

# Resource Protection



*Ultimately, the people who are best able to take care of the land are those who live on the land, work on the land, and love the land. They have the knowledge, skills, and motivation to care for the land. We need to empower them.*

*Secretary Gale A. Norton, August 15, 2005*

As steward of one-fifth of this Nation's lands, the Department of the Interior conserves, protects, and restores awesome natural, cultural, and historic treasures. The Department partners with landowners, Tribes, States, conservation groups, and others to conserve and preserve natural and cultural resources; to solve land management and water disputes; and to strengthen on-the-ground conservation results. This commitment translates into a wide variety of activities that benefit all Americans. These efforts include:

- Managing, through the Bureau of Land Management, 261 million acres of culturally rich public lands and sustaining the health, diversity, and productivity of those lands for the use and enjoyment of present and future generations.
- Managing the Nation's unique collection of national park units to protect our heritage for the enjoyment of present and future generations. Through park management, visitors experience historic and cultural symbols of America such as the Statue of Liberty, Independence Hall, and the Washington Monument.
- Fostering conditions that allow plants and wildlife to flourish alongside human activity, including hunting and fishing. Fish and Wildlife Service employees work with States and private individuals to preserve habitat, conserve species, and prevent their decline while maintaining healthy communities and a dynamic economy that depends on the Nation's lands and waters.

Successful management of the Nation's public lands, waters, wildlife, and special places increasingly depends upon collaboration and partnerships among Interior agencies, with other Federal, State, and tribal entities, and, most importantly, with the citizens who share these lands and resources. The Department's resource protection programs extend beyond land management and regulatory programs to include grants and technical assistance to landowners. These programs enhance community involvement and citizen engagement through cooperative projects among our agencies, volunteers, and local watershed groups in stream restoration; with farmers and ranchers to restore native grasslands; and with Tribes and States to protect threatened and endangered species.

## **RESOURCE PROTECTION MISSION**

**Protect the Nation's natural, cultural, and heritage resources**

The 2007 budget proposes \$2.6 billion for resource protection activities that improve the health of natural landscapes, sustain biological communities, and protect cultural and heritage resources. The budget will:

- Improve the health of the Nation's lands and watersheds through cooperative conservation and private stewardship.
- Protect significant natural and cultural resources on public lands for future generations to come.
- Help local communities find self-sustaining ways to manage historic properties and promote heritage tourism.
- Sustain biological communities by improving habitat conditions, measuring the condition of natural resources, and improving the ability of Interior agencies and partners to detect, respond to, and control invasive species.
- Address serious resource and life-threatening hazards resulting from abandoned mine lands.



## COOPERATIVE CONSERVATION

At field locations throughout the country, bureau employees and volunteers are learning by doing, working side-by-side with neighbors, and tapping into best practices from others working on similar issues. By working with local communities, Interior employees benefit from local knowledge, ideas, and assistance to achieve conservation results that can transcend jurisdictional boundaries. At the national level, conservation partnerships leverage resources, broaden our knowledge base, and help

coordinate actions to achieve our strategic goals for resource protection, resource use, recreation, and serving communities.

Natural landscapes and ecosystems transcend human-constructed boundaries. Cooperative conservation offers a way to keep intact a medley of land ownerships, achieving conservation through partnerships. Sometimes, these partnerships involve single projects that have a beginning and an end. But, increasingly, they are more complex, bringing together scientific expertise, local insights and knowledge of land, and caring hands to develop long-term solutions to conserve land and protect the environment.

For example, over 70 percent of Oregon's population resides in the Willamette Valley, and over 95 percent of the Valley is in private ownership. In this same area, over 95 percent of native habitats (upland and wet prairies) have been lost to development, degraded, or converted to agriculture, resulting in 17 federally-listed species and over 50 species of concern. By 2050, the human population in the Valley is expected to nearly double to four million.

Efforts to recover, delist, and preclude the need to list species must start with stabilizing the threatened habitats upon which these species depend. In the past two years, over \$3.8 million of FWS funds have leveraged over \$11.2 million in non-Federal funds to produce partnerships for on-the-ground recovery actions in the Willamette Valley for the federally-listed Columbian white-tailed deer and six other listed species. These actions include habitat restoration, reintroduction of species, invasive species control, species surveys, and habitat assessments.



From 2002 through 2006, Interior's conservation partnership programs have provided \$2.1 billion for conservation investments. The 2007 budget request includes \$322.3 million to support continued partnership success through a suite of grant and technical assistance programs.



**White House Conference on Cooperative Conservation** – In August 2004, President Bush signed Executive Order 13352, Facilitation of Cooperative Conservation. This order directed the Chairman of the White House Council on Environmental Quality to convene a White House Conference on Cooperative Conservation. The Departments of the Interior, Agriculture, Commerce, and Defense, and the Environmental Protection Agency co-hosted the event.

On August 29-31, 2005, representatives from the public and private sectors convened in St. Louis, Missouri to discuss the advancement of this cooperative conservation vision. The conference emphasized the need to create a culture of responsibility to enhance opportunities for citizen stewards to work together.

The Department is enhancing cooperative conservation by improving its partnering efforts and developing and utilizing governing tools that inspire and complement citizen stewardship and environmental entrepreneurship. The Department is dedicated to generating and sharing scientific and other information that can inform conservation and land management decisions.

