DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS FOR FISCAL YEAR 2007

U.S. SENATE,
SUBCOMMITTEE OF THE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS,
Washington, DC.

NONDEPARTMENTAL WITNESSES

[CLERK'S NOTE.—The subcommittee was unable to hold hearings on nondepartmental witnesses, the statements and letters of those submitting written testimony are as follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF AMERICANS FOR THE ARTS

Americans for the Arts is pleased to submit written testimony to the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on the Interior supporting fiscal year 2007 funding for the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) at a restored level of $170 million. At the end of this statement we will also touch on a special one-time request for $5 million for the NEA in the next Gulf Coast emergency package, separate from its regular fiscal year 2007 funding.

The requested fiscal year 2007 funding of $170 million would:

—restore the NEA's ability to perform its core mission of supporting the creation, preservation, and presentation of the arts in America;

—strengthen the Challenge America program, which uses the arts to enhance America's communities through improved access to the arts for all Americans; and

—cover increased administrative and grant-making costs.

My statement focuses on the core programs of the NEA: Access to Artistic Excellence, Learning in the Arts for Children and Youth, and Challenge America: Reaching Every Community. I would like especially to explain how local arts agencies use these programs to serve their communities.

Local arts agencies are Americans for the Arts' key constituency, and advancing full and affordable access to the arts is at the heart of their mission. Local arts agencies meet community needs by using the arts to address social, educational, and economic development issues as well as by supporting "art for art's sake." They make grants, provide services to artists and arts organizations, and present arts programming to the public. Typically, local arts agencies lead community cultural planning—a community-inclusive process of assessing local cultural needs and mapping a plan of implementation. NEA leadership has played a pivotal role in creating and sustaining local arts agencies, which have grown in number from 500 in 1965, when the NEA was established, to 4,000 today. Three quarters of all existing local arts agencies are private non-profit organizations, of which many are designated official arts agencies for their communities and entrusted with granting government funds. The remaining quarter are government agencies.

Turning to the core programs of the NEA:

First, the Access to Artistic Excellence core program of the NEA helps local arts agencies build infrastructure, pool resources, and coordinate local partnerships and coalitions, with the aim of extending the reach of artists and arts organizations to new audiences. A few examples of recent fiscal year 2006 grants include:

—The Arts Council in Stuart, FL, received a grant to support a needs assessment and cultural inventory as preliminary steps toward the development of a cultural plan, including a comprehensive catalogue of the county's cultural assets.

—In Broward County, FL, a grant from the NEA supports an e-marketing program, a regional shared calendar database, and electronic advertisements for cultural events and organizations in a multi-county area.

—South Dakotans for the Arts received a grant to support the Prairie Arts Management Institute, which provides intensive training for staff of small and mid-sized arts organizations from the "prairie states" of Middle America.

The second of the NEA's core programs is Learning in the Arts for Children and Youth. To cite the NEA's applications guidelines, this program "achieves its support of arts education through a focus on children, teachers, artists, arts organizations, and school leadership that will model best practices in arts education, disseminate those practices to the field, and build the case for quality arts education across the country. Critical to this strategy is the rigorous application of national, state, or local arts education standards."

Grants to local arts agencies from the Learning in the Arts core program typically support collaborations among teaching artists, local arts institutions, and providers of educational services to students in school and after-school. These grants play to the strengths of local arts agencies, which often maintain rosters of teaching artists and facilitate multi-party partnerships.

Recent examples include:

—The Fulton County Arts Council in Atlanta, GA, received a grant for after-school visual arts workshops and open studios for stained glass, clay, furniture making, glass blowing, and printmaking. The teenage participants are referred by the Fulton County Juvenile Court probation officer or a judge.

—In Lafayette, LA, the Acadiana Arts Council received a grant for an after-school and summer program featuring workshops in the visual and performing arts, emphasizing job-building skills. Participants work with artists on projects including public mural, web design, and theater production.

—In Tennessee, Allied Arts of Chattanooga is supporting local teaching artists who team with classroom teachers to develop and implement a curriculum that promotes reading and writing through dance, theater, and visual arts.

The third core program of the NEA is Challenge America: Reaching Every Community. To quote the NEA once again:

"[T]his category offers $10,000 grants, primarily to small and mid-sized organizations, for projects that extend the reach of the arts to underserved populations—those whose opportunities to experience the arts are limited by geography, ethnicity, economics, or disability. Projects that are supported in this category generally are smaller in scale and shorter in duration than those in the Access to Artistic Excellence or Learning in the Arts for Children and Youth categories."

Grants are limited to four specific uses: special events with guest artists; professionally developed public art projects such as murals or sculptures that are developed with community engagement; civic design activities; and planning projects that address cultural tourism or economic revitalization.

With a simpler application process and expedited review, these grants are especially valuable to arts organizations that lack the administrative staffing and expertise to compete with larger, better-funded organizations. Challenge America is a key component of the NEA's drive, which we praise, to ensure that direct federal support for the arts is spread broadly and fairly across the country. Our research shows that in fiscal year 2005, 114 congressional districts received direct NEA grants solely through this program.

Recent examples of grants to local arts agencies include:

—In Aliceville, AL, the Rural Members Association received a grant to support the Freedom Creek Blues Festival, which showcases Alabama blues artists.

—In Idaho Falls, ID, the Arts Council received a grant to promote the Idaho Falls Cultural District, supporting the production of brochures, advertising, and banners for the district.

—The Iowa Trails Council received a grant to support the design and installation of public art on the Cedar View Pedestrian and Bicycle Trail Bridges in Jefferson County, IA.

Unfortunately, the administration's requested budget includes a cut of $3.46 million from the Challenge America core program of the NEA. The funds would be shifted to the other core grant programs as well as to cover increased administrative costs. As noted at the beginning of my statement, we are requesting that the NEA receive an appropriation that can accommodate these needs without taking funds from an existing program that is effective, popular, and essential to accomplishing the NEA's goal of distributing federal funds fairly across the country.

Finally, I would like to address our special request for $5 million in disaster recovery funds for the NEA as part of the next relief package of reprogrammed or supplemental appropriations.

As soon as Hurricane Katrina hit, the arts community stepped forward with open hearts and helping hands, in common with the rest of the nation. In the immediate aftermath of the storm, national arts organizations collected and disseminated information including damage reports, requests for help, and offers of aid. National organizations also solicited, coordinated, and/or provided assistance. For example, by Monday, September 5, the board of directors of Americans for the Arts had approved the release of $100,000 from our reserve funds. In 30 days, we disbursed the entire amount in emergency grants to local arts agencies and other arts organizations in the affected areas. Finally, national arts service organizations asked for federal relief funds to be provided to the NEA to address specific, unique needs, and that would not duplicate other federal programs.

The NEA's expertise is unmatched among federal agencies with respect to the internal operations of arts organizations, their public services, and their relationships to the broader community. Therefore, several national arts organizations have developed a proposal for $5 million in NEA funds that would provide technical assistance and planning for nonprofit arts organizations. In view of the immense shock that the storm delivered to a regional economy, arts organizations must come up with plans to withstand several years of reduced funding and smaller audiences. Many that have been forced to suspend operations must figure out how, when, and—unfortunately—even whether to reopen. Regrettably, these organizations as nonprofits are ineligible for Economic Injury Disaster Loans from the Small Business Association. Most similarly cannot qualify for help in any form from FEMA. Finally, other federal funds, especially the Community Development Block Grants, which normally can be used at the discretion of city governments to assist the arts, are now being directed almost solely to assistance for homeowners. We certainly do not begrudge the help to these individuals—they need it. My points are simply that first, almost no federal help is currently available for the nonprofit arts, and second, the arts need help because they are key to the recovery and rebuilding of devastated communities. Third and finally, as I indicated, private groups and individuals from around the nation stepped forth and helped at a moment's notice. I understand that the arts could not be at the top of the list for federal help when a million people were displaced and an entire infrastructure was destroyed. Eight months later, however, it seems appropriate to begin investing in their recovery. To its credit, the NEA scraped together $700,000 in fiscal year 2006 funds to dispatch in discretionary grants. More funding, more broadly disbursed, is needed as quickly as possible.

Thank you very much for the opportunity to submit this testimony.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE AMERICAN BIRD CONSERVANCY, AUDUBON, DUCKS UNLIMITED, AND THE ASSOCIATION OF FISH AND WILDLIFE AGENCIES

We are writing to express our support for the Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Act Grants Program in fiscal year 2007. We appreciate your past support of this extremely effective matching grant program that coordinates and funds the conservation of neotropical migratory birds and their habitats throughout the United States, Latin America, and the Caribbean. We urge your continued support in the current funding cycle.

Each spring, some 5 billion birds from 500 different species make their spectacular migration from their winter habitats in Mexico, Central America, Caribbean, and northern parts of South America to their breeding grounds throughout North America. These species comprise a vast array of many well known birds, such as: ducks, geese, and other waterfowl; raptors; warblers; thrushes; shorebirds such as sandpipers and plovers; hummingbirds; orioles; and many others that fly in this annual ritual.

Unfortunately, the survival rate for many migratory birds is relatively low, due in part to natural predation and general hazards along their migratory route. Exacerbating these challenges, however, is the continuing loss of habitat in the breeding grounds, staging areas, and wintering grounds of these species, particularly throughout the Caribbean, Latin America and Canada. Through the establishment of a matching grants program to fund projects that promote the conservation of these birds in the United States, Latin America, and Caribbean, the Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Act Grants Program provides a comprehensive approach to address the varied and significant threats facing the numerous species of migratory birds as identified in the North America Bird Conservation Initiative.

The Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Act Grants Program has provided an effective framework for nations, states, local governments and other entities to work together cooperatively for the protection of neotropical migratory birds in the Western Hemisphere. It has a proven track record of reversing habitat loss and degradation and of advancing innovative management and habitat restoration strategies for the broad range of neotropical birds. Grants have gone to conservation programs in 31 states and 33 Latin American and Caribbean countries for projects that protect, research, monitor, and manage neotropical migratory bird populations and their habitats. Partner funds have contributed $80 million since fiscal year 2002, far exceeding the 3:1 federal match requirement to nearly 4:1. In fact, for the 37 projects approved in fiscal year 2005, partners leveraged $17.6 million in funds against the $3.9 million appropriated by Congress.

We urge the Interior Appropriations Subcommittee to prioritize fiscal year 2007 funding for the Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Act Grants Program at $5 million, the currently authorized level, an increase of $1 million from the appropriated amount in fiscal year 2006.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE ARKANSAS BASIN DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATION

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, I am Gerald H. Holman, Senior Vice President of the Wichita Area Chamber of Commerce, Wichita, Kansas and Chairman of the Kansas Interstate Committee for the Arkansas Basin Development Association (ABDA).

The Kansas ABDA representatives join with our colleagues from the other Arkansas River Basin states to form the multi-state Arkansas Basin Development Association. We fully endorse the summary statement presented to you by the Chairman of the Arkansas River Basin Interstate Committee.

Public Law 108–137 authorized a 12-foot channel on the McClellan-Kerr Arkansas River Navigation System. The Corps is now obligated to operate and maintain the system as a 12-foot channel. Over 90 percent of the system currently is adequate for a 12-foot channel. Deepening the remainder of the channel to 12 feet will allow carriers to place 43 percent more cargo on barges, which will reduce the amount of fuel consumed and emissions released. Funds in the amount of $7.0 million were allocated in fiscal year 2005 with $1.5 million used to complete the Feasibility Study and Environmental Impact Statement with the other $5.5 million used on engineering, design, and construction activities. In conjunction with the deepening project the Corps is preparing a Basin Wide Master Plan that will include an integrated major maintenance construction and operational maintenance prioritized list for investment opportunities. Other environmental benefits include the creation of new aquatic habitat through new dike construction and the construction of Least Tern islands through beneficial use of dredged material.

Therefore, we request $40 million to maintain the authorized depth by constructing dike structures to minimize dredging and dredging only necessary areas. This investment will increase the cost competitiveness of this low cost, environment-friendly transportation method and help us combat the loss of industry and jobs to overseas.

The critical water resources projects in the Kansas portion of the Arkansas River Basin are identified below. The projects are environmental and conservation in nature and all have regional and/or multi-state impact. We are grateful for your past commitment to these projects.

A. We ask for your continued support for this important Bureau of Reclamation project on behalf of the Wichita/South Central Kansas area:

Equus Beds Aquifer Storage and Recovery Project.—This is the continuation of a Bureau of Reclamation project jointly endorsed by the City of Wichita, Groundwater Management District No. 2 and the State of Kansas. This model technology has proven the feasibility of recharging a major groundwater aquifer supplying water to nearly 600,000 irrigation, municipal and industrial users. The demonstration project has successfully recharged more than one billion gallons of water from the Little Arkansas River. The project is essential to help protect the aquifer from on-going degradation caused by the migration of saline water.

The Equus Beds are vital to the surrounding agricultural economy. Also, environmental protection of the aquifer, which this strategic project provides, has increasing importance to ensure quality water for the future since south central Kansas will rely to an even greater extent on the Equus Beds aquifer for water resources.

The south-central Kansas economy including the Wichita MSA represents:

—More than 20 percent of the state's employment.

—More than one-third of the state's manufacturing employment and payroll.

—At least 20 percent of the state personal income.

The quality of life and economic future for more than 20 percent of the state's population and economy is dependent upon the availability of reliable, high quality water resources from the Equus Beds.

The State of Kansas supports the project as the needed cornerstone for the area agricultural economy and for the economy of the Wichita metropolitan area. The Chief Engineer of Kansas has authorized full-scale construction.

The aquifer storage and recovery project is a vital component of Wichita's comprehensive and integrated water supply strategy. The full scale design concept for the aquifer storage and recovery project calls for a multi-year construction program. Phase One is estimated to cost approximately $25 million and is scheduled for completion in 2007. The total project involving the capture and recharge of more than 100 million gallons of water per day is estimated to cost $130 million over 10 years. This is substantially less costly, both environmentally and economically, when compared with reservoir construction or other alternatives.

We are grateful for your previous cost share funding during the demonstration phase, as a compliment to funds provided by the City of Wichita. As we enter the construction phase, we request continued Congressional support in two ways:

1. House Bill 1327 was passed by the House of Representatives last year. The Senate passed a very similar bill, Senate Bill 1025. This legislation, or similar legislation, would authorize the project and also provide cost share funding up to 25 percent of the project cost to a maximum of $30 million. We request your support of this legislation authorizing the Aquifer Storage and Recovery Project as a Federal project and directing the Bureau of Reclamation to participate in its final design and construction to completion.

2. Through continued cost share funding of the full-scale Aquifer Storage and Recovery Project within the limits of House Bill 1327 or similar legislation for fiscal year 2007.

B. The Arkansas River Basin is a treasure that must be protected for future generations. However, we are experiencing decline in water quality due to sediment and nutrient loading. The quality of the water in the Arkansas River and its tributaries, including the numerous reservoirs in the system, is a reflection of its watershed and land use practices. It is imperative that the subbasins within the system are studied using the watershed approach and that protective remedies are identified and implemented to reverse the continuing decline in water quality. We recommend adding the following high priority watershed studies to the fiscal year 2007 budget:

1. *Walnut River (El Dorado Lake) Watershed Feasibility Study*.—A reconnaissance study was conducted in July 2000 by the USACE, Tulsa District, which identified ecosystem restoration as a primary concern in the Walnut Basin. The Kansas Water Office entered into an agreement with the USACE to begin a Walnut River Basin Ecosystem Restoration Feasibility Study for the entire basin.

Following the initial phase of the feasibility study, it was decided that focusing the study to a smaller geographic area would make more efficient use of existing local, state, and federal resources. The project was re-scoped to focus study efforts on protection and restoration of El Dorado Lake and its contributing watershed.

Public water supply storage in El Dorado Lake is owned by the City of El Dorado and represents an important future regional water supply source for the Walnut Basin. The reservoir and its watershed have been designated by the Kansas Department of Health and Environment as high priority for Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) implementation for eutrophication (nutrients) and siltation. Fecal coliform bacteria is another high priority TMDL pollutant. Because of the importance of protecting both water quality and quantity in El Dorado Lake, and to more effectively target limited resources, KWO has partnered with the City of El Dorado to address long-term protection and restoration needs for the reservoir and its watershed, in cooperation with other local, state and federal agencies.

Study efforts include addressing identified opportunities to reduce sedimentation in El Dorado Lake and meet the watershed total daily maximum load (TMDL) issues of sediment and eutrophication for the purpose of preserving existing water supply storage, restoring riparian and aquatic habitat in the lake and watershed.

The fiscal year 2006 budget for this project in the amount of $200,000 is for continuation of the feasibility study. We support the President's proposed fiscal year 2007 budget which includes $80,000 for completion of the feasibility study in September 2007

2. *Grand (Neosho) Basin Reconnaissance Study*.—A need exists for a basin-wide water resource planning effort in the Grand-Neosho River basin, apart from the issues associated with Grand Lake, Oklahoma. A federal interest has been determined from the reconnaissance study as a result from a Congressional add in fiscal year 2003 and another add was appropriated in fiscal year 2004. The Reconnais-

sance Report has been approved. Feasibility Cost Share Agreements will be executed in 2006. The study would support management efforts by Kansas and Oklahoma agencies to address watershed and reservoir restoration issues in the Grand Lake Watershed. Local interest exists for ecosystem restoration projects and flood damage reduction projects. We request funding in the amount of $450,000 in fiscal year 2007.

C. *Grand Lake Feasibility Study*.—A need exists to evaluate solutions to upstream flooding problems associated with the adequacy of existing real estate easements necessary for flood control operations of Grand Lake, Oklahoma. A study authorized by the Water Resources Development Act of 1996 was completed in September of 1998 and determined that if the project were constructed based on current criteria, additional easements would be required. Section 449 of the WRDA of 2000 directed the Secretary to evaluate backwater effects specifically due to flood control operations on land around Grand Lake and authorizes a feasibility study at full Federal cost if the Secretary determines that Federal actions have been a significant cause of the backwater effects. The Tulsa District is preparing a letter report which will be submitted to the ASA(CW) for a determination on proceeding with a full federally financed feasibility study. If the ASA(CW) determines that Federal actions have been a significant cause of the flooding, feasibility study activities would be initiated at full Federal expense. Since Grand Lake is an integral component of a system flood control operation consisting of 11 principal reservoir projects in the Arkansas River basin, changes in the operations of the project or other upstream changes could have a significant impact on flood control, hydropower and navigation operations in the Grand (Neosho) River system and on the Arkansas River Basin system, as well. A feasibility study is necessary to determine the most cost-effective comprehensive solution to the real estate inadequacies. We urge you to provide $500,000 to fund feasibility studies for this important project in fiscal year 2007 and to direct the Corps of Engineers to execute the study at full federal expense. This project has been a Congressional add for the past four years, but there are no funds in the fiscal year 2007 President's budget request to continue this project.

D. *Continuing Authorities Programs*.—We support funding of needed programs including the Small Flood Control Projects Program (Section 205 of the 1948 Flood Control Act, as amended), Aquatic Ecosystem Restoration (Section 206 of the 1996 Water Resources Development Act, as amended), Ecosystem Restoration (Section 1135 of the 1986 Water Resources Development Act, as amended) as well as the Emergency Streambank Stabilization Program (Section 14 of the 1946 Flood Control Act, as amended). Smaller communities in Kansas (Iola, Liberal, McPherson, Augusta, Parsons, Altoona, Kinsley, Newton, Arkansas City, Coffeyville and Medicine Lodge) have previously requested assistance from the Corps of Engineers under the Section 205 and Section 14 programs. The City of Wichita also requests funding through these programs to address flooding problems. We urge you to support an increase of these programs to the $65 million programmatic limit for the Small Flood Control Projects Program, $35 million for Aquatic Ecosystem Restoration, $35 million for the Ecosystem Restoration Program and $25 million for the Emergency Streambank Stabilization Program.

The Planning Assistance to States Program under section 22 of the Water Resources Development Act of 1974, as amended, provides federal funding to assist the states in water resource planning. The state of Kansas is grateful for previous funding under this program which has assisted small Kansas communities in cost sharing needed resource planning as called for in the Kansas State Water Plan. We request continued funding of this program at the $10 million programmatic limit which will allow the state of Kansas to receive the $500,000 limit.

Finally, we are very grateful that both the Corps of Engineers and Bureau of Reclamation have the expertise needed for the development and protection of water resources infrastructure. It is essential to have the integrity and continuity these agencies provide on major public projects. Your continued support of these vital agencies, including funding, will be appreciated. Our infrastructure must be maintained and where needed, enhanced for the future.

Mr. Chairman and Members of these Committees, thank you very much for the dedicated manner in which you have dealt with the Water Resources Programs and for allowing us to present our funding requests.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE AMERICAN FISHERIES SOCIETY

The American Fisheries Society (AFS) would like to provide input that may assist you in the task of determining the level of fiscal year 2007 appropriations for the Department of the Interior's, Biological Research Discipline (BRD) of the U.S. Geo-

logical Survey (USGS), the Fisheries Program of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), the National Park Service, the Bureau of Reclamation (BOR), and the Bureau of Land Management (BLM). As the Nation's largest association of fisheries and aquatic science professionals with 9,000 members representing all states, commonwealths, and trust territories, we believe it is essential that interests of our members and our profession be considered in the appropriations process for agencies supporting fisheries and aquatic science and conservation. We ask this statement be included in the official record of the agency's appropriation hearings.

The Nation's fisheries annually provide billions of dollars in recreational and commercial benefits. Millions of Americans and visitors spend hundreds of millions of hours fishing the country's rivers, streams, lakes, and marine coastal waters.

Over the past few years the Congress has taken critically important actions to conserve these resources to ensure that their benefits will continue to be enjoyed by future generations. However, despite Congress' actions, our fisheries resources are at risk and in too many cases threatened. Additional funds are needed to better implement the management and research programs that are essential to reverse the current decline in many of our fisheries.

Although we understand that this is a period of strongly competing government priorities, we also wish to note that robust research and technology development programs are the only means by which more effective and efficient fisheries management tools and actions can be developed and tested. Management and conservation decisions are only as good as the information upon which they are based and there is substantial evidence to suggest that better information is critically needed here. To address these needs the Society offers the following recommendations for your consideration.

U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY

Biological Resources Discipline

The Biological Resources Discipline (BRD) provides critical scientific research and information needed for the effective management and restoration of the Nation's inland, anadromous, and estuarine fisheries and aquatic resources. With no regulatory role, BRD provides high-quality unbiased science for our nation's natural resources decision makers.

In light of past under funding of the BRD, AFS is disappointed over the fiscal year 2007 request of $172.5 million for the Biology component. This is a slight increase over the fiscal year 2006 budget, and it is still almost a $3 million decrease from the fiscal year 2004 budget. AFS also notes that although recent BRD budgets show progress by tracking in the same direction as inflation, they still are not keeping -up with inflation and have not yet made up for the 20 percent decrease experienced in 1996.

The Society is a strong supporter of BRD's Co-Operative Research Units (CRU). CRU is of particular importance to fishery research, restoration, and management are the Co-operative Research Units (CRU). We strongly support the $274,000 increase to this important program.

U. S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

Fisheries Program

The U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service works with others to conserve, protect, and enhance the nation's fishery resources and aquatic ecosystems for the benefit of the American people. The Fisheries Program safeguards these resources while helping to provide recreational opportunities for the nation's 50 million licensed anglers, as well as evaluates fish populations and their habitats and coordinates the restoration and recovery of aquatic populations, habitats, and ecosystems.

The Society recommends the $3.859 million increase to the Cooperative Endangered Species Fund in mandatory appropriations. AFS also commends the fiscal year 2007 budget request for continuing to address the operations and management challenges faced by our aging National Fish Hatchery System, a system critical to fishery conservation, restoration, and recreation efforts, but that needs to be updated to function at its full capacity and achieve its management objectives. However, the total budget includes $114.6 million for the Fisheries program, which is a net program decrease of $2.1 million compared to 2006. Within this level of funding are program increases of $1.9 million for hatchery operations for endangered species recovery actions, $1.4 million for fish passage improvements, and an increase of $2.0 million for the National Fish Habitat Initiative. The Society recommends restoring the fiscal year 2007 Fisheries Program budget to the fiscal year 2006 level.

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

Wildlife and Fisheries

The BLM manages public lands for a range of uses, including recreation, conservation, livestock grazing, hunting and fishing, forest management and wildland fire management, cultural resource protection, and energy and mineral production. Many of the BLM lands are managed for fisheries as well as other uses. Fisheries program priorities for 2007 include: inland-fisheries conservation; subsistence fisheries management; Pacific Northwest fisheries, including culverted fish passage issues; multi-species conservation; aquatic indicators of land condition; and partnerships.

While we feel that the President and Congress have made an effort to increase funding for the important role of conserving our Nation's aquatic resources, we feel more funds should be allocated to these programs in fiscal year 2007. AFS was encouraged in fiscal year 2005 to see an increase of $100,000 for these programs and $430,000 in fiscal year 2006. The fiscal year 2007 budget request of $12.418 is still an encouraging increase over the fiscal year 2006 budget. However, AFS recommends an increase of the Fisheries Line Item to back the fiscal year 2001 level of $12.8 million.

AFS is also pleased to see an increase of $181,000 in the fiscal year 2007 budget for Threatened and Endangered Species Management.

MINERALS MANAGEMENT SERVICE

Outer Continental Shelf Program

AFS supports MMS activities overseeing OCS leases, review of new exploration and development plans, examination of pipeline right-of-way applications, environmental assessments, and annual safety inspections of mineral extraction operations on-site. MMS OCS provides for safe and environmentally sound energy and mineral development on the OCS. AFS supports the MMS request of $159.365 million in fiscal year 2007 for OCS program activities, a net increase of $10,594 above the fiscal year 2006 enacted budget.

AFS is also pleased to see $250 million dedicated to the Coastal Impact Assistance Program in fiscal year 2007.

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

Park Management

For fiscal year 2007, AFS recommends supporting the Resource Stewardship Line Item at the level requested of $362.4 million. AFS also supports The 2007 budget includes an increase of $1.0 million for natural resource programs to complete establishment of inventory and monitoring programs, and equip managers with critical information about the ecosystems they manage.

BUREAU OF RECLAMATION

The AFS is concerned with the President's request of $970.7 million in fiscal year 2007 for BOR. This is a net decrease of $132.5 million below the fiscal year 2006 enacted level. With the growing challenge of water quality and quantity, allocation and preservation, AFS wants to underscore the critical responsiblity the Bureau of Reclamation and other Federal agencies have in managing our water resources and their associated ecosystems and species for the public good, including compliance with the Endangered Species Act.

The Society appreciates your consideration of our view. We welcome the opportunity to provide additional information and advice regarding fisheries efforts of the Department of Commerce.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE ASSOCIATION OF FISH AND WILDLIFE AGENCIES

On behalf of our America's fish and wildlife agencies, I urge the Subcommittee on Interior and Related Agencies to support funding in the amount of $85 million for the State Wildlife Grants Program in the fiscal year 2007 Interior and Related Agencies Appropriations Act.

The State Wildlife Grants Program is our nation's core program for keeping wildlife from becoming endangered. State fish and wildlife agencies enjoy a strong partnership with the federal government in managing our nation's wildlife resources. Working together, we are able to ensure robust fish and wildlife populations and keep species from declining to the point of becoming endangered. State Wildlife Grants is an integral element of this partnership, providing the federal govern-

ment's share of support for proactive on-the-ground conservation projects aimed at declining fish and wildlife species and their habitats. State Wildlife Grants is not just a grants program. It truly is a core program of the Department of Interior for advancing a pressing national need.

The President's budget includes $74.7 million, an increase of $5 million above the fiscal year 2006 enacted level of $68.5 million. We appreciate the Administration's continued support for this program as a core component of their collaborative conservation agenda.

Although the budget is tight, America's fish and wildlife agencies are recommending that Congress provide a funding level of at least $85 million in order to restore this program back up to the highest level of funding it has ever received, in fiscal year 2002. Consistent funding is essential to the long-term success of this program, and the completion of wildlife action plans in every state and territory only underscores the need for adequate and reliable resources. A funding level of $85 million would send an important message about the Congress's commitment to following through on providing the support needed to implement the wildlife action plans. We are pleased that 170 Representatives have already formally signed on to this commitment in the form of a "dear colleague" and we hope you will match that strong demonstration of support.

We also urge your consideration of additional language to provide an incentive for states to cooperate on projects with other states as well as federal agencies when implementing the actions in their plans. Allowing implementation projects that include several states working together to implement actions identified in their comprehensive state wildlife strategies at a 75:25 match (vs. 50:50) will provide greater benefits to the nation. In addition, allowing federal funds to be used as a match for a particular State Wildlife Grants project will encourage greater cooperation between a federal entity within that state and the state wildlife agency in implementing the strategies/plans together. The strategies/plans have the potential to encourage everyone to work together resulting in a greater cumulative impact as well as avoiding costly duplication and unnecessary overlap.

The President's budget includes a proposal to set aside $5 million of the new funds recommended for State Wildlife Grants for a new program of competitive grants. While we appreciate the intent to reward effective conservation proposals, we believe that the time is not yet right for a new competitive program to be created within State Wildlife Grants. The creation of such a program should be predicated on the attainment of higher levels of funding. State Wildlife Grants has provided a tremendous enhancement to the capacity of every state to address wildlife conservation. While we cannot currently support the creation of a competitive funding program, we are committed to making any programs that are enacted by Congress a success. If Congress deems that this is an appropriate course of action, we will work together with the Fish and Wildlife Service to make it a success.

In closing, I again extend the appreciation of America's wildlife agencies for your continued support for the state-federal wildlife conservation partnership. We sincerely urge you to provide our requested level of $85 million for State Wildlife Grants.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE ARKANSAS GAME & FISH COMMISSION

We are seeking your support for the President's fiscal year 2007 Budget Request of $3 million to support the National Fish Habitat Initiative (NFHI) and, furthermore, we ask you to support an additional $3 million to be appropriated to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Southeast Fisheries Program for the Southeast Aquatic Resources Partnership (SARP). The NFHI, led by the International Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies in partnership with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, is a nationwide fisheries habitat restoration plan modeled on the successful North American Waterfowl Management Plan. The SARP is developing a Southeast Aquatic Habitat Plan that will guide the implementation of the NFHI on a regional scale and serve as a model for other regions of the country. The Southeast Aquatic Habitat Plan will identify and establish Fish Habitat Partnerships that will deliver the objectives of the NFHI in the Southeast.

The SARP was initiated in 2001 to better address the conservation and management of aquatic resources in the Southeastern United States. This partnership developed because (1) the Southeast has the highest diversity of aquatic species and habitats of any region in the country, (2) these resources are facing serious threats to their future existence, and (3) no single State or Federal agency has the necessary resources and authority to address this impending aquatic crisis. It is only by working together through partnerships that we will make a difference. SARP in-

cludes the fish and wildlife agencies from 13 States (Alabama, Arkansas, Florida; Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, Missouri, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, and Texas), the Gulf and Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commissions, the Gulf of Mexico and South Atlantic Fishery Management Councils, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and NOAA Fisheries.

This unique and focused effort is poised to deliver a new regional approach to aquatic conservation for future generations. Securing $3 million in additional funding for the SARP is critical for the successful implementation of the Southeast Aquatic Habitat Plan.

Thank you for your consideration of this request.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE AMERICAN GEOLOGICAL INSTITUTE

Thank you for this opportunity to provide the American Geological Institute's perspective on fiscal year 2007 appropriations for geoscience programs within the Subcommittee's jurisdiction. We ask the Subcommittee to support the well-informed, yet fiscally responsible increases in the Administration's budget proposal for the Minerals Management Services (MMS), the Bureau of Land Management's Energy and Mineral Management program and the Smithsonian Institution. AGI also supports new funding for fixed costs and a few high priority programs within the United States Geological Survey (USGS). The high priority programs include a new Integrated Multi-Hazards Demonstration Project, the National Streamflow Information Program, the Energy Resources Program and some new funding for the Landsat Continuity Mission.

Regrettably, the Administration also proposes significant cuts to the USGS mineral resources and water programs. If the President's request were enacted, the USGS would receive a total budget of only $945 million, a 2 percent decrease compared to last year's funding, while the Mineral Resources Program would receive a $22 million cut, leaving the program with only about $30 million in fiscal year 2007 and the Water Resources Program would be cut by about $7.4 million. If enacted, these reductions would hamper the Survey's ability to carry out its important objectives to monitor environmental conditions and provide resource assessments for economic development and national security. The value of domestically processed nonfuel mineral resources is estimated to be about $478 billion and the USGS Mineral Resources Program is the only entity, public or private, that provides an analysis and assessment of the raw materials and processed minerals accessible from domestic and global markets. Specifically, we ask the Subcommittee to restore funds to the Mineral Resources Program and the Water Resources Program and to support a $1.2 billion overall budget for USGS. This budget would allow essential, but consistently under funded, programs throughout the agency to fulfill their basic mission and such a request is supported by the 69 organizations of the USGS Coalition. AGI is a charter member of the USGS Coalition.

For the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the proposed fiscal year 2007 is $7.3 billion, a 5.1 percent decrease from last year with significant cuts for state water programs. AGI supports full funding for water programs in EPA and USGS, given the importance of clean and readily available water for our citizens, industries, local to federal government agencies and the environment.

AGI is a nonprofit federation of 44 geoscientific and professional associations that represent more than 100,000 geologists, geophysicists, and other earth scientists who work in industry, academia and government. The institute serves as a voice for shared interests in our profession, plays a major role in strengthening geoscience education, and strives to increase public awareness of the vital role that the geosciences play in society's use of resources and interaction with the environment.

