

LADY LIBERTY LOSE\$ OUT

A REVIEW OF PRIORITIES IN PRESIDENT BUSH'S
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE BUDGET



U.S. Representative Anthony D. Weiner

NY City Councilman David Yassky

February 16, 2004

Overview

In an immediate response to the September 11 attacks, all of the National Park Service's icon installations were immediately closed. But on September 12th, virtually every major landmark re-opened including the Lincoln Memorial, Jefferson Memorial, Independence Hall, the Liberty Bell, and Mount Rushmore. A handful of other sites such as the U.S.S. Arizona and parts of Golden Gate Park remained closed, but they too were re-opened within the month. For the past two years, there has been one, and only one, facility within the National Park Service that has remained closed since September 11th – the Statue of Liberty.

Why has Lady Liberty remained closed? The answer is simple – Safety. The Statue of Liberty has only one entry and exit at the Statue's base, and National Park Service officials have determined that it is not safe to re-open the Statue itself until additional exits are created and emergency notification systems are improved. The National Park Service has put the cost of these improvements at \$5 million, and most Americans and New Yorkers would agree that is a small price to pay to restore this powerful symbol of freedom and American strength.

But apparently \$5 million is too high a price to pay for the Bush Administration, which has not included in construction funding to make these safety improvements. And in September 2003, asked the Statue of Liberty Ellis Island Foundation to raise this money privately. A spokesman for the Park Service said that the decision to raise the money privately was about “reducing the taxpayer burden”, which seems ridiculous when considering that these repairs would cost less than 3 cents for every U.S. taxpayer.

To get a better understanding of the Administration's priorities, we have conducted a study of the President's Park Service budget to see what park projects actually deserve taxpayer dollars. Among those receiving more than the total cost of the Statue of Liberty's security needs in the President's FY05 budget are the following:

- \$14,708,000 to construct a heritage center at the Western Arctic National Parklands, AK.
- \$10,051,000 to renovate the ski chalet at Lassen Volcanic National Park, CA
- \$7,420,000 to replace the visitor center in Denali National Park, AK

Clearly, if the country can afford these improvements, they can afford \$5 million to re-open the Statue of Liberty. And re-opening the Statue is not only important symbolically for the Nation, it is critical financially for our City. The number of visitors to Liberty Island has dropped 40 percent from 4.4 million annually to 2.6 million, significantly reducing the traffic around businesses in lower Manhattan, and hurting the tourism industry in the City as a whole. The time has come for the Bush Administration to quit playing games and provide this security funding, so we do by the end of this year, what should have been done months ago: re-open the Statue of Liberty.

The National Park Service has said that \$5 million in safety enhancements need to be made before the Statue of Liberty can be re-opened. This funding would come out of the Park Service's Construction account. This account is level funded at \$330 million in President Bush's fiscal 2005 budget, and it includes \$214 million in earmarks. The Statue of Liberty does not receive an earmark. Below is a list of the projects that would receive funding:

Denali National Park and Preserve, AK Replace Eielson Visitor Center.	\$7,420,000
Klondike Gold Rush NHP, AK Construct historic resource support center and protect museum collections.	\$739,000
Western Arctic National Parklands, AK Construct Northwest Alaska Heritage Center and administrative headquarters.	\$14,708,000
Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve, AK Construct museum to preserve and interpret the Ahtna culture.	\$1,135,000
Hot Springs National Park, AR Rehabilitate Bathhouses for adaptive reuse.	\$4,989,000
Lassen Volcanic National Park, CA Replace condemned ski chalet with improved visitor services facilities.	\$10,051,000
Pinnacles National Monument, CA Relocate and replace flood-prone West Side maintenance and visitor facilities.	\$4,610,000
Point Reyes National Seashore, CA Restore Lifeboat Station Marine Railway.	\$1,885,000
Point Reyes National Seashore, CA Coastal watershed restoration and enhancement.	\$2,077,000
San Francisco Maritime National Historical Park, CA Repair historic Sala Burton Maritime Museum building.	\$4,183,000
Weir Farm National Historic Site, CT Replace maintenance, curatorial, and administrative facilities.	\$3,536,000
Rock Creek Park, DC Preserve and protect Meredian Hill Park.	\$3,007,000
White House, DC Provide structural and utility rehabilitation for the Executive Residence.	\$9,938,000