**Conservation Grants** — The FWS administers a variety of natural resource assistance grants to governmental, public and private organizations, groups, and individuals. In general, these grants focus funding on at-risk species and their habitats. For example, the Landowner Incentive program

provides grants to States, Territories, and Tribes for projects that enhance, protect, or restore habitats that benefit federally-listed, proposed, or candidate species, or other at-risk species on private lands. The 2007 request for this program is \$24.4 million, an increase of \$2.7 million over 2006. The Department is also proposing \$9.4 million for Private Stewardship grants, which provide assistance directly to individuals and groups to undertake conservation projects on private lands for endangered, threatened, and other at-risk species.

The State and Tribal Wildlife Grants program will provide \$74.7 million to State, tribal, and territorial fish and wildlife agencies to stabilize, restore, enhance, and protect species of concern and their habitats. This is an increase of \$7.2 million, of which \$5.0 million would be for competitive grants for exemplary cooperative conservation projects. In 2005, wildlife agencies from all 50 States and six U.S. Territories submitted wildlife action plans for approval by FWS, establishing a nationwide blueprint to conserve imperiled species so they do not become threatened or endangered.

When approved, the wildlife action plans will be the first of their kind — a thorough State-by-State assessment of wildlife and the actions needed to ensure their survival. The action plans establish a coordinated strategy for wildlife agencies to conserve all wildlife species. In the past, most of the States and Territories have had great success in managing game species. This program will help fund expansion of their conservation work to include all wildlife species and their habitats. The action plans also will allow States and Territories to continue to receive grants through the State Wildlife Grant program.

As in 2006, Interior requests \$80.0 million for the Cooperative Endangered Species Conservation Fund. The 2007 budget proposal funds \$10.0 million for grants to States that promote species conservation and recovery, \$54.8 million for acquisitions in support of recovery habitat conservation plans, and \$7.6 million to assist States in completing habitat conservation plans and related acquisitions. To fulfill obligations under the Snake River Water Rights Act of 2004, \$5.1 million will be provided

*Through State Wildlife Grants, we are empowering States, Territories, and their many partners to do what the Federal government cannot do alone. The grant program is now our Nation's primary conservation program for keeping species healthy and off the list of threatened and endangered species.*

*Secretary Gale A. Norton, November 2, 2005*

## CHALLENGE COST SHARE PROJECTS

**Minnesota**—The National Park Service in partnership with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers; City of Brooklyn Center, MN; Minnesota Department of Natural Resources; Great River Greening; Shingle Creek Watershed Management Organization; and private landowners restored a highly disturbed 850-foot stretch of riverbank within the Mississippi National River and Recreation Area. This dynamic group of Federal and local partners used bioengineering and native planting techniques to restore the site and demonstrate a more natural approach to riverbank stabilization along the Mississippi River, as opposed to the traditional riprap method. Close to 4,500 native trees, shrubs, and plants were installed with the help of volunteers to control invasive species and prevent the recurrence of erosion along this disturbed stretch of river. The Federal investment of \$610,000 was matched by the local partners for a total of nearly \$1.9 million.

**Colorado**—The BLM, in partnership with the Upper Arkansas River Partnership, has worked to implement the Arkansas River Recreation Management Plan, a management plan for recreation activities along 150 miles of the Arkansas River, including 24 developed recreation sites. Children and adults benefited from interpretive and education programs through this project. The Federal investment of \$36,000 was matched by local partners for a total of \$1.4 million; a matching ratio of approximately 38:1.

**Massachusetts**—Great Meadows National Wildlife Refuge, in partnership with volunteers from the Carlisle Trails Committee, recently celebrated two days of successful footbridge construction at Great Meadows National Wildlife Refuge, Massachusetts. The construction of the Foss Trail, pictured here, was supported by the Town of Carlisle Department of Public Works and volunteers ranging from ages five to 77. The volunteers donated more than 650 hours to planning and construction in addition to the 40 hours per year the volunteers contribute to clearing fallen trees and trimming brush along the trail. As a result, area residents and visitors have a wonderful trail to enjoy, and the fragile wetland vegetation is protected year round. The Federal investment of \$3,000 was matched by the local partners for a total of \$8,000.



from the Fund to the State of Idaho for the Idaho Salmon and Clearwater Basin Habitat account.

**Challenge Cost Share Programs** — In 2002, the Department proposed an expansion of its successful challenge cost share program to provide land managers with additional funds for conservation partnership projects. Since then, over \$131 million has been allocated to fund partnership projects

throughout the country. These funds are matched, often more than doubling the Federal investment. In 2005, these funds supported 831 projects in 45 States with 1,372 partners. The 2007 budget includes \$20.3 million for challenge cost share grants, an increase of \$1.8 million above the 2006 enacted level.

In 2007, the Department proposes combining traditional and conservation challenge cost share pro-

grams to give resource managers greater flexibility to address the highest priority needs at individual sites, while promoting cooperative conservation with local partners. The 2007 increase will foster the accomplishment of additional cooperative conservation projects.