U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY

For the fifth year in a row, the USGS faces cuts in the Administration's request. AGI thanks the Subcommittee for its record of restoring critical funds and recognizing the Survey's essential value to the nation. The USGS is a critical federal science agency and it should receive increased funding like the proposed increases in the President's American Competitiveness Initiative for the National Science Foundation and the Office of Science within the Department of Energy. The USGS performs complementary research, analysis and education and should be part of the President's initiative to advance innovation, reduce imported oil dependencies and ensure American competitiveness in science and technology.

Virtually every American citizen and every federal, state, and local agency benefits either directly or indirectly from USGS products and services. As was made clear by the National Research Council report Future Roles and Opportunities for

the U.S. Geological Survey, the USGS's value to the nation goes well beyond the Department of the Interior's stewardship mission for public lands. USGS information and expertise address a wide range of important problems facing this nation: earthquakes and floods, global environmental change, water availability, waste disposal, and availability of energy and mineral resources. Some of the most important activities of the Survey serve the entire nation. At the same time, AGI recognizes that the Survey does have a responsibility to provide scientific support for its sister land management agencies at Interior, an important mission that needs to be well executed if land management decisions are to be made with the best available scientific information. It is imperative that these missions be recognized and valued within the Department and by the Administration. AGI asks the Subcommittee to continue its efforts to help the Administration better understand the Survey's value to the nation as a whole

Mineral Resources Program.—This highly regarded research program is the nation's premier credible source for regional, national and global mineral resource and mineral environmental assessments, statistics and research critical for sound economic, mineral-supply, land-use and environmental analysis, planning and decision-making. AGI urges the Subcommittee to reject the Administration's requested cuts to this program and to fund it at the fiscal year 2005 appropriated level of $54 million. The huge cut, leaving the program with less than $30 million in fiscal year 2007 would decimate the program. It would cost about 240 full time positions and would eliminate or reduce global mineral resource assessments of mineral commodities, research on industrial minerals, research on inorganic toxins, materials flow analyses, and the Minerals Resources External Research program. The essence of the program would be jeopardized at a time when mineral products account for a rapidly growing and valuable commodity of the U.S. economy.

The Mineral Resources Program (MRP) has 6 divisions with offices across the United States working on a broad range of initiatives to secure the nation's economic base and environmental welfare. Each month, the Minerals Information Services of the MRP responds to over 2,000 telephone inquiries and more than 90,000 email or facsimile inquiries from the federal government, state agencies, domestic and foreign agencies, foreign governments and the general public. Cutting-edge research by MRP scientists investigates the role of microbes in the geochemical cycles of arsenic, mercury, lead and zinc to understand the transport and accumulation of health-threatening toxins related to these elements and to distinguish their natural or anthropogenic sources. MRP scientists also investigated and prepared a report on the asbestos-bearing debris in the aftermath of the World Trade Center disaster. The Global Mineral Resource Assessment Project of the MRP provides unbiased and timely information about the current and future availability of mineral resources around the world, which is needed to understand and anticipate economic, health, environmental and political factors that will affect how these resources are used in this increasingly interconnected world.

The data and analyses of the MRP are used by the Department of the Interior, Department of Defense, the Central Intelligence Agency, the Department of State, the Federal Reserve, other federal, state and local government entities, foreign governments, private companies and the general public. Analyses based on the MRP data are essential for guiding economic and environmental policy and for providing options for land use decisions posed by industry, government and private land owners. We urge the Subcommittee to restore the Mineral Resources Program to its fiscal year 2005 level of $54 million so that it may perform its core missions effectively and efficiently.

National Cooperative Geologic Mapping Program.—AGI is encouraged by the Administration's continued requests for small annual increases for the National Cooperative Geologic Mapping Program (the fiscal year 2007 request is for $25.4 million) and values Congress' past support for much larger increases. This important partnership between the USGS, state geological surveys, and universities provides the nation with fundamental data for addressing natural hazard mitigation, environmental remediation, land-use planning, and resource development. The program was authorized (Public Law 106–148) to grow by about 10 percent to 20 percent per year from a starting level of $28 million in 1999 to $64 million in 2005. Re-authorization at $64 million per year over the next 5 years is currently being considered in Congress. AGI strongly supports the increased funding being considered by Congress because the program provides a timely basis for assessing water availability and quality, risks from hazards and other major land and resource-use issues that are of increasing prominence in many states.

Natural Hazards.—A key role for the USGS is providing the research, monitoring, and assessment that are critically needed to better prepare for and respond to natural hazards. The tragic earthquake/tsunami in the Indian Ocean, hurricanes

Katrina and Rita striking the Gulf Coast and the massive earthquake in Pakistan, remind us of the need for preparation, education, mitigation and rapid response to natural hazards. A 2006 National Academies report entitled Improved Seismic Monitoring estimates that increased seismic monitoring leads to increased future savings from the damaging effects of potential earthquakes. Given recent events and this timely report, AGI strongly supports the Administration's request for increased funding for Earthquake, Volcano and Landslide Hazards and appreciates Congress' past support for these programs. With great forethought, the Earthquake Hazards Reduction Authorization Act of 1999 called for a significant federal investment in expansion and modernization of existing seismic networks and for the development of the Advanced National Seismic System (ANSS)—a nationwide network of shaking measurement systems focused on urban areas. ANSS can provide real-time earthquake information to emergency responders as well as building and ground shaking data for engineers and scientists seeking to understand earthquake processes. ANSS has been allocated about 10 percent of its authorized funding level per year, which is not nearly enough to deploy the 7,000 instruments called for in the law. Currently, 66 are operating and there is much more work that needs congressional support. We would like to commend the Subcommittee for your leadership in securing previous increases for ANSS and ask for additional increases in fiscal year 2007. The National Earthquake Hazards Reduction Program (NEHRP) was reauthorized in October, 2004 and AGI supports the appropriation of full funding for this vital program. We hope that all of these under funded systems will receive additional support to meet their timely goals of better protection and mitigation of earthquake hazards long before we need to react.

Water Programs.—The president's request calls for the termination of the Water Resources Research Institutes. AGI strongly encourages the Subcommittee to oppose these reductions and to fully support this program at its small, but effective fiscal year 2005 level of $6.4 million. AGI is pleased that the Administration supports increased funding for stream gages and the National Streamflow Information program.

Homeland Security.—Another troubling aspect of the President's request is the lack of funding for the USGS activities in support of homeland security and the war on terrorism overseas. All four disciplines within the Survey have made and continue to make significant contributions to these efforts, but the fiscal year 2007 request does not provide any direct funding. Instead, those costs must be absorbed in addition to the proposed cuts. AGI encourages the Subcommittee to recognize the Survey's important role in homeland security and ensure adequate support for its newfound responsibilities.

SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION

The Smithsonian's National Museum of Natural History plays a dual role in communicating the excitement of the geosciences and enhancing knowledge through research and preservation of geoscience collections. AGI asks the Subcommittee to build up Smithsonian research with steady increases that are a tiny fraction of the overall budget, but would dramatically improve the facilities and their benefit to the country. We support the Administration's request for increased funding for the Smithsonian in fiscal year 2007.

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

The national parks are very important to the geoscience community as unique national treasures that showcase the geologic splendor of our country and offer unparalleled opportunities for both geoscientific research and education of our fellow citizens. The National Park Services's Geologic Resources Division was established in 1995 to provide park managers with geologic expertise. Working in conjunction with USGS and other partners, the division helps ensure that geoscientists are becoming part of an integrated approach to science-based resource management in parks. AGI would like to see additional support for geological staff positions to adequately address the treasured geologic resources in the national parks.

Thank you for the opportunity to present this testimony to the Subcommittee. If you would like any additional information for the record, please contact me at 703–379–2480, ext. 228 voice, 703–379–7563 fax, rowan@agiweb.org, or 4220 King Street, Alexandria VA 22302–1502.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE AMERICAN HIKING SOCIETY

Mr. Chairman and members of the Subcommittee, American Hiking Society is the only national nonprofit organization that promotes and protects foot trails and the hiking experience. With a strong membership base of individual hikers and hiking clubs, American Hiking represents half a million outdoors people and serves as the voice of the American hiker. We appreciate the Subcommittee's past support for trails and recreation and urge you to support strong funding that will keep our trails open, safe, and enjoyable today and for future generations. American Hiking makes the following trail and recreation funding recommendations for fiscal year 2007:

National Park Service

Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance program: $10.1 million
National Trails System: $10.68 million, plus $1.25 million for GIS Network
Challenge Cost-Share Program: $4.5 million Traditional CCSP (one-third of $4.5 million for National Trails System), plus $2.5 million for Lewis & Clark Bicentennial

USDA Forest Service

Recreation Management, Heritage and Wilderness: $275 million
Capital Improvement and Maintenance—Trails: $90 million

Bureau of Land Management

Recreation and Wilderness Management: $70 million
National Landscape Conservation System: $46 million

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

National Wildlife Refuge System: $417.5 million

Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF)

Stateside LWCF: $100 million
Federal LWCF: $220 million, including $23.7 million for National Scenic and Historic Trails, as follows: Appalachian NST: $5.6 million (Forest Service); Continental Divide NST: $1.4 million (BLM); Ice Age NST: $4 million (NPS); Florida NST: $5 million (Forest Service); Pacific Crest NST: $5.25 million (Forest Service), $1.5 million (BLM); Overmountain Victory NHT: $195,000 (Forest Service); Oregon NHT: $1 million (BLM).

FISCAL YEAR 207 TRAIL & RECREATION FUNDING PRIORITIES

Our nation's trails provide unparalleled opportunities for hiking and other outdoor recreation activities, enjoyment and appreciation of natural and cultural resources, healthy physical activities, alternatives for transportation, and economic development for local communities. Recreation has increased dramatically in importance for the American people, yet the federal investment for trails, recreation, and land conservation has not increased accordingly. This lag has resulted in high maintenance backlogs, deteriorating infrastructure, loss of open space, and negative impacts to resources.

NPS, Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance Program (RTCA): $10.1 million

The RTCA program is a technical assistance program that implements the natural resource conservation and outdoor recreation mission of the NPS. RTCA yields enormous conservation and recreation benefits to communities by fostering partnerships between federal, state, and local interests. The resulting cooperative efforts restore rivers and wildlife habitat, develop trail and greenway networks, preserve open space, and revitalize communities—all contributing to improved quality of life and close-to-home recreation. On average, the program partners protect nearly 700 miles of rivers, create more than 1,300 miles of trails, and conserve more than 61,000 acres of open space each year. RTCA is a very successful and popular program, but its funding has remained relatively flat during the last decade and lagged well behind the rate of inflation. The program's declining real budget has resulted in significant cuts to staff and reduced staff participation in on-the-ground projects. RTCA requires at least a $2 million increase to remedy the program's continued erosion, compensate for losses due to inflation, and enable the program to respond to growing needs and opportunities in communities throughout the country.

NPS, National Trails System: $10.68 million, plus $1.25 million for GIS network

The NPS administers eighteen of the twenty-four National Scenic and Historic Trails. For most of these trails, barely one-half of their congressionally authorized length and resources are protected and available for public use. A minimum of

$10.68 million in fiscal year 2007 is crucial for resource protection, trail maintenance, interpretation, and volunteer coordination and support. In addition, NPS requires $1.25 million to continue work on a Geographic Information System network for the National Trails System. American Hiking thanks the Subcommittee for its support of the National Trails System and urges you to increase funding to help complete and protect these national treasures. American Hiking Society endorses the specific funding requests submitted by the Partnership for the National Trails System.

USDA Forest Service, Recreation Management, Heritage and Wilderness: $275 million

Although recreation makes up the greatest use of National Forest System lands and the largest share (60 percent) of the Forest Service's contribution to the Gross Domestic Product, recreation remains woefully underfunded and understaffed. Only about 10 percent of the Forest Service budget is dedicated to recreation. The Forest Service requires increased funding for recreation management and wilderness to protect critical resources; upgrade recreation facilities; reduce the $200+ million deferred maintenance backlog; augment on-the-ground recreation staff; improve recreation resource analyses and planning; and more effectively utilize partnerships and volunteers. The President's fiscal year 2007 proposed funding level, excluding any cost of living increases or inflationary pressures, would result in a program reduction of $14.3 million from fiscal year 2006.

Forest Service, Capital Improvement and Maintenance—Trails: $90 million

The Forest Service manages 133,000 miles of trails and requires increased funding to restore and maintain these thousands of trail miles; reduce the $99 million trails maintenance backlog and address the $99.2 million capital improvement construction needs for trails; improve trail infrastructure; prevent and mitigate resource impacts; and provide safe, high-quality recreational experiences for millions of hikers and other trail enthusiasts. The President's fiscal year 2007 proposed funding level, excluding any cost of living increases or inflationary pressures, would result in a program reduction of $15.6 million from fiscal year 2006. We request $11.48 million as a separate budgetary item in addition to the Administration's request specifically for the Continental Divide, Florida, and Pacific Crest National Scenic Trails and the Nez Perce National Historic Trail as outlined by the Partnership for the National Trails System.

BLM, Recreation Management: $70 million

The BLM supports a broad range of recreational opportunities within its multiple use mission yet continues to receive very limited funding for recreation. BLM is focusing on a comprehensive travel management approach to managing roads and trails, providing adequate and appropriate public access, and has generated many collaborative partnerships for trails. However, the BLM faces daunting challenges with a growing deferred maintenance backlog for upkeep of more than 15,500 miles of trails. BLM is also facing critical inventory, planning and management challenges as it manages a staggering network of an estimated 600,000 miles of roads, trails, routes and ways available for public use—with 80,000 miles maintained and signed. Increased funding will support the development of travel management plans, interpretation projects, stewardship education, outreach projects, expansion of partnerships, and the protection of natural and cultural resources impacted by increased recreational use.

BLM, National Landscape Conservation System (NLCS): $46 million

Basic Operations and Maintenance, Law Enforcement, Resource Monitoring, and Cultural Resource Protection: We urge the subcommittee to increase the Administration's fiscal year 2007 budget for the NLCS by $11.3 million, for operations and maintenance, to provide a total of at least $46 million to conserve the unique National Monuments, Conservation Areas, Trails, Rivers, Wilderness, and Wilderness Study Areas that comprise the 26 million-acre System. This would restore funding levels to those proposed by the President in fiscal year 2006. Priority unmet needs include law enforcement, resource monitoring, and cultural resource protection. Adequate funding for fiscal year 2007 is critical, as the BLM will need to implement numerous Resource Management Plans for areas in the System. We also ask the committee to support any member requests for additional funding for NLCS units in their districts. American Hiking endorses the specific funding requests for National Scenic and Historic Trails submitted by the Partnership for the National Trails System.

Crucial Acquisitions.—We urge the committee to add $5.1 million to purchase inholdings and lands adjacent to NLCS areas that are threatened by development,

including Colorado's Canyons of the Ancients National Monument and McInnis Canyons NCA, California's Carrizo Plain National Monument, the Pacific Crest Trail and Cascade-Siskiyou National Monument in Oregon, and the Continental Divide Trail in New Mexico.

Accountability and Transparency.—We urge the committee to promote greater transparency through budgeting and reporting. Congress should require BLM to provide a cross-cut budget for NLCS that includes subactivity accounts, similar to that published in the fiscal year 2002 DOI budget, which clearly listed funding for specific activities within specific NLCS units. The BLM's recent National Scenic and Historic Trails Strategy and Work Plan recognized the ". . . need for a subactivity account . . ." by emphasizing that ". . . In order to ensure adequate funding to properly protect congressionally recognized national trail resources and monitor success, this objective eliminates conflict of purpose and will provide a mechanism to improve funding and identify and track use of designated funds." To help Congress and the public understand the needs of the NLCS and how funds were spent, Congress should require BLM to provide expenditure and accomplishment reports on NLCS areas, like Monuments, Conservation Areas and National Scenic and Historic Trails, starting with reports for fiscal year 2006.

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, National Wildlife Refuge System (NWRS): $417.5 million

The NWRS protects countless species of wildlife, fish, plants, and critical habitat, provides recreational opportunities for nearly 40 million visitors annually, and continues to face significant budget shortfalls. The operations and maintenance backlog for the system totals about $2.7 billion. Approximately 200 refuges do not have any staff. A minimum increase of $16 million above the fiscal year 2006 appropriation is necessary to prevent "no net loss" for the system, meet cost of living increases and inflationary pressures, and keep refuges from cutting public use programs. The NWRS uses its approximately 2,500 miles of land and water trails to deliver its congressionally determined six priority wildlife dependent recreation activities.

Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF): $100 million Stateside; $220 million Federal

The LWCF helps create parks, protect trails and open spaces, preserve wilderness and wildlife habitat, and enhance recreational opportunities. While LWCF funds have been cut severely, the need for open space and recreation has soared. LWCF has helped create parks for people to enjoy in 98 percent of counties in America and has provided protection for more than five million acres of land and water areas across the country. Authorized at $900 million annually, LWCF is one of the most important conservation tools ever designed and is critical to the future protection of national trails. We strongly oppose the Administration's recommendation to terminate the stateside LWCF program.

American Hiking is joined by many Representatives and Senators of both parties in strongly opposing the Administration's proposal to raise $800 million to help fund rural roads and schools by selling off national forests and other public lands, our nation's pride and legacy.

CONCLUSION

Volunteer contributions are essential to trails and recreation programs, and American Hiking and its members and partners contribute hundreds of thousands of hours worth millions in labor, to help maintain our nation's trails. However, an increase in volunteerism on public lands must not be perceived as a panacea to agency budget constraints. American Hiking is coordinating more than 100 week-long Volunteer Vacation trail maintenance trips in 2006 on our treasured national parks, forests, and other public lands. On June 3, 2006, American Hiking will coordinate the fourteenth National Trails Day (NTD) to raise public awareness and appreciation for trails, with more than one thousand NTD events nationwide to celebrate and maintain trails. American Hiking Society members and outdoorspeople nationwide appreciate the Subcommittee's support for trail and recreation in the past and look forward to continued strong support. Thank you for considering our request.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE AMERICAN HIKING SOCIETY

I am writing on behalf of American Hiking Society to urge your support for trails, recreation, and land conservation in the fiscal year 2007 Interior Appropriations bill. We are very concerned about some of the deep cuts for trail and recreation programs

proposed in the Administration's fiscal year 2007 budget request. Increased funding is crucial to keeping our trails open, safe, and enjoyable today and for future generations. We respectfully request the following funding levels in fiscal year 2007:

—$10.1 million for the National Park Service's (NPS) Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance program to help communities manage and protect their recreational and natural resources. Ongoing funding shortages continue to erode RTCA's real budget and reduce essential services of this excellent federal technical assistance program.

—$10.5 million for the 18 national scenic and historic trails administered by the NPS; plus $1.25 million for a Geographic Information System network for the national trails.

—$275 million for USDA Forest Service Recreation Management, Heritage, and Wilderness, and $90 million for Capital Improvement and Maintenance for Trails to protect resources, reduce the maintenance backlog, augment on-the-ground recreation staff, leverage volunteers, and maintain trails. These two programs each face about a $15 million cut in the Administration's request, which would adversely affect critical trail and recreation needs across the country.

—$70 million for Bureau of Land Management Recreation and Wilderness Management and an $11.3 million increase for the National Landscape Conservation System to manage rapidly expanding recreational use while protecting natural and cultural resources. We urge the Interior Appropriations Subcommittee to establish high standards for accountability and transparency in the BLM's budget.

—$220 million for the Federal side of the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF); $100 million for Stateside LWCF. We vigorously oppose the Administration's recommendation to terminate the state assistance program, a vital tool that provides close-to-home recreational opportunities for all Americans.

In addition, we strongly oppose the Administration's proposal to help fund rural roads and schools by selling off national forests and other public lands, our nation's pride and legacy.

American Hiking Society is a national organization that promotes and protects foot trails and the hiking experience. Thank you for your support and considering this request.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF BIOLOGICAL SCIENCES

The American Institute of Biological Sciences requests that Congress provide the United States Geological Survey (USGS) with $1.2 billion in fiscal year 2007, with at least $200 million for the Biological Resources Discipline.

The funding we request would restore proposed cuts to important science programs, provide a modest but needed inflation adjustment, and implement important science and information dissemination initiatives. This funding would also help USGS address the cost of maintaining research infrastructure.

The USGS provides independent research, data, and assessments needed by public and private sector decision-makers. The Survey's unique combination of biological, geographical, geological and hydrological research programs enable USGS scientists to utilize innovative interdisciplinary research techniques to answer important questions.

USGS scientists do not work in isolation. Through offices located in every state and partnerships with more than 2,000 federal, state, local, tribal, and private organizations, the USGS has built the capacity to leverage additional research expertise. For example, through the Cooperative Research Units program USGS scientists are stationed on university campuses. This proximity to academic researchers brings additional intellectual and technical resources to work on the biological, ecological, and natural resource questions USGS seeks to answer. The value of Cooperative Research Units extends beyond their immediate research productivity, however. Cooperative Research Units are a vital component of our nation's education and training infrastructure. These research units enable future natural resource professionals to gain the skills and experience government agencies need. Furthermore, Cooperative Research Units are one of USGS' mechanisms for providing data and technical assistance to local, state, and national decision-makers.

Natural resource managers require reliable, relevant, and timely information. The Biological Informatics Program develops and applies innovative technologies and practices to the management of biological data, information, and knowledge. Increased funding for the USGS would enable the Biological Informatics Program to continue on-going activities and begin to implement initiatives the resource manage-

ment and research communities have identified as priorities. For instance, new nodes could be added to the National Biological Information Infrastructure program.

The NatureServe program provides the scientific basis for wise natural resources management. Together with its network of sate Natural Heritage programs, NatureServe provides valuable information about rare species and threatened ecosystems to numerous federal and state agencies to help them make informed natural resource management decisions. The proposed $1.0 million investment in ensuring the quality and consistency of this national data resource is estimated to leverage $40 million nationwide, primarily from state and private sources.

USGS biological research programs gather important data and information that academic, private sector, or other government scientists do not or cannot collect. For instance, a clear national priority is the prevention and mitigation of economic losses from non-native species invading new environments. USGS research helps guide our understanding of how these invasive species, such as the zebra mussel, snakehead fish, and tamarisk, colonize new environments. Decision-makers, whether a private land owner or a resource manager working for a government agency, utilize USGS science to develop action plans to combat invasive species.

USGS biologists conduct impartial research that makes it possible to assess the vitality of waterfowl, songbirds, large mammals, terrestrial plants, amphibians, and their habitats. These data subsequently inform state and federal agency conservation planning and management. As an example, USGS research allows scientists to assess the vitality of bird populations, determine habitat requirements, and map migration routes. This information is increasingly important to public health officials concerned with the potential spread of diseases that may be transmitted from wild animals to humans or domesticated animals. Indeed, included in the President's fiscal year 2007 budget request is $3.2 million for surveillance of migratory waterfowl for avian flu.

The fiscal year 2007 budget request does not fully fund "fixed" cost increases. We encourage the committee to fully fund these expenses. Without full funding for these costs, USGS science programs would likely be forced to reprogram funds that would otherwise support important research.

An fiscal year 2007 appropriation of $1.2 billion for the USGS and at least $200 million for the Biological Resources Discipline would enable the USGS to: maintain current research efforts; restore $7.3 million in proposed terminations of on-going research; provide at least a $1.5 million increase to the Cooperative Research Units program; provide $1.0 million for the NatureServe program; provide funding for fixed cost increases; provide $3.2 million to support surveillance of waterfowl for avian flu; support for a new USGS-wide natural hazards initiative; and, provide a modest inflation adjustment.

Thank you for your thoughtful consideration of this request. If you require additional information, please contact Robert Gropp at 202–628–1500.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF HYDROLOGY; AMERICAN RIVERS; AMERICAN SOCIETY OF AGRONOMY; AMERICAN WATER WORKS ASSOCIATION; ASSOCIATION OF AMERICAN STATE GEOLOGISTS; ASSOCIATION OF METROPOLITAN WATER AGENCIES; ASSOCIATION OF STATE AND INTERSTATE WATER; POLLUTION CONTROL ADMINISTRATORS; CLEAN WATER ACTION; CROP SCIENCE SOCIETY OF AMERICA; THE GROUNDWATER FOUNDATION; THE H. JOHN HEINZ III CENTER FOR SCIENCE, ECONOMIC AND THE ENVIRONMENT; NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF CLEAN WATER AGENCIES; NATURAL RESOURCES DEFENSE COUNCIL; THE NATIONAL GROUND WATER ASSOCIATION; SIERRA CLUB; SOIL SCIENCE SOCIETY OF AMERICA; AND WATER ENVIRONMENT FEDERATION

We are writing to urge you to provide increased funding for the National Water Quality Assessment Program (NAWQA) and the Ground-Water Resources Program within the budget for the U.S. Geological Survey in the fiscal year 2007 Interior, Environment and Related Agencies Appropriations Bill. Specifically, we urge that you provide $70 million for the NAWQA program and $8.5 million for the Ground-Water Resources Program. These amounts would enable both programs to maintain program capabilities while meeting cost increases due to inflation.

One of the most important challenges we face as a Nation in the coming decades is the management of water resources to provide sufficient quantities of clean and safe water to meet the needs of our growing population, agricultural and industrial demand, and environmental and recreational needs. Two programs within the U.S. Geological Survey conduct basic scientific research on critical surface and ground water resources to assist policy-makers in making informed resource allocations decisions.

NAWQA was established to provide consistent and comparable information across the nation on water-quality conditions and ecosystem health, and the Ground-Water Resources Program was established to assess the availability of ground-water resources at the regional and national scale. Both programs are the only non-regulatory federal programs that conduct long-term, scientifically-based monitoring of our nation's streams and ground water to support sound management and policy decisions relating to our water resources.

While a number of state and federal programs conduct water resources monitoring, these two programs are the primary sources for long-term, nationwide information on the quality of streams and aquatic ecosystems, and the availability of ground water resources.

The general public as well as local, state, and federal water quality officials charged with managing our water resources rely on NAWQA and the Ground-Water Resources Program and the information they provide.

For example, a 1993 NAWQA study near Denver uncovered the existence of MTBE in ground water which alerted the public and health professionals to unintended consequences of a compound designed to enable gasoline to burn cleaner. In 2005, NAWQA studies conducted in Austin, Texas uncovered a direct link between increased mortality of aquatic life and contaminated storm water run-off caused by polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAH) found in parking lot and driveway pavement sealants. During drought conditions, the Ground-Water Resources Program provides real-time ground-water measurements to USGS databases for display on the Internet for water managers and the general public.

In 2005, the Government Accountability Office (GAO) issued a report examining twenty federal data collection programs that assemble and analyze quantitative measures of the nation's environmental conditions and trends. The report examined whether funding issues or other factors will affect the ability of these programs to continue to generate data comparable to data from past years. GAO found that of the twenty programs examined, only two programs were in jeopardy of continuing to generate quality data, including NAWQA. GAO found that NAWQA's ability to continue providing comparable data has been significantly diminished due to funding constraints.

Congress provided slight increases in funding for both these programs in the fiscal year 2006 appropriations cycle; however, the fiscal year 2007 Budget request proposes a reduction for the Ground-Water Resources Program and a slight increase of approximately $300,000 for NAWQA. If these budget requests were to be accepted, both programs will be required to curtail their research programs. Already, static funding for NAWQA has required it to reduce the number of water study units from sixty to forty-two. And, within these study regions, the impacts of the reductions were amplified by a reduction in the number of stream networks targeted for continuous monitoring from 492 stream sites to just 84.

Insufficient funding for these two programs is severely hampering their ability to fulfill their missions and to effectively assist water managers and policy makers at all levels of government. Furthermore, there is an opportunity to develop a stronger cooperative program with existing state ground water research agencies with additional federal funding to these programs. We urge you to support $70 million for NAWQA and $8.5 million for the Ground-Water Resources Program in the fiscal year 2007 Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Appropriations Bill so that critical water monitoring data will continue to be available.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF BIOLOGICAL SCIENCES

The American Institute of Biological Sciences requests that Congress provide the United States Geological Survey (USGS) with $1.2 billion in fiscal year 2007, with at least $200 million for the Biological Resources Discipline.

The funding we request would restore proposed cuts to important science programs, provide a modest but needed inflation adjustment, and implement important science and information dissemination initiatives. This funding would also help USGS address the cost of maintaining research infrastructure.

The USGS provides independent research, data, and assessments needed by public and private sector decision-makers. The Survey's unique combination of biological, geographical, geological and hydrological research programs enable USGS scientists to utilize innovative interdisciplinary research techniques to answer important questions.

USGS scientists do not work in isolation. Through offices located in every state and partnerships with more than 2,000 federal, state, local, tribal, and private organizations, the USGS has built the capacity to leverage additional research expertise.

For example, through the Cooperative Research Units program USGS scientists are stationed on university campuses. This proximity to academic researchers brings additional intellectual and technical resources to work on the biological, ecological, and natural resource questions USGS seeks to answer. The value of Cooperative Research Units extends beyond their immediate research productivity, however. Cooperative Research Units are a vital component of our nation's education and training infrastructure. These research units enable future natural resource professionals to gain the skills and experience government agencies need. Furthermore, Cooperative Research Units are one of USGS' mechanisms for providing data and technical assistance to local, state, and national decision-makers.

Natural resource managers require reliable, relevant, and timely information. The Biological Informatics Program develops and applies innovative technologies and practices to the management of biological data, information, and knowledge. Increased funding for the USGS would enable the Biological Informatics Program to continue on-going activities and begin to implement initiatives the resource management and research communities have identified as priorities. For instance, new nodes could be added to the National Biological Information Infrastructure program.

The NatureServe program provides the scientific basis for wise natural resources management. Together with its network of sate Natural Heritage programs, NatureServe provides valuable information about rare species and threatened ecosystems to numerous federal and state agencies to help them make informed natural resource management decisions. The proposed $1.0 million investment in ensuring the quality and consistency of this national data resource is estimated to leverage $40 million nationwide, primarily from state and private sources.

USGS biological research programs gather important data and information that academic, private sector, or other government scientists do not or can not collect. For instance, a clear national priority is the prevention and mitigation of economic losses from non-native species invading new environments. USGS research helps guide our understanding of how these invasive species, such as the zebra mussel, snakehead fish, and tamarisk, colonize new environments. Decision-makers, whether a private land owner or a resource manager working for a government agency, utilize USGS science to develop action plans to combat invasive species.

USGS biologists conduct impartial research that makes it possible to assess the vitality of waterfowl, songbirds, large mammals, terrestrial plants, amphibians, and their habitats. These data subsequently inform state and federal agency conservation planning and management. As an example, USGS research allows scientists to assess the vitality of bird populations, determine habitat requirements, and map migration routes. This information is increasingly important to public health officials concerned with the potential spread of diseases that may be transmitted from wild animals to humans or domesticated animals. Indeed, included in the President's fiscal year 2007 budget request is $3.2 million for surveillance of migratory waterfowl for avian flu.

The fiscal year 2007 budget request does not fully fund "fixed" cost increases. We encourage the committee to fully fund these expenses. Without full funding for these costs, USGS science programs would likely be forced to reprogram funds that would otherwise support important research.

An fiscal year 2007 appropriation of $1.2 billion for the USGS and at least $200 million for the Biological Resources Discipline would enable the USGS to: maintain current research efforts; restore $7.3 million in proposed terminations of on-going research; provide at least a $1.5 million increase to the Cooperative Research Units program; provide $1.0 million for the NatureServe program; provide funding for fixed cost increases; provide $3.2 million to support surveillance of waterfowl for avian flu; support for a new USGS-wide natural hazards initiative; and, provide a modest inflation adjustment.

Thank you for your thoughtful consideration of this request. If you require additional information, please contact Robert Gropp at 202–628–1500.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE AMERICAN INDIAN HIGHER EDUCATION CONSORTIUM

REQUEST SUMMARY

On behalf of the nation's 36 Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCUs), which comprise the American Indian Higher Education Consortium (AIHEC), thank you for this opportunity to present our fiscal year 2007 Appropriations recommendations for the 26 colleges funded under the Tribally Controlled College or University Assistance Act (Tribal College Act), our two tribally controlled postsecondary vocational institutions, the two Bureau of Indian Affairs postsecondary institutions, and the In-

stitute of American Indian Arts. The U.S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Indian Affairs, administers all these programs, save for the Institute of American Indian Arts, which is funded directly by the Interior Department. While AIHEC ultimately seeks full funding for all programs authorized under the Tribal College Act, we recognize that a focused approach with incremental increases is a realistic way to meet that goal. In fiscal year 2007, we seek a total of $69.4 million for Tribal College Act programs. Our first priority within this request is to increase funding for the day-to-day operations of institutions funded under Titles I & II of the Act. Specifically, we request $66.9 million; of which, $49.2 million would be for Title I grants (funding 25 TCUs) and $17.7 to fund Title II (Diné College). This request is an increase of $7 million for Title I grants and a $6.3 million increase for Diné College over fiscal year 2006 levels and a total of $12.7 million over the President's fiscal year 2007 budget request for institutional operations funding. Additionally, we seek $500,000 for the technical assistance contract under section 105 of the Act, the same amount as appropriated in fiscal year 2006. These funds will help address continually emerging technical assistance needs and to gather and analyze data necessary to comply with the Congressional request to provide added information on TCUs. Additionally, $2 million is requested for endowments under Title III of the Act. Lastly, we support $4.5 million for United Tribes Technical College; and $2.5 million for Crownpoint Institute of Technology; the latest budget once again recommends eliminating Interior Department funding for these two tribally controlled postsecondary vocational institutions.

