accessible. Finally, Secretary Norton will participate in the Western States Tour in July 2005 to promote the goals and mission of the Take Pride in America program with an emphasis on volunteer projects. The 2006 request increases funding for coordination of Take Pride in America activities by \$509,600, bringing the Take Pride budget to \$1.0 million.

TAKE PRIDE IN AMERICA SUCCESS STORIES

- The America the Beautiful Fund donated \$1.0 million for seeds for 1,672 Take Pride in America Gardens. These gardens have been planted in all 50 States. Garden award winners are selected by the America the Beautiful Fund based on gardening ingenuity and creativity. This program encourages community involvement in the spirit of Take Pride in America. Gardens for Humanity received a Take Pride in America Garden Award for planting “healing” gardens in several locations throughout Arizona, including health care facilities, reservations, and schools.
- A group of fifth graders painted picnic tables and cleaned up a hiking trail in Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area. The children were winners of the 2003-2004 Jiminy Cricket Environmental Challenge, sponsored by The Walt Disney Company. This program encourages children to take care of the environment. Clint Eastwood, a spokesman for Take Pride, urged attendees at the event to take responsibility for public lands.
- Florida residents responded to the ravaging effects of multiple hurricanes by stepping up volunteer efforts throughout the State. Over 80 events took place within a week of the Take Pride in America pledge drive, demonstrating the commitment Florida residents have to benefiting public lands.



Every community has a stake in preserving our public lands and resources for future generations.

Secretary Gale A. Norton, January 21, 2004