**FWS Migratory Bird Joint Ventures** — North American Waterfowl Management Plan Joint Ventures are regionally based, self-directed partnerships that carry out science-based conservation through community efforts. Joint venture partnerships provide a model for cooperative conservation for the 21st century. Since 1986, these partnerships have protected, restored, or enhanced more than nine million acres of wetlands and associated uplands for waterfowl and other bird species. Much of the program's remarkable success springs from its cooperative conservation approach, through which Federal agencies partner with States, non-profit groups, private citizens,

and universities to pursue shared goals to restore wildlife and habitat.

The 2007 budget request of \$11.8 million includes an increase of \$1.0 million for joint ventures to fund four additional joint ventures, resulting in a 1.1 million acre increase in the number of acres of landscapes and watersheds managed through partnerships and networked lands. It will also provide additional funding for the Central Hardwoods and Northern Great Plains joint ventures initiated in 2006, and provide funds to expand biological planning in established joint ventures.

**FWS Coastal Program** — The budget includes \$13.0 million for the Coastal program. It provides an increase of \$604,000 for general program activities to address the growing demand for habitat conservation activities for the FWS trust species through new agreements with private landowners, communities, non-governmental organizations,

## KLAMATH

The budget includes \$63.6 million for Klamath Basin restoration activities, a \$9.0 million increase over 2006. Through the Partners for Fish and Wildlife program, FWS partners with local landowners, conservation organizations, and other Federal entities in the Upper Klamath Basin to restore stream channel and riparian habitat for species such as bull trout and Oregon spotted frogs, as well as restoring lakeshore wetlands for Lost River and shortnose suckers. The 2007 budget also includes \$3.5 million to acquire and restore agricultural lands adjacent to Upper Klamath Lake. Restoration of this property will provide quality habitat for larval and juvenile suckers and a host of native waterbirds. It will also improve water quality for the lake and downstream anadromous fish and increase water storage in the lake.

In 2007, the Partners program will also initiate a new \$2.0 million Lower Klamath Basin initiative. Funding for Lower Klamath Basin restoration would be used to provide fish passage on tributaries; fencing for riparian areas along streams; assessment and monitoring of disease, particularly in juvenile fish; and restoration of stream channels from former mining excavations. This new Partners



initiative will help improve roads and culverts so that erosional sediments due to logging in the Lower Basin are not flushed into the River during heavy rains. Restoration of aquatic habitats in the Lower Klamath Basin is critical for recovery of federally-listed coho salmon and for the recovery of chinook salmon whose numbers are now depleted. The Lower Klamath Basin contains critically important spawning and rearing areas for salmon and steelhead trout, which form the basis of the commercial and sport fisheries. Restoring these stocks will improve fisheries and help meet tribal trust responsibilities.



## CULTURAL RESOURCES AND ASSET MANAGEMENT

America's cultural resources embody a rich heritage of human experiences, architectural achievements, and cultural identities. The NPS maintains a leading Federal role in preserving nationally significant natural and historical resources for present and future generations. Several complementary historic preservation programs help protect these resources through initiatives to inventory, manage, and preserve artifacts and monuments while encouraging community efforts to preserve local and regional cultural landscapes.

and State and Federal agencies. The new funding will restore 71 wetland and 37 upland acres and protect 136 wetland and 243 upland acres.

In 2007, Coastal program activities also will expand to address the decline of aquatic habitat in areas such as the Gulf Coast region, affected by hurricanes Katrina and Rita. Technical assistance and funding will be provided to local landowners, communities, parishes, and States to implement on-the-ground restoration projects. For example, the Alabama and Mississippi coastline includes fragile barrier islands that protect submerged aquatic vegetation that provides critical nursery grounds for Gulf of Mexico fish. On-the-ground voluntary restoration and protection of these areas would increase through both new and long-standing partnerships.

The BLM is also an important caretaker of heritage resources, managing perhaps the largest, most diverse, and most scientifically important collection of heritage resources in North America. Thousands of cultural properties have been reported in surveys of BLM public lands, with an additional 4.5 million sites estimated to exist, including cliff dwellings, mines and stamp mills, rock art renderings, and homesteads.



### PRIVATE STEWARDSHIP GRANTS

A \$56,000 Private Stewardship grant to the nonprofit group Olino, funded the propagation and outplanting of six endangered plant species in the Pu'u-o-kali wiliwili dryland forest on the island of Maui, Hawaii. Dryland forests are the most imperiled of Hawaiian plant communities. Pu'u-o-kali is one of the few remaining examples of dryland forest and home to many rare Hawaiian plant species.

**American Heritage and Preservation Partnership Program** — Through its Preserve America initiative, the Administration is encouraging community efforts to preserve our cultural and natural heritage. The goals of the initiative include a greater shared knowledge about the Nation's past, strengthened regional identities and local pride, increased local participation in preserving the country's cultural and natural heritage assets, and support for the economic vitality of our communities. Nowhere is this needed more right now than along the Gulf Coast, where hundreds of historic structures, which

*For so many Americans, National Parks help define who we are as a Nation. Our identity is conjured up in the historical record our parks preserve. It is conjured up in the landscapes that our parks keep whole for us to experience.*

*Deputy Secretary P. Lynn Scarlett, June 15, 2005*

*Each community has its own story. These stories present opportunities—opportunities for heritage tourism, education, and historic preservation. Through Preserve America, these stories come alive.*

*Secretary Gale A. Norton, June 30, 2005*

have been a magnet for tourists in the past, were severely damaged.