AIHEC's membership also includes three other TCUs funded under separate authorities within Interior Appropriations, namely: Haskell Indian Nations University; Southwestern Indian Polytechnic Institute; and The Institute of American Indian Arts. AIHEC supports the independently submitted requests for funding the institutional operations of these institutions.

BACKGROUND AND FUNDING DISPARITIES

In 1972, six tribally controlled colleges established AIHEC to provide a support network for member institutions. Today, AIHEC represents 35 Tribal Colleges and Universities in 13 states, created specifically to serve the higher education needs of American Indians. Annually, they serve approximately 30,000 full- and part-time students from over 250 Federally recognized tribes.

The vast majority of TCUs is accredited by regional accreditation agencies and like all institutions of higher education, must undergo stringent performance reviews on a periodic basis to retain their accreditation status. In addition to college level programming, TCUs provide much needed high school completion (GED), basic remediation, job training, college preparatory courses, and adult basic education. Tribal colleges fulfill additional roles within their respective communities functioning as community centers, libraries, tribal archives, career and business centers, economic development centers, public meeting places, and childcare centers. An underlying goal of TCUs is to improve the lives of students through higher education and to move American Indians toward self sufficiency.

Title I of the Tribal College Act authorizes funding for the basic institutional operating budget of one qualifying institution per Federally recognized tribe based on a full time American Indian student enrollment formula. The Tribal College Act was first funded in 1981. Today, 25 years later and notwithstanding an increase of $2.5 million in fiscal year 2006, these colleges are operating at $4,563 per full-time Indian student count (ISC), approximately 75 percent of their authorized level of $6,000 per ISC. If the TCUs were to be fully funded at $6,000 per ISC today, when you consider inflation, they would not even have the same buying power as their initial fiscal year 1981 appropriations, which was $2,831 per ISC. While the other TCUs funding is not enrollment driven and therefore the disparity of funding is not as easily illustrated, they too suffer from a lack of adequate operating funds. This is not simply a matter of appropriations falling short of an authorization; it effectively impedes our institutions from having the necessary resources to grow their programs in response to the changing needs of their students and the communities they serve.

JUSTIFICATIONS

(a) Tribal colleges provide critical access to vital postsecondary education opportunities.—TCU reservations are located in remote areas, and their populations are among the poorest in the nation. On average, median household income levels are only about half of the level for the U.S. population as a whole. As a result, the cost of attending a mainstream institution, which for many reservation communities is

several hours away, is prohibitively high, especially when tuition, travel, housing, textbooks, and other expenses are considered.

(b) Tribal colleges are producing a new generation of highly trained American Indians as teachers, tribal government leaders, engineers, nurses, computer programmers, and other much-needed professionals.—By teaching the job skills most in demand on their reservations, TCUs are laying a solid foundation for tribal economic growth, with benefits for surrounding communities. In contrast to the high rates of unemployment on reservations, graduates of TCUs are employed in "high need" occupational areas such as Head Start teachers, elementary and secondary school teachers, and nurses/health care providers. Just as important, the overwhelming majority of tribal college graduates remain in their tribal communities, applying their newly acquired skills and knowledge where they are most needed. One-half of the faculty and staff of Little Big Horn College in Crow Agency, Montana are graduates of the college.

(c) Tribal colleges meet the strict standards of mainstream accreditation boards and offer top quality academic programs.—Several TCUs have attained a ten year accreditation term, the longest term granted to any higher education institution. The quality of the colleges' programs is reflected in the high rates of satisfaction reported by their graduates: Over 90 percent of TCU graduates surveyed reported being very satisfied or satisfied with courses in their major field of study and with overall instruction.

(d) Tribal college attendance increases educational success and serves as highly effective bridges to four year postsecondary institutions.—While most TCUs are two year institutions offering certificates and associate degrees, their transfer function is significant. A survey of TCU graduates conducted by Harder+Company Community Research, San Francisco, CA for the American Indian College Fund, indicated that more than 80 percent of respondents who attended a mainstream college prior to enrolling at a tribal college did not finish the degree they were pursuing at the mainstream college. The rate of completion markedly improved for those who attended a tribal college prior to pursuing a degree at a mainstream institution. After completing tribal college coursework, less than half of respondents dropped out of mainstream college, and nearly 40 percent went on to obtain a bachelor's degree. This suggests TCUs may have a profound impact on the persistence of American Indian students in pursuit of baccalaureate degrees. The overwhelming majority of respondents felt that their tribal college experience had prepared them well for further education and noted that it had a very positive impact on their personal and professional achievements.

SOME ADDITIONAL FACTS

(a) Enrollment Gains & New TCUs.—Compounding existing funding disparities is the fact that although the numbers of TCUs and students enrolled in them have dramatically increased since 1981, appropriations have increased at a disproportionately low rate. Since they were first funded, the number of colleges has quadrupled and Indian student enrollments have risen a remarkable 333 percent. In fiscal year 2005, two newly established TCUs, Saginaw Chippewa Tribal College (Michigan) and Tohono O'odham Community College (Arizona) became eligible to receive funds under the Tribal College Act. White Earth Tribal and Community College (Minnesota) is expected to become eligible for funding in fiscal year 2007. TCUs are in many ways victims of their own successes. The dramatic enrollment increases, coupled with a growing number of tribally chartered colleges, have forced TCUs to slice an already inadequate pie into even smaller pieces. Our fiscal year 2007 recommendation would fund institutional operations at Title I colleges at approximately $5,400 per ISC, which is still short of the original funding level as appropriations have not even kept up with inflation.

(b) The Absence of State Funds for Institutional Operations.—While mainstream institutions have enjoyed a foundation of long-term stable state support, TCUs must rely on the Federal government for their operating funds. Because TCUs are located on Federal trust lands, states have no obligation to fund them even for the non-Indian state-resident students who account for approximately 20 percent of TCU enrollments. Yet, if these same students attended any other public institution in the state, the state would contribute basic operating funds to the institution.

(c) Local Tax and Revenue Bases.—TCUs cannot rely on local tax base revenue. Although tribes have the sovereign authority to tax, high reservation poverty rates, the trust status of reservation lands, and the lack of strong reservation economies hinder the creation of a reservation tax base. On reservations where tribal colleges are located, the unemployment rate can exceed 60 percent. In comparison, the national unemployment rate for February 2006 is 4.8 percent.

(d) Trust Responsibility.—The emergence of tribal colleges is a direct result of the special relationship between American Indian tribes and the Federal government. TCUs are founded and chartered by their respective American Indian tribes, which hold a special legal relationship with the Federal government, actualized by more than 400 treaties, several Supreme Court decisions, prior Congressional action, and the ceding of more than one billion acres of land to the Federal government. Beyond the trust responsibility, the fact remains that TCUs are providing a public service that no other institutions of higher education are willing, or able, to provide by helping the Federal government fulfill its responsibility to the American people, particularly in rural America. Despite the fact that only students that are enrolled members of a Federally recognized Indian tribe are counted when determining the level of operating funds, TCUs have open enrollment policies and do not discriminate based on race or ethnicity. They are simply and effectively removing barriers that have long prevented equal access to higher education for reservation community residents.

THE PRESIDENT'S BUDGET REQUEST FOR FISCAL YEAR 2007

For the past several years the annual Federal budget has recommended deep cuts in TCU operations, in fiscal year 2006 the budget recommended an 18 percent cut. The President's fiscal year 2007 budget includes $54.3 million for institutional operations of 26 TCUs, which indicating a change in this trend. Each year Congress has restored the recommended cuts and even included some increase to the TCUs' operating grants. Over the past few years several new TCUs have become eligible for funding under the Tribal College Act. However, the lack of basic operating funds caused financial difficulties that two long standing colleges were not able to overcome. Unfortunately, D–Q University in California and Si Tanka University in South Dakota, which were chartered in 1971 and 1974 respectively, are now closing their doors. We are hopeful that Congress will build on the President's fiscal year 2007 budget recommendation so that tribal colleges might realize a true increase in the funding available for basic operations.

AIHEC'S APPROPRIATIONS RECOMMENDATION FOR FISCAL YEAR 2007

We respectfully request a total appropriation of $69.4 million for the programs authorized under the Tribal College Act. Our first priority within this request is to increase funding for the day-to-day operations of institutions funded under Titles I & II of the Act. Specifically, we request $66.9 million; of which, $49.2 million would be for Title I grants (funding 25 TCUs) and $17.7 to fund Title II (Diné College). This request is an increase of $7 million for Title I grants and a $6.3 million increase for Diné College over fiscal year 2006 levels and a total of $12.7 million over the President's fiscal year 2007 budget request for institutional operations funding. Additionally, we seek $500,000 for the technical assistance contract under Sec. 105 of the Act, equal to the fiscal year 2006 appropriation and the President's request. These funds will help address ever emerging technical assistance needs and to fund data collection and analysis necessary to comply with the Congressional requests for additional information on TCU funding and operations. Additionally, we request $2 million for Title III of the Act, which helps our institutions to build endowments. The President's budget request eliminates this program.

For our two tribally controlled vocational institutions, we support $4.5 million for United Tribes Technical College; and $2.5 million for Crownpoint Institute of Technology to restore and expand the funding for these programs that the fiscal year 2007 President's budget recommends eliminating.

CONCLUSION

Tribal colleges provide higher education to thousands of American Indians who might otherwise not have access to such opportunities. The modest Federal investment in the Tribal Colleges and Universities has paid great dividends in terms of employment, education, and economic development. Continuation of this investment makes sound moral and fiscal sense. We very much need your help to sustain and grow our programs and achieve our missions.

Thank you for your past and continued support of the nation's Tribal Colleges and Universities and your consideration of our fiscal year 2007 appropriations recommendations.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE ASSOCIATION TO PRESERVE CAPE COD

Mr. Chairman and Honorable Members of the Committee: On behalf of the Association to Preserve Cape Cod, the region's leading environmental advocacy and stewardship organization with more than 5,500 members, I write to strongly support an appropriation of $6.1 million from the Land and Water Conservation Fund for the Cape Cod National Seashore in Massachusetts. This funding would be used to acquire the 57-acre North of Highland Campground, which is a family-run campground within the Seashore's boundary in the town of Truro.

The Cape Cod National Seashore is clearly the crown jewel of this peninsula's natural resources. The beautiful beaches, dunes, marshlands, and kettle hole ponds make the Cape Cod National Seashore one of the most heavily visited parks in the National Park system. Biking and hiking trails and surfing, swimming and fishing opportunities attract those seeking active recreation as well as those looking for serenity and scenic vistas.

The family that owns this land, which as been operated as a campground since 1954, wishes the land to continue to be used as a campground, providing affordable recreation for the general public at this very popular destination. For the family, the Seashore and the public, this outcome is by far superior to the land being sold and developed as residences. The family is working closely with the National Seashore to that end.

I thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of the appropriation of $6.1 million in the fiscal year 2007 from the Land and Water Conservation Fund for the Cape Cod National Seashore.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE AIR POLLUTION CONTROL DISTRICT

We respectfully request $220.3 million in fiscal year 2007 for the State and Local Air Quality Management Program—which is the amount appropriated in fiscal year 2006. The President's fiscal year 2007 budget reduces funding for this important program by $35.1 million.

Established by the Clean Air Act, the State and Local Air Quality Management Program provides federal financial assistance in the form of grants to the 50 states, 4 territories, and approximately 60 local agencies to operate their air pollution control programs. The grants provide the resources to states and localities to perform basic air pollution control activities like monitoring air quality, developing and planning control options, permitting and inspecting sources, enforcing laws and regulations, and educating the public.

In particular, this grant funding helps support state and local air quality management efforts to implement the National Ambient Air Quality Standards. As you may know, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has designated 495 counties across the nation as in nonattainment for the particulate matter and ozone air quality standards. Under the Clean Air Act, states must submit State Implementation Plans by 2007 and 2008 detailing how these areas will meet the standards by specified deadlines. Additionally, EPA has promulgated numerous other regulations that impose additional duties on state and local officials.

The President's fiscal year 2007 budget includes $185.2 million for the state and local grant program—which is a reduction of 16 percent or $35.1 million from the fiscal year 2006 appropriated level. This entails reductions of $15.6 million from the Section 105 air grants program and $2.5 million from regional planning organizations. Additionally, funding for the fine particulate monitoring program is cut by $17 million, with the remainder shifted from Section 103 authority to Section 105. This shift will require states and localities to provide matching funds.

Thank you for your consideration of this matter. We urge you to restore the funding for this important program to $220.3 million for fiscal year 2007 and not shift funds for monitoring from Section 103 authority to Section 105. Funding for this vital program should not be decreased at a time when the workload required of states and localities is increasing.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE ALEUTIAN PRIBILOF ISLANDS ASSOCIATION, INC.

The Aleutian Pribilof Islands Association, Inc. (APIA) submits the following request with regard to the fiscal year 2007 Indian Health Service budget:

—$1.14 million increase over fiscal year 2006 for phase two of staffing for our new health center in St. Paul. This is $265,000 more than the Administration's requested $875,000 increase.

—$1 million for the construction shortfall for the staff quarters for the new St. Paul Health Center

—We support the recommendations of the Alaska Native Health Board on matters including increased funding for built-in costs, for contract support, medevac and patient travel, village-built clinics and for construction of the hospitals in Barrow and Nome which are at the top of the IHS priority construction list.

St. Paul Health Center Staffing. We thank Congress for providing funding for the construction of the new health center at St. Paul, one of the most remote and needy locations in the IHS health system. The Center opened on January 13, 2006. In fiscal year 2006 Congress provided $260,000 for the first phase of staffing for our new health center. The President's fiscal year 2007 budget would build the $260,000 from fiscal year 2006 into the base budget and provide an increase of $875,000 for a total of $1.13 million. This is $265,000 short of the needed $1.4 million. Thus we request a total increase over fiscal year 2006 of $1.14 million.

Staffing Package:

Fiscal year 2006 staffing package—$260,000 (built into base budget)

Fiscal year 2007 Admin proposal—$875,000 increase over fiscal year 2006

APIA Need—$1,140,000 increase over fiscal year 2006

TOTAL TWO-YEAR PHASE-IN OF STAFFING

Year	Amount
Fiscal year 2006 appropriation	$260,000
Fiscal year 2007 APIA Request	1,140,000
Total	1,400,000

While we appreciate the Administration's effort to calculate our funding package need, it falls short by not accounting for the extreme remoteness of our site and the ensuing lack of access to available support services and facilities.

St. Paul Island is located, as this committee knows, in the Bering Sea and it is almost 1000 air miles away from our nearest referral center in Anchorage. It is also the only Health Center in the most dangerous fisheries area in the country. APIA must serve a huge influx of seasonal fisheries workers and our staff must be of a caliber to handle major disasters with no ready assistance. Our population balloons to over 2000 during the fishing seasons. Due to the dangerous nature of fishing in the Bering Sea, many of our cases are of an emergency nature—for instance, we have provided emergency response services for shipwrecks, explosions, and fishing-related injuries. In addition to the large numbers of persons—Native and non-Native—who fish in our waters, we also attend to emergency health needs of the many people who visit our area for bird watching. We are, in fact, "the only act in town" when it comes to health care, and thus we need to be as self-sufficient as possible in the provision of health care. That is why our new Health Center will include x-ray capability, a holding bed area, and 24 hours per day call-back for emergencies.

As you would imagine, the cost of medical staff is very high in the Aleutian Pribilof Islands. While last year's Physician Assistants received an annual salary of $85,000, the cost this year is $120,000 plus housing. In addition, the cost of traveling to and from our communities has increased in some cases 140 percent. A ticket to St. Paul is $1,000. Home heating fuel has risen to over $800/month and electricity is $400/month.

Extreme weather conditions and the cost of travel further play an adverse role in getting field services out to St. Paul. Visits by physicians are minimal and often times postponed or shortened due to weather conditions. St. Paul has the highest recorded per capita rate of Type 2 Diabetes in the United States. This situation has become critical as the rate continues to increase. Approximately 60 percent of the population is in need of mental health assistance, with anticipation that this will increase as the fishing industry continues to decline. Having an adequate staffing package will allow us to address these disease burdens.

A total staffing package of $1.4 million is more realistic to meet our unique needs that are not easily quantified by a universal formula devised for other IHS sites that have far better access to support centers.

St. Paul Health Center Quarters Shortfall.—We also ask for $1 million to meet the shortfall in quarters construction funds for the St. Paul Health Center. Without the additional $1 million we will be forced to eliminate one single and one double housing unit which were in our approved construction plan. In the context of St. Paul Island, this is very significant.

It is extremely difficult to find housing for staff on the Island. Island land is, as you can imagine, extremely scarce and can only be leased, making it impossible for anyone to acquire bank financing for loans on existing homes (should a rare one become available). Our own Health Administrator, who is from St. Paul, has had to live off-island waiting for housing to become available. We must have this additional funding so that our attempts to recruit and retain medical staff for the new St. Paul Health Center are not thwarted by the lack of adequate housing.

History.—While well known to our Congressional delegation, we would like to bring to the Subcommittee's attention a little sense of the history of the Aleut people—a history likened to that of colonialism and of being treated like the enemy during World War II. Much of what has happened to the Aleut people has been driven by the desire of private industry and governments for the riches of the Bering Sea seal trade and of the coerced labor of highly skilled Aleut fishermen.

Russian fur traders first started coming to the Pribilof Islands during the mid 1700s. They used Aleut fishermen as slave labor, mistreated Aleut women, and indiscriminately plundered the seal population. Rival traders took an estimated 240,000 seals in 1868 alone. In the first 30 years of Russian contact, the Aleut population declined from an estimated 12,000 to about 1,900. Aleuts were relocated by the Russians from hundreds of villages into just 27 villages. (Source: A Century of Servitude by Dorothy M. Jones, B.A.)

Alaska was purchased by the United States from Russia in 1867 for $7.2 million—the transaction referred to as Seward's Folly. The cost was more than paid for by the profits to the government from the Pribilof fur trade—with the labor done by Aleuts. In 1870, the U.S. Government established the Pribilofs as a government reservation and signed a 20-year contract with the Alaska Commercial Company granting it exclusive property right to seals in exchange for rent and royalties. The law also required conservation measures, much needed after the years of Russian exploitation. The Pribilof Islands were managed by the United States Treasury Department. Treasury officials had a great deal of influence over the daily lives of Aleuts but were given little direction on how to go about their jobs. The results ranged from neglect to egregious violation of individual rights.

A most painful experience for us was the evacuation during World War II of Aleuts from the Pribilofs to various locations in southeastern Alaska. Aleuts endured the evacuation from 1942 to 1945. This was allegedly done for the safety of the Aleuts, but in fact Aleuts were treated like they were the enemy. People were given two days notice to leave and then were never told their destination—most ended up 1,500 miles away in various southeast Alaska locations. It is a little known fact that some people were also evacuated to Japan. Aleuts were put in extremely crowded unheated abandoned buildings, many families in one area separated only by blankets hung from the ceiling. Sanitation conditions were horrible—in one case there was one outhouse for over 200 persons. There was little clean water. Naturally there was much sickness. The U.S. Government realized that they needed the labor of the Aleut fisherman for sealing operations and they were taken back to the Pribilofs on a seasonal basis to obtain the fur and seal oil needed by the military—their wives and children left behind in the horrendous relocation camps.

In the end, 10 percent of the Aleuts who were evacuated from St. Paul, St. George, Unalaska, Atka, Akutan, Nikolski, Biorka, Kashega, and Makushin died in the relocation camps. Of the 42 persons evacuated from Attu to Japan, 22, or nearly 50 percent, died. When people were allowed to return to their home villages, many found that their homes had been destroyed, their possessions taken, and their churches stripped of religious icons—by the U.S. military.

Despite this history, the Aleut are a proud people and are up to the challenge of providing quality health care to our people despite the many geographical and environmental challenges of living in an isolated frontier community. The efforts to build a new health center on St. Paul Island started over 20 years ago. Now that the dream is a reality, it would be devastating to the many who worked hard to make this happen to have the Center fall short of desperately needed housing and staff.

Thank you for your consideration of the needs of the Aleutian Pribilof Islands Association.

Prepared Statement of the American Public Power Association

The American Public Power Association (APPA) is the national service organization representing the interests of over 2,000 municipal and other state and locally owned utilities throughout the United States (all but Hawaii). Collectively, public

power utilities deliver electricity to one of every seven electric consumers (approximately 43 million people), serving some of the Nation's largest cities. However, the vast majority of APPA's members serve communities with populations of 10,000 people or less.

We appreciate the opportunity to submit this statement outlining our fiscal year 2007 funding priorities within the jurisdiction of the Interior and Related Agencies Subcommittee.

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY: ENERGY STAR PROGRAMS

APPA is disappointed in the Administration's request of $45.7 million for fiscal year 2007 for EPA's Energy Star Programs as it represents a reduction in their request of approximately $5 million from fiscal year 2006 as well as a reduction in the congressional allocation of $49.5 million for fiscal year 2007. We urge the Subcommittee to allocate at least the fiscal year 2006 amount for Energy Star.

Energy Star is a voluntary partnership program pairing EPA with businesses and consumers nationwide to enhance investment in underutilized technologies and practices that increase energy efficiency while at the same time reducing emissions of criteria pollutants and greenhouse gases. In particular, APPA member systems across the country have been active participants in a subset of the Energy Star program called "Green Lights." The Green Lights program encourages the use of energy efficient lighting to reduce energy costs, increase productivity, promote customer retention and protect the environment.

According to the EPA, Energy Star is saving businesses, organizations, and consumers more than $9 billion a year, and has been instrumental in the more widespread use technological innovations like LED traffic lights, efficient fluorescent lighting, power management systems for office equipment, and low standby energy use.

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY: LANDFILL METHANE OUTREACH PROGRAM

APPA is also disappointed in the Administration's request of $1.9 million for fiscal year 2007 for the Landfill Methane Outreach Program at EPA. We would urge the Subcommittee to again consider an allocation for this program over and above the Administration's request.

The Landfill Methane Outreach Program (LMOP) helps to partner utilities, energy organizations, states, tribes, the landfill gas industry and trade associations to promote the recovery and use of landfill gas as an energy source. According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), LMOP has more than 490 Partners that have signed voluntary agreements to work with EPA to develop cost-effective landfill-gas-to-energy (LFG) projects. There are approximately 395 operational LFG energy projects in the United States with approximately 140 projects currently under construction or exploring development options and opportunities. LMOP has also developed detailed profiles for over 1,300 candidate landfills.

Landfill gas is created when organic waste in a landfill decomposes. This gas consists of about 50 percent methane and about 50 percent carbon dioxide. Landfill gas can be captured, converted, and used as an energy source rather than being released into the atmosphere as a potent greenhouse gas. Converting landfill gas to energy offsets the need for non-renewable resources such as coal and oil, and thereby helps to diversify utilities' fuel portfolios and to reduce emissions of air pollutants from conventional fuel sources.

In 2005, all operational LFG energy projects in the United States prevented the release of 19 MMTCE (million metric tons of carbon equivalent). This reduction is the carbon equivalent of removing the emissions from 13.3 million vehicles on the road or planting 19 million acres of forest for one year. This reduction also has the same environmental benefit as preventing the use of 162 million barrels of oil or offsetting the use of 341,000 railcars of coal.

As units of local and state governments, APPA's member utilities are uniquely poised to embark on landfill-gas to energy projects. EPA's LMOP facilitates this process by providing technical support and access to invaluable partnerships to our members and the communities they serve.

COUNCIL ON ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

APPA is disappointed with the Administration's request of $2.7 million for fiscal year 2007 for the White House's Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ), and urges the Subcommittee to consider allocating at least $3.2 million for this office. Public power utilities have experienced a general lack of consistency in federal government regulation, particularly involving environmental issues. While additional layers of government should be avoided, a central overseer can perform a valuable

function in preventing duplicative, unnecessary and inconsistent regulation. CEQ is responsible for ensuring that federal agencies perform their tasks in an efficient and coordinated manner.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE ARKANSAS RIVER BASIN INTERSTATE COMMITTEE

Mr. Chairman and members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to present testimony to this most important committee. I serve as Executive Director for the Little Rock Port Authority and as Arkansas Chairman for the Interstate Committee. Other committee members representing Arkansas, in whose behalf this statement is made, are:

Mr. Scott McGeorge, President, Pine Bluff Sand and Gravel Company, Pine Bluff

Mr. N.M. "Buck" Shell, CEO, Five Rivers Distribution in Van Buren and Fort Smith

Mr. Jack Long, General Manager, Logistic Services, Inc., Port of Little Rock

Mr. Jeff Pipkin, President & CEO of the Russellville Area Chamber of Commerce and Director of the Arkansas Valley Alliance for Economic Development

We call to your attention four projects on the McClellan-Kerr Arkansas River Navigation System (the "System") that are especially important to navigation and the economy of this multi-state area: Arkansas River 12-Foot Channel, Little Rock Port, Backlog of Channel and Structure Maintenance, and the Arkansas-White Rivers Cut-Off Study.

ARKANSAS RIVER'S 12-FOOT CHANNEL

Mr. Chairman, Public Law 108–137 authorized a 12-foot channel on the McClellan-Kerr Arkansas River Navigation System. The Corps is now obligated to operate and maintain the system as a 12-foot channel. Over 90 percent of the system currently is adequate for a 12-foot channel. Deepening the remainder of the channel to 12 feet will allow carriers to place 43 percent more cargo on each barge which will reduce the amount of fuel consumed and emissions released. Other environmental benefits include the creation of new aquatic habitat through new dike construction and the construction of least tern islands through beneficial use of dredged material.

—Therefore, we request $40,000,000 to continue the work towards achieving the 12-foot navigation channel as noted in Public Law 108–137. Corps of Engineers capability levels on this project are currently $20,000,000 in both the Tulsa and Little Rock Districts. The goal of completing this project in four years at the capability levels of the Corps will increase the cost competitiveness of this low cost-environment friendly transportation method and help us combat the loss of industry and jobs to overseas.

LITTLE ROCK PORT

We recognize the significant reduction in new work and understand the need to combat the Global War on Terrorism. We also recognize the need to look for economic advantages where the needs of the government cross with the good of public entities to serve both needs. We believe a prime example of this effort would be to utilize Section 107 of the River and Harbors Act of 1960 (Public Law 86–645) in the Continuing Authorities Program which would allow the disposal of dredge disposal material to be utilized by the Little Rock Port for beneficial fill material.

—Therefore, $7.6 million is requested for this project. This project will compliment the goal of Homeland Security by providing a safe, mid-America environment for shipping while complimenting other Federal investments, including the 12-foot channel project" by providing completion of a major economic development engine.

BACKLOG OF CHANNEL STRUCTURE MAINTENANCE

We request $10 million Operation and Maintenance Budget which is urgently needed for critical repairs to damaged and deteriorated dikes and revetments to maintain channel alignment and provide original channel configuration while reducing the need for dredging.

More than a decade of neglect to our navigation structures while funding the construction of Montgomery Point Lock & Dam has created a critical backlog of channel structure work that threatens the viability of the McClellan-Kerr Arkansas River Navigation System.

ARKANSAS–WHITE RIVERS CUTOFF STUDY

A cutoff is developing between the Arkansas and White Rivers which, if not corrected, could have dramatic adverse effects on the navigation system as well as significant bottomland hardwoods and pristine environment that provides unique wildlife habitat in southeast Arkansas.

Unless corrected, it is inevitable that a major cutoff will occur negatively impacting navigation on the river, significantly increasing siltation and dredging requirements and, at worst, cutting off the lower end of the Navigation System from the Mississippi River.

—We request, for the benefit of the entire system, $300,000 to protect the Navigation System from incurring significant increases in dredging, hazardous navigation conditions, and to preclude a devastating loss of habitat in bottom land hardwoods in the Big Island region between the Arkansas River, the White River and the Mississippi River. This pristine habitat is being threatened from the meandering of these rivers while also adversely impacting the Navigation System. The funds are greatly needed to complete the study and do the required environmental documentation.

In addition to these three vital requests, we urge you to continue to support funding for the construction, and operation and maintenance of the McClellan-Kerr Arkansas River Navigation System which provides low-cost and dependable transportation for farm products, construction aggregates, raw materials and finished products important to our nation's economic recovery.

It is also most important that you continue construction authority of the McClellan-Kerr Project until remaining channel stabilization problems identified by the Little Rock District Corps of Engineers have been resolved. The Corps needs to develop a permanent solution to the threat of cutoffs developing in the lower reaches of the navigation system and to use environmentally sustainable methods under the existing construction authority.

Mr. Chairman, we appreciate the work of this essential committee and thank you for your efforts that contribute so much to the social and economic well-being of the United States of America.

We fully endorse the statement presented to you today by the Chairman of the Arkansas River Basin Interstate Committee and urge you to favorably consider these requests that are so important to the economic recovery of our region and nation.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE ASSOCIATION OF RESEARCH LIBRARIES AND THE COUNCIL ON LIBRARY AND INFORMATIONS RESOURCES

This statement is submitted on behalf of the Association of Research Libraries (ARL) and the Council on Library and Information Resources (CLIR). ARL and CLIR are writing in support of the fiscal year 2007 budget request of $140.955 million for the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) and, in particular, the $17.988 million budget request for the Preservation and Access Division, whose work is critical to preserving our American heritage. ARL and CLIR respectfully urge that Congress provide an addition $15 million or a total of $156 million for NEH in fiscal year 2007.

NEH plays a vital role in preserving our historic and cultural legacy, improving education at all levels, and helping Americans better understand the life of their Nation. The Preservation and Access Division of NEH was created to help advance knowledge and understanding of the humanities in America. Through its grant programs, the Division supports projects that preserve and increase the availability of resources, such as books, journals, newspapers, photographs, and films that are crucial for research, education, and public programming in the humanities.

NEH funding is absolutely critical to ongoing programs of interest to the library community: the Brittle Books Program, the U.S. Newspaper Program, and Preservation Education and Training. Without Congressional support for NEH, fragile material in libraries and repositories in universities, colleges, and communities across the country would be in danger of permanent loss.

We applaud NEH's quick response in assisting cultural institutions following the devastation caused by Katrina. NEH provided $30,000 to state humanities councils in Louisiana, Mississippi and Alabama and generously channeled $1 million in emergency grants to libraries, museums, historical societies and cultural institutions. More recently, NEH announced that it would dedicate an additional $250,000 to hurricane relief for affected humanities-related institutions.

ARL and CLIR also encourage funding for the Administration's request of $15.239 million for the We the People initiative. This initiative further enhances NEH's core

functions in critical areas, including Preservation and Access. The initiative, created in response to the lack of basic historical knowledge among many Americans, is designed to enhance the teaching, research, and understanding of American history and culture. Of particular interest to the research library community is one of the initiative's key programs, the National Digital Newspaper Program (NDNP). This program will convert microfilm of historical newspapers published between 1836 and 1922 into digital files and mount them on a national database that will be freely accessible to all Americans via the Internet. This effort is a partnership between NEH, which funds the digitization projects, and the Library of Congress, which mounts and maintains the resources. We strongly encourage you to support this initiative.

Although microfilming serves as a great tool for preserving America's books and newspapers, ARL and CLIR strongly support the efforts of NEH to complement its preservation program with grants for the digitization of library materials. Digital technology provides new opportunities to extend the reach of humanities resources into every classroom, library, and home. To that end, many repositories of specialized and rare materials are digitizing their holdings to provide students, educators, and scholars easy access to them. Moreover, libraries and other humanities organizations are providing online access to an ever-increasing body of knowledge created in "born digital" journals, books, and databases.

NEH also provides critical assistance to our Nation's libraries, archives, historical societies, and other repositories for preservation education and training. Grants in this area help support U.S. graduate programs in art and material culture conservation; preservation workshops, surveys, and information services to hundreds of cultural institutions; and targeted workshops for staff who manage digital imaging and preservation microfilming projects.

Last year, the NEH and the National Science Foundation (NSF) formed a partnership to develop and advance knowledge of endangered languages. The initiative, "Documenting Endangered Languages," records, documents and archives information on 3,000 languages that are near extinction. ARL and CLIR strongly support this important multiyear, cooperative initiative.

Information, education, and knowledge are the pillars of our country's domestic progress and international leadership in the 21st century. The existence and support of humanities is vital to ensure a successful democracy by means of reflection, participation, and communication. The Nation must preserve the historical record accumulated by past generations to ensure the success of future generations.

We very much appreciate the Subcommittee's continuing support of NEH and its programs.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF AMERICANS FOR RESPONSIBLE RECREATIONAL ACCESS

Americans for Responsible Recreational Access is a group committed to fostering responsible recreational practices on public lands. We are writing to you today to express our grave concerns about the Administration's budget proposal for the U.S. Forest Service, especially those portions dealing with the recreation and trail programs.

The President's budget proposal calls for reducing the Recreation, Wilderness and Heritage program by 4 percent, $10 million less than the Congress appropriated in fiscal year 2006. The Trails program is slated for an even larger cut of 19.4 percent, $14.5 million less than fiscal year 2006 funding.

We understand that the Federal budget is under severe strain. And we certainly don't envy the task you have before you in deciding which programs should ultimately receive lesser support in the coming fiscal year. We hope that as you balance competing interests, you will take a close look at the Forest Service budget, especially those areas dealing with recreation.

More than ever, greater numbers of Americans are visiting our national forests for recreational activities. The Forest Service tracks the number of visitors to its facilities and its own statistics show that in 2004 alone, there were more than 205 million visits to the National Forests. Since then, we know that this figure has grown and will continue to do so for the foreseeable future. This is not the time to be cutting funds for trail maintenance and rehabilitation work.