Big Cypress National Preserve, FL Complete rehabilitation of off-road vehicle trails.	\$569,000
Everglades National Park, FL Complete modified water delivery system.	\$8,077,000
Chattahoochee River National Recreational Area, GA Reduce resource damage by providing river recreation access.	\$2,125,000
Cumberland Island National Seashore, GA Stabilize Dungeness Ruins.	\$1,285,000
Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site, GA Restore Ebenezer Baptist Church, phase II.	\$2,459,000
Kalaupapa National Historical Site, HI Preserve historic buildings, correct safety problems.	\$3,928,000
Pu'uhonua o Honaunau National Historical Park, HI Remove and replace administrative buildings from archeological site.	\$1,112,000
Fort Larned National Historic Site, KS Correct structural problems in Old Commissary.	\$869,000
Fort Larned National Historic Site, KS Stabilize and restore North Officers.	\$1,114,000
Cane River Creole National Historical Park, LA Stabilize and preserve Magnolia Plantation structures.	\$1,068,000
Chesapeake and Ohio Canal National Historical Park, MD Repair and rehabilitate Great Falls Visitor Center and facilities.	\$1,776,000
Fort Washington Park, MD Stabilize Fort Washington.	\$3,660,000
Hampton National Historic Site, MD Install environmental controls in Hampton Mansion.	\$1,546,000
Monocacy National Battlefield, MD Relocate flood-prone visitor center to Best Farm.	\$3,539,000
Boston Harbor Islands National Recreation Area, MA Construct floating docks to provide safe access to Little Brewster Island.	\$800,000

Boston National Historical Park, MA Rehabilitate Building 5.	\$2,963,000
Boston National Historical Park, MA Rehabilitate Building 125.	\$1,187,000
Boston National Historical Park, MA Rehabilitate Commandant's House.	\$774,000
Frederick Law Olmsted National Historic Site, MA Upgrade life/safety systems and rehabilitate historic structures.	\$2,011,000
Saugus Iron Works National Historic Site, MA Rehabilitate resources for accessibility and safety.	\$1,283,000
Deleware Gap National Recreation Area, NJ Replace Depew recreation site.	\$2,298,000
Fire Island National Seashore, NY Rehabilitate Sailors Haven marina and ferry dock.	\$2,374,000
Fire Island National Seashore, NY Replace West Entrance ranger station and construct restrooms	\$735,000
Great Smoky Mountains National Park, NC Replace Smokemont water and sewer with municipal system.	\$2,171,000
Crater Lake National Park, OR Rehabilitate historic cafeteria building and relocate rim parking area.	\$8,741,000
Allegheny Portage Railroad National Historic Site, PA Rehabilitate historic trace corridor trail.	\$861,000
Flight 93 Memorial, PA Construct starter public facilities and services.	\$806,000
Independence National Historical Park, PA Construct security fence and screening structure, Phase I.	\$2,000,000
Big Bend National Park, TX Replace Chisos Basin water supply.	\$2,000,000
Manassas National Battlefield Park, VA Rehabilitate historic Brawner Farm for visitor use.	\$2,317,000

Petersburg National Battlefield, VA	
Consolidate, rehabilitate, and replace park maintenance.	\$812,000
Wolf Trap Farm Park, VA	
Replace main gate facility at Filene Center, Phase I.	\$4,120,000
Olympic National Park, WA	
Remove salmon obstructions and construct bridge and culvert.	\$1,940,000
Olympic National Park, WA	
Restoration of Elwha River Ecosystem.	\$26,950,000
Apostle Islands National Lakeshore, WI	
Restore Raspberry Island Light Station.	\$1,136,000
Grand Teton National Park, WY	
Complete reconstruction of the West Entrance Station.	\$1,487,000
Yellowstone National Park, WY	
Construct a new visitor center at Moose Visitor Center.	\$5,000,000
Yellowstone National Park, WY	
Replace existing Court facilities with a new Courthouse.	\$2,655,000
Yellowstone National Park, WY	
Replace Madison wastewater facilities.	\$3,956,000
Yellowstone National Park, WY	
Replace winter snowcoaches and improve support infrastructure.	\$1,000,000
Yellowstone National Park, WY	
Restoration of Old House at Old Faithful Inn, Phase II.	\$9,801,000
Other	
Various Parks	
Emergency storm damage reconstruction and recovery	\$14,000,000
Special Programs	\$53,800,000
Construction Planning	\$21,220,000
Construction Program Management/Operations	\$27,364,000
General Management Planning	\$13,313,000
TOT NPS Construction:	\$329,880,000