The 2007 budget request for NPS includes \$32.2 million for locally focused historic preservation and heritage tourism programs, as part of the Preserve America initiative. This budget presents a more seamless approach to these programs by combining Preserve America grants, Save America's Treasures, and the Heritage Partnership program, and operating these programs under a unifying theme. This combination will allow local communities to determine which strategies best suit their heritage needs; apply to the most appropriate programs for repairing historic buildings, conserving museum resources, and promoting heritage development; effect better coordination; and generate greater efficiencies in enhancing and expanding opportuni-

ties for cultural resource preservation throughout the Nation.

Preserve America grants help States and communities preserve their historic resources by incorporating them into their local economies. The 2007 budget includes \$10.0 million, an increase of \$5.1 million above the 2006 level, for grants to help communities develop resource management strategies and business practices for continued preservation of heritage assets. Such activities include planning and feasibility studies, heritage education materials, heritage tourism business cases, and feasibility initiatives.

Grants will be awarded competitively, subject to a 50:50 match, as a start-up investment to help eligible communities deliver a specific product or accomplish a specific historic preservation result. Since its inception in January 2004, 261 communities in 47 States have been designated as Preserve America communities. In addition, Preserve America Presidential Awards have been presented to eight communities.

The Preserve America grants link to and complement both the Heritage Preservation program, through which communities manage notable historic places of national significance, and the Save America's Treasures grant program, which helps communities restore significant historic structures and resources. The Heritage Partnership program helps citizens, in partnership with local, State, and Federal governments, non-profit organizations, and the private sector, work across jurisdictional and demographic boundaries by identifying multiple cultural landscapes that are linked thematically, historically, or geographically. Communities collaboratively focus on maintaining the distinct qualities that integrate the region and make it special.



Congress has designated 27 national heritage areas across the country. Through partnerships among Federal, State and local governments, residents, and the private sector, these heritage areas conserve, interpret, and enhance heritage tourism activities. These areas are fully managed by private non-profit groups or by the States. The NPS provides technical and financial assistance to these areas, including planning and interpretative expertise, and connects regions with other Federal agencies to fully leverage private funding. The 2007 budget request includes \$7.4 million for heritage areas.

Save America's Treasures grants are available for preservation and conservation work on nationally significant intellectual and cultural artifacts and nationally significant historic structures and sites. Intellectual and cultural artifacts include collections, documents, and works of art. Historic structures and sites include historic districts, buildings, and objects. The budget includes \$14.8 million for Save America's Treasures. Grants under this program are awarded through a competitive process and require a dollar-for-dollar non-Federal match, which can be cash, donated services, or use of equipment.

Within the American Heritage and Preservation Partnership program, each program would continue to operate in accordance with its own previously established selection criteria under line-items appropriated by Congress. However, the budget request also emphasizes a more competitive process for awarding grants and providing assistance for the purposes of preserving cultural landscapes and resources through cooperative programs.

**BLM Cultural Resource Initiative** — The BLM is caretaker of perhaps the largest, most diverse, and most scientifically important body of heritage resources in North America. Thousands of cultural properties have been reported in surveys of BLM public lands, with an additional 4.5 million sites estimated to exist, including cliff dwellings; mines and stamp mills; immense ground figures and rock alignments known as intaglios; abstract, realistic, and anthropomorphic rock art renderings; aban-

doned military outposts and homesteads; ghost towns; Indian and emigrant trails; and lighthouses. These resources represent the tangible remains of at least 13,000 years of human adaptation to the land, spanning the entire spectrum of human experiences since people first set foot on the North American continent. Currently, BLM has 403 listings on the National Register of Historic Places that encompass 4,248 contributing properties, as well as 21 National Historic Landmarks, and five World Heritage properties. Many of the properties and artifacts are threatened by unauthorized use, theft, and vandalism.

The approaching 100th anniversary of the Antiquities Act of 1906 and the 40th anniversary of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 serve as another reminder of the legacy overseen by BLM, and the profound responsibilities this entails. The cultural and historic resources on public lands represent a priceless heritage. They are tributes to America's pioneering and innovating spirit and provide the public with a deeper understanding



of America—from the indigenous people to early Europeans to today's changing face of the West as urban growth and the western frontier merge on several public land fronts.

The 2007 BLM budget includes a \$3.0 million initiative to improve the protection, preservation, access to, and interpretation of these cultural resources to enhance their economic, scientific, cultural, and educational value to all Americans. In allocating these funds, BLM will give priority to areas with recently completed land-use plans that describe cultural resource enhancement and preservation projects.

The following types of projects will be funded with the \$3.0 million increase: implementing stabilization and other physical protection measures at sites appropriate for heritage tourism, increasing the



number of sites protected by 30 percent; increasing the number of sites monitored by 25 percent; increasing partnerships with Indian Tribes, accomplishing two projects to identify and assess places of traditional cultural importance; and conducting two heritage tourism workshops to develop ten on-the-ground tourism venues, leveraging BLM dollars with local tourism providers. Most of this work will be accomplished using partners and volunteers, although contractors will be used where specialized expertise is required.