We think a strong case could be made that these programs merit an increase in funding especially for trail maintenance and rehabilitation. But we understand that such a wish is highly unlikely during these difficult fiscal times. Therefore, our hope is that your committee will fund these programs in fiscal year 2007 at the current level found in fiscal year 2006.

In the coming days, we will be visiting members of your committee to make the case that facilitating recreation in our National Forests is an important mission of the U.S. Forest Service, and that the Recreation and Trail programs merit, at a minimum, funding at the 2006 level. We stand ready to assist your committee with any background information you desire that supports funding the trails and recreation programs at their existing levels.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE AMERICAN SOCIETY OF CIVIL ENGINEERS [1]

THE ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

The American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE) recommends an annual appropriation of $1.5 billion from the federal general fund for the Clean Water State Revolving Loan Fund (CWSRF) program and $1 billion for the Safe Drinking Water SRF (DWSRF) in fiscal year 2007. The need is justified; the nation's wastewater treatment infrastructure and drinking water systems received a grade of D− from ASCE on our 2005 Report Card for America's Infrastructure released on March 2005.

THE UNITED STATES GEOLOGICAL SURVEY

ASCE also recommends that Congress approve at least $1.2 billion in new budget authority for the U.S. Geological Survey in fiscal year 2007, including $85.8 million for the National Earthquake Hazards Reduction Program. This level would enable the USGS to meet new challenges while continuing to provide data for land-use management, sustainable natural resource development, economic growth, and enhanced security from natural and manmade hazards. More investment is needed to strengthen USGS partnerships, improve monitoring networks, produce high-quality digital geospatial data and deliver the best possible science to address societally important problems.

WATER INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENT NEEDED

For fiscal year 2007, we support annual appropriations of $1.5 billion from the federal general fund for the Clean Water State Revolving Loan Fund (SRF) program.

For fiscal year 2007, ASCE supports a minimum appropriation of $1 billion from the federal general fund for the Safe Drinking Water State Revolving Loan Fund (SRF) program.

The federal government has directly invested more than $70 billion in the construction of publicly owned sewage treatment works (POTWs) and their related facilities since passage of the Clean Water Act in 1972. Nevertheless, the physical condition of many of the nation's 16,000 wastewater treatment systems is poor due to a lack of investment in plant, equipment, and other capital improvements over the years.

Numerous wastewater systems have reached the end of their useful design life. Older systems are plagued by chronic overflows during major rain storms and heavy snowmelt and, intentionally or not, are bringing about the discharge of raw sewage into U.S. surface waters. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) estimated in August 2004 that the volume of combined sewer overflows (CSOs) discharged nationwide is 850 billion gallons a year. Sanitary sewer overflows (SSOs), caused by blocked or broken pipes, trigger the release of as much as 10 billion gallons of raw sewage yearly, according to the EPA.

Federal funding under the CWSRF program has been steadily eroding. Congress appropriated between $1.2 billion and $1.35 billion from 1995 to 2004. But in fiscal year 2005 Congress cut wastewater SRF funding for the first time in eight years, reducing the total investment to $1.1 billion, and the total was further redueced in fiscal year 2006 to $887 million. The Bush administration has proposed further cuts for fiscal year 2007, with a budget submittal calling for an appropriation of only $688 million, a reduction of nearly 29 percent from the fiscal year 2006 enacted level.

Funding needs remain very high: the U.S. must invest an additional $181 billion for all types of sewage treatment projects eligible for funding under the Act, accord-

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[1] ASCE was founded in 1852 and is the country's oldest national civil engineering organization. It represents 137,000 civil engineers in private practice, government, industry and academia who are dedicated to the advancement of the science and profession of civil engineering. ASCE is a non-profit educational and professional society organized under Part 1.501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.

ing to the most recent Needs Survey estimate by the EPA and the states, completed in August 2003.

In September 2002, EPA released a detailed Gap Analysis, which assessed the difference between current spending for wastewater infrastructure and total funding needs. The EPA Gap Analysis estimated that, over the next two decades, the United States needs to spend nearly $390 billion to replace existing wastewater infrastructure systems and to build new ones. (The total includes money for some projects not currently eligible for federal funds, such as system replacement, which are not reflected in the EPA-state Needs Survey).

The Congressional Budget Office (CBO) released its own gap analysis in 2002 in which it determined that the gap for wastewater ranges, depending on various financial and accounting variables, from $23 billion to $37 billion annually.[2]

—ASCE supports enactment of the Clean Water Trust Act of 2005,[3] which would establish a federal water infrastructure trust fund act that would provide a reliable source of federal assistance for the construction and repair of POTWs to reduce the enormous funding "gap." The bill also would authorize Congress to appropriate $37.5 billion over five years for wastewater and drinking water systems.

—We support the establishment of a federal capital budget to create a mechanism to help reduce the constant conflict between short-term and long-term needs. The current federal budget process does not differentiate between expenditures for current consumption and long-term investment. This causes major inefficiencies in the planning, design and construction process for long-term investments. A capital budget system would help increase public awareness of the problems and needs facing this country's physical infrastructure and help Congress focus on programs devoted to long-term growth and productivity.

In addition, the nation's 54,000 drinking water systems face staggering public investment needs over the next 20 years. Although America spends billions on infrastructure each year, drinking water faces an annual shortfall of at least $11 billion to replace aging facilities that are near the end of their useful life and to comply with existing and future federal water regulations. The shortfall does not account for any growth in the demand for drinking water over the next 20 years.

In 2001, the EPA released a national survey of drinking water infrastructure needs. The survey results concluded that approximately $151 billion would be needed over 20 years to repair, replace, and upgrade the nation's 55,000 community drinking water systems to protect public health.

A year later, the agency published The Clean Water and Drinking Water Infrastructure Gap Analysis, which identified potential funding gaps between projected needs and spending from 2000 through 2019. This analysis estimated a potential 20-year funding gap for drinking water capital, and operations and maintenance, ranging from $45 billion to $263 billion, depending on spending levels. Capital needs alone were pegged at $161 billion, a $10 billion increase from the 2001 estimate.[4]

The CBO concluded in 2003 that "current funding from all levels of government and current revenues generated from ratepayers will not be sufficient to meet the nation's future demand for water infrastructure." The CBO estimated the nation's needs for drinking water investments at between $10 billion and $20 billion over the next 20 years.[5]

Federal assistance has not kept pace with demand. Since fiscal year 1997, Congress has appropriated only between $700 million and $850 million annually for the Safe Drinking Water Act State Revolving Loan Fund (SRF) program, enacted in 1987. The enacted funding level for fiscal year 2006 was $838 million, less than 10 percent of the total national requirements. The Bush Administration has proposed an appropriation of $842 million for fiscal year 2007.

—ASCE supports the establishment of a federal capital budget to create a mechanism to help reduce the constant conflict between short-term and long-term needs. The current federal budget process does not differentiate between expenditures for current consumption and long-term investment. This causes major inefficiencies in the planning, design and construction process for long-

[2] None of the estimates cited includes the costs of operation and maintenance (O&M), costs that are borne entirely by the local utilities and are not eligible for federal funding. The 2002 Gap Analysis, for example, put the total O&M costs at $161 billion for the 20-year study period.

[3] H.R. 4560, 109th Cong. (2005).

[4] Operation and maintenance (O&M) costs are paid for by the local water utilities, not the federal government.

[5] The CBO approximation does not include the $178 billion to $331 billion in anticipated pipe replacement costs over the same 20-year period.

term investments. A capital budget system would help Congress to focus on programs devoted to long-term growth and productivity.

USGS PROGRAMS

ASCE requests that Congress increase the fiscal year 2007 budget of the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) to $1.2 billion. We support full funding for the agency's vital streamgaging program.

The fiscal year 2007 budget request would cut funding for the USGS by $20.6 million (2.1 percent) to $944.8 million.

The USGS plays a critical role in protecting the public from natural hazards such as floods and earthquakes, in assessing water quality, in providing emergency responders with geospatial data to improve homeland security, in analyzing the strategic and economic implications of mineral supply and demand, and in providing the science needed to manage our natural resources and combat invasive species that can threaten agriculture and public health. The USGS is working in every state and has nearly 400 offices across the country. To aid in its interdisciplinary investigations, the USGS works with more than 2,000 federal, state, local, tribal and private organizations.

During the past 10 years, total federal spending for non-defense research and development has risen by 64 percent from $45 billion to $74 billion in constant dollars. By contrast, funding for the USGS has been essentailly flat. Even this flat funding for the USGS reflects congressional restoration of proposed budget cuts.

NATIONAL EARTHQUAKE HAZARDS REDUCTION PROGRAM

ASCE strongly supports the president's fiscal year 2007 request of $51.5 million for the Earthquake Hazards Office and $5.7 million for the multi-hazards initiative; these are a positive indication of the Administration's support in this important area. ASCE remains concerned about the continued under funding of Advanced National Seismic System (ANSS), as the $8 million requested for fiscal year 2007 is well under the authorized level of $36 million.

ASCE urges Congress to build on the president's support and appropriate the fully authorized funding level of $85.8 million, including $36 million for ANSS, for the National Earthquake Hazards Reduction Program (NEHRP) functions at the U.S. Geological Survey.

The USGS has the responsibility to monitor earthquakes, assess the seismic hazard for the Nation and research the basic earth science processes controlling earthquake occurrence and effect. The Advanced National Seismic Research and Monitoring System (ANSS), authorized by Congress in 2000, is intended to expand the current monitoring system and provide the needed information to maximize our understanding of how specific buildings performed during earthquakes. Strong motion information is critical to making the next quantum leap in understanding how to economically arrest the growth of earthquake risk.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE ASSOCIATION OF STATE DRINKING WATER ADMINISTRATORS (ASDWA)

ASDWA respectfully requests that, for fiscal year 2007, the Subcommittee appropriate funding for three state drinking water programs at levels commensurate with Federal expectations for performance and at levels that continue to ensure appropriate public health protection. Specifically, ASDWA requests an appropriation of $112 million for the Public Water System Supervision (PWSS) program; $850 million for the Drinking Water State Revolving Loan Fund (DWSRF) program; and $6 million for state drinking water program security initiatives.

ASDWA represents the state drinking water programs in each of the fifty states and territories in their efforts to ensure the provision of safe drinking water to more than 275 million consumers nationwide. ASDWA's primary mission is the protection of public health through the effective management of state drinking water programs that implement the Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA).

States Need Increased Federal Support to Maintain Public Health Protection.—State drinking water programs strive to meet their public health protection goals through two principal funding programs—the Public Water System Supervision Program and the Drinking Water State Revolving Loan Fund Program. These two programs—with their attendant state match requirements—provide the means for states to work with drinking water systems to ensure that American citizens can turn on their taps with confidence that the water is safe to drink and that the supply is adequate. In recent years, state drinking water programs have accepted addi-

tional responsibilities to work with all public water systems to ensure that critical drinking water infrastructure is protected and that plans are in place to respond to disasters both natural and manmade.

HOW STATES USE FEDERAL FUNDS

The PWSS Program.—To meet the requirements of the SDWA, states have accepted primary enforcement authority for oversight of ongoing regulatory compliance and technical assistance efforts for 160,000 public water systems to ensure that potential health-based violations do not occur or are remedied in a timely manner. Going beyond these longstanding core responsibilities, since 1996, state drinking water programs have participated in the development and implementation of more than 20 new Federal regulations and strategic initiatives designed to enhance the protection of public health. States are also implementing an array of proactive initiatives to protect public health from "source to tap"—including source water assessments and controls; technical assistance with water treatment and distribution; and enhancement of overall water system capacity. State activities go far beyond simply ensuring compliance at the tap.

The DWSRF Program.—In less than 10 years, states have leveraged funding for the DWSRF program into more than $9 billion in loans to thousands of communities as a means to help them improve the quality or quantity of the water they drink. State drinking water programs have also used DWSRF funds to support the technical assistance and training needs of small drinking water systems and to help them obtain the technical, managerial, and financial proficiency that enables them to meet the requirements of the SDWA.

State Drinking Water Security Responsibilities.—Since 2001, and more critically since last summer's experience of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, states have taken extraordinary measures to meet the security and emergency response-related needs of the drinking water community. State drinking water programs have endeavored to respond to the significant number of requests for assistance, training, information, and financial support from the systems under their purview. States have also been instrumental in providing support and assistance to systems in assessing whether a contamination event has occurred and, if so, evaluating the magnitude of the public health implications. States have devised training and technical assistance programs, initiated new communications structures, and begun the work of integrating the concepts of enhanced security concerns throughout all aspects of the drinking water program.

WHY INCREASED FUNDING IS CRITICALLY NEEDED

States must accomplish all of the above-described activities and take on new responsibilities while responding to escalating pressures to further cut their budgets, streamline their workforces, and operate with less state-provided financial support. State drinking water programs have always been expected to do more with less and states have always responded with commitment and ingenuity. However, state drinking water programs are now in crisis. Congress and the Executive Branch, through EPA, have implemented national program guidance calling for both states and water systems to continually improve their contaminant rule compliance rates. However, many states are now experiencing declining compliance rates in the face of declining or stagnant financial resources. For every decrease in available Federal dollars, the likelihood of a contamination event that puts public health at risk increases.

Although the 1996 SDWA Amendments authorized the PWSS Program at $100 million per year, appropriated amounts have only recently reached that originally-authorized level. This level of funding, 10 years after enactment, is now woefully inadequate for the enormity of the task faced by state drinking water programs.

Of the $1.1 billion in PWSS grants that states could have received since 1996, actual appropriations have only been $851.7 million through fiscal year 2005 and the additional $98.3 million appropriated for state programs in fiscal year 2006 is still a tentative figure, according to the EPA website, due to the potential for additional rescissions. Such chronic underfunding of the program has consequences. It is estimated that one-third of the states may not be able to conduct timely implementation of major provisions of the newer regulations, leaving the work undone or forcing U.S. EPA to undertake rule implementation tasks that they may not have the resources or expertise to perform. This could create a significant implementation crisis in several regions of the country and ultimately delay implementation of several critically needed public health protections.

Similarly, for the DWSRF, the authorized level of $1 billion per year has never been appropriated. States have received less than 80 percent of the $11 billion au-

thorized for the DWSRF program since 1996. This underfunding, coupled with the decline in the spending power of these dollars due to inflation and cost of living increases, has severely hampered state drinking water programs' ability to fulfill their mission and provide critically needed support to drinking water systems.

FISCAL YEAR 2007 REQUEST LEVELS AND SDWA PROGRAM OBLIGATIONS

The PWSS Program.—This year, the State PWSS program request level in the Administration's budget is $99.1 million. This reflects an alarming downward trend from prior year Administration requests of $105.1 million and the enacted budget high point of $101.9 million appropriated just three years ago—in fiscal year 2004. State drinking water programs are hard pressed to understand a justification for the decreased funding since this is the year when they must begin implementation of the new arsenic regulations and the M/DBP Rule cluster—two very sophisticated and complex initiatives. States want to offer the flexibilities allowed under these and other rules; however, fewer dollars mean less opportunities to work one-on-one with systems to meet their needs. States, this year, are also expecting to see new regulatory requirements relating to ground water protection and revisions to the existing lead and copper rule. Looking ahead, states expect that new rules relating to MTBE, perchlorate, and NDMA will be forthcoming. A new Radon Rule will also likely soon be developed along with revisions to the Total Coliform Rule and possibly, a new distribution system rule. The number of regulations requiring state implementation and oversight as well as performance expectations continue to grow while, at the same time, Federal funding support necessary to maintain compliance levels and meet expectations is in decline.

ASDWA, therefore, respectfully requests that the fiscal year 2007 funding for the PWSS program be appropriated at $112 million. This figure represents a baseline of $101.9 million as appropriated in fiscal year 2004 plus an additional 3 percent increase over the past two fiscal years and into fiscal year 2007 to adjust for inflation.

The DWSRF Program.—The fiscal year 2007 DWSRF program request in the President's budget reflects a nearly $9 million decrease from the amount requested in the three previous years. The primary purpose of the DWSRF is to improve public health protection by facilitating water system compliance with national primary drinking water regulations through the provision of loans to improve drinking water infrastructure. EPA's most recent National Drinking Water Infrastructure Needs Survey (2003) indicated that water system needs total $276.8 billion over the next 20 years to comply with SDWA mandates. This represents a significant jump from the earlier survey (1999) findings of a total 20 year need of $150.9 billion. "Immediate" water infrastructure needs totaled $165 billion in the 2003 survey as compared to $102.5 billion identified in 1999. Despite these documented needs, the maximum amount requested by the Administration for the DWSRF has been $850 million and Congress has appropriated less than those requested levels. (the anticipated post-rescission appropriation for fiscal year 2006 is $832.2 million). Without reasonable increases—or at least maintenance of previous funding levels, the DWSRF will never be able to meet the SDWA compliance and public health protection goals for which it was designed.

ASDWA, therefore, respectfully requests that the fiscal year 2007 funding for the DWSRF program be appropriated at authorized level of $1 billion or at least $850 million. $850 million represents a maintenance baseline consistent with previous year funding request levels.

Security Responsibilities.—The fiscal year 2007 budget request includes $4.9 million for state drinking water programs to continue to expand their security activities, particularly for small and medium systems. While states are appreciative of the funding, once again it is difficult to understand why the request level is decreased from previous years. Given the realities exemplified by Hurricane Katrina, state drinking water programs are working more closely than ever with their water utilities to evaluate, assist, and support drinking water systems' preparedness and response capabilities. In addition to providing technical assistance, training, and support as mandated by the Bioterrorism Act of 2002, in recent years, states have been directed to focus their efforts toward smaller water systems not covered by the Act. These systems are much less likely to have the organizational or financial wherewithal to better secure either their physical or cyber infrastructures and rely on the states to help them meet their needs and identify potential funding sources (DWSRF). There is no dedicated fund to support or assist these smaller systems.

ASDWA, therefore, respectfully requests that the fiscal year 2007 funding for the state security initiatives program be appropriated at $6 million. This figure represents a maintenance baseline consistent with previous year funding request levels

adjusted for the eroding effects of inflation since the originally appropriated level of $5 million in fiscal year 2002.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, ASDWA respectfully recommends that both state and Federal fiscal year 2007 budget needs for the provision of safe drinking water be adequately funded by Congress. The Subcommittee can meet those needs through relatively modest increases in funding over the Administration's requested fiscal year 2007 budget or by a "budget-neutral" reallocation of funding within the overall budget of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. ASDWA calls the Subcommittee's attention to an alternative state-recommended fiscal year 2007 budget developed by the Environmental Council of the States (ECOS) as a constructive starting point for these discussions.

A strong drinking water program supported by the Federal-state partnership will ensure that the quality of drinking water in this country will not deteriorate and, in fact, will continue to improve—so that the public can be assured that a glass of water is safe to drink no matter where they travel or live. States are willing and committed partners. Additional Federal financial assistance is needed, however, to meet ongoing and ever growing regulatory and security needs. In 1996, Congress provided the authority to ensure that the burden would not go unsupported. In 2006, ASDWA asks that the promise of that support be realized.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE ALLIANCE TO SAVE ENERGY

INTRODUCTION

The Alliance to Save Energy, a bipartisan, nonprofit coalition of more than 100 business, government, environmental, and consumer leaders, appreciates this opportunity to submit written testimony in support of a $10 million increase for the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Energy Star Program in fiscal year 2007 compared to the fiscal year 2006 appropriated level. The Alliance's mission is to promote energy efficiency worldwide to achieve a healthier economy, a cleaner environment, and greater energy security. The Alliance, founded in 1977 by Senators Charles Percy and Hubert Humphrey, currently enjoys the leadership of Senator Mark Pryor as Chairman; Washington Gas Chairman and CEO James DeGraffenreidt, Jr. as Co-Chairman; and Representatives Ralph Hall, Zach Wamp and Ed Markey and Senators Bingaman, Collins and Jeffords as its Vice-Chairs. The American Council for an Energy-Efficient Economy (ACEEE) also supports the recommendations in this testimony.

The Energy Star program is one of the most successful efforts to promote marketplace solutions for greater energy efficiency. The program works with thousands of business partners to make it easy for consumers to find and buy many energy-efficient products, buildings, and services by awarding the well-known Energy Star label and by providing other consumer information. The Energy Star program is an entirely voluntary program that reduces energy demand, lowers energy bills, and helps avoid pollution and greenhouse gas emissions.

Increased investment by the federal government in the Energy Star program will translate to increased energy savings by consumers and businesses across the country. The EPA estimates that every federal dollar spent on the Energy Star program results in an average savings of $75 or more in consumer energy bills; the reduction of about 3.7 tons of carbon dioxide emissions; an investment of $15 in private sector capital; and the contribution of over $60 to the economy.

In 2005 alone, Energy Star helped Americans save 28,000 Megawatts of peak power, enough to avoid the need for more than 50 new power plants. This savings is a significant amount of energy—150 billion kWh—representing 4 percent of total 2005 electricity demand. Working together with Energy Star, Americans prevented the emission of 35 million metric tons of greenhouse gas emissions, which is equivalent to removing 23 million cars from the road. And Americans, with the help of Energy Star, saved $12 billion on their energy bills. As these statistics exemplify, the Energy Star program is helping millions of Americans get the energy they need, while saving money and avoiding pollution.

ENERGY EFFICIENCY IS AMERICA'S GREATEST ENERGY RESOURCE

Energy efficiency is the nation's greatest energy resource—we now save more energy each year from energy efficiency than we get from any single energy source, including oil, natural gas, coal, or nuclear power. The Alliance to Save Energy estimates that if we tried to run today's economy without the energy-efficiency improve-

ments that have taken place since 1973, we would need 43 percent more energy supplies than we use now (43 quadrillion Btu). What's more, increasing America's energy efficiency is the quickest, cleanest, and cheapest way of meeting our energy needs. Without these enormous savings, our difficulties in meeting energy demand would be far, far worse than they are today.

HOW ENERGY STAR CAPITALIZES ON THIS RESOURCE

EPA's Energy Star program has proven to be an extremely effective way for this nation to capitalize on the potential of energy efficiency as a resource. Energy Star's voluntary partnership program—which includes Energy Star Buildings, Energy Star Homes, Energy Star Small Businesses, and Energy Star Labeled Products—works by removing marketplace barriers to existing and emerging technologies, providing information on technology opportunities, generating awareness of energy-efficient products and services, and educating consumers about life-cycle energy savings.

Energy efficiency is an investment. There is often a modest additional cost for purchasing more efficient, smarter technologies, but that additional cost and more is paid back to the consumer through lower energy bills. Energy Star helps consumers understand and realize these benefits. The label represents the "good housekeeping seal of approval." The program sets rigorous guidelines representing high energy-efficiency and product quality goals that products, buildings, or services must meet in order to qualify for the Energy Star label.

In 2003 the Alliance to Save Energy undertook an extensive public opinion survey and found that the name recognition of the Energy Star program is very high—86 percent among U.S. homeowners. Approximately one-third of U.S. consumers report using the Energy Star label as an information tool for making purchase decisions; and an even higher number report using Energy Star as an information tool to help them save energy. Most consumers who are aware of the Energy Star label correctly understand that products bearing the Energy Star label use less energy and can save them money on energy bills.

ABOUT THE ENERGY STAR PARTNERSHIPS

Energy Star works through voluntary partnerships, and these have grown since the early 1990s to include thousands of businesses. These partnerships demonstrate that energy efficiency delivers "pollution prevention at a profit." And the Energy Star program testifies to the important environmental achievements that can be made through cooperative partnerships between government and businesses.

Energy Star serves broad constituencies in every state in the country. Energy Star currently has more than 8,000 partners who are committed to improving the energy efficiency of our homes, businesses and products. Among those partners are over 1,500 manufacturing partners who make and market over 35,000 different models of Energy Star qualifying products, and 800 retail partners representing over 21,000 storefronts, as well as building owners and operators, utilities, state and local governments, and nonprofit organizations. Energy Star counts more than 2,500 builder partners and partners who supply products and services for energy-efficient home construction. More than 500,000 families now live in Energy Star Homes (40 percent more than last year)—locking in financial savings for homeowners of more than $110 million annually. In fact, nearly 10 percent of all homes built in 2005 earned the Energy Star label.

As you may know, 2006 marks the sixth year that the Alliance has asked Energy Star company partners to join us in our request for a significant increase in funding for the program. The response in the past has been remarkable. Joining us in our request this year are 391 companies and Energy Star partners and another 75 individuals.

MUCH HAS BEEN ACCOMPLISHED, BUT HUGE POTENTIAL REMAINS UNTAPPED

Although the Energy Star program has made a significant contribution to reducing consumer energy use, a wide array of important, additional opportunities to use the program to promote energy efficiency remain untapped. Energy Star is a success, poised to provide more savings and enhanced environmental protection as soon as the government is ready and able to invest more.

In 2001, the President's National Energy Plan recommended that the Energy Star program be expanded to label more products, appliances, buildings, and services. Time and again, the President and the EPA Administrator have noted that voluntary measures are vital to addressing climate change and have held up Energy Star as an exemplary program. Yet funding for the program has declined. The fiscal year 2007 proposed budget for Energy Star, $45.7 million, is down 9 percent from this year and, after inflation, is down one-fifth from fiscal year 2002. In addition,

internal funding cuts at EPA have plagued the program over the past several years. Even with tight budgets, the number of products and manufacturers in the labeling program has greatly expanded, and the number of partners in the Buildings, Homes, and Small Business programs has soared.

But more funds are needed. Considering the sky-high energy prices around the country and the concerns about electricity reliability and pollution abatement, the Alliance believes that funding for the Energy Star program should be increased by at least $10 million over last year's appropriated level for fiscal year 2007, and should be doubled over the next five years. This would enable the Energy Star program to label additional products, update its criteria, increase consumer education campaigns, and—especially important—address energy-efficient home improvements nationwide.

By building on the Energy Star name, we can save much more energy and break through additional market barriers, building homeowner trust in energy audit programs and whole-home retrofits, including insulation, duct sealing, and home envelope sealing. In addition to labeling products and buildings, Energy Star has begun a successful effort working with state and local organizations to help homeowners audit and upgrade the efficiency of their homes. Home Performance with Energy Star is growing as state and utilities look for opportunities to save energy and reduce peak load. More than 17,000 homes in California, Colorado, Georgia, Idaho, Kansas, Massachusetts, Minnesota, New York, Texas, and Wisconsin have been improved through this program. But much more needs to be done to implement similar programs across the country. With additional funding, the Energy Star program could develop a supportive infrastructure for contractors around the country, share information with interested state organizations, and develop marketing efforts in up to 10 metropolitan areas per year.

RECOMMENDATIONS

EPA's Energy Star program has clearly demonstrated its importance in helping the United States to capitalize on its greatest energy "resource"—energy efficiency. The program is delivering real progress toward meeting our country's environmental and energy security goals, while at the same time putting more money in consumers' pockets through reduced energy bills. More investment by the federal government is needed to expand the impact of this voluntary partnership between the government and industry.

The Alliance to Save Energy recommends the subcommittee take the following actions to best leverage the proven results that stem from EPA's Energy Star program:

—First, we ask that the House, Senate, and conference reports again specify the exact level of federal funding that is appropriated for the Energy Star program as in the fiscal year 2006 reports. Such direction to EPA is needed to assure that funding intended by Congress for the program is used by the agency for that purpose. Unfortunately, EPA has a history of imposing internal cuts in the program, especially in years when Congress has not specified Energy Star funding.

—Second, we recommend that Congress increase funding of the Energy Star program by $10 million over the fiscal year 2006 appropriated level, to $60.0 million, in order to expand the number of products, programs, and partners involved in the current program. This should be a first step to doubling the $50 million budget for the Energy Star program within five years. In particular, the added funds will allow expansion of the new Energy Star "Home Performance" component nationwide.

CONCLUSION

The Energy Star program proves that we can protect the environment while simultaneously saving consumers money on their energy bills and enhancing the economy. Energy Star provides the catalyst for many businesses, state and local governments, and consumers to invest in energy efficiency, which in turn yields multiple private and public benefits. It does this by providing access to information, improving brand recognition, and providing positive publicity.

While there are many demands on the country's financial resources, Energy Star has proven tremendously cost-effective, and it returns important benefits to the nation. Every added federal dollar invested in Energy Star in fiscal year 2007 will return a significant and cost-effective yield in pollution reduction, economic stimulation, energy security, and consumer savings.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE AMERICAN SOCIETY FOR MICROBIOLOGY

The American Society for Microbiology (ASM) appreciates the opportunity to submit testimony on the fiscal year 2007 appropriation for the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The ASM is the largest single life science organization in the world, comprised of more than 43,000 members. ASM members are involved in research to improve human health and the environment and work in academic, industrial, medical, and governmental institutions worldwide. The ASM's mission is to enhance the science of microbiology, to gain a better understanding of life processes, and to promote the application of this knowledge for improved health, and for economic and environmental well-being.

The EPA's mission is to protect human health and to safeguard the environment. The ASM believes that sound public policy for environmental protection depends on adequately funded intramural and extramural research programs based on scientific peer review to assure that support is awarded for both quality and relevant research. At laboratories located throughout the nation, the EPA works to assess environmental conditions and to identify, understand, and solve current and future environmental problems; integrate the work of scientific partners such as nations, private sector organizations, academia and other agencies; and provide leadership in addressing emerging environmental issues and in advancing the science and technology of risk assessment and risk management. It is essential that the EPA science and technology programs are adequately supported.

The fiscal year 2007 request for the EPA's science and technology funding is $788 million, 8 percent above fiscal year 2006. Science and technology programs are important to addressing complex environmental problems, and the ASM urges Congress to support the Administration's overall request to increase funding for the EPA's science and technology programs by $58.5 million. The EPA depends on excellent research programs to evaluate risk, develop and defend protective standards, anticipate future health and environmental threats, and to identify solutions to environmental problems.

WATERBORNE PATHOGENS

Although the American public enjoys safe drinking water, waterborne disease outbreaks caused by pathogenic bacteria, viruses, and parasites continue to be reported. Surface water and groundwater sources can be contaminated with many different types of chemical substances and microorganisms. Furthermore, the disinfection process itself creates a number of potentially toxic chemical byproducts. The EPA conducts the necessary research to provide a strong scientific foundation for standards that limit the public's exposure to drinking water contaminants and disinfection byproducts. This research supports major regulatory activities including the Microbial/Disinfection Byproduct Rules, and future decisions on unregulated pathogens and chemicals.

The EPA has drinking water regulations for more than 90 contaminants. The Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA) includes a process for identifying new contaminants, which are reported in a Contaminant Candidate List (CCL). The first CCL was published in March 1998. The EPA uses this list of unregulated contaminants to prioritize research and data collection efforts to help determine whether a specific contaminant should be regulated.

In addition to releasing the most recent CCL in February 2005, the EPA provided an update on its work to improve the CCL process for the future that is based, in part, on recommendations from the National Research Council and the National Drinking Water Advisory Council. Goals for the future include:

—evaluate a wider range of information;
—screen contaminants more systematically; and
—develop a more comprehensive CCL by expanding the number of contaminants being reviewed for inclusion on the next CCL.

The EPA is currently working on the third CCL and anticipates its draft release in 2006. The increasing numbers of contaminants and candidate contaminants that must be monitored and regulated require adequate funding. Research focuses on filling data gaps, developing analytical methods for measuring the occurrence of chemical and microbial contaminants on the CCL and developing and evaluating cost-effective treatment technologies for removing pathogens from water supplies, while at the same time minimizing microbial/disinfection by-product formation.

Under the Beaches Environmental Assessment and Coastal Health Act of 2000 (BEACH Act), the EPA protects the quality of the nation's coastal and Great Lakes region recreational water. Swimming in some recreational waters can pose a risk of illness as a result of exposure to microbial pathogens. The EPA's safety improve-

ment strategy includes the general reduction of pathogen levels in recreational waters by:

—reducing pollution from Combined Sewer Overflows (CSOs);

—addressing major sources discharging pathogens under the permit program; and

—improving management of septic systems.

The EPA is conducting research on waterborne pathogens, arsenic, disinfection byproducts, and other chemical contaminants to protect the nation. The ASM supports the Administration's request to increase Drinking Water and Water Quality research by $9.8 million in fiscal year 2007.

INDOOR AIR QUALITY

Every breath we take, indoors and out, we inhale not just life-sustaining oxygen but dust and smoke, chemicals, microorganisms, and particles and pollutants that float on the air. The average human inhales approximately 10 cubic meters of air daily. Because most people spend about 22 hours each day indoors, poor indoor air quality (IAQ) affects both public health and national productivity. At present, a shortage of IAQ research leaves much unknown about cause-and-effect specifics, but there is little doubt that contaminated buildings are attracting more attention as occupants develop often vague symptoms followed by remediation, litigation, and other costly outcomes.

Although IAQ issues are often viewed as a problem of modern buildings, connections made between air and disease date to ancient times. Long before the germ theory of disease and its indictment of pathogenic microorganisms, humans associated foul miasmas like "sewer gas" with infectious diseases such as malaria. Initially, prevention of disease transmission by infectious pathogens became the principal concern of early public health advocates. Today we understand that airborne nonpathogenic organisms, fragments of microbial cells, and by-products of microbial metabolism also cause problems. The ASM believes that more research is needed in this area for the safety and protection of human health and urges Congress not to support the Administration's request for a $6.4 million reduction in fiscal year 2007 for Air Quality research at the EPA.