### **Inventory and Monitoring of Historic Structures**

— The NPS manages and preserves many of the Nation’s cultural, historic, and natural treasures. As the Nation’s cultural resource steward, NPS identifies, evaluates, documents, registers, preserves, and interprets cultural resources so these important places, sites, objects, and documents can continue to convey their important history about people from the past to present and future generations of Americans.

The cultural landscapes inventory is an NPS effort to establish a baseline of cultural landscapes in the national park system, serving as a vehicle for tracking the condition of these resources with historical significance within the national park system. At the national level, the information helps inform facility management planning efforts and budget decisions. At the park level, the inventory will aid managers in planning, programming, prioritizing spending, requesting funding, enhancing interpretation programs, and recording treatment and management decisions for their park landscapes.

The NPS also has made continued progress in the percentage of historic and prehistoric structures with complete, accurate, and reliable information including baseline information about a structure’s condition. In 2004, 35 percent of structures had such information. In 2006, the performance target for this goal is 67 percent. The 2006 PART evaluation of the Park Service’s cultural resource stewardship programs identified the need to fully inventory and monitor historic structures as a high priority goal.

The 2007 budget includes an increase of \$1.0 million to fund 20 term or contractor positions to accelerate the preparation of a cultural landscapes inventory and update the list of classified structures. The proposed increase would ensure that a full-time professional effort could be expended to ensure 83

percent of the historic and prehistoric structures in the inventory have complete, accurate, and reliable information. This is a 25 percent increase over the 2006 performance target.

## **SUSTAINING BIOLOGICAL COMMUNITIES**

**Invasive Species**— The Department’s 2007 budget request includes \$60.0 million for invasive species and continues the government-wide, performance-based crosscut budget effort that began in 2004. The budget provides an increase of \$994,000 for work in three priority geo-regional areas: South Florida, the Northern Great Plains, and the Rio Grande River Basin. The 2007 program will focus on invasive species that present significant threats to ecosystem health, including lygodium, leafy spurge, and tamarisk in particular.

In South Florida, lygodium is a well-established, hardy, fast-growing fern imported from the land ranges of Africa, southern Asia, Australia, and the Pacific. Lygodium directly affects native plant species diversity and coverage by suppressing growth through competition for sunlight, impeding water flow and drainage, restricting wildlife movement, and affecting prescribed burning programs for



habitat restoration. Rare plant species, such as the tropical curly grass fern, are severely imperiled by the spread of lygodium into their last remaining habitats, including the northern Everglades tree islands. Affected lands include national parks and seashores, wildlife refuges, and Bureau of Indian Affairs administered lands. In total, an estimated 60,355 acres of these areas are infested with lygo-

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dium. The 2007 budget request of \$417,000 will allow for control of lygodium on 8,000 acres and fund research to address issues critical to the control and management of lygodium and ecosystem restoration in South Florida.

An infestation of leafy spurge, an invasive weed that infests more than five million acres of land in 35 States and the prairie provinces of Canada, impacts the plant communities in the Northern Great Plains. Leafy spurge is a native of Eurasia that causes significant problems by invading grazing lands for cattle and horses, reducing rangeland productivity and plant diversity, degrading wildlife habitat, displacing sensitive species, and drastically reducing land values. Habitat occupied by leafy spurge has doubled in acreage every ten years since the early 1900s and is expanding beyond its foothold in the western United States.

In the Northern Great Plains, Interior manages lands in eastern Montana, western North Dakota, and the northwest corner of South Dakota extending to the banks of the Missouri River. Of the 213,779 acres of Interior lands in the Great Plains infested with invasive species, 204,367 acres, or 96 percent, are infested with leafy spurge. The 2007 budget requests an increase of \$149,000 for the control and management of invasive species on over 6,000 acres of Interior land in the Great Plains.

Tamarisk is an introduced invasive shrub-tree that was planted along waterways for erosion control and to serve as windbreaks. Its prolific reproductive traits and broad ecological tolerances have allowed tamarisk to spread quickly within the 17 western States, adversely affecting many water dependent activities across the southwestern United States. Along the Rio Grande River, in particular, tamarisk threatens water transport and is resulting in the loss of wildlife. Tamarisk adversely affects community water supplies, increases the frequency of wildfires, replaces native vegetation and associated fauna, and modifies soil chemistry, river channels, and stream flows.

Tamarisk infests an estimated two million acres of riparian lands in the western States. In the Rio Grande River Basin area, which covers the Rio Grande Basin from north of Albuquerque, New Mexico, to below Big Bend National Park, tamarisk infests an estimated 57,000 acres of Interior land. The 2007 budget requests an increase of \$428,000 to control and manage invasive species on 16,600 acres. The 2007 proposed funding level will also

allow tamarisk revegetation research, which builds on tamarisk mapping and forecasting capabilities focused on the Rio Grande River Basin.

**FWS Migratory Bird Conservation** —The 2007 budget includes \$41.3 million for migratory bird management, including a programmatic increase of \$1.0 million for joint ventures, and a \$1.5 million programmatic increase for migratory bird conservation and monitoring.

The conservation and monitoring increase includes \$396,000 for an ivory-billed woodpecker ecological assessment. This increase will augment the program's capacity to provide biological planning and assessment information to guide recovery efforts. Through the Lower Mississippi Alluvial Valley Joint Venture, program staff will work with scientific and conservation partners to identify and develop the parameters that link population sustainability to critical habitat characteristics. The outcomes of population-habitat models will be used to characterize and assess the current and historic capacity of habitats within the Mississippi alluvial valley and will also be used to develop decision support tools to guide conservation partners in voluntarily increasing the biological effectiveness of reforestation and habitat enhancement projects.