COMPUTATION TOXICOLOGY

The EPA's Office of Research and Development (ORD) has initiated a research program on Computational Toxicology to better understand the relationships between sources of environmental pollutant exposure and adverse outcomes. Computational toxicology integrates computing and information technology with the technologies of molecular biology and chemistry and is used to improve the EPA's prioritization of data requirements and risk assessments for toxic chemicals. Strategic objectives of this program are to: (1) improve understanding of the linkages in the continuum between the source of a chemical in the environment and adverse outcomes, (2) provide predictive models for screening and testing and (3) improve quantitative risk assessment.

The ASM supports the Administration's request to increase research funding for this program by $2.7 million in fiscal year 2007. Part of this increase will support a biologically based system to reduce the uncertainty in the prioritization and categorization of chemicals, and develop computational models of biological processes relevant to the induction of toxicity for high priority environmental contaminants. As a result, the Agency would be less reliant on default assumptions of risk assessments and able to accurately characterize the uncertainty associated with risk predictions.

STAR GRANTS PROGRAM

The EPA's Office of Research and Development (ORD) manages the STAR grants program, which is a competitive, peer-reviewed, extramural research grants program intended to increase access to the nation's best scientists and engineers in academic and other nonprofit research institutions. Research sponsored by the STAR program allows the EPA to fill information gaps that are not addressed completely by its intramural research programs, and to respond to new and emerging issues that the agency's laboratories are not able to address.

The EPA fiscal year 2007 budget requests $65 million for the STAR grants program, a 5 percent reduction from the fiscal year 2006 level, and 36 percent below the peak funding level of $102 million in fiscal year 2002. The National Academy of Sciences (NAS) has urged the continuation of and investment in the STAR program. In 2003, the NAS released a report titled, The Measure of STAR: Review of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Science to Achieve Results (STAR) Research Grants Program, which argues that the STAR grants are a critical means

for the agency to access scientific expertise that it does not have in-house, and to respond quickly to emerging issues.

Since its inception in 1995, the STAR research projects have resulted in articles in highly respected, peer-reviewed journals, and have already helped to improve our understanding of the causes, exposures and effects of environmental pollution and microorganisms in the environment. The ASM urges Congress to increase funding for the STAR grants program to the fiscal year 2002 level of $102 million. The STAR program focuses on critical research areas, including the health effects of particulate matter, drinking water, water quality, global change, ecosystem assessment and restoration, human health risk assessment, endocrine disrupting chemicals, pollution prevention and new technologies, children's health, and socio-economic research.

STAR FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM

As part of its STAR program, the EPA offers Graduate Fellowships for master's and doctoral level students in environmentally related fields of study. The STAR fellowship program was initiated in 1995. Approximately 1,100 STAR fellowships have been awarded since the inception of the program. The purpose of the fellowship program is to encourage promising students to obtain advanced degrees and pursue careers in an environmental field. This goal is consistent with the immediate and long-term mission of the EPA, to protect public health and the environment.

The EPA budget requests a $3.4 million reduction to the STAR Fellowship Program in fiscal year 2007, or 37 percent below the fiscal year 2006 level. This reduction will affect approximately 37 graduate students pursuing degrees related to environmental sciences. The ASM urges Congress to restore funding for the STAR Fellowship Program. The STAR fellowship program has proven to be beneficial to both the public and private sectors by providing a steady stream of well-trained environmental specialists to meet environmental challenges in our society. It has also provided new environmental research in physical, biological, health sciences, and social sciences and engineering.

CONCLUSION

Well-funded research is needed to address emerging issues affecting the environment and human health. For the EPA to fulfill its mission to protect human health and to safeguard the natural environment, the ASM urges Congress to support the Administration's overall request for increased funding for the EPA's science and technology programs in fiscal year 2007.

The ASM appreciates the opportunity to provide written testimony and would be pleased to assist the Subcommittee as it considers its appropriation for the EPA for fiscal year 2007.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE AMERICAN SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA LEAGUE

On behalf of America's orchestras, the American Symphony Orchestra League urges the subcommittee to approve fiscal year 2007 funding for the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) at a level of $170 million. Congressional support for the NEA has strengthened in recent years, evidenced by meaningful incremental funding increases. Still, the NEA has never fully recovered from a 40 percent budget cut in fiscal year 1996. The current fiscal year 2006 level of funding for the NEA—$124.4 million—is well below the 1992 appropriation of $176 million.

An increased appropriation would expand the NEA's ability to serve the American public through grants supporting and promoting the creation, preservation, and presentation of the arts in America through the NEA's core programs—Access to Artistic Excellence, Challenge America: Reaching Every Community, Learning in the Arts for Children and Youth, and Federal/State partnerships—and through important national initiatives.

Founded in 1942, the American Symphony Orchestra League is the national service organization for nearly 1,000 symphony, chamber, youth, and collegiate orchestras, with budgets ranging from less than $50,000 to more than $50 million. Together with the NEA, we share a common goal of strengthening orchestras as organizations and promoting the value of the music they perform.

As the NEA marks its 40th year, it is important to recognize the irreplaceable contributions federal funding makes to the creative capacity of the United States. The grants awarded to orchestras by the NEA, and support provided to orchestras through NEA funds administered by state arts agencies, provide critical support for projects that increase access to music in communities nationwide.

A few quick facts about the state of American orchestras:

Across America, there are 1,800 adult and youth orchestras.—Supported by a network of musicians, volunteers, administrators, and community leaders, America's adult, youth, and college orchestras exist in every state and territory, in cities and rural areas alike. They engage more than 150,000 instrumentalists, employ (with and without pay) more than 8,000 administrative staff, and attract more than 475,000 volunteers and trustees.

During the last decade, America's orchestras performed for more people than ever before.—American orchestras have never been in greater demand. In the course of a season, orchestras perform nearly 36,000 concerts to total audiences nearing 28 million. Current attendance at concerts is higher than a decade ago.

Orchestras remain artistically rich, economically challenged—and amazingly resilient.—Though their structure is delicately balanced, the economic performance of America's orchestras continues to improve. Three of the communities that lost orchestras during the recession of 2002 through 2005 have already revived their orchestras or started new ones. Musicians and civic leaders value live symphony music so much that they do whatever it takes to ensure the presence of an orchestra in their community.

Orchestras are an important part of the community fabric.—The resolve of American orchestras to reach all segments of their communities is strong. In the 2003–04 season, America's orchestras performed more than 36,000 concerts, including twice as many education concerts as a decade ago. Orchestras are working to increase the representation of their diverse communities both on stage and in the audience, and composer residencies are on the rise. Orchestras are essential and active partners in increasing access to music, improving the quality of life in their communities by collaborating with school systems and other local partners to deliver a wide array of performances and programs.

NEA GRANTS UNIQUELY SUPPORT THE CREATION, PRESENTATION, AND PRESERVATION OF THE ARTS

In the most recently completed grant year, fiscal year 2005, the NEA's Grants to Organizations included 118 grants to orchestras and the communities they serve, supporting arts education for children and adults, expanding public access to performances, preserving great classical works, and fostering the creative endeavors of contemporary classical musicians, composers, and conductors.

The NEA is a critical component in the network of public, private, corporate, and philanthropic support that makes the work of America's orchestras possible. Orchestras and the communities they serve benefit from NEA support through direct grants to organizations and distribution of NEA funds through state arts agencies. Concert income accounts for only 37 percent of orchestra revenue. The remaining support for orchestras is generated by a delicate balance of private and public support. For many orchestras, the benefit of an NEA grant goes far beyond the dollar-value of the award and serves to multiply private support by attracting additional sponsorship and recognition.

—In fiscal year 2005, the Juneau Symphony received an NEA grant, funding a tour to Wrangell, Alaska through Alaska's Inside Passage. This is the first NEA grant the orchestra has received. Support from the NEA enabled the orchestra to bring live symphonic music to underserved communities and helped attract new funding sources from area businesses.

—The Orchestra of Southern Utah received its first NEA grant to support the Spanish Trail Festival, a celebration of the Hispanic, Paiute, and Pioneer heritage of the area through music and native dance. The NEA grant enabled the orchestra to commission an original composition by Marshall McDonald, a nationally prominent guest artist, pianist and composer, and helped procure a $5,000 grant from the George S. and Dolores Doré Eccles Foundation.

—NEA funding for the New Mexico Symphony Orchestra supported a state-wide tour to small, rural, and underserved communities in New Mexico, serving approximately 5,000 new audience members and reaching over 42,000 children through educational programs in partnership with local school systems and community centers.

NEA FUNDING HELPS ORCHESTRAS CONNECT TO THEIR COMMUNITIES

The NEA motto, "A Great Nation Deserves Great Art" aptly reinforces the key focus of the agency. While the vast majority of NEA funds are allocated to arts institutions, the NEA exists to serve the American people. Projects supported by the NEA must demonstrate artistic excellence and a strong capacity to reach new audiences. Audiences across the country are currently experiencing an NEA-funded

project that exhibits the hallmarks of the agency: reaching new audiences, attracting additional financial support, and providing access to the arts to communities nationwide.

An NEA grant to the Glens Falls (N.Y.) Symphony Orchestra supports the "Ford Made in America" project, a collaborative commissioning, performance, and outreach project that involves 65 smaller-budget orchestras, including at least one from each of the 50 states. In addition to support from the NEA, the Ford Motor Company Fund contributed major funding, becoming the title sponsor, and the program is a partnership of the American Symphony Orchestra League and Meet the Composer. The largest consortium commission ever planned by American orchestras, Ford Made in America gives ensembles in smaller communities the capacity to premiere a new work by Joan Tower, an established American composer of national repute.

For orchestras with smaller budgets, commissioning and presenting a major new work by a nationally recognized composer can be difficult, due to budget constraints and limited staff resources. The collaborative nature of the Ford Made in America project provides the 65 participating orchestras the opportunity to achieve together what no one of them could afford to do on their own. On the local level, Ford Made in America has opened up new potential funding streams for participating orchestras. Communities in all participating orchestras are enjoying the "buzz" that comes with being connected with the greater symphony community and garnering national attention by being part of an exciting new project.

Joan Tower's composition titled "Made in America" received its world premiere by the Glens Falls Symphony Orchestra in October 2005, and will be performed in May 2006 by the Missoula Symphony Orchestra. The subsequent performances will take place through March 2007, making "Made in America" the most-performed work by a living American composer. The Ford Made in America project is more than just a performance of one piece, however. Each participating orchestra has been equipped with a "tool kit" which provides talking points for local fund raising, marketing materials, and education lesson plans that serve as the basis for developing distinctive community-based programs.

The Ford Made in America project exemplifies the vitality of America's orchestras and composers, a spirit of partnership, and a commitment to creativity and communities. It also demonstrates the capacity of the NEA to identify and support efforts that encourage creative collaboration and build the artistic strengths of local communities.

The Endowment's unique ability to provide a national forum to promote excellence, both through high standards for artistic products and the highest expectation of accessibility, remains one of the strongest arguments for a federal role in support of the arts. We ask you to support creativity and access to the arts by approving an increase in funding for the National Endowment for the Arts.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE ASSOCIATION OF STATE AND TERRITORIAL SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT OFFICIALS (ASTSWMO); NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF CONVENIENCE STORES (NAGS); NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF TRUCK STOP OPERATORS (NATSO); NATIONAL GROUND WATER ASSOCIATION (NGWA); NATURAL RESOURCES DEFENSE COUNCIL (NRDC); PETROLEUM EQUIPMENT INSTITUTE (PEI); SIERRA CLUB; AND THE SOCIETY OF INDEPENDENT GASOLINE MARKETERS OF AMERICA (SIGMA)

As you prepare to develop fiscal year 2007 appropriations legislation, the undersigned organizations request that you increase substantially the level of appropriations from the Federal Leaking Underground Storage Tank (LUST) Trust Fund to fund fully the Federal underground storage tank (UST) program. Such an increase in fiscal year 2007 appropriations will: (1) provide important assistance to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and States in preventing petroleum releases from regulated USTs; (2) enable EPA and States to undertake remediation work at UST sites where a responsible party can not be found; (3) provide Federal and State UST officials with adequate resources to ,enforce Federal and State UST laws; and, (4) enhance the protection of human health and the environment.

The Federal LUST Trust Fund provides money to States and EPA to operate their UST programs and to assist States in remediating releases when a responsible party cannot be found. In the years since its inception, this Fund has amassed a balance of $2.349 billion as of September 30, 2005. A preliminary analysis by the Treasury Department reports that in fiscal year 2005 the Fund received an additional $190.8 million from the Federal LUST tax and $77.7 million from interest on the balance in the Fund. Yet, for the last several years Administration budget re-

quests and congressional appropriations from the Fund have been less than the interest earned—$69.4 million in fiscal year 2005.

These minimal annual appropriations levels have persisted for years, causing the balance in the Fund to rise to a point that it could now fund annual appropriations at current levels for the next 30 years—without an additional dollar in income! Clearly, the LUST Trust Fund is being used as a Federal deficit reduction device rather than for the important purpose originally envisioned by Congress—protection of the environment. This situation must change. We have asked the Administration to increase its budget request for the program, and we are asking you to increase congressional appropriations.

The Energy Policy Act of 2005 contained several reforms to the Federal UST program that expand the permitted uses of Federal LUST Trust Fund dollars and place substantial new responsibilities on the EPA and State UST agencies. The legislation authorized significant increases in appropriations from the Fund to assure that EPA has the financial resources to implement these reforms, to assure that the new regulatory provisions do not represent an unreasonable burden on the States, and to allow EPA and States to expand their response to UST petroleum releases, including those containing MTBE. If the Administration and Congress do not break with tradition and appropriate significantly higher amounts from the Fund in the coming years, EPA and the States will be unable to implement these important reforms.

The President's proposed budget includes an additional $26 million in State and Tribal Assistance Grants (STAG) dedicated to help States implement these important reforms, yet requests only $73 million from the LUST Trust Fund for overall program operations. While the additional STAG funds will be of great assistance to the States, they are insufficient to fully implement the reforms of the Energy Policy Act without a substantial increase in appropriations from the LUST Trust Fund as authorized in the Energy Policy Act.

We understand that the Administration and Congress currently are facing a difficult budget situation and there are many demands on Federal funds. However, the Federal LUST Trust Fund must cease to be used as a deficit reduction tool in the budget process and its massive resources must be employed to fulfill Congress' intent—prevention of UST releases, remediation of UST releases, and enforcement of Federal and state UST laws.

As you consider fiscal year 2007 spending priorities, we urge you to ensure this important environmental program is adequately funded and that the resources collected to protect the environment, prevent UST releases and enforce Federal and State UST laws are used to do just that.

Thank you for your support for the Federal UST program and please let us know how we may be of assistance to you and your staffs in this effort.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE APPALACHIAN TRAIL CONSERVANCY

Mr. Chairman and Honorable Members of the Subcommittee: I am writing in behalf of the Appalachian Trail Conservancy to present this testimony in support of three Land and Water Conservation Fund appropriations totaling $5.6 million and two Forest Legacy appropriations totaling $3.22 million. These projects are in Tennessee, Virginia, Connecticut, Vermont and Maine and if funded will lead to acquisitions that significantly benefit the Appalachian National Scenic Trail (A.T.), America's favorite long-distance hiking trail and a unit of the National Park System.

The Appalachian Trail Conservancy is a volunteer-based, private nonprofit organization dedicated to the conservation of the 2,175-mile Appalachian National Scenic Trail, a 250,000-acre greenway extending from Maine to Georgia. Our mission is to ensure that future generations will enjoy the clean air and water, scenic vistas, wildlife and opportunities for simple recreation and renewal along the entire Trail corridor. Our 37,000 members come from all 50 states and last year our 5,000 affiliated volunteers contributed more than 195,000 hours toward managing and maintaining the Trail and its associated facilities and resources.

Cherokee National Forest ($3 million LWCF).—We are requesting $3 million from the Land and Water Conservation Fund for the Cherokee National Forest in Tennessee. This funding will support the acquisition of four tracts—three of them directly benefiting the Appalachian Trail. The most spectacular of them is the Hump Mountain tract (470 acres for $1.175 million). This in-holding consists of vacant land, both open and wooded, and lies on the upper slopes of Hump Mountain and includes the headwaters and upper watershed of Shell Creek. This tract is situated in the immediate view shed of the A.T. which traverses along the crest of Hump Mountain at elevations exceeding 5,000 feet. This section of the A.T. is characterized by high altitude grassy balds situated along the Tennessee/North Carolina state

line. Views from and to the property are outstanding. Currently, this tract is being subdivided and advertised for sale on the Internet; however, no lots have been sold and the landowner has indicated he would consider selling the tract as a whole. The Southern Appalachian Highlands Conservancy (SAHC), Appalachian Trail Conservancy (ATC), The Nature Conservancy (TNC) and local hiking clubs are working in cooperation with the Forest Service to prevent development of this tract and bring this tract under Forest Service ownership.

Also in the Cherokee National Forest is the Shook Branch relocation tract (20 acres for $50,000). The present location of the A.T. in the Shook Branch area includes approximately a one-quarter-mile walk on a paved county road that not only diminishes A.T. values, but also creates a safety concern of mixing pedestrians with vehicular traffic. The original Trail route planned for this area has met with an unwilling seller. The Forest Service, in cooperation with ATC and local hiking clubs, has determined a better and more scenic route for the Appalachian Trail that can be accomplished without utilizing eminent domain. Two properties on the new proposed route were recently acquired from willing sellers and only this tract remains to complete this A.T. relocation.

The final A.T. parcel in the Cherokee National Forest is the Pond Mountain Wilderness tract: (11 acres for $27,500). This tract is within 1,500 feet of the Appalachian Trail and is adjacent to the federal Pond Mountain Wilderness area. Acquisition will allow the Forest Service to provide parking for foot travel access into National Forest System lands and will enhance several outdoor activities such as hunting, camping, hiking and other backcountry recreational experiences.

George Washington and Jefferson National Forest ($1.25 million LWCF).—This appropriation will enable acquisition of a combination of fee-simple interests as well as conservation easements along a proposed seven-mile relocation of the Appalachian Trail adjacent to the New River in Giles County in Southwest Virginia. For nearly 30 years the final alignment of the A.T. in this area has remained unresolved due to challenges with trail design, land ownership, and hiker-safety issues. The current footpath location is on private property owned by Celanese Acetate, LLC and is open only at the discretion of the landowner. The current route parallels U.S. 460, passes by a large chemical plant, provides minimal recreational or scenic values, and poses a barrier to certain Celanese land uses. The largest portion of the requested funding will be to purchase fee interest in approximately 400 acres from Celanese. Seven scenic easements will be acquired from additional landowners amounting to approximately an additional 25 acres.

Through the collaborative efforts of the USDA Forest Service and the Appalachian Trail Conservancy, in negotiation with the managers of the Celanese Acetate, LLC Chemical Plant and the local community and government, a new alternative route was identified on the Celanese property that provides a scenic and safe route from the New River to the summit of Peters Mountain. The new route alleviates impacts to adjacent private landowners. This is a route that is receiving wide public support. The completed trail will provide the local community with an outstanding recreational opportunity, as this area of Southwestern Virginia seeks to capitalize on outdoor recreation dollars for economic growth.

The proposed new route crosses the New River and U.S. 460 and immediately enters the woods. The terrain and topography will shield the Trail from the audible and visual impacts of the chemical plant and the highway. The trail will follow the New River for one mile before ascending a ridgeline onto Hemlock Ridge through terrain that provides a more remote experience and minimizes conflicts with Celanese operations. As it continues and ascends Peters Mountain, it affords spectacular vistas of the surrounding terrain.

Skiff Mountain Forest Legacy ($1.22 million Legacy).— This Forest Legacy funding will allow the State of Connecticut to acquire an easement on 510 acres of working forest in the towns of Kent and Sharon in the northwest corner. The Skiff Mountain project is being spearheaded by the Trust for Public Land and the State of Connecticut and if funded will implement the second and final phase of this project. Given the level of development and the relative lack of open space in a small urban state like Connecticut this presents a unique opportunity to conserve a large piece of working forest. These lands contain the headwaters of several tributary streams to the Housatonic River and also harbor important wildlife habitat. Of importance to the Appalachian Trail, these parcels provide significant viewshed protection and buffer the Trail from development. These lands also contain the upstream area for several brooks that are used as water sources by hikers. Keeping these lands from being developed will sustain the rural economy by providing a long term source of forest products in a region that frequently is seeing large parcels subdivided for second home development.

Broad Brook Property—Green Mountain National Forest ($1.1 million LWCF).—The Broad Brook Property is an important addition to the Green Mountain National Forest along the Massachusetts border. Available for acquisition in fiscal year 2007 are the final 970 acres of the 3,921-acre Broad Brook watershed property. For many years, the city of North Adams, Massachusetts, which owns this parcel, used the Broad Brook watershed as a source of drinking water for city residents. However, several years ago the city ceased depending on Broad Brook for its water and is now interested in selling the property. The State of Vermont has mapped this parcel as being entirely within black bear production habitat capable of supporting high densities of cub producing females. On the property there can be found a large and healthy population of the state threatened Large Whorled Pogonia (Isotria verticillata), and close to 7 miles of pristine headwaters streams. A portion of the Appalachian National Scenic Trail, which in this part of Vermont coincides with the Long Trail, passes across the Broad Brook property. The current A.T. protection is a narrow easement and this acquisition would bring the level of A.T. protection up to an adequate standard. Putting the trail in the midst of a larger protected landscape is the surest way to retain the wild and scenic experience that hikers currently enjoy elsewhere in southern Vermont.

Grafton Notch Forest Legacy: Maine ($2 million Legacy).—The Grafton Notch parcel is part of the Mahoosuc Range, an important mountain landscape that is seeing intense development pressure around the resort community of Bethel, Maine. This project is ranked #1 on the President's Forest Legacy list and the funding would provide an opportunity for the State of Maine to acquire a 3,688-acre parcel. This parcel contains spectacular views both to and from the Appalachian Trail. It also contains a section of the Grafton Loop Trail, a side trail to the Appalachian Trail. This new trail is designed to take pressure off of the heavily visited section of the A.T. in the Mahoosuc Range. The Grafton Notch parcel is surrounded on three sides by state land and is part of an important mountain ecosystem that is one of only three places in Maine where peaks rise above 4,000 feet. If it is not purchased by the state, the parcel is vulnerable to development since it is in the same valley as the Sunday River Ski Area, a destination resort that has been spawning very large subdivisions at a rate that has caused concern in the local community.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for the opportunity to present this testimony in support of Land and Water Conservation Fund and Forest Legacy appropriations.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF AUDUBON CONNECTICUT

Mr. Chairman and Honorable Members of the Committee: On behalf of the Audubon Connecticut, I appreciate the opportunity to present this testimony in support of a $2 million appropriation from the Land and Water Conservation Fund for land acquisition within the Salmon River Division of the Silvio O. Conte National Wildlife Refuge in Connecticut, as part of an overall $4 million request for funding for refuge projects in Connecticut, Massachusetts, Vermont and New Hampshire.

Audubon Connecticut, the state organization of the National Audubon Society with more than 10,000 members statewide, works to further the protection of birds, other wildlife and their habitats using education, science and conservation, and legislative advocacy for the benefit of humanity and the earth's biological diversity.

In 1991, the Silvio O. Conte National Fish and Wildlife Refuge (NFWR) Act directed USFWS to study the entire Connecticut River watershed, from Vermont and New Hampshire, through Massachusetts to Connecticut, and create a national fish and wildlife refuge. The Conte NFWR is no ordinary refuge. The Connecticut River watershed, 7.2 million acres in four states, is larger and more populous than areas usually considered for a refuge. The purposes of the Conte Refuge are also much broader, it is one of the few fish and wildlife refuges, and protecting natural diversity is a new scientific and social challenge. There are several announced, identified and potential IBAs within the boundaries of the Refuge. The two current acquisition opportunities are located at the Salmon River Division in Connecticut and the Fort River Division in Massachusetts.

The northern third of the watershed located in Vermont and New Hampshire is part of the "Northern Forest" which is largely privately owned industrial forest stretching from the Adirondacks to the coast of Maine. Large blocks of this land have been sold in unprecedented quantities recently as the timber industry relocates some of its financial assets. Important bottomland forest, flood plain wetlands, and a variety of grassland areas are generally located along the middle third of the Connecticut River in western Massachusetts and northern Connecticut. The mouth of the river, located in southern Connecticut, contains internationally significant fresh, brackish and saltwater tidally influenced wetlands. The Refuge emphasizes pro-

tecting Federal trust species—migratory birds, migratory fish, federally endangered or threatened species, and rare and exemplary natural communities.

Forty-eight "Special Focus Areas" encompassing roughly 180,000 acres have been identified within the watershed. These areas contribute substantially or in unique ways to supporting natural diversity in the watershed. There are two recognized IBAs and seven identified IBAs within the Refuge Special Focus areas in Connecticut; there are 14 in Massachusetts, four in Vermont, and one in New Hampshire.

In Connecticut, the Salmon River is recognized by U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (USFWS) as a high-priority Special Focus Area. Salmon River Division is comprised of a range of important natural features, including free-flowing rivers, thriving freshwater tidal marshes, forested watersheds, floodplain forests, and rare plants and animals.

The Elm Camp Johnson property proposed for acquisition in 2007 would be the first acquisition in this division and is a keystone property containing these features:

—3,360 feet of frontage on Pine Brook, a high-quality stream that provides remarkable cold-water fish habitat

—1,440 feet on the west bank of the Salmon River, site of extensive state and federal efforts to restore anadromous fish runs, including the Atlantic salmon

—Pine Brook is the only major Salmon tributary free of artificial barriers to migratory fish

I respectfully request that you include an appropriation of $4 million for the Silvio O. Conte NWR in fiscal year 2007 in the Interior and Related Agencies Appropriations bill, allocated to projects in the four states included in the Refuge, with $2 million for the Elm Camp Johnson parcel in Connecticut, and an additional $2 million for land acquisition projects in Massachusetts, Vermont and New Hampshire in the Fort River Division, Pondicherry, and Mohawk River Divisions.

Thank you for the opportunity to present this request.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF AUDUBON CONNECTICUT

Mr. Chairman and Honorable Members of the Committee: On behalf of Audubon Connecticut, I appreciate the opportunity to present this testimony in support of a $1 million appropriation from the Land and Water Conservation Fund for land acquisition within the Stewart B. McKinney National Wildlife Refuge.

Audubon Connecticut, the state organization of the National Audubon Society with more than 10,000 members statewide, works to further the protection of birds, other wildlife and their habitats using education, science and conservation, and legislative advocacy for the benefit of humanity and the earth's biological diversity.

The Stewart B. McKinney National Wildlife Refuge, named to honor the late U.S. congressman who was instrumental in its creation, was established to protect migratory bird habitat considered important to wading and shorebird species including heron, egrets, terns, plovers and oystercatchers among others. Stewart B. McKinney NWR is currently comprised of eight units stretching along 60 miles of Connecticut's coastline. In addition to the increase in habitat protection over the years, the refuge now provides opportunities for scientific research, environmental education, and fish and wildlife-oriented recreation. Located in the Atlantic Flyway, the refuge provides important resting, feeding, and nesting habitat for many species of wading birds, shorebirds, songbirds and terns, including the endangered roseate tern. Adjacent waters serve as wintering habitat for brant, scoters, American black duck and other waterfowl. Overall, the refuge encompasses over 800 acres of barrier beach, tidal wetland and fragile island habitats.

Available for refuge acquisition in fiscal year 2007 is the 22-acre Menunketesuck Salt Meadow Marsh in Westbrook, Connecticut. The property is comprised of pristine coastal tidal marsh, a forested upland, scrubland, and a rock outcropping that towers above 1,000 feet of frontage along the gentle Menunketesuck River as it winds its way to Long Island Sound. As a migratory stopover for neo-tropical migrant land birds, this riparian area is the top priority for acquisition for the refuge. It has been identified as an Important Bird Area by Audubon Connecticut because of its high value avian habitat.

Acquisition of the marsh property will enhance the resources of the current Salt Meadow Unit of the refuge, as it contains part of the least developed upland borders of any remaining tidal marsh in all of Connecticut. As much of the state's coastline has been built upon, it is rare to find such a large undeveloped marsh area in Connecticut. Under imminent threat of development into condominiums, this parcel

must be acquired by the Refuge if it is to continue to serve as an island of forested habitat land on an otherwise highly developed coastline.

In order to acquire the Menunketesuck Salt Meadow Marsh property, an appropriation of $1 million is needed from the Land and Water Conservation Fund in fiscal year 2007. This priority acquisition will increase wildlife habitat protection at the Stewart B. McKinney NWR and ensure the public continued opportunities for recreation and environmental education along Connecticut's coastline.

I respectfully request that you include an appropriation of $1 million for the Stewart B. McKinney NWR in the fiscal year 2007 Interior and Related Agencies Appropriations bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to present this request.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE ARIZONA WILDERNESS COALITION

Mr. Chairman and Honorable Members of the Subcommittee: I appreciate the opportunity to submit this testimony in support of an appropriation of $5.5 million from the Land and Water Conservation Fund for purchase of the Packard Ranch for the Coconino National Forest in Arizona.

The canyons, deserts, and forests of the Coconino National Forest are a tremendous natural resource for residents and visitors in central Arizona. Millions of visitors are drawn annually to the forest to camp, fish, picnic, ride horses, and enjoy winter sports.

This year, the Forest Service has the opportunity to acquire the 139-acre Packard Ranch property. Located upstream from the towns of Clarkdale and Cottonwood, the riparian areas along the Verde River and Sycamore Creek on the property provide critical habitat for threatened and endangered species including bald eagles, razorback suckers, and spikedace. The parcel is adjacent to the Sycamore Creek Wilderness, an area that protects the scenic red rock Sycamore Canyon.

Packard Ranch includes an important trailhead providing access to the Sycamore Canyon Wilderness. Both the Parson's and Packard hiking trails are entered exclusively from this property. Although the public has traditionally been permitted to use this trailhead, there is no permanent guarantee of access.

Properties with riparian frontage in Arizona are at a premium for development, and without permanent protection, it is predictable that Packard Ranch would be developed. If this were to happen, the character of the landscape could change dramatically, and the public could lose access to the trails and wilderness area.

With its strategic location within the Coconino National Forest, the acquisition of the Packard Ranch property in fiscal year 2007 will protect vital habitat, ensure continued public access to trails, and preserve the unique scenic vistas of Sycamore Canyon. Acquiring this property from the currently willing seller should be provided the highest level of priority. An appropriation of $5.5 million is needed from the Land and Water Conservation Fund to ensure that this land will be protected in perpetuity.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for the opportunity to present this testimony in support of the acquisition of Packard Ranch for the Coconino National Forest.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF AMERICAN RIVERS, ASSOCIATION OF STATE AND INTERSTATE WATER POLLUTION CONTROL ADMINISTRATORS, INTERSTATE COUNCIL ON WATER POLICY, ASSOCIATION OF AMERICAN STATE GEOLOGISTS, WESTERN STATES WATER COUNCIL, AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF HYDROLOGY, ENVIRONMENTAL DEFENSE, AMERICAN SOCIETY OF CIVIL ENGINEERS, WATER ENVIRONMENTAL FEDERATION, FEDERATION OF FLYFISHERS, AMERICAN CANOE ASSOCIATION, ASSOCIATION OF STATE FLOOD PLAIN MANAGERS, TROUT UNLIMITED, ASSOCIATION OF STATE DAM SAFETY OFFICIALS, NATIONAL WATER RESOURCES ASSOCIATION, THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF FLOOD AND STORMWATER MANAGEMENT AGENCIES, AMERICAN WHITEWATER, AND INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF FISH AND WHILEDLIFE AGENCIES

We seek your help to increase funding in the federal fiscal year 2007 budget sufficient to restore the U.S. Geological Survey's Cooperative Water Program (CWP) and National Streamflow Information Program (NSIP) to at least fiscal year 2003 levels of capability. Restoring this capacity requires an appropriation of at least $74 million for the CWP (rather than the $62.171 million in the President's request) and $16.764 million for the NSIP (as requested by the President).

Many of our members are active, financial partners in the Cooperative Water Program. All of us rely on the streamflow data collected and disseminated by these two important programs.

Together, these two programs comprise a critical national system of water resource monitoring. The USGS operates and maintains these networks with extensive cooperation from state agencies, interstate organizations, tribal and local governments and many non-governmental organizations.

The Nation's need for accurate streamflow data continues to increase along with our population. This information is used by federal, state, tribal, and local government agencies, by public utilities, private businesses, non-profit organizations and individuals, on a regular basis to forecast flooding and drought events, to plan and protect water supplies for agricultural, municipal, and industrial uses, to design bridges, manage hydropower production, schedule recreation activities, evaluate dam safety and to integrate ecological protection of wetlands, fish and wildlife management and for endangered species conservation with our other priorities.

Although these data collection and science programs benefit so many interests, their funding has been allowed to erode to the point that the quantity and quality of the basic data are threatened, with significant adverse consequences to a growing and diverse number of decision makers and stakeholders. Years of inadequate federal funding threatens the availability of critical data regarding stream flows, lake levels, groundwater levels and water quality, which are the basis for many essential public and private decisions. The President's request for the CWP will continue a pattern of steady erosion of federal support and the elimination or obsolescence of many long-term gages, undermining our planning, design, forecasting and emergency warning capabilities.

In 1998, Congress' concern about streamgaging led the USGS to create the National Streamflow Information Program. Unlike the Cooperative Water Program (which is funded in large part by non-federal Cooperators), Congress determined that the NSIP should be funded entirely with federal appropriations. In November 2004, the National Research Council's Committee on Water Resources Research completed its assessment of the USGS plans for the NSIP: "Overall, the Committee concludes that the National Streamflow Information Program is a sound, well-conceived program that meets the nation's needs for streamflow measurement, interpretation, and information delivery."

The NSIP has been severely under funded and we urge your support for the President's request to increase its appropriation to $16.764 million for fiscal year 2007 in order to restore program capability to its fiscal year 2003 level. The NSIP is currently able to fund less than 15 percent of the gages listed in the plan approved by the National Research Council. In future years, another $100 million will be needed to reactivate and add streamgages, upgrade the system, and realize the full vision of the NSIP. A fully funded NSIP averts the loss of long-term gages that are critical for analysis of trends, floods, and water supply. A strong federal investment in the NSIP is needed to reverse the current trend of annually shutting down streamgages that provide the basis for flood warnings and info for water resource management.

The President's request for the Cooperative Water Program in fiscal year 2007 ($62.171 million) represents a cut of $2 million and will exacerbate the decline in CWP capability. For over 100 years, the CWP has been maintained as a federal/non-federal partnership, funded through 50/50 percent cost-share agreements. Today, roughly 70 percent of the funding is from non-USGS sources.

For fiscal year 2007, we ask that you appropriate at least $74 million for the Cooperative Water Program to restore its ability to its fiscal year 2003 level, as we urged in our August 12, 2005 letter to Interior Secretary Norton and OMB Associate Director Anderson. This amount is still well below the $138 million contributed by Cooperators annually since fiscal year 2004. We will continue asking Interior, OMB and the President to increase their annual requests to match the Cooperators' level of support over the next few years. In the meantime, we seek your help.

Our recent experience with the prediction of catastrophic storms and the design of adequate safeguards proves that timely and accurate information needed for water resources management has never been more important.

We urge you to give a higher priority to these vital programs in fiscal year 2007 and then increase future appropriations until the Cooperators' matching contributions are fully met and the nation's water monitoring system is fully stabilized. In this regard, the funding levels we are requesting should be viewed as the minimum needed to maintain existing capabilities, while even greater funding would hasten the restoration and completion of a National Streamgaging System that we depend on in making water supply and emergency management decisions.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE AWWA RESEARCH FOUNDATION (AWWARF)

Thank you for the opportunity to present testimony on behalf of AwwaRF. We request the consideration of the Subcommittee for $5 million in funding from the EPA Science and Technology account of your fiscal year 2007 bill.

Providing safe, secure, and affordable drinking water to the American public is a national priority and compliance with federally mandated drinking water regulations is an essential part of this process. AwwaRF, acting in its capacity as the research arm of the North American water supply community, supplies much of the sound science and knowledge that utilities depend upon to meet EPA regulations. We believe that the Foundation offers a successful model for how to fund this crucial research in today's challenging budgetary climate.

AwwaRF generates $12 million each year in cash from our nearly 1,000 participating utilities in the research subscription program. This funding is produced when utilities invest $2.10 per million gallons of delivered water out of their rate base with the Foundation. We generate a further $13 million each year through research partnerships and researcher in-kind contributions. Very simply, when the Congress provides $5 million in EPA Science and Technology funding for AwwaRF, it is instantly matched by $12 million from the subscription program. When partnerships and in-kind are factored in, every $1 in Congressional funding is matched by $5 from AwwaRF and the water supply community. We are proud of our demonstrated ability, year after year, to turn $5 million in Congressional funding into a $30 million drinking water research program. This achievement is made possible by the funds generated by local utility customers through their water bill and by the investment of the Congress.

Over the past 20 years, this approach has produced an AwwaRF investment in drinking water research of over $370 million, including $53 million in Congressional funding. This translates into 710 completed and 323 ongoing projects. These projects have been conducted by researchers in leading universities, water utilities, and consulting engineering firms from throughout the world. The results are providing answers and tools for a host of challenges to the delivery of safe drinking water including improved methods for removing arsenic and perchlorate from water, desalinating brackish groundwater and ocean water, and protecting against waterborne pathogens such as cryptosporidium, to name only a few. The breadth of AwwaRF supported and managed research is so broad that it impacts water agencies in every region of the country and of every size from rural water systems to the largest cities.

We appreciate the consideration of the Interior Appropriations Committee, including your $1 million in fiscal year 2006 funding. This however represents an 80 percent decrease from the $5 million in funding that was provided to AwwaRF from fiscal year 2002 through fiscal year 2005. The Foundation makes no claim whatsoever to assured funding each year from the Congress. We instead base our requests upon our proven track-record of delivering relevant and highly creditable drinking water research to the water supply and regulatory communities. The $5 million in EPA funding provided by the Congress had been leveraged into a $30 million a year ongoing research program. This will be impossible to sustain given the $4 million cut in fiscal year 2006 funding and despite the fact that water utilities have continued their investment in the research subscription program at the same $12 million annual level. If these reductions continue in fiscal year 2007, AwwaRF will be obliged to shrink its staff and to further cut back on drinking water research, including our ability to create research partnerships to further leverage our funding.

Although AwwaRF's $30 million annual program is largely directed towards providing water utilities with the tools they need to comply with federal regulations, 80 percent or $25 million of this amount is paid for with local dollars. We trust that very few requests come before the Committee where such a modest funding request affects as many people as AwwaRF and its drinking water research program. We further trust that few requests feature a local match of five to one. If Congress withdraws its support of AwwaRF and drinking water research, we do not believe that federal regulations or the challenges they entail will go away as well. We therefore respectfully submit that it is good policy for the Congress to continue to help water utilities to secure the research they need by continuing the AwwaRF/Congressional research partnership at its current 80/20 match.

We note that the Administration has requested a $4 million increase in fiscal year 2007 drinking water research located in the EPA S&T account. We respectfully request that the Committee re-invest this $4 million with AwwaRF, along with the $1 million in fiscal year 2006 funding that you provided. This would create the $5 million in funding that we are seeking and, more importantly, it would provide for the continued operation of AwwaRF and the research subscription program at its

current level. This means that water utilities will continue to have the knowledge and the tools they need to deliver safe drinking water to the American public.

Thank you again for your past support and for your consideration of our fiscal year 2007 request.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE BETHEL AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE, BETHEL, MAINE

Mr. Chairman and Honorable Members of the Subcommittee: I appreciate the opportunity to present testimony in support of an appropriation of $2 million from the Forest Legacy Program for the Grafton Notch property in Maine. Grafton Notch is Maine's highest priority Forest Legacy project.

The 3,688-acre Grafton Notch property offers plentiful opportunities for recreation, sustainable forestry, and protection of diverse forest and riparian habitats. It is surrounded on three sides by Maine public reserve lands and Grafton Notch State Park, a very popular tourist destination, and is adjacent to Mahoosuc Notch, one of the most rugged sections of the federally protected Appalachian National Scenic Trail. The parcel is also in the viewshed from the Trail, both from Mahoosuc Notch and from the Baldpate Mountain section. Given its location, the property is a prime site for public recreational use, and upon purchase by the state, would be added to the 27,253-acre Mahoosuc Unit.

A snowmobile trail that provides a critical link to a Maine-New Hampshire trail network runs through the property along the Bear River. In addition, this property's public protection is critical to the completion of the 42-mile Grafton Loop Trail, a newly-constructed AT spur that runs from East Baldpate Mountain across several peaks before ascending the southeast slopes of Old Speck and reconnecting to the AT. Protection of the Grafton Notch property would ensure that these recreational opportunities will continue to be available to the public and will also help alleviate overcrowding by providing significant backcountry recreation alternatives.

The Grafton Notch property contains the southeast slopes of Old Speck Mountain and the northwest slopes of Sunday River Whitecap. There are numerous waterfalls on the site as well as several tributaries that drain into the Bear River and the Sunday River, both of which contribute to the Androscoggin River.

The mountainous terrain supports a variety of plant communities in the transition between forested slopes and alpine summits. Up to 80 percent of the property is available as a timber resource and will be managed by the state using sustainable harvesting procedures.

With its proximity to scenic, natural, and recreational resources, the forested resources found on the Grafton Notch property are seriously threatened with fragmentation. The property is only 10 miles from the Sunday River Ski Area, Maine's largest ski resort, and is immediately adjacent to Route 26, which leads into the growing town of Bethel. A second-home subdivision was recently approved across Route 26 on the slopes of Puzzle Mountain, and in nearby Andover, a 5,500-acre timber lot was carved into 500 acre homesites.

With an appropriation of $2 million from the Forest Legacy Program in fiscal year 2007, the Grafton Notch property would be permanently protected, ensuring a host of public benefits for future generations.

Thank you Mr. Chairman, for this opportunity to present testimony in support of the Grafton Notch Forest Legacy project.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE BLACK BEAR CONSERVATION COMMITTEE

Mr. Chairman and Honorable Members of the Committee: I appreciate the opportunity to present this testimony in support of a $1.75 million appropriation to the Fish and Wildlife Service from the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) for the Tensas River National Wildlife Refuge.

The Black Bear Conservation Committee (BBCC) is a regional non-profit conservation organization whose mission is to restore the federally listed Louisiana black bear to suitable habitat in its historic range in Louisiana, Mississippi, southern Arkansas, and east Texas. The recovery efforts associated with the Louisiana bear are considered to be as progressive as any restoration effort in the nation because of the broad base of support from landowners, timber companies, agricultural interests and other stakeholders in the region. Habitat restoration and protection are key components to the success of the recovery objective.

The Tensas River NWR has an immediate opportunity to further its black bear recovery program and ensure the permanent protection of critical bottomland hardwood forestlands by completing the final phase of the 11,033-acre Chicago Mill tract.

At present, the Tensas NWR exists as two separate units. With the acquisition of the Chicago Mill property, these two units will be bridged, thus providing a protected wildlife corridor for the refuge species, most notably the Louisiana black bear. Located in Madison Parish, near the town of Tallulah, this property was initially used for forestry purposes and then primarily as an agricultural tract for many years. Conservation offers the US Fish and Wildlife Service an outstanding opportunity to create additional habitat by restoring bottomland hardwoods to the site.

The Chicago Mill acquisition is both innovative and highly leveraged, using almost $4 million of private carbon sequestration funds to offset what otherwise would be costs incurred by the USFWS. Thus far, over 8,200 acres have been conserved, using previously Congressionally appropriated funds, an allocation from the Migratory Bird Conservation Fund, and carbon sequestration funds from the Entergy Corporation. To further the recovery efforts for the Louisiana black bear, over one-half million trees have already been replanted on over 1,900 acres of these lands. Additionally, Entergy Corporation has donated substantial management funding to the refuge as part of the this conservation deal.

Available for acquisition in fiscal year 2007 is the final of four phases of the Chicago Mill acquisition. An appropriation of $1.75 million from the Land and Water Conservation Fund in fiscal year 2007 is needed to purchase the final 2,723 acres of the Chicago Mill tract. This funding will provide connectivity among refuge-protected habitat lands, safeguard important wildlife habitat, and allow restoration activities to proceed at the Tensas River NWR.

I respectfully request that you include an appropriation of $1.75 million for the Tensas River NWR in the fiscal year 2007 Interior and Related Agencies Appropriations bill.

Thank you for your attention to this request.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE BIOMASS ENERGY RESEARCH ASSOCIATION

This testimony pertains to the Biomass Energy Research Association's (BERA) recommendations for fiscal year 2007 in support of appropriations for the USDA's Forest Service (USDAFS) to support bioenergy-related R&D under the President's Healthy Forest Initiative and through the USDAFS Forest Products Laboratory. Both activities are conducted under the auspices of the Natural Resources and Environment program of the U.S.D.A. BERA recommends that $56,000,000 be appropriated for these efforts in fiscal year 2007. A separate statement has been prepared for submission on other biomass energy RD&D performed by the Department of Energy's (DOE) Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy (EERE) under the Energy and Water Development Bill. Specific line items for the USDAFS budget are as follows:

—$35,000,000 under the President's Healthy Forest Initiative for the reduction of hazardous fuels via removal of forest thinnings, waste and underbrush.

—$5,000,000 to continue the Biobased Products and Bioenergy Research (BPBR) program of the USDAFS Forest Products Laboratory.

—$1,000,000 to collect and consolidate the results of two decades of R&D conducted at the DOE on utilization of forestry energy sources.

—$5,000,000 to develop and implement an integrated R&D plan for forestry-derived bioenergy.

—$10,000,000 for industry cost-shared energy plantation demonstration projects

BACKGROUND

On behalf of BERA's members, we would like to thank you, Mr. Chairman, for the opportunity to present the recommendations of BERA's Board of Directors for the high-priority programs that we strongly urge be continued or started. BERA is a non-profit association based in the Washington, DC area. It was founded in 1982 by researchers and private organizations conducting biomass research. Our objectives are to promote education and research on the economic production of energy and fuels from freshly harvested and waste biomass, and to serve as a source of information on biomass RD&D policies and programs. BERA does not solicit or accept federal funding for its efforts.

There is a growing realization in our country that we need to diversify our energy resources and reduce reliance on foreign oil. Economic growth is fueling increasing energy demand and placing considerable pressure on our already burdened energy supplies and environment. The import of oil and other fuels into the United States is growing steadily and shows no sign of abating. Industry and consumers both are being faced with rapidly rising costs for petroleum and natural gas, which are vital to our economy. A diversified energy supply will be critical to meeting the energy

challenges of the future and maintaining a healthy economy with a competitive edge in global markets. The recently announced Biofuels Initiative at the DOE provides funding to support the use of cellulosic biomass as a feedstock for ethanol, including wood and forestry resources, with the potential to replace as much as 30 percent of domestic gasoline demand in 2030. We support this Initiative and believe it will help to accelerate the use of this important energy resource.

Forest biomass energy plantations that provide feedstocks for forest biorefineries producing paper products as well as fuels and biopower could make an important contribution to our energy supply while providing a boost for rural economies and reducing wildland forest fires. In addition, wood can be used instead of petroleum and natural gas to produce many high-value products such as plastics and chemicals. However, targeted research is needed to make this a reality.

BERA RECOMMENDATIONS FOR USDA FOREST SERVICE R&D

The Bioenergy/Bioproducts Initiative, which was created as a result of "The Biomass Research and Development Act of 2000," and Title IX of the Farm Bill, sought to triple U.S. usage of bioenergy and biobased products. A strategic plan was developed to reach this goal by the multi-agency Biomass Research and Development Board (BRDB) co-chaired by the Secretary of Energy and the Secretary of Agriculture. To meet goals for bioenergy and biobased products, substantial increases in biomass energy and fuel consumption are clearly needed. BERA's recommendations support several key areas that will contribute to the goals of sustainable forestry as well as the creation of viable renewable resources as part of a diversified energy supply. Specific programs are recommended as follows.

Recommendation 1: Support the President's Healthy Forest Initiative: Reduction in Hazardous Fuels via Forest Waste Recovery for Fuel and Feedstocks

Large, repetitive, wide-spread losses have occurred in the Nation's forests over the last several years because of wild fires. Such fires are supported by the accumulation of dense undergrowth and brush coupled with poor forest management practices, insect infestation and disease that increase the number of dead trees, and other factors. As a result, loss and injury to fire fighters and others, large property, financial, and esthetic losses, and environmental harm have occurred in commercial as well as private and federally owned forests. BERA believes that this problem can be optimally addressed by conducting a targeted RD&D program to develop economic, practical methods for collection and removal of forest wastes, underbrush, and small-diameter tree thinnings, for the purpose of using them as energy resources. Forest wastes could be combined with large-scale forest biomass energy plantations to provide fuel and feedstocks for forest biorefineries producing fuels and high-valued products. Funding should be provided to start an RD&D program in this area as soon as possible. This is essential to the long-term sustainability of the forest and biomass energy industries in North America and to help reduce and displace fossil fuel consumption.

Recommendation 2: Continue to Conduct Wood-based Feedstock Research at the USDAFS Forest Products Laboratory

Critical research to develop, plant, grow, and manage energy crops, particularly forest biomass, for conversion to cost-competitive energy and fuels, was once conducted by the DOE but has since been terminated. DOE's position is that other agencies (USDA) are better suited to handle this research. While DOE's feedstock production program has made significant research contributions over the last 25 years, BERA strongly endorses the idea that the USDA should assume responsibility for this program. The USDA has a long history in biomass production and is recognized worldwide for its accomplishments in developing advanced agricultural and forest biomass production methods. According to a recent study (Biomass as Feedstock for a Bioenergy and Bioproducts Industry: The Technical Feasibility of a Billion-Ton Annual Supply, DOE/USDA April 2005), woody feedstocks can make a substantial contribution (368 million dry tons per year) and are an essential component of a large-scale industry producing affordable biomass energy, fuels, and chemicals. BERA strongly recommends that RD&D on woody biomass production for dedicated energy and feedstock uses be continued by the USDAFS Forest Products Laboratory Biobased Products and Bioenergy Program(BPBR) under the Interior and Related Agencies Bill. This program is developing new and more economical technologies for the production, management, harvest, and utilization of woody materials for energy and high-value products. The research is a natural complement to the forest waste recovery R&D that BERA recommends be added to its overall program.

Recommendation 3: Collect/Consolidate DOE's Research and Field Results

DOE has conducted an extensive forest biomass production program from the 1970's up to 1992. This research included laboratory and field projects performed by academe, national laboratories, research institutes, and the private sector. The program emphasized the development and selection of special species, hybrids, and clones of trees, and advanced growth, management, and harvesting procedures for dedicated energy crops. Research on short-rotation tree growth and the screening of tree species in small-scale test plots was carried out in several areas of the country. Depending on the geographic location, woody species recommended as energy feedstocks from the test-plot results included hybrid poplars, willow, eucalyptus, black locust, and others. In collaboration with DOE, BERA recommends that the results of these efforts be collected and consolidated with those of the USDAFS efforts on woody biomass production. A plan should also be developed for preserving the large amount of improved woody crop clonal materials produced both by the USDAFS and the university collaborators of DOE.

Recommendation 4: Develop an Optimized RD&D Plan

BERA recommends that the USDAFS produce a 10-year, strategic RD&D plan that continues the research necessary to obtain the data and information needed for optimization of methods for recovering and removing waste biomass and small-diameter thinnings from forests and the testing of their efficacy on preventing forest fires, to design forest plantations for different regions of North America, including environmental impacts, and to integrate fire prevention methods with forest biomass production. The management, growth, harvesting, storage, and transport to hypothetical processing plants of both the waste and virgin biomass should be included in this work. The resulting system designs should lead to industry cost-shared field projects to demonstrate medium-scale, sustainable, forest biomass production and the removal of residuals in several geographic locations.

Considerable progress has been made on the efficient production of short-rotation woody crop and multi-crop systems. In addition, research on tissue culture techniques and the application of genetic engineering methods to low-cost energy crop production have shown promise. This research should continue to be an important part of the R&D plan going forward.

Recommendation 5: Support Industry Cost-shared Plantation Projects

BERA recommends that industry cost-shared, scale-up projects of at least 1,000 acres in size be installed and operated in different regions of the country as a forerunner to commercial energy plantations in which dedicated energy crops are grown and harvested for use as biomass resources. The results of this work will provide sufficient operating and capital cost data to afford second generation economic data for larger modular systems and to perfect the design of sustainable energy plantations. The scale-up projects should be strategically located and should utilize the advanced woody biomass production methods developed in the research programs. Successful completion of this work will help biomass energy attain its potential by providing the data and information needed to implement the design, construction, and operation of practical forest biomass production methods for sustainable energy plantations that can supply low-cost feedstock for conversion to heat, steam, electric power, liquid and gaseous fuels, and chemicals.

During the first year of this program, fiscal year 2007, site studies can be completed to facilitate the selection of specific areas that are deemed suitable for energy plantation construction, and that installation on at least one site can be started. DOE should be involved in this program where appropriate so that their work on biomass infrastructure can be applied, such as the design and operation of integrated biomass production and conversion systems.

CONCLUSIONS

Expansion of the USDAFS programs as recommended by BERA enables a considerably higher probability of significantly increasing the contribution of biomass to primary U.S. energy demand by displacing more fossil fuel usage and eliminating a national fire hazard. The key to this eventuality is the deployment of technologies for producing and recovering low-cost virgin and waste forest biomass for conversion to cost-competitive supplies of energy, fuels, and chemicals. Forest biomass is the Nation's and the world's largest reserve of renewable carbon resources. Without the availability of economically competitive forest biomass feedstocks, the probability of tripling biomass energy consumption in the United States is doubtful. Ultimately, this RD&D program is expected to lead to commercial, sustainable energy plantations that are integrated with biorefineries supplied with forest-based fuels and feedstocks.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE BLUERIBBON COALITION

The BlueRibbon Coalition (BRC) is a nationwide organization representing 600,000 motorized recreationists, equestrians, mountain bike enthusiasts and resource users. We work with land managers to provide recreation opportunities, conserve resources, and promote cooperation with other public land users.

I am writing you to encourage you to sustain current funding levels for the Recreation and Trails programs within the USDA Forest Service (USES) budget.

The Administration's proposed fiscal year 2007 budget recommends a decrease of $10.4 million to the Recreation program and a $14.5 million reduction to the Trails program as compared to the fiscal year 2006 enacted budget. The cuts proposed by the President would make it very difficult for the USFS to serve the recreational needs of the over 200 million people who annually visit our National Forests.

Recreational use of USFS lands continues to grow and we believe that the vital role played by the USFS needs to be recognized. It is crucial that its funding be protected instead of facing steep cuts that will hamper its ability to provide adequate opportunities for those who wish to recreate on our National Forests.

The proposed cuts come at a critical time for the USFS. On November 9, 2005 the USFS finalized a rulemaking process that requires each National Forest or ranger district to designate which roads, trails and areas are open for motorized vehicle use. This will be a massive undertaking that will require individual forests and districts to undergo an extensive process of route identification, evaluation, designation and mapping.

BRC agrees with Forest Service Chief Dale Bosworth's affirmation that "OHVs are growing in popularity and they are a legitimate use of national forest land." As such it is imperative that adequate funding be provided to the USFS to ensure that the effective management of OHV use can be accomplished by the implementation of the new rule. Without the necessary funding, the Forest Service will be unable to either adequately manage or provide adequate opportunity for all National Forest system users.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE BONNEVILLE SHORELINE TRAIL COALITION

Mr. Chairman and Honorable Members of the Committee: On behalf of the Bonneville Shoreline Trail Coalition, I appreciate the opportunity to present this testimony in support of a $3 million appropriation from the Land and Water Conservation Fund for critical land protection efforts along the Bonneville Shoreline Trail in Utah.

The Bonneville Shoreline Trail Coalition (Coalition) is an organization of entities, both citizen and governmental, representing the communities in Utah involved in promoting, planning and building the Bonneville Shoreline Trail (BST). The vision of the BST is a non-motorized trail that serves as an interface between the urban area and public lands along the Wasatch Front and will provide trail users with a recreational experience at a distance from motorized activities that is both safe and aesthetically pleasing. The Coalition was formed on an ad hoc basis in 2001 and formalized and incorporated in 2003.

The Bonneville Shoreline Trail concept was originated in 1990 as a proposed 90 mile trail for non-motorized use that would span the foothills of the four counties of the central Wasatch Front. Trail planning has now expanded to encompass more than 280 miles from the Idaho border through Cache, Box Elder, Weber, Davis, Salt Lake, and Utah Counties. Additional planning has been proceeding to continue the BST westward through Camp Williams and the Kennecott Land development, around the Oquirrh Mountains and into the Tooele valley. This multi-use non-motorized trail system will enhance access to open space and public lands, and provide a connection to a variety of other trails and recreational areas. The Coalition's private and governmental entities representing the Wasatch Front communities and many dedicated volunteers are working to make the trail a reality

The ideal alignment of the trail is on or near the foothills bench formed by the shoreline of ancient Lake Bonneville. While it is recognized such an alignment is not possible throughout the entire length of the trail, planners are urged to vigorously seek a route as near to the Bonneville Shoreline as possible in order to achieve the following objectives:

—To provide access to the canyons, streams, mountains and other features in our Wasatch foothills by locating the trail high enough on the slope to provide ready access to public lands.

—To provide a place where walkers, runners, bicyclists and horse users can experience their recreational pursuits at a distance from automobiles that is both safe and aesthetically pleasing. (On some sections of the trail, it may not be ap-

propriate to include all uses—pedestrian, bicycle and equestrian—but planners are urged to accommodate as broad a range of non-motorized users as possible.)

—To provide citizens an opportunity for quiet and scenic recreational use that is nearby, yet apart from the developed urban area of the Wasatch Front.

—To provide rapid deployment of fire fighting resources to the urban/foothills interface while at the same time serving as a buffer between the developed urban area and the more natural environment of the foothills.

—To contribute to the preservation of aesthetic, wildlife, historic and educational values of the foothills.

The major challenges in creating the Bonneville Shoreline Trail lie principally in obtaining the necessary property acquisitions, rights-of-way, easements and permissions. The efforts to actually build trail are typically of secondary difficulty and rely principally on volunteer labor. The major costs of developing the BST will be associated with the acquisition of property for the trail.

Available for acquisition in fiscal year 2007 are two critical properties along the BST that are high priorities for protection by the U.S. Forest Service. Both properties are extremely important summer and winter range habitat for deer and elk. They serve as important buffers for fire protection for the rapidly developing area along the Wasatch Front and also provide watershed protection for neighboring areas.

The 1,700-acre Draper (Bear Canyon) property is located on the eastern boundaries of the cities of Sandy and Draper along the BST, and both cities are very supportive of this land acquisition. Conveyance of the Bear Canyon property to the Forest Service will allow the forest to reduce management costs by consolidating public lands. The property to be acquired is adjacent to both the Lone Peak Wilderness and the 1,000-acre Corner Canyon property that was acquired for $13 million by Draper City in late 2005 for permanent open space protection and recreation. The combination of the Draper's protection of Corner Canyon and the planned Forest Service acquisition of Bear Canyon represents an important federal and local conservation partnership in southern Salt Lake County. In fiscal year 2006, $1.5 million was appropriated to acquire 900 acres. This year, an additional $1.5 million through the Land and Water Conservation Fund is needed to complete this project and protect the remaining 800 acres. Major stretches of the BST are planned across this property and its acquisition would be important for the continuity of this portion of the trail.

The second property available for protection this year is the 300-acre North Ogden property in Weber County. The North Ogden program is a partnership effort to provide a new stretch of the BST along the northern boundaries of North Ogden and Pleasant View, within the boundaries of the national forest. In 2005, a five-mile stretch of BST along North Ogden and Pleasant View was secured through a trail easement on an existing utility corridor granted to the nonprofit Weber Pathways. The property available for protection this year is critical to the North Ogden program because it will bring Forest Service ownership down to this stretch of the BST and add critical trail access to the citizens in this area of the state. Protection of this property will also protect beautiful views of the foothills of the Wasatch Front and Ben Lomond Peak, one of Weber County's most important landmarks, while conserving important wildlife habitat and winter range along this rapid growth area. This property is also valued at $1.5 million.

In fiscal year 2007, a total of $3 million is needed to acquire these two BST properties that are critically important to furthering the goals of the trail. If not protected, this area will be developed over time. Public access to this portion of the BST could be lost forever, and adjacent forest and wilderness lands would also be put at risk.

I respectfully request that you include an appropriation of $3 million for the Bonneville Shoreline Trail in the fiscal year 2007 Interior and Related Agencies Appropriations bill.

Thank you for your attention to this request.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE PUEBLO BOARD OF WATER WORKS

We are requesting your support for the following appropriations in fiscal year 2007 to the Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) for the Upper Colorado River Endangered Fish Recovery Program and the San Juan River Basin Recovery Implementation Program, as recommended in the President's budget.

1. Appropriation of $697,000 in "recovery" funds (Ecological Services Activity; Endangered Species Subactivity; Recovery Element; $697,000 within the $5,631,000 item entitled "General Program Activities") to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

(FWS) to allow FWS to continue its necessary participation in the Upper Colorado River Endangered Fish Recovery Program.

2. Appropriation of $437,000 in operation and maintenance funds (Resource Management Appropriation; Fisheries Activity; Hatchery Operations & Maintenance Subactivity, Hatchery Operations Project) to support the ongoing operation of the FWS' Ouray National Fish Hatchery in Utah.

3. Allocation of $211,000 in "recovery" funds for the San Juan River Basin Recovery Implementation Program to the FWS for fiscal year 2007 to meet FWS' Region 2 expenses managing and implementing the San Juan Recovery Program.

We thank you for your past support and request the Subcommittee's assistance for fiscal year 2007 funding to ensure FWS' continuing financial participation in these vitally important programs.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE COOPERATIVE ALLIANCE FOR REFUGE ENHANCEMENT

The Cooperative Alliance for Refuge Enhancement consists of the following organizations: American Birding Association; American Fisheries Society; American Sportfishing Association Assateague Coastal Trust; Congressional Sportsmen's Foundation; Defenders of Wildlife; Ducks Unlimited; International Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies; Izaak Walton League of America; National Association of Service and Conservation Corps; National Audubon Society; National Rifle Association of America; National Wildlife Federation; National Wildlife Refuge Association; Safari Club International; The Wilderness Society; The Wildlife Society; Trout Unlimited; U.S. Sportsmen's Alliance; Wildlife Forever; and the Wildlife Management Institute.

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Subcommittee: Thank you for the opportunity to offer comments on the fiscal year 2007 (fiscal year 2007) Interior Appropriations bill. Over the last several years, the Cooperative Alliance for Refuge Enhancement (CARE), a broad coalition of 21 diverse wildlife, sporting, conservation, and scientific organizations, has worked cooperatively with Congress and the Administration to highlight the needs of the National Wildlife Refuge System and secure strong investments in this remarkable network of lands and waters. We are grateful for the budget increases that Congress provided the Refuge System leading up to its 100th anniversary, and we again seek your support as Congress considers fiscal year 2007 and beyond. We urge the Subcommittee to provide $415 million for the operations and maintenance (O&M) budget of the National Wildlife Refuge System, managed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS), in the fiscal year 2007 budget.

CARE, representing a national constituency numbering more than 5 million Americans, recognizes the value of a healthy Refuge System to both the wildlife and habitats refuges were established to protect and the 40 million visitors that frequent these special places each year. The Cooperative Alliance for Refuge Enhancement was formed in 1995 as a loose coalition of diverse organizations concerned about the ability of our national wildlife refuges to fulfill their missions. We have determined that it will be necessary to increase the annual Refuge System budget to $700 million simply to meet the System's top tier needs.

Each year, 40 million Americans from coast to coast visit national wildlife refuges to experience the best of our great nation's natural resources. During its first 100 years, the Refuge System has been instrumental in restoring vital North American wildlife populations; providing diverse recreational opportunities to fish, hunt, birdwatch, view and photograph wildlife; and educating the public about the wonders of the natural world. In addition, national wildlife refuges stimulate local economic growth, fostering nearly $1.4 billion in recreation-based economic activity and generating nearly 24,000 jobs and $453.9 million in employment income. While all of these activities are significant, the Refuge System's potential continues to be largely unrealized.

The mission of CARE has been to address the backlog in operations and maintenance needs within the Refuge System budget, needs that now total $2.7 billion. Unfortunately, recent funding cuts in the refuge budget have adversely affected the Refuge System by exacerbating the already burdensome O&M backlog.

President Bush's fiscal year 2007 request of $381.7 million is approximately $11 million less than the administration's fiscal year 2006 request and $763,000 less than the actual fiscal year 2006 funding level (after Congressional rescissions and agency reprogramming). A $16 million increase in Refuge System O&M funding would be a "no-net-loss" budget for the Refuge System to keep pace with inflation and other uncontrollable costs when taking into account cost-of-living, energy, and sustaining levels of visitor services and wildlife management requirements.

We respectfully request that you fund the National Wildlife Refuge System at $415 million, which would equal the fiscal year 2004 Refuge System budget ($406.5 million) when adjusted for inflation. This level of funding would ensure a "no-net-loss" budget which would allow the Refuge System to avoid layoffs and reductions in services, maintain protections for wildlife and habitat, prevent backsliding on gains already made, and provide for addressing the backlog in coming years.

We extend our appreciation to the Subcommittee for its ongoing commitment to our National Wildlife Refuge System.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE CENTER FOR ADVANCED SEPARATION TECHNOLOGIES

The Center for Advanced Separation Technologies (CAST) is a consortium of the seven universities listed above. It was formed in 2001 to develop advanced technologies that can be used to efficiently produce cleaner fuels in an environmentally acceptable manner and to study the basic sciences and engineering involved. The new technologies developed as a result of CAST research and the highly skilled personnel trained during the course of its activities will help the United States meet the challenges of energy independence. These missions are consistent with President Bush's American Competitiveness Initiative, announced in his 2006 State of the Union Address. The President's new program includes doubling R&D commitments to basic research, supporting universities for world-class education and research opportunities, and training a work force with skills that can be used to better compete in the 21st century.

ORGANIZATION

The Center for Advanced Separation Technologies (CAST) was formed initially between Virginia Tech and West Virginia University with the objective of developing advanced solid-solid and solid-liquid separation technologies that can help the U.S. coal industry produce cleaner solid fuels. In 2002, five other universities listed above joined the consortium to develop crosscutting technologies that can also be used in the U.S. minerals resources industry. As a result, the scope of CAST research was expanded to studies of chemical/biological separations and environmental control.

As a consortium, the Center can take advantage of the diverse expertise available in the member universities and address the interests of the different geographical regions of the country. Working together as a consortium is consistent with the recommendations of a recent National Research Council (NRC) report on the U.S. Department of Energy's fossil energy research, which states that "consortia are a preferred way of leveraging expertise and technical inputs to the mining sector, and recommends that DOE should support "academia, which helps to train technical people for the industry."