The remaining \$1.1 million conservation and monitoring increase will help FWS meet performance targets for increasing the number of migratory birds at healthy and sustainable levels and increase the number of people participating in bird-related recreation. These goals were established through the recent Program Assessment Rating Tool evaluation of the Migratory Bird program. The increase includes \$658,000 for focal species management. This strategy will focus resources on selected species identified as being of management concern. It also includes \$488,000 for an initiative to collect additional biological information on webless migratory game birds, such as the mourning dove and American woodcock, and improve the management of these species and other webless species.

**FWS National Fish Habitat Initiative** — The nationwide National Fish Habitat Initiative harnesses the energies and expertise of existing partnerships of State and Federal agencies and conservation organizations to improve aquatic habitat health. The FWS Fisheries program, as the lead Federal partner, has brought together States, Tribes, partners, and others to develop a coordinated plan to implement this initiative.



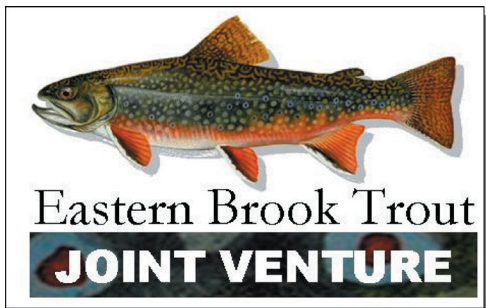
The 2007 budget includes \$3.0 million for the National Fish Habitat Initiative, an increase of \$2.0 million. The funding increase will foster geographically focused, locally driven, and scientifically based partnerships to protect, restore, and enhance aquatic habitats and reverse the decline of fish and aquatic species.

These partnerships maximize use of existing partnerships through a collaborative, non-regulatory framework modeled after the highly successful North American Waterfowl Management Plan Joint Ventures. The Eastern Brook Trout Joint Venture, for example is a geographically focused effort to protect, restore, and enhance aquatic habitat throughout the range of the Eastern brook trout. Historically, approaches to the conservation of Eastern brook trout have been fragmented. The joint venture will implement a comprehensive range-wide conservation strategy to assist all partners in addressing common large-scale threats to brook trout and their habitat.

barriers were constructed to impound and redirect water for industry, irrigation, flood control, electricity, drinking water, and transportation—all changing natural features of rivers and streams.

This process interrupted fish movements along rivers and streams. All river fish migrate between feeding and spawning areas and make other seasonal movements to important habitats. Barriers prevent natural fish migrations, keeping them from important habitats and impeding critical feeding, spawning, and other activities. As a result, some populations of native fish are gone and others are on the brink of disappearing.

In 1999, FWS initiated the fish passage program to work with partners to address this problem. The program uses a voluntary, non-regulatory approach to remove and bypass barriers. The program addresses the problem of fish barriers on a national level, working with local communities and partner agencies to restore natural flows and fish migration. Fish passage projects increase habitat available for fish spawning and growth. Natural flows and temperature have been restored for salmon, trout, sturgeon, striped bass, herring and shad, paddlefish, and many more native and declining species. Anglers, and commercial and subsistence fishers benefit from larger fish populations, which are distributed across more available habitats.



**FWS Fish Passage Program** — Early American industrialization was fueled by the use and management of water resources. Millions of culverts, dikes, water diversions, dams, and other artificial

The 2007 budget includes \$5.0 million for the fish passage program, a \$1.4 million increase compared to 2006. This increase will be used to address artificial structures that block the free movement

## YELLOWSTONE GRIZZLY BEARS



After three decades of successful conservation efforts involving Federal and State agencies and many other partners, the greater Yellowstone population of grizzly bears has recovered and no longer needs the protection of the Endangered Species Act. As a result, the FWS is proposing to remove the Yellowstone population from the list of threatened and endangered species. The remaining grizzly population in the lower 48 States has not yet recovered and will continue to be protected as threatened species under the Act.

A regional conservation strategy will guide State and Federal agencies in managing and maintaining a grizzly bear population after delisting the bears. In 2007, the budget provides \$1.0 million for implementing the conservation strategy for the grizzly bear in the greater Yellowstone area; \$495,000 through the FWS Partners for Fish and Wildlife program, and \$500,000 through the NPS Natural Resource Stewardship program.

*When it was listed in 1975, this majestic animal that greeted Lewis and Clark on their historic expedition stood at risk of disappearing from the American West. Thanks to the work of many partners, more than 600 grizzlies now inhabit the Yellowstone ecosystem and the population is no longer threatened. With a comprehensive conservation strategy ready to be put into place upon delisting, we are confident that the future of the grizzly bear in Yellowstone is bright. Our grandchildren's grandchildren will see grizzly bears roaming Yellowstone.*

*Secretary Gale A. Norton, November 15, 2005*

of fish in rivers and streams. The increase in 2007 should bypass or remove 13 fish passage barriers and restore access to an additional 3,787 miles of river habitat and 12,949 acres of wetlands for fish

spawning and growth. The FWS also expects to work closely with partners as well as other FWS programs in implementing the National Fish Habitat Initiative.

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## LANDSCAPE AND WATERSHED PROTECTION

**Natural Resource Challenge** — National Park Service activities funded through the Natural Resource Challenge provide park managers with the information needed to understand and to measure the condition of resources in parks, including the condition of watersheds, landscapes, marine resources, and biological communities. The information guides park management actions to improve and sustain the health of the Nation's park resources.

Two key components of the Natural Resource Challenge are vital signs and water quality monitoring. Vital signs monitoring tracks measurable features of the environment that indicate the health of park ecosystems, as well as the health of individual plant and animal species. Water quality monitoring tracks water conditions to preserve pristine waters and improve impaired waters in parks and surrounding areas. The NPS has organized 272 parks into 32 vital signs and water quality monitoring networks sharing similar geographical and natural resource characteristics to complete this task.

As of 2006, all 32 water quality networks and 30 of the vital signs networks have been funded. The 2007 budget proposal includes an increase of \$1.0

million to complete the remaining two planned vital signs networks. The additional funding will allow the inventory and monitoring program to identify vital signs for natural resource monitoring in 100 percent of the 272 parks.

The 2007 budget also builds upon the success of the Exotic Plant Management Teams, which were created through the Natural Resource Challenge, for invasive species management. Sixteen mobile exotic plant teams have been deployed to identify, control, and measure performance of control actions of non-native vegetation in many parks. The proposed funding would provide \$750,000 to support each of the three teams focused on Interior priority areas: the Florida team, which targets old world climbing fern; the Great Plains team, which targets leafy spurge; and the Rio Grande Valley team, which targets tamarisk.

**BLM Successes and Challenges** — The 2007 BLM budget includes approximately \$385.0 million in support of the strategic plan's resource protection goal. These funds will help BLM fulfill its multiple-use mandate. They support BLM efforts to sustain the health and productivity of public lands while accommodating recreation and other uses of the public lands, including energy development and grazing. The BLM conducts wide-ranging assessment, monitoring, protection, and restoration activities to maintain or improve the health of the

### HIGHLANDS CONSERVATION

The 2007 budget includes \$2.0 million for implementing the Highlands Conservation Act. The more than two million-acre Highlands region provides a green buffer to the sprawling New York City, Philadelphia, and Hartford metropolitan areas, providing clean drinking water, vital open spaces and abundant outdoor recreation opportunities for 14 million visitors and as well as the 25 million people who live within an hour of this nationally significant and threatened region. The Highlands Conservation Act, signed by President Bush on November 30, 2004, is designed to assist Connecticut, New Jersey, New York, and Pennsylvania in conserving land and natural resources in the Highlands region with Federal assistance for land conservation projects. In close collaboration with the Interior Department and the Forest Service, these four States have established priorities to acquire land or interests in land from willing sellers to permanently protect resources of high conservation value.

*With Congress's support and President Bush's signature, the Highlands Conservation Act is a historic victory that will greatly strengthen our efforts to protect the region's critical lands, drinking water supplies for 3.5 million New Jerseyans, and recreational lands for the region's 14 million annual visitors.*

*Representative Rodney Frelinghuysen, March 7, 2005*

broad diversity of riparian and upland habitat and abundant fish and wildlife species on the 261 million acres of public lands administered by BLM. In 2007, BLM will continue to focus on such high priority efforts as implementing its national sage grouse habitat conservation strategy, controlling and eradicating invasive weeds, and implementing the President's Healthy Forests Initiative. The BLM is also developing a national resource monitoring strategy to improve its understanding of natural resource conditions and to track changes in the health of these resources over time.

**Abandoned Mine Land Reclamation: Reforming the Allocation Formula** — Through its major programs, the Office of Surface Mining protects communities and the environment from the adverse effects of coal mining operations. The Abandoned Mine Land Reclamation program addresses safety and environmental hazards found on over 560,000 acres impacted by abandoned coal mines in 25 States and on three Indian reservations.

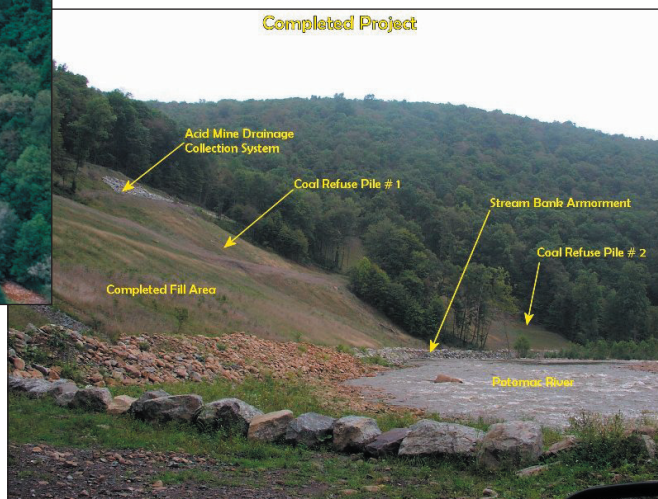
Both the 2005 and 2006 budgets were accompanied by a legislative proposal to reauthorize the abandoned mine fee that finances the AML program. The reauthorization proposal would substantially improve the program by reforming features of the current authorization that divert dollars away from the most serious reclamation needs. The proposal would also repay to certified States and Tribes fee balances that they are owed under current law. During the current session of Congress,

The 2007 budget includes a proposal for an interim extension of OSM's fee collection authority through September 30, 2007. This authority will allow continued reclamation activities under current law. Pending enactment of specific reform legislation, the budget does not propose new funding for payments to certified States.