PROGRESS AND NEXT STEP

At present, a total of 45 research projects are being carried out at the seven CAST member universities. Of these, 12 projects are in solid-solid separation, 5 in solid-liquid separation, 12 in chemical/biological separation, 7 in modeling and control, and 6 in environmental control. The project selection was made by an industry panel according to the priorities set forth in the CAST Technology Roadmap developed in 2002 by industry representatives. Research results have been presented at two workshops, the first in Charleston, WV, November 19–21, 2003, and the second in Blacksburg, VA, July 26–27, 2005. Both meetings enjoyed strong participation from industry. The third workshop will be held in July 2007 in Blacksburg.

CAST research has been focused on removing impurities (e.g., ash, sulfur, mercury and other toxic elements) from coal. Various solid-solid and solid-liquid separation technologies are used to remove these impurities. In general, the efficiency of separation diminishes sharply with decreasing particle size. As a result, coal companies discard coal fines to impoundments. In the United States, approximately 70 to 90 million tons of coal fines are being discarded annually according to a National Research Council report. The report was issued as a result of a congressional directive to investigate a major failure of a fine coal impoundment in Kentucky in October, 2000, which caused 300 million gallons of coal sludge to flood an active mine and neighboring creeks and rivers. There are more than 713 active water and slurry impoundments in the eastern United States, many of which are rated "high risk." The report suggested a study to identify appropriate technologies that can eliminate the need for slurry impoundments.

CAST has been developing advanced separation technologies that can help U.S. coal companies recover fine coal rather than discard it to impoundments. One com-

pany, Beard Technologies, Inc., is currently building a plant designed to recover fine coal from a large impoundment in Pineville, WV, using the technologies developed by CAST. The plant will be the first to recover practically all of the coal from a waste impoundment without the benefit of a tax credit. If the project is successful, it is anticipated that many other companies will follow suit. The enabling technology used in the Pineville recovery plant is the use of chemical additives that can remove moisture from fine coal during vacuum filtration. CAST is developing several other dewatering technologies, which include hyperbaric centrifuge, hyperbaric horizontal belt filter (HHBF), and a flocculant injection system. In a recent pilot-scale test conducted with the hyperbaric centrifuge, it was possible to reduce the moisture of a fine coal (smaller than 0.15 mm) to below 10 percent by weight without using chemical additives. The technology has been licensed to Decanter Machine Company, Johnson City, TN, which plans to construct a prototype unit for onsite testing. Development of the HHBF technology is also making progress. Construction of a pilot-scale test unit has been completed, and is ready for a trial. This new dewatering technology is also designed to reduce fine coal moisture to less than 10 percent. The flocculant injection system is already in use by many coal companies to minimize the loss of fine coal associated with the use of screen-bowl centrifuges, which represent the most widely used conventional dewatering technology in the U.S. coal industry. In addition, Arch Coal Company is seriously considering installation of a deep-cone thickener, as a result of the work conducted at CAST, to obviate the need to build a fine coal impoundment.

Despite the importance of fine coal cleaning, the bulk of the coal being cleaned today is coarse coal, most of which is being cleaned of impurities using density-based separation methods. Therefore, there is an interest in determining separation efficiencies using density tracers. Typically, plastic blocks of known densities are added to a feed stream, collected manually from product streams, and counted to determine the efficiency of separation—a process which is cumbersome and entails inaccuracies. Therefore, a new method has been developed in which each tracer is tagged with a transponder so that the destination of each tracer can be monitored electronically. The new technique has been tested successfully in several plants and is ready for commercial deployment. Precision Testing Laboratory, Beckley, WV, plans to market the new technology. Its use can help coal companies maximize the efficiency of cleaning coarse coal.

Much of the basic scientific principles and technologies involved in coal cleaning also apply to processing ores. Therefore, CAST has been developing crosscutting technologies that can be used in both coal and minerals industries. As an example, a joint Krebs Engineers-CAST research resulted in the development of a novel hydrocyclone that can efficiently remove clay (slimes) from coal. The same technology can also be used in processing many industrial minerals. For instance, removal of clay minerals is an a priori requirement in processing the potash (KCl) ores in New Mexico. Laboratory experiments showed that more efficient desliming can increase potash recovery by 4 to 6 percent downstream. Implementation of these new technologies being developed at CAST will help the industry remain competitive against foreign producers and retain high-paying jobs in the country.

The United States is the second largest copper producer in the world. However, much of the ores being mined are low grade, which makes it difficult for U.S. companies to compete internationally. Traditionally, copper is extracted from an ore through a series of processes, including grinding, flotation, smelting, and refining, which are energy intensive and hence costly. CAST is currently developing new technologies to facilitate the application of alternative leaching/impurity removal/electrowinning processes that can replace the costlier steps of grinding, flotation, smelting, and refining. The alternative processes should require substantially lower capital costs and reduce energy consumption by 50 percent.

The mining industry has been extracting gold using cyanide, which is toxic. Therefore, CAST has been developing an environmentally benign extraction method using alkaline sulfide. Bench-scale continuous tests conducted using this new lixiviant showed that the extraction efficiency is as good as those obtained using cyanide.

In addition to the more practical projects described above, CAST has also conducted fundamental research. As an example, a mathematical model has been developed to describe the flotation process, which is the most widely used and versatile solid-solid separation process used in both the coal and minerals industries. The model is based on first principles so that it has predictive and diagnostic capabilities. In another project, a computational fluid dynamic (CFD) simulation technique has been used to design optimal flotation machines. This project is co-funded by Dorr-Oliver EIMCO, Utah. In addition, the surface forces acting between two microscopic surfaces immersed in water have been measured using the atomic force mi-

croscope (AFM) and the surface force apparatus (SFA). The results show that strong attractive forces are present between hydrophobic surfaces, the origin of which is not yet known. The newly discovered surface forces, which are referred to as 'hydrophobic force' play an important role in the separation of hydrophobic energy 'minerals' such as coal, oil, bitumen, and kerogen from hydrophilic waste minerals such as clay, silica and others.

FUNDING REQUEST AND RATIONALE

The United States is by far the largest mining country in the western world, followed by South Africa and Australia. In 2004, the U.S. mining industry produced $63.9 billion of raw materials, including $19.9 billion of coal and $44 billion of minerals. Australia is a smaller mining country but has five centers of excellence in advanced separations as applied to coal and minerals processing. Last year, Australia established the Mineral Science Research Institute, a consortium of four mining schools, with a funding of $22.6 million for the initial five-year period. In the United States, CAST is the only federally funded consortium serving the mining industry. According to a Congressional testimony by K. Mark Le Vier, President of the Mining and Metallurgical Society of America, 50 percent or more of the faculty in the U.S. mining schools will retire in the next five years. Continued funding of the CAST program is critical for producing a trained workforce for the industry.

CAST has been developing a broad range of advanced separation technologies. Although it is a relatively new research center, some of the projects have yielded technologies that are already in use in industry. Many other promising research projects are on-going and require continued support. Working as a consortium is an effective way of exchanging ideas and utilizing diverse expertise required to solve major problems. Continued funding will allow CAST to develop advanced technologies that can be used to produce cleaner coal in an environmentally acceptable manner. Furthermore, the advanced technologies can be used not only to clean up the troublesome waste impoundments that have been created in the past but also to eliminate the need to create them in the first place.

For fiscal year 2007, CAST is requesting $3 million to (i) develop crosscutting separation technologies, (ii) better understand the basic sciences involved, and (iii) produce highly-skilled engineers and scientists. Although the aim of the proposed research is to benefit the U.S. mining industry, its results should also help the President's initiatives to develop a hydrogen economy and to produce biofuels more efficiently (e.g., separating ethanol from water without distillation). Further, the results can be used to develop technologies for extracting kerogen from oil shale, of which the United States has 72 percent (1.2 trillion barrel equivalent of oil) of the world's reserves. A steady supply of fuels and strategic minerals is critical for the continued growth of the economy and for national security.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE CALIFORNIA INDUSTRY AND GOVERNMENT CENTRAL CALIFORNIA OZONE STUDY (CCOS) COALITION

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Subcommittee: On behalf of the California Industry and Government Central California Ozone Study (CCOS) Coalition, we are pleased to submit this statement for the record in support of our fiscal year 2007 funding request of $400,000 from the Environmental Protection Agency for CCOS. These funds are necessary for the State of California to address the very significant challenges it faces to comply with new national ambient air quality standards for ozone and fine particulate matter. The study design incorporates recent technical recommendations from the National Academy of Sciences (NAS) on how to most effectively comply with federal Clean Air Act requirements.

First, we want to thank you for your past assistance in obtaining federal funding for the Central California Ozone Study (CCOS) and California Regional PM_{10}/$PM_{2.5}$ Air Quality Study (CRPAQS). Your support of these studies has been instrumental in improving the scientific understanding of the nature and cause of ozone and particulate matter air pollution in Central California and the nation. Information gained from these two studies is forming the basis for the 8-hour ozone, $PM_{2.5}$, and regional haze State Implementation Plans (SIPs) that are due in 2007 (ozone) and 2008 (particulate matter/haze). As with California's previous SIPs, the 2007–2008 SIPs will need to be updated and refined due to the scientific complexity of our air pollution problem. Our request this year would fund the completion of CCOS to address important questions that won't be answered with results from previously funded research projects.

To date, our understanding of air pollution and the technical basis for SIPs has largely been founded on pollutant-specific studies, like CCOS. These studies are con-

ducted over a single season or single year and have relied on modeling and analysis of selected days with high concentrations. Future SIPs will be more complex than they were in the past. The National Academy of Sciences (NAS) is now recommending a weight-of-evidence approach that will involve utilizing more broad-based, integrated methods, such as data analysis in combination with seasonal and annual photochemical modeling, to assess compliance with federal Clean Air Act requirements. This will involve the analysis of a larger number of days and possibly an entire season. In addition, because ozone and particulate matter are formed from some of the same emissions precursors, there is a need to address both pollutants in combination, which CCOS will do.

Consistent with the new NAS recommendations, the CCOS study includes corroborative analyses with the extensive data provided by past studies, advances the state-of-science in air quality modeling, and addresses the integration of ozone and particulate pollution studies. In addition, the study will incorporate further refinements to emission inventories, address the development of observation-based analyses with sound theoretical bases, and includes the following four general components:

Performing SIP modeling analyses—2005–2011
Conducting weight-of-evidence data analyses—2006–2008
Making emission inventory improvements—2006–2010
Performing seasonal and annual modeling—2008–2011

CCOS is directed by Policy and Technical Committees consisting of representatives from Federal, State, and local governments, as well as private industry. These committees, which managed the San Joaquin Valley Ozone Study and are currently managing the California Regional Particulate Air Quality Study, are landmark examples of collaborative environmental management. The proven methods and established teamwork provide a solid foundation for CCOS.

For fiscal year 2007, our Coalition is seeking funding of $400,000 from the EPA through Clean Air funds.—The requested funds would be used in conjunction with other funding to conduct weight-of-evidence data analyses, which will help address future SIP needs as well as the new NAS recommendations. This funding will also allow for computational improvements and air quality modeling validation studies that are associated with multi-pollutant air pollution assessments for extended periods (e.g. seasonal or annual). These are necessary to ensure that models are representing the results for the right reasons. The U.S. EPA has a direct stake in, and will benefit from, the CCOS program. This program will further the development of corroborative analysis methods and improve the fundamental science upon which to base future SIPs in California and nationwide.

California should not bear the entire cost of the study for several reasons. There is a national need to address issues regarding air quality modeling, especially for long-term multi-pollutant scenarios. The study itself is very cost-effective since it builds on other successful efforts including the 1990 San Joaquin Valley Ozone Study and the current California Regional Particulate Matter Air Quality Study. Use of models for future ozone SIPs (and updating existing SIPs) is a national issue. The federal government should fund continuing efforts to improve the performance of models used in SIPs. Much of the information generated by CCOS will further the fundamental science of air quality modeling which makes it valuable from a national perspective.

Thank you very much for your consideration of our request.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE CONSERVATION COMMISSION, WESTBROOK, CT

Mr. Chairman and Honorable Members of the Committee: On behalf of the Conservation Commission, Westbrook Connecticut, I appreciate the opportunity to present this testimony in support of a $1 million appropriation from the Land and Water Conservation Fund for land acquisition within the Stewart B. McKinney National Wildlife Refuge. The Conservation Commission has, by Town ordinance, the responsibility for developing criteria for prioritizing open space protection and acquisition. The 22-acre Menunketesuck Salt Meadow Marsh meets the four top criteria: (1) protection of water resources including coastal zone resources; (2) protection of unique and sensitive habitats; (3) significantly contributes to the viability of adjacent protected open space; and (4) is under threat of development. The Commission has also has the responsibility for recommending acquisition of priority lands to the Town of Westbrook, or to private, State or Federal agencies, when appropriate. Acquisition and protection of the 22-acre Menunketesuck Salt Meadow Marsh within the Stewart B. McKinney National Wildlife Refuge will add significant protection to refuge and to the Menunketesuck River estuarine habitat one of Westbrook's

most valuable natural resources, and a coastal resource of state and national significance.

Named to honor the late U.S. congressman who was instrumental in its creation, the Stewart B. McKinney National Wildlife Refuge was established to protect migratory bird habitat considered important to wading and shorebird species including heron, egrets, terns, plovers and oystercatchers among others. Stewart B. McKinney NWR is currently comprised of eight units stretching along 60 miles of Connecticut's coastline. In addition to the increase in habitat protection over the years, the refuge now provides opportunities for scientific research, environmental education, and fish and wildlife oriented recreation. Located in the Atlantic Flyway, the refuge provides important resting, feeding, and nesting habitat for many species of wading birds, shorebirds, songbirds and terns, including the endangered roseate tern. Adjacent waters serve as wintering habitat for brant, scoters, American black duck and other waterfowl. Overall, the refuge encompasses over 800 acres of barrier beach, tidal wetland and fragile island habitats.

Available for refuge acquisition in fiscal year 2007 is the 22-acre Menunketesuck Salt Meadow Marsh in Westbrook, Connecticut. The property is comprised of pristine coastal tidal marsh, a forested upland, scrubland, and a rock outcropping that towers above 1,000 feet of frontage along the gentle Menunketesuck River as it winds its way to Long Island Sound. As a migratory stopover for neotropical migrant land birds, this riparian area is the top priority for acquisition for the refuge. The marsh property will enhance the resources of the current Salt Meadow Unit of the refuge, as it contains part of the least developed upland borders of any remaining tidal marsh in all of Connecticut. As much of the state's coastline has been built upon, it is rare to find an such a large undeveloped marsh area in Connecticut. Under imminent threat of development into condominiums, this parcel must be acquired by the refuge if it is to continue to serve as an island of forested habitat land on an otherwise highly developed coastline. In order to acquire the Menunketesuck Salt Meadow Marsh property, an appropriation of $1 million is needed from the Land and Water Conservation Fund in fiscal year 2007. This priority acquisition will increase wildlife habitat protection at the Stewart B. McKinney NWR and ensure the public continued opportunities for recreation and environmental education along Connecticut's coastline.

I respectfully request that you include an appropriation of $1 million for the Stewart B. McKinney NWR in the fiscal year 2007 Interior and Related Agencies Appropriations bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to present this request.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE CONTINENTAL DIVIDE TRAIL ALLIANCE

The Continental Divide Trail Alliance respectfully requests an addition to the President's budget of $6.42 million, earmarked for the congressionally designated Continental Divide National Scenic Trail. We request that $6,076,000 be appropriated to the Forest Service and $344,000 be appropriated to the Bureau of Land Management. These funds will be utilized toward the funding needed to plan 591 miles of the Trail in preparation for construction and to construct 345 miles of the Trail.

Over the last eleven years we have developed countless partners, utilized thousands of volunteers and significantly leveraged federal funds and resources. We believe the time has come to step up the level of support from Congress:

—The CDTA, Forest Service, National Park Service and Bureau of Land Management have a well defined plan to complete the Trail;

—States, corporations and individuals are making substantial contributions to the efforts to complete the CDT and leverage limited federal funds; and

—The investment in this national treasure has tremendous potential to capitalize on local and national citizens' investment of time and money, provide significant rural economic development opportunities and increase the awareness of appropriate uses of this amazing national treasure.

It is important to note that these funds would be available for use in Montana, Idaho, Wyoming, Colorado and New Mexico where the CDT is located. Funding provided by this Congress will also be leveraged by volunteer labor and financial support from the private sector.

We are proud of the many successes we have had over the last few years, raising over $4 million in private sector support and $3.5 million in volunteer labor. We truly believe that our efforts can send a strong signal to the land managers and Americans from every state that the National Trail System model is the best way to be effective stewards of our lands.

It should also be noted that Representatives Hefley, Beauprez, Tancredo, DeGette, Salazar, Mark and Tom Udall and Cubin have signed on to this request in support of the Continental Divide Trail.

BACKGROUND

Mission.—The Continental Divide Trail Alliance's (CDTA) mission is: "To construct, manage and preserve a non-motorized public backcountry trail along the full length of the Continental Divide from Canada to Mexico and to link its significant resources with the assistance of volunteers and public and private partnerships. To develop an appreciation of and enjoyment in America's natural lands through education and the opportunity to experience the Continental Divide National Scenic Trail."

In January 2005, the CDTA adopted a new Vision: "Connecting people to the land and each other to instill conservation, respect and renewal of the human spirit". This vision builds upon CDTA's ten years of community and public lands work. While we are extremely proud of our accomplishments, there is much more to be done to fulfill our vision through the creation of the Continental Divide National Scenic Trail. Our Vision guides us to encourage people to know and use the Trail to connect with nature, instill public land stewardship, build spiritual communities, inspire healthy lifestyles and to protect the environment.

History.—The idea of a trail through the West's most scenic, rugged, diverse and historic landscapes won the approval of Congress in 1978 when it was officially designated a National Scenic Trail, one of only eight in the Nation. The vision for the Continental Divide Trail is to create a 3,100-mile primitive and challenging non-motorized trail on or near the Continental Divide—the Backbone of America—to allow people to experience the scenic beauty of the Rocky Mountains and to conserve the nationally significant scenic, historic, natural and cultural qualities critical to the Trail's experience.

The Continental Divide Trail is known as the "King of Trails". The CDT is the highest (14,290 feet), wildest, and most remote National Scenic Trail, offering more wildlife viewing and miles of dramatic and diverse landscapes than any other long trail. The Trail is a window into our past and an open door for adventure and exploring. It is home to working ranches, small towns, and generations of Americans whose lives are forever etched with the land they work. It crosses paths where Lewis & Clark first set foot on the Continental Divide, where legendary mountain men like Jim Bridger and Kit Carson roamed, and where Native Americans built rock walls for driving game 5,800 years ago. The Trail is a natural resource treasure chest with a changing panorama of crystal clear alpine lakes, glorious mountain peaks, cascading waterfalls, sheer cliffs, glaciers, dense forests, arid deserts, and fields of brilliant wildflowers. The CDT allows modern day explorers to journey among thousands of plant and animal species in their natural settings: mountain goats, wild horses, elk, moose, deer, antelope, grizzlies, bald eagles and road runners, as well as, meadows of wildflowers, prickly pear, ancient stands of bristle cone pine, aspen groves strewn with columbine and the remote rugged alpine terrain with the illusive alpine buttercup.

In spite of the CDT's rich history and resources, endless benefits and conservation values, the lack of public awareness, volunteer involvement, overall coordination and funding were killing progress. In 1995, the Continental Divide Trail Alliance was formed to work with the public and federal, state and local agencies in the completion, maintenance and protection of the CDT. Start-up funding was provided primarily by the Fausel Foundation, National Forest Foundation and Recreational Equipment Inc. In 1997, the CDTA coordinated the first border-to-border inventory of the Trail's status with volunteers and released a State of the Trail Report. The inventory and report led to the development of the CDT 2008 Strategic Completion Plan outlining all of the needs, projects, methods and costs to complete the CDT by 2008, or the Trail's 30th Anniversary.

Program.—The CDTA is recognized by the Forest Service, National Park Service and Bureau of Land Management (BLM) as the major non-governmental partner in the completion, management and protection of the 3,100 miles Continental Divide Trail. The CDTA is the voice for unity in the creation of the Trail. CDTA's work includes Trail promotion, public education, and recruitment, training and the coordination of volunteers to scout, locate, construct, repair, maintain and protect the Trail. Through these programs, thousands of people connect with and gain ownership of the land, learn and have a greater understanding of public land management, the environment and people living along it, as well as the health benefits of using it. Currently the CDT is approximately 58 percent complete meaning it is located to provide the most scenic, diverse and inspiring experience, sensitive to the

environment, constructed to a high quality non-motorized standard, and signed. When complete the Trail will traverse the backbone of America, from Canada to Mexico, passing through five states (Montana, Idaho, Wyoming, Colorado and New Mexico), 25 National Forests, 20 Wildernesses, three National Parks (Yellowstone, Glacier and Rocky Mountain) one National Monument (El Malpais) and eight BLM Resource areas. The CDT acts as a conservation tool, preserving the surrounding natural features and significant qualities critical to experiencing a National Scenic Trail.

Accomplishments.—CDTA's work has been praised by national new sources, such as Newsweek, Washington Post and Backpacker Magazine and received the Take Pride in America Award. This national attention is due, in part, to the accomplishments we have made over the past ten years (1995–2004).

—Coordinated, trained and educated nearly 6,700 volunteers who have donated more than $3.1 million in volunteer labor on 620 miles of the CDT.

—Organized two end-to-end surveys with more than 1,000 volunteers to identify the Trail's status, document more than 300 nationally significant features and capture 1,700 photos.

—Developed a 10-year action plan outlining the needs, projects, methods and costs to complete the CDT by 2008.

—Created mutually beneficial partnerships or shared our vision with diverse groups like Rotary Clubs, Wyoming Stock Growers Assoc., Backcountry Horseman of America, National Mining Association and Montana Wilderness Association.

—Completed more than 1,275 miles, 31 bridges and 46 trailheads with the physical labor of volunteers and federal land manager staff, and generous gifts of individuals, businesses and foundations.

Need.—Americans connection to the land and to our diverse cultures and traditions are limited, and in many cases diminishing. With approximately 80 percent of U.S. citizens living in urban areas, 40 percent of adults engaging in no leisure-time physical activity, and the average citizen of Western civilizations spending 95 percent of their lives indoors, one could deduct fewer people experience and recreate in the natural world outside. People shut off from the natural world are less sensitive to and supportive of the environment, and experience more stress, a perpetual decline in health and well being, and dependencies that cause disorders.

Also, respect and understanding for other people's perspectives and lifestyles, particularly as it relates to our public lands, is lacking, as witnessed in the continual battles over how public lands should be managed and used. Lack of respect and understanding creates conflicts, produces poor communication, destroys any sense of community, and provokes people to make decisions that hurt others.

In addition, less than one-third of adults in the U.S. engage in the recommended amount of physical activity and millions suffer from illnesses (50 million have high blood pressure, one-third are overweight, 13.5 million have coronary heart disease, etc.) that can be prevented or improved through regular physical activity. Promotion of the CDT can inspire and lead people down a path of good health and well being.

Last, federal land managers are confronted with two troubling trends: an expanding backlog of work on our public lands and a shrinking budget. Funding for routine maintenance, currently a $200 million backlog, has not kept pace with needs. The result is a declining quality of experience for recreationists. CDTA programs assist in caring for the land with millions of dollars worth of volunteer service.

The CDTA recognizes and embraces the benefits and challenges of building the Continental Divide Trail, including providing access to recreate, enjoy and learn from the outdoors and to experience and understand the diverse and unique lifestyles and traditions along the Trail. Due to its location, the Trail is a magnet for many public-lands issues and CDTA works to unite diverse communities in an effort to create a national treasure that will benefit all of America.

Benefit.— Have you ever sat on top of a mountain and felt refreshed, or been cheered by the vibrant sounds of a songbird? Does a wildflower's fragrance bring you joy, and a rushing stream change your senses? These are only a sample of how nature soothes the soul and lessons the stresses of normal life. And, these are only a few of the ways the Continental Divide Trail inspires and educates thousands of people.

Experiencing the Continental Divide Trail, whether on a six-month end-to-end hike, a one-day adventure, or a volunteer work project, will create more knowledgeable and environmentally and socially responsible individuals. The Trail crosses 3,100 miles of public lands with diverse users and uses, providing an experience that teaches and promotes respect and understanding of other people's perspectives.

Establishing the Trail on the ground will preserve the land and the significant scenic, historic, natural and cultural qualities surrounding the Trail and critical to the experience.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE CROWNPOINT INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY (CIT)

CIT respectfully requests $2.5 million for fiscal year 2007 under U.S. Department of Interior, Bureau of Indian Affairs. Activity: Special Programs and Pooled Overhead.

On behalf of the Crownpoint Institute of Technology (CIT), I thank this Subcommittee for appropriating critically needed operational funds to CIT. The authorization for this appropriation that enables CIT to educate Indian young adults for our nation's workforce is Public Law 84–959, "Vocational Training for Adult Indians." Public Law 84–959 is fully consistent with the BIA goal of economic self-sufficiency for all tribal citizens. CIT expresses its gratitude to this Subcommittee for assisting CIT toward reaching the common goal of economic self-sufficiency for tribal citizens through education for employment.

CIT is a tribal college in all definitions, and is a member in good standing with all voting rights of the national association that advocates for all the nation's tribal colleges, the American Indian Higher Education Consortium (AIHEC). However, CIT is not eligible to receive funding under the "Tribally Controlled Colleges and Universities Act," due to an original 1978 statutory restriction of one college per tribe. Diné College in Tsaile, Arizona is the one Navajo tribal college already participating under this statute. This restriction is fair for nearly all tribes chartering tribal colleges, as the average tribal population for those tribes is 4,909 derived from U.S. Census 2000 trust land tribal populations. The same U.S. Census acknowledges Navajo Nation trust land tribal population 173,987, of a total Navajo population of 225,298. This population is spread throughout a 17,500,000 acre reservation (26,897 square miles) extending into three States (AZ, NM, UT). The Navajo reservation is 2,810 square miles larger than the State of West Virginia. The driving distance across the reservation is approximately nine hours. As an example of comparison, the fifteen tribes in the States of Montana, North Dakota and South Dakota have a combined tribal population of 72,835 (U.S. Census 2000). These fifteen tribes charter sixteen tribal colleges, each on significantly smaller land bases than the Navajo reservation.

The population and vast service area of the Navajo Nation warrant a second tribal college. CIT's Congressional Delegation sought unsuccessfully to amend this restriction to allow a second college for exceptionally high population tribes. CIT is the only postsecondary vocational educational institution on the Navajo Nation reservation. CIT students come from throughout the reservation, as well as from the towns of Gallup, Cruet, Continental Divide, Fruitland, Kirtland, Mentmore, Rehobeth (all in New Mexico), Durango, Colorado, White Mesa, Utah and the Tohono O'odham and Hopi Reservations in Arizona. CIT also serves all eligible applicants as room is available and has retrained non-Indian displaced uranium workers and Indian students from as far away as Alaska and Montana.

In its fiscal year 2007 Budget Justification to the U.S. Congress, the Department of Interior proposes elimination of CIT funding, but the Department uses erroneous calculations to justify their proposal. CIT has submitted correct per student cost and funding calculations to the BIA on numerous occasions. To assure accuracy, CIT's cost calculations have been prepared by the outside, independent auditing firm of Sloan and Company, Albuquerque, New Mexico. CIT's correct per student cost per year is $10,282. Of this, 65 percent or $6,710 is for residential-related costs. CIT's correct cost is $2,710 higher than the Department's inaccurate assessment of $4,000 per student for residential costs. CIT's correct instruction-only per student cost is $3,572, or 35 percent of total per student cost. CIT is one of the few tribal colleges that are residential. CIT also offers day care as an essential service for single-parent students who are among those most in need of job-oriented educational opportunity. The vast majority of all tribal colleges have commuting students only. Most tribal colleges do not have residential costs and therefore these dissimilar colleges cannot be compared on a per student cost basis to residential tribal colleges. This dissimilarity of comparison is further exacerbated as a result of the Department applying cost bases which are severely inaccurate.

In its proposal to eliminate CIT funding, the Department incorrectly calculates that Interior provides $4,402 per student to CIT. The correct per student Interior allocation is half that, $2,237. In addition, the Department erroneously calculates CIT enrollment at 403 Indian Student Count (ISC). CIT's correct ISC for fiscal year 2005 was 646. CIT submits actual enrollment numbers to the BIA every year. The

most recent year in which CIT had an enrollment approaching the BIA's incorrect fiscal year 2007 citation was in 1993, thirteen years prior. In academic year 2005–06, CIT's accurate ISC enrollment is 904.

CIT does receive U.S. Department of Education Funding under Section 117 of the Carl D. Perkins Vocational Education Act. The other tribal colleges also participate in Indian Set-aside Perkins funding under Section 116, a section for which CIT is not eligible. CIT began to experience a crippling shortfall under Section 117 in 1995 when disproportionate funding was redirected to online courses. This threatened CIT's operational continuation and in fiscal year 2000 CIT sought Interior operational funding to keep its doors open, the same as the tribal colleges. All tribal colleges including CIT are eligible to compete for multiple sources of funding from many Departments, but these sources are not core operational funding. CIT's correct combined funding per ISC from Interior and Department of Education is $8,447, which still leaves a shortfall of $1,835 per residential student for the last year calculated. CIT's 258 ISC enrollment increase from 646 to 904 will exacerbate the funding shortfall. CIT has consistently produced outstanding graduation and employment placement statistics with the help of Interior appropriations.

For fiscal year 2007, the Department also seeks to "continue facilitating a partnership between the Colorado School of Mines, UTTC and Crownpoint to offer an energy related career curriculum." CIT cannot partner with Colorado School of Mines if CIT cannot keep its doors open through direct BIA operational assistance.

Also for fiscal year 2007, the Department of Interior requests "an increase of $600,000 in the Trust-Real Estate Services activity to offer a Certified Federal Surveyor curriculum provided by United Tribes Technical College and the Crownpoint Institute of Technology." The fiscal year 2007 Budget Justification is the first time that CIT learned of this proposal. CIT was never consulted regarding this proposed joint curriculum and does not even offer such a program. CIT eliminated its surveyor program 14 years ago due to absence of economic demand which demand is necessary for employment opportunities. Further, the State of New Mexico requires a bachelor degree in order for surveyor graduates to qualify to even take the State certification exam. CIT does not offer four-year programs.

CIT offers one-year certificate and two-year associate degree programs, as well as continuing education and summer session. CIT's most recent graduating class May 2005 was comprised 201 one-year Certificate and two-year Associate degree students, an increase of 40 graduates over 2004. U.S. Department of Education does not allow Spring Count funding, therefore CIT must ask Interior to assist in funding this cost. CIT's 2006 Spring enrollment consists of a Nursing Assistant program not able to be offered in the Fall. This program is high employment demand and has high job placement.

Nearly all Navajo citizens on the reservation not only can speak the Navajo language, but use it in their everyday lives. On trust land alone, 106,432 Navajo citizens are age 18 and over. The median Native American population age is 27.4 years, eight years younger than the median age for mainstream America. Approximately 10,000 Navajo students graduate from area high schools each year. The average CIT student age is 26, with the actual age range being 18 to 64. The Navajo Nation is one of the very few tribes with an extant native language. 94 percent of CIT's students are full-time: six percent are part-time. Seventy percent of CIT enrollment is comprised New Mexico residents, 29 percent Arizona residents and 1 percent from Utah, Colorado, Minnesota and Montana

Of the entire Navajo population, only 4.66 percent of high school graduates go on to achieve a bachelor's degree. Only 2 percent achieve Masters degrees, and less than .5 percent earn doctorates. CIT has proven to offer a realistic educational experience that equips young adults with skills that place the majority of graduates into career track employment. For students with the goal of continuing their educations at four-year institutions, their CIT educational experience has proven to augment their ability to succeed. Although distant from major towns, Crownpoint is a major reservation activity center.

In order to overcome the obstacles inherent in its geographic location and underserved population, CIT has broader infrastructure responsibilities. CIT's campus base is comprised of 153,468 square feet of facilities. The campus includes state-of-the-art classrooms, a hands-on working Veterinary Clinic, modular administrative buildings, library, separate men's and women's dormitories, married student housing, daycare and cafeteria. CIT has no recreation facility. CIT has a higher proportion of students with developmental education needs resultant from inadequate high school preparation. Most students require remedial courses to equip them to undertake college level programs. CIT has longer distances to transport students over reservation expanses where public transportation is non-existent. Despite many challenges, CIT earns achievements. CIT twice received an excellence award from the

U.S. Department of Agriculture for sincere commitment to student outcomes, one of only eight such awards nationally, which carried with it a modest cash prize and congratulatory letter from President Bush. CIT's Culinary Arts Program continues to win awards in both national and State competitions.

For years CIT wait-listed approximately 200 otherwise qualified students due to residential housing limitations, a practice recently discontinued because limited housing renders admission highly improbable. CIT has a ten-year average student retention rate of over 90 percent. Due to funding challenges resulting in insufficient Employment Placement personnel, the average job placement has dropped from a previous average of 86 percent to 74 percent. Increased funding would greatly assist in this area.

CIT is fully-accredited by North Central Association of Colleges and Schools as a higher educational institution. CIT offers two-year Associate of Applied Science degrees in seven disciplines: Accounting, Administrative Assistant, Applied Computer Technology, Environmental Technology and Natural Resources, Law Advocate, Legal Assistant and Veterinary Technician. CIT offers sixteen vocational certificate programs: Accounting, Administrative Assistant, Applied Computer Technology, Automotive Technology, Building Maintenance, Carpentry, Culinary Arts, Electrical Trades, Environmental Technology and Natural Resources, Law Advocate. Legal Assistant, Nursing Assistant, Veterinary Assistant, Small Business Development (new), Commercial Drivers License and Computer Aided Drafting.