**State Regulatory Grants** — The goal of OSM's Regulation and Technology program is to implement Title V of the Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act by providing oversight and technical support for the regulation of active mining. The regulatory program involves current coal mining operations on 4.4 million acres in 26 States and on the lands of three Indian Tribes. Total funding requested for the regulatory program is \$112.2 million, an increase of \$3.3 million above the 2006 enacted budget.

The Surface Mining and Control Reclamation Act provides that States should have the primary responsibility for regulating surface coal mining and reclamation operations on non-Indian lands within their borders. To encourage States to assume this responsibility, the Act authorizes the annual award of grants to States with approved regulatory programs for up to 50 percent of the State's cost of administering the program. Twenty-four States have approved permanent regulatory programs for the regulation of coal mining activities.

The 2007 budget includes an increase of \$2.0 million for State regulatory grants. The increase provides program and fixed cost increases for the State regulatory programs. In 2007, regulatory grants will allow the States and Tribes to prevent 93 percent of current mining opera-



the Administration and the Department will continue to work with the relevant authorizing committees to develop fiscally responsible and fair AML program reforms.

tions from causing offsite impacts, and will result in the release of 100,000 acres from phase one and two performance bonds, and the full reclamation of 70,000 acres.

**NPS Asset Management** — Operating and maintaining in good condition over 7,500 facilities for more than 273 million visitors annually presents a perennial challenge to the Park Service. Over previous decades, a backlog of maintenance needs accumulated in the national parks. Including the 2002 budget, the Administration has invested nearly \$4.7 billion and undertaken nearly 6,000 facility improvements within the national parks, resulting in improved roads and trails, rehabilitated visitor centers, more accessible campgrounds, stabilized historic structures, and visitor satisfaction rates that are high.

Ensuring that the state of disrepair experienced in the past does not recur requires an asset management plan that addresses all phases of an asset's lifecycle and encompasses the total cost of ownership for each asset. The key components to more effective facility management are a comprehensive inventory, needs assessment, and facility condition assessment survey process, which provide the necessary service-wide information for determining which resources and activities are necessary to maintain facilities and infrastructure in acceptable operating condition. At the end of 2005, NPS had performed comprehensive assessments on 57 percent of its asset inventory. It is on track to meeting its goal of completing the first cycle of assessments by the conclusion of 2006. This comprehensive process for monitoring the health of the NPS assets will

provide a means of detecting problems early and preventing further facility deterioration.

The Department's 2007 budget continues to support NPS's implementation of its asset management program. Total construction and maintenance funding is \$622.8 million in 2007, a decrease of \$80.6 million from 2006, but still above prior Administrations' funding levels. This reflects a return to sustainable funding levels after the completion last year of a five-year surge in funding. The budget request focuses on protecting and maintaining existing assets rather than funding new construction projects.

This shift in priorities will allow the Department to maintain the progress made, as measured by the Facility Condition Index, in the maintenance backlog over the past four years. The initial implementation phase of the NPS asset management program focused on the asset inventory, utilizing

the FCI and the asset priority index to target annual appropriations to improve the condition of high priority facilities, and instituting performance measures to monitor progress made in addressing the deferred maintenance backlog.

Within the levels requested for maintenance, the 2007 budget includes an increase of \$10.0 million

to maximize cyclic maintenance work. Increasing cyclic project dollars will enable parks to maintain assets on a predictive cycle, rather than allowing them to fall into disrepair. Proposed cyclic maintenance funds would target mission critical assets that are still in a maintainable condition, but could fall into poor condition without proper application of life-cycle maintenance. Typical projects include



*I am awed at the challenges and responsibilities of managing our national parks. The Park Service mission — bequeathed to us by the founders of the park system — is inspirational and succinct. That mission is to preserve these great places unimpaired for current and future generations. The mission is succinct and inspirational, yet complex at the same time.*

*Deputy Secretary P. Lynn Scarlett, June 15, 2005*

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road sealing, painting and roofing of buildings, sign repair and replacement, repair of dock and marine facilities, and upgrading electrical and security systems.

The 2007 budget also proposes to use additional recreation fee revenue for facility maintenance projects. The proposed pricing model that supports the fee revenue increase is based on a recent study conducted by NPS in partnership with McKinsey & Company. To strengthen and enhance the fee revenue program, the pricing model seeks to simplify and standardize the fee rate structure; group parks and set fees by categories of like parks; and

review the pass program and pricing. Once the new pricing structure is in place, park managers will provide feedback on the most appropriate implementation strategy for each individual site. This is one facet of the Department's implementation of the Recreation Enhancement Act that will allow for greater consistency and rationale of fee programs; align fee rates more closely with commercial tour fee structures, the new interagency national recreation pass, and transportation fees; provide a tiered approach to the fee structure that is rational, familiar, and simple to administer; and create a sustainable rate structure while assisting in lowering the cost of collection.