On average, 85 percent of CIT graduates secure full-time employment and 15 percent accept seasonal jobs. Of this, 54 percent secured employment on-reservation and 46 percent off-reservation. The region's economy is comprised significantly of self-employed ranchers who by definition are not placed in employment. Several CIT Veterinary students are self-employed ranchers who improve their livestock yield through knowledge and skills learned in the CIT Veterinary Program. Students continuing their educations are considered positive terminations.

Of the above graduating classes students, the CIT Placement Office successfully tracked and placed 74 percent of graduates in jobs or continuing education. Of all CIT graduates, the average entry level annual wage is over $17,000. Commercial Drivers License (CDL) graduates earn the highest wage at $16 to $18 an hour, or $33,280 to $37,440 annually if employment remains stable. The next highest entry-level wages are: Veterinary Technician, Assistant $23,920: Legal Advocate/Assistant $21,320: Electrical Trades $20,280: Automotive and Environmental Technology, both at $19,760. An apprentice will start at $9/$11 hourly and increase to $22/$28 hourly in less than 4 years.

In an average lifetime of employment, CIT graduates will return to the Federal Government the cost of its investment many times over. Each employed graduate pays an average of $2,576 of their earnings to federal taxes in the first year of employment alone. Actual taxes paid differ according to a number of variables such as number of dependants, but wage earnings and resultant tax contributions will generally continue over at least thirty years. Over 60 percent of tracked graduates were employed in private industry and did not rely directly or indirectly on federal appropriations for jobs.

On behalf of CIT students and their dependants whose quality of life has been greatly improved by education resulting in employment, thank you for your consideration.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE CITY OF NORTH ADAMS, MASSACHUSETTS

Mr. Chairman and Honorable Members of the Committee: I appreciate the opportunity to present this testimony in support of a $1.1 million appropriation from the Land and Water Conservation Fund for the acquisition of Broad Brook watershed project in the Green Mountain National Forest.

The City of North Adams has owned the 3,921-acre Broad Brook property across the border in Vermont as a source of drinking water for its residents for nearly one hundred years. However, several years ago the city ceased depending on the Broad Brook parcel for its water and is now interested in selling the property to the Forest Service for inclusion into the Green Mountain National Forest. We completed the sale of the first portion of the property in December 2005 and are anxious to finish this project this year.

In fiscal year 2007, an appropriation of $1.1 million will secure the transfer of the final 970 acres of the 3,921-acre Broad Brook watershed property. Located within the boundaries of the Green Mountain NF in the towns of Pownal and Stamford, the Broad Brook property would be an outstanding addition to the forest, known for its excellent recreational opportunities and critical wildlife habitat.

The State of Vermont has mapped this parcel as being entirely within black bear production habitat, regions which support high densities of cub producing females. On the property there can be found a large and healthy population of the state threatened Large Whorled Pogonia (Isotria verticillata), and close to 7 miles of pristine headwater streams. A portion of the Appalachian National Scenic Trail, which in this part of Vermont coincides with the Long Trail, passes across the Broad Brook property. The tract is adjacent to other Forest Service ownership, the Stamford Meadows Wildlife Management Area—a state-owned sanctuary—as well as other conservation lands near the town of Pownal.

The Vermont congressional delegation, lead by Senator Leahy, has secured appropriations for this project in three consecutive fiscal years, 2004, 2005, and 2006. These funds recently allowed the first phase of the property, 2,450 acres, to be added to the Green Mountain NF. An appropriation of $1.1 million in fiscal year 2007 will complete the final phase of this project and would add an additional 970 acres to the forest.

The City of North Adams has reduced the total acquisition price for the Forest Service for the Broad Brook property by 25 percent off fair market value, allowing for a significant savings for the federal government. Importantly for the City of North Adams and its residents, the sale of this property to the federal government will provide the city with critical funds to enhance city services. The community also supports the transaction as a positive conservation legacy of which the city can be very proud.

This federal acquisition in Vermont has significant positive impacts for residents in both Massachusetts and Vermont. An appropriation of $1.1 million will complete the final phase of this important project.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for the opportunity to present this testimony in support of the appropriation for the Broad Brook property in Vermont.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE CITY OF DRAPER

Mr. Chairman and Honorable Members of the Committee: On behalf of the Draper City Council and its residents, I appreciate the opportunity to present this testimony in support of a $3 million appropriation from the Land and Water Conservation Fund for critical land protection efforts along the Bonneville Shoreline Trail in Utah.

In November 2005, the City of Draper, with an overwhelming vote of support by Draper's citizens, completed the purchase and permanent protection of Corner Canyon, a 1,020-acre property that was slated for development. This land will now be available to the community for open space and recreational uses. Corner Canyon is located within Draper's city limits and is nestled in the foothills below the Lone Peak Wilderness Area, in the "corner" between the Wasatch Range and Traverse Ridge. Following our acquisition, it will offer a variety of trails for hikers, bikers, and equestrians, and provides public access to the Bonneville Shoreline Trail. Such recreational uses will be incorporated in a master plan for Corner Canyon and is scheduled for completion by August 2006.

The Corner Canyon project is the largest ever conservation purchase by Draper City, and the $7 million bond passed to fund it is the largest bond measure passed in Salt Lake County for a single open space acquisition. The landowners agreed to sell the property to the City for approximately $13.6 million, with the agreement that a conservation easement would be placed on the property once the City acquired it. In addition to City funds, funding applications for $500,000 each were successfully made to both the State of Utah's Quality Growth Commission and Salt Lake County to assist in the acquisition of the property. With the assistance of this additional $1,000,000, the city was able to come up with the additional funds to acquire the property. For a City of approximately 35,000 residents, the purchase of Corner Canyon was obviously a very large investment and demonstrates both the commitment of the City and importance of protecting this critical land.

Corner Canyon is truly a public treasure, and has become an investment for each of us in the future of Draper. I am convinced that "Our Corner Canyon" will stand as a monument to our community, to our past and those who settled here and to our quality of life.

A significant portion of the Bonneville Shoreline Trail/Bear Canyon property, which the Forest Service would acquire with the requested 2007 Land and Water Conservation Funds, lies immediately adjacent to the Corner Canyon property and is a very important connection to our efforts to protect Corner Canyon and the land between City limits and the Lone Peak Wilderness Area. Additionally, the Bonneville Shoreline Trail/Bear Canyon property contains significant stretches of the Bon-

neville Shoreline and therefore will fill important gaps in completion of the Bonneville Shoreline Trail in Salt Lake County. The combination of the city's protection of Corner Canyon and the planned Forest Service acquisition of Bear Canyon represents an important federal and local conservation partnership in southern Salt Lake County.

In fiscal year 2007, additional funds are needed for the Forest Service to acquire the remaining portion of the Bonneville Shoreline Trail/Bear Canyon property. If not protected, this area could be developed, public access to this portion of the Bonneville Shoreline Trail could be lost forever, and adjacent forest and wilderness lands would also be put at risk.

Because of the afore stated reasons, I respectfully request that you include an appropriation of $3 million for the Bonneville Shoreline Trail in the fiscal year 2007 Interior and Related Agencies Appropriations bill.

Thank you for your time, consideration, and attention to this request.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE

On behalf of the County of Riverside, please support full funding for the Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILT) program in fiscal year 2007.

With your assistance, Congress provided $233 million for PILT in fiscal year 2006. This funding provides important compensation to local communities that have significant amounts of Federal land in their counties. There are over 2.5 million acres of Federal land within the borders of the County of Riverside. PILT funds partially offset the costs of supplying many valuable services such as search and rescue, law enforcement, and road maintenance.

The authorization for PILT would provide funding at approximately $340 million annually, which is warranted by the fiscal pressures felt by counties, particularly in California. The President's fiscal year 2007 budget proposal would cut PILT by $35 million. The County of Riverside strongly urges you to oppose this proposal.

Please continue to work to increase the funding necessary for this program.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE COUNTY OF VENTURA

I am writing on behalf of the County of Ventura to urge you to include provisions to extend the existing moratorium against new activities on the California Outer Continental Shelf (OCS) in the fiscal year 2007 Interior and Related Agencies Appropriations bill.

On September 20, 2005, the Ventura County Board of Supervisors unanimously voted to oppose federal bills and regulations that reduce the role or authority of State and local governments in the siting and approval of offshore energy facilities or diminish the public and environmental review process. The Board also voted to oppose time extensions of existing undeveloped offshore oil & gas leases.

Exploration and development activities on the OCS raise many unique and complex environmental issues. In order to avoid the potential ecological disaster risks inherent in offshore oil production, avoid the air quality impacts to the Ventura County air shed of increased offshore oil exploration and production, and to preserve the scenic, recreational, economic, and environmental resource values of our coast, the Board opposes the extension of existing undeveloped offshore oil & gas leases and the lifting of the existing moratorium on new leases.

The Board of Supervisors urges you to continue to work with your colleagues on the subcommittee to oppose efforts to modify the moratorium, and to ensure that the role or authority of State and local governments in the siting and approval of offshore energy facilities is not diminished.

Thank you for your consideration.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE COLORADO RIVER BOARD OF CALIFORNIA

Support for fiscal year 2007 Federal Funding of $5.2 million for the Department of the Interior—Bureau of Land Management to assist in the Colorado River Basin Salinity Control Program, with $1,500,000 to be expended on identified salinity control related projects and studies.

Your support and leadership are needed in securing adequate fiscal year 2007 funding for the Department of the Interior-Bureau of Land Management with respect to the federal/state Colorado River Basin Salinity Control Program. This program is carried out as a part of ecosystem and watershed management pursuant

to the Colorado River Basin Salinity Control Act (Public Law 93–320) and the Clean Water Act (Public Law 92–500).

As you are aware, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) is the largest landowner in the Colorado River Basin. Due to geologic conditions, much of the land that is controlled and managed by the BLM is heavily laden with salt. Past management practices have led to human-induced and accelerated erosional processes from which soil and rocks, heavily laden with salt have been deposited in various stream beds or flood plains. As a result of this disposition, salt is dissolved into the Colorado River system causing water quality problems downstream.

Congress has charged federal agencies, including the BLM, with proceeding with programs to control the salinity of the Colorado River. BLM's rangeland improvement programs can lead to some of the most cost-effective salinity control measures available. These measures may be more cost-effective than some of those now being considered for implementation by the Bureau of Reclamation through its Basin-wide Program and by the U.S. Department of Agriculture through its Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP). In keeping with the Congressional mandate to maximize the cost-effectiveness of the salinity control program, the Colorado River Board of California (Colorado River Board) is requesting that Congress appropriate and the administration allocate adequate funds to support BLM's portion of the Colorado River Basin Salinity Control Program.

Since the Congressional mandates of over two decades ago, much has been learned about the impact of salts in the Colorado River system. The USBR estimates that the quantified economic impacts and damages to United States' water users alone is about $330 million per year and that there are very significant additional damages yet to be quantified. For example, damages occur from:

—A reduction in the yield of salt sensitive crops and increased water use for leaching in the agricultural sector,

—A reduction in the useful life of galvanized water pipe systems, water heaters, faucets, garbage disposals, clothes washers, and dishwashers, and increased use of bottled water and water softeners in the household sector,

—An increase in the use of water for cooling, and the cost of water softening, and a decrease in equipment service life in the commercial sector,

—An increase in the use of water and the cost of water treatment, and an increase in sewer fees in the industrial sector,

—A decrease in the life of treatment facilities and pipelines in the utility sector,

—Difficulty in meeting wastewater discharge requirements to comply with National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System permit terms and conditions, an increase in desalination and brine disposal costs due to accumulation of salts in groundwater basins, and fewer opportunities for recycling and reuse of the water due to groundwater quality deterioration,

—Increased use of imported water for leaching and the cost of desalination and brine disposal for recycled water.

For every 30 milligram per liter increase in salinity concentrations, there are $75 million in additional damages in the United States. In addition, the federal government has made significant commitments to the Republic of Mexico and to the seven Colorado River Basin states with regard to the delivery of quality water to Mexico. In order for those commitments to be honored, it is essential that in fiscal year 2007 and in future fiscal years, that the Congress provides adequate funds to the Bureau of Land Management for its activities related to salinity control in the Colorado River Basin.

The BLM budget, as proposed by the Administration in the BLM budget justification document, includes five long-term vision components for the Soil, Water, and Air Management Program. One of these components is meeting state water quality standards in all stream miles flowing on BLM lands. Reducing saline runoff to meet the interstate, federal and international agreements is a critical element of the Soil, Water and Air Management Program.

The Colorado River Board, the state agency charged with protecting California's interests and rights in the water and power resources of the Colorado River System, requests that Congress appropriate $5,200,000 to BLM in fiscal year 2007 for activities that help control salt contributions from BLM managed lands in the Colorado River Basin. In the past, the BLM has used $800,000 of this funding for proposals submitted by BLM staff to the BLM's salinity control coordinator for projects that focus on salinity control. The Colorado River Basin Salinity Control Advisory Council report states that the BLM has now identified specific projects and studies that in fiscal year 2007 totals $1.5 million. The Colorado River Board urges the Subcommittee to specifically designate, $1.5 million for BLM identified projects and studies.

The Colorado River Basin Salinity Control Forum (Forum), on behalf of the seven Colorado River Basin states, has submitted testimony to your Subcommittee. The Colorado River Board concurs in the fiscal year 2007 funding request and justification statements for BLM as set forth in the Forum's testimony.

The Colorado River is, and will continue to be, a major and vital water resource to the 17 million residents of southern California. Preservation of its quality through an effective Salinity Control Program will avoid the additional economic damages to river users in California and the other states that rely on the Colorado River.

The Colorado River Board greatly appreciates your support of the Colorado River Basin Salinity Control Program and asks for your assistance and leadership in securing adequate funding for this vital program.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE COLORADO RIVER BASIN SALINITY CONTROL FORUM

In Support of $5,200,000 to assist in Colorado River Salinity Control, Title II from the Soil, Water and Air Management effort, and with support for the President's request for that activity. Also a request that $1,500,000 be spent on identified salinity control related projects and studies.

This testimony is in support of funding for the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) for the subactivity that assists the Colorado River Basin Salinity Control Program authorized by the Congress. The BLM budget, as proposed by the Administration in the BLM budget justification document, calls for five principal program priorities within the Soil, Water, and Air Management Program. One of these priorities is reducing saline runoff to meet the interstate, federal and international agreements to control salinity of the Colorado River.

The BLM's 2007 Budget Justification document states, with respect to 2005 Planned Program Performance, that the BLM continues to implement on-the-ground projects, evaluate progress in cooperation with the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation (USBR) and the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), and report salt-retaining measures in order to further the Plan of Implementation of the Federal Salinity Control Program in the Colorado River Basin. The Colorado River Basin Salinity Control Forum (Forum) believes that fiscal year 2007 funds appropriated by the Congress for the Soil, Water, and Air Management Program should be used, in part, for reducing saline runoff in the Colorado River Basin.

The seven Colorado River Basin States, through the Forum, have engaged the BLM in a partnership with the Basin states as has been done previously with the two other federal agencies implementing salinity control in the Basin. The Forum has requested and the BLM has selected a salinity control coordinator for this basinwide effort. This person now serves with the two full-time coordinators in place for the USBR and the USDA efforts. This enhanced working relationship has taken advantage of the availability of Basin states' cost-sharing monies to leverage federal funds. The Forum is encouraged by the words in the BLM budget document. The Forum supports the funding request of $32,053,000 for the Soil, Water, and Air Management Subactivity. As one of the five principal Soil, Water, and Air Program priorities, the Forum believes that the BLM needs to specifically target $5,200,000 to activities that help control salt contributions from BLM managed lands in the Colorado River Basin. In the past, the BLM has used $800,000 of the Soil, Water and Air Program funding for proposals submitted by BLM staff to the BLM's salinity control coordinator for projects that focus on salinity control. The Colorado River Basin Salinity Control Advisory Council report states that the BLM has now identified projects that in fiscal year 2006 could use $1.5 million. For years, Congress has dedicated $800,000 on the effort and now the Forum believes $1.5 million should be so designated.

The success of the BLM in controlling erosion and, hence, salt contributions to the Colorado River and its tributaries is essential to the success of the Colorado River Basin Salinity Control Program, including adherence to the water quality standards adopted by the seven Colorado River Basin states and approved by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA). Inadequate BLM salinity control efforts will result in very significant additional economic damages to water users downstream. The Forum submits this testimony in support of adequate funding so that the BLM program can move ahead at a pace that is needed to sustain these water quality standards.

OVERVIEW

This testimony is in support of funding for a portion of the Title II program. The Colorado River Basin Salinity Control Program was authorized by the Congress in

1974. The Title I portion of the Colorado River Basin Salinity Control Act responded to commitments that the United States made, through a minute of the International Boundary & Water Commission, to Mexico specific to the quality of water being delivered to Mexico at the international boundary. Title II of the Act established a program to respond to salinity control needs of Colorado River water users in the United States and to comply with the mandates of the then newly enacted Clean Water Act. Initially, the Secretary of the Interior and the USBR were given the lead federal role by the Congress.

After a decade of investigative and implementation efforts, the Basin states concluded that the Salinity Control Act needed to be amended. In response to the Basin states' requests, the Congress revised the Act in 1984 to give new salinity control responsibilities to the USDA and to the BLM. That revision, while leaving implementation of the salinity control policy with the Secretary of the Interior, gave new salinity control responsibilities to the USDA and to the BLM. The Congress has charged the Administration with implementing the most cost-effective program practicable (measured in dollars per ton of salt removed). The Basin states are strongly supportive of that concept and have proceeded to implement salinity control activities for which they are responsible in the Colorado River Basin.

Since the Congressional mandates of over two decades ago, much has been learned about the impact of salts in the Colorado River system. The USBR estimates that the quantified economic impacts and damages to United States' water users alone is about $330 million per year and there are very significant additional damages yet to be quantified. Damages occur from:

—a reduction in the yield of salt sensitive crops and increased water use for leaching in the agricultural sector,

—a reduction in the useful life of galvanized water pipe systems, water heaters, faucets, garbage disposals, clothes washers, and dishwashers, and increased use of bottled water and water softeners in the household sector,

—an increase in the use of water for cooling, and the cost of water softening, and a decrease in equipment service life in the commercial sector,

—an increase in the use of water and the cost of water treatment, and an increase in sewer fees in the industrial sector,

—a decrease in the life of treatment facilities and pipelines in the utility sector,

—difficulty in meeting wastewater discharge requirements to comply with National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System permit terms and conditions, an increase in desalination and brine disposal costs due to accumulation of salts in groundwater basins, and fewer opportunities for recycling due to groundwater quality deterioration,

—increased use of imported water for leaching and the cost of desalination and brine disposal for recycled water.

For every 30 mg/l increase in salinity concentrations, there is $75 million in additional damages in the United States.

The Forum is composed of gubernatorial appointees from Arizona, California, Colorado, Nevada, New Mexico, Utah and Wyoming. The Forum has become the seven-state coordinating body for interfacing with federal agencies and the Congress in support of the implementation of the Salinity Control Program. In close cooperation with the USEPA and pursuant to requirements of the Clean Water Act, every three years the Forum prepares a formal report analyzing the salinity of the Colorado River, anticipated future salinity, and the program elements necessary to keep the salinities at or below the concentrations in the river system in 1972 at Imperial Dam, and below Parker and Hoover Dams.

In setting water quality standards for the Colorado River system, the salinity concentrations at these three locations have been identified as the numeric criteria. The plan necessary for controlling salinity and reducing downstream damages has been captioned the "Plan of Implementation." The 2005 Review of water quality standards includes an updated Plan of Implementation. The level of appropriation requested in this testimony is in keeping with the agreed upon plan. If adequate funds are not appropriated, significant damages from the higher salt concentrations in the water will be more widespread in the United States and Mexico.

JUSTIFICATION

The BLM is, by far and away, the largest land manager in the Colorado River Basin. Much of the land that is controlled and managed by the BLM is heavily laden with salt. Past management practices, which include the use of lands for recreation; for road building and transportation; and for oil, gas, and mineral exploration have led to man-induced and accelerated erosional processes. When soil and rocks heavily laden with salt erode, the silt is carried along for some distance and

ultimately settles in the streambed or flood plain. The salts, however, are dissolved and remain in the river system causing water quality problems downstream.

The Forum believes that the federal government has a major and important responsibility with respect to controlling salt contributions from public lands. The Congress has explicitly directed specific federal agencies, including the BLM, to proceed with measures to control the salinity of the Colorado River, with a strong mandate to seek out the most cost-effective options. It has been determined that rangeland improvements can lead to some of the most cost-effective salinity control measures available. These salinity control measures may be more cost-effective than some now being considered for implementation by the USBR and by the USDA. They are very environmentally acceptable as they will prevent erosion, enhance wildlife habitat, increase dependable stream flows and increase grazing opportunities.

Through studying hundreds of watersheds in the States of Utah, Colorado and Wyoming, consortiums of federal and state agencies, including the BLM, have selected several watersheds where very cost-effective salinity control efforts could be implemented immediately. In keeping with the Congressional mandate to maximize the cost-effectiveness of salinity control, the Forum is requesting that the Congress appropriate and the Administration allocate adequate funds to support the BLM's portion of the Colorado River Salinity Control Program as set forth in the Forum's adopted Plan of Implementation.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE COLORADO RIVER COMMISSION OF NEVADA

As a Nevada representative of the Colorado River Basin Salinity Control Forum, the Colorado River Commission of Nevada (CRC) supports funding for the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) for the subactivity that assists the Colorado River Basin Salinity Control Program. The CRC supports the fiscal year 2007 funding request of $33,343,000 for the Soil, Water, and Air Management Subactivity. As one of the five principal Soil, Water, and Air Program priorities, the CRC believes the BLM needs to specifically target $5,200,000 to activities that help control salt contributions from BLM managed lands in the Colorado River Basin.

Salinity remains one of the major problems in the Colorado River. Congress has recognized the need to confront this problem with its passage of Public Law 93–320 and Public Law 98–569. Your support of the current funding recommendations that support the Colorado River Basin Salinity Control Program is essential to move the program forward so that the congressionally directed salinity objectives are achieved.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE COLUMBIA RIVER INTER-TRIBAL FISH COMMISSION

Mr. Chairman, Honorable Members of the Committee, on behalf of the Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission, I want to thank you for the opportunity to present our views on the Bureau of Indian Affairs budget. The Commission also endorses the testimony of our four member tribes on their natural resource program needs. We respectfully request that Congress reverse the downward trend in program funding that supports tribal well being including the protection of our natural resources. We also encourage this committee to take note of the on-going collaborative effort ordered by the federal judge within the region under the Biological Opinions on the Federal Columbia River Power System. For fiscal year 2007, the Commission has identified the following funding needs:

$4,570,185, an increase of $1,435,000 over fiscal year 2006, for Columbia River Fisheries Management (a subcategory under the Rights Protection Implementation, Wildlife and Parks, Other Recurring Programs Area), plus pay cost adjustments. Of this increased amount:

—$500,000 is required for base programs to address salmon listings under the Endangered Species Act, including genetic stock identification work required for hatchery reform programs.

—$535,000 for enforcement officers to patrol In-lieu and Treaty Fishing Access Sites on the Columbia River.

—$400,000 to assist in the start-up of a commercial fish processing center and expand marketing efforts to increase the value of the commercial treaty fisheries through processing and marketing.

$1,500,000 is required for Conservation Officers, either as a new program category/line item included under Wildlife and Parks or as a base increase to the Columbia River Fisheries Management line item.

$4,650,000, an increase of $608,485 over fiscal year 2006, plus pay-cost adjustments, for the U.S./Canada Salmon Treaty program.

BACKGROUND

In 1977, the Columbia River Treaty Tribes (Nez Perce, Umatilla, Warm Springs and Yakama Tribes) formed the Commission to provide coordination and technical assistance to the member tribes.

In 1855, the United States entered into treaties with the four tribes[1] to ensure the mutual peace and security of our peoples. For the four tribes' cession of millions of acres, the United States promised to protect and honor the rights and resources the tribes reserved to themselves under those treaties. Our rights and our religious beliefs are tied to the salmon which is being destroyed by process and delay by those blocking the adoption of necessary recovery and restoration actions and programs consistent with the Endangered Species Act and federal trust obligations. We have a plan designed to restore salmon to healthy sustainable levels.

The Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) continues to fall short in funding the fish and wildlife efforts proposed by the region's co-managers. This January, 541 project proposals were submitted to the Northwest Power and Conservation Council (NPCC) for the 2007–09 funding cycle. These proposals followed an extensive subbasin planning effort involving tribal, state and federal co-managers as well as a growing number of local conservation groups and watershed councils. The 2007–09 proposals total $354 million, $338 million and $324 million over the three-year period. Under BPA's proposed artificial funding cap of $179 million, many projects will not be funded and ongoing projects may be at risk of not getting funded. We are recommending that BPA fish and wildlife funding levels be set at least at $200 million, $225 million, and $240 million respectively in 2007 to 2009. Unfortunately, because of BPA's artificial funding cap, we must now ask Congress to fund the project proposals identified by the region's fish and wildlife agencies.

CRITFC's principles for fisheries protection and restoration are outlined in a restoration plan titled Wy-Kan-Ush-Mi Wa-Kish-Wit (Spirit of the Salmon). Wy-Kan-Ush-Mi Wa-Kish-Wit can be viewed at www.critfc.org. The plan's objectives are to halt the decline of salmon, lamprey and sturgeon populations and rebuild salmon runs to levels that support tribal ceremonial, subsistence and commercial harvests. To achieve these objectives, the plan emphasizes strategies and principles that rely on natural production and healthy river systems. The plan utilizes the cooperative collaborative conservation approach that the White House has encouraged parties to use to address natural resource issues. The tribes can point to several successes in watershed-based restoration of salmon working with state, federal and private entities.

Columbia River Fisheries Management Program Needs.—The member tribes have identified programmatic funding shortfalls that undermine efforts to fulfill their self-determination goals and objectives for ESA recovery planning, hatchery reform, treaty fishing access sites, salmon marketing, and conservation enforcement. These funding shortfalls require an increase of $1,435,000 over fiscal year 2006 for a new program base of $4,570,185 for Columbia River Fisheries Management as explained below.

ESA Recovery Planning.—$500,000 is required for base programs to address salmon listings under the ESA, including extensive coordination with federal agencies regarding recovery planning for listed salmon. In 1991, at the BIA's request, we submitted a needs assessment regarding outstanding hunting and fishing rights. At that time, we requested $1,000,000 to determine the allocation of the conservation burden among all sources of salmon mortality caused by hydropower, habitat, hatcheries and harvest impacts and for implementing hatchery production reform. The BIA provided only $700,000. The funding has supported ongoing effort to participate in multiple processes and forums for salmon recovery planning.

Hatchery Reform.—While we have been calling for hatchery reform since 1976, the White House recently recognized reforming hatchery production programs is an integral part of salmon restoration. The tribes are leaders in restoration efforts utilizing methods such as supplementation and welcome the White House's new interest to advance this useful tool as part of a comprehensive restore salmon program. This broader mandate carries responsibilities to monitor and evaluate the results of management actions taken to reform production. To meet regional obligations and high standards under this broader mandate, the tribes must develop the capacity

[1] Treaty with the Yakama Tribe, June 9, 1855, 12 Stat. 951; Treaty with the Tribes of Middle Oregon, June 25, 1855, 12 Stat. 963; Treaty with the Umatilla Tribe, June 9, 1855, 12 Stat. 945; Treaty with the Nez Perce Tribe, June 11, 1855, 12 Stat. 957.

to analyze a broad base of genetic data essential for conservation and restoration of salmon populations, without impacting remaining wild stocks and request $200,000 for this requirement. This funding is part of the $500,000 program increase identified for ESA recovery planning.

In-Lieu Treaty Fishing Access Sites.—We request new base funding of $535,000 specifically for the Treaty Fishing Access Sites, putting four officers on patrol to provide full coverage. This funding will cover dispatch support, vehicles with equipment, and four new uniformed officers. In-lieu and treaty fishing access sites were developed to replace fishing and access sites lost to the tribes as a result of federal construction of hydropower dams. While the BIA provides two enforcement personnel for these sites, they are not a dedicated resource and often called away from the river area for extended periods of time. Problems include illegal drugs, assaults, domestic violence complaints, damage to government property (the in-lieu and access site facilities), and numerous trespass violations by non-tribal members using the sites. All four tribes passed formal resolutions requesting that the Bureau provide funding to the Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fisheries Enforcement Department to take over protection and enforcement responsibilities at these sites.

Salmon Marketing.—$400,000 to assist in the start-up of a commercial fish processing center and expand marketing efforts to increase the value of the commercial treaty fisheries through processing and marketing. Over the years, tribal fishers have been relegated to the bottom of the retail chain, with little compensation for their efforts. It is imperative that the tribal fishers have the opportunity to increase the economic value of their fisheries through processing, specialty product development, and marketing. The Corps of Engineers, in coordination with the four tribes, is building a commercial fish-processing center along the Columbia River. This facility should be finished by early 2007. A business plan to guide operations is being completed, and funding is needed for start-up capital needs for equipment and initial staffing, and for expanded marketing activities to process and move a value added salmon product.

Conservation Enforcement Program Restoration.—Due to funding cuts made by the Bonneville Power Administration (BPA), we have a conservation enforcement request of $1,500,000 for fiscal year 2007 for a new program category under Wildlife and Parks for Conservation Officers, or as a base funding increase to the Columbia River fisheries management line item, to restore the tribes' coordinated fisheries enforcement program, and for cultural resource protection. This program was previously funded by BPA but was reduced due to BPA's artificial limitation on fish and wildlife program funding. The BPA and the Northwest Power and Conservation Council have both endorsed Congressional funding for this successful program. This funding would allow enable the Nez Perce Tribe to maintain a well qualified staff that provides conservation enforcement in the tributaries in the Snake River Basin, would allow the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation to provide conservation enforcement in tributaries in northeastern Oregon, and would allow the Columbia River Inter-Tribal Enforcement branch to continue conservation enforcement and safety programs on the mainstem of the Columbia River between Bonneville and McNary dams. The NPCC acknowledged these program needs in its 1994 "Strategy for Salmon," calling for "an expanded enforcement program to provide additional protection to Columbia River salmon and steelhead." The program has been successful in both reducing violations and educating tribal and non-tribal fishers and continues to receive the strong endorsement of NPCC, the BPA, and NOAA Fisheries.

U.S.-Canada Salmon Treaty Program.—The 24 treaty fishing tribes that participate in the implementation of the U.S./Canada Pacific Salmon Treaty of 1985 have identified a program need of $4,650,000, an increase of $608,485 over fiscal year 2006, plus pay-cost adjustments, for the U.S./Canada Salmon Treaty program. This funding supports salmon harvest monitoring and evaluation, mark tagging programs, and research carried out by the tribes on Chinook, coho, chum, sockeye and pink salmon stocks originating in the Snake, Columbia River, Washington Coastal and Puget Sound rivers and streams. This work is coordinated with state and federal efforts through the U.S. Section of the Pacific Salmon Commission in order to ensure cost and program efficiencies. Continued funding reductions in this program area have forced the twenty-four tribes to cut staff in order to maintain critical research needs.

In summary, through a governing body of leaders from the four tribes working together to protect our treaty fishing rights, with a staff of biologists, hydrologists, law enforcement personnel, and other experts advising tribal policy-makers, the tribes have become proven leaders on natural resource issues, provided that adequate resources are available. These activities are essential to meet the federal mandate of co-management reaffirmed by federal court order. We ask for your con-

tinued support of our efforts and we are prepared to provide any additional information you may require on the Department of the Interior budget.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE CHUGACH REGIONAL RESOURCES COMMISSION

We appreciate the opportunity to provide this written testimony to the Appropriations Subcommittee on Interior and Related Agencies. The Chugach Regional Resources Commission (CRRC), a non-profit Alaska Native coalition for managing Tribal natural resources, with its seven member Tribes located in the Prince William Sound and Lower Cook Inlet, respectfully requests restoration of its base funding of $350,000 to the fiscal year 2007 Bureau of Indian Affairs budget, Fish, Wildlife and Parks Program and an increase of $150,000 for the continued operations of the Alutiiq Pride Shellfish Hatchery. Thus, CRRC is seeking a total of $500,000 for fiscal year 2007 Appropriations. We have attached a budget of our appropriations request.

The Tribes of the Chugach Region, who make up CRRC, appreciate the support of the Subcommittee in reinstating our fiscal year 2006 funding, which was zeroed out by the Bureau of Indian Affairs. Unfortunately, the Administration has once again zeroed out our funding in the President's proposed BIA fiscal year 2007 budget. Therefore, we are respectfully requesting the support of the Appropriations Subcommittee to restore the $350,000 to the Bureau of Indian Affairs fiscal year 2007 Fish, Wildlife and Parks budget for CRRC and add it to the base budget as permanent funding. We also request an additional appropriation of $150,000 to support the Alutiiq Pride Shellfish Hatchery until it becomes economically self-sustaining.

The mission of CRRC is to work with our seven member Tribes to promote and develop sound economic resource based-projects and to work collectively to address any natural resource and environment-related issues that affect the Native people of the Chugach Region.

Until fiscal year 2002, funding for CRRC had been included in the BIA's Fish, Wildlife and Parks budget for the previous 12 years. In fiscal year 2002–2006, this fiscal year funding was not included, but was restored by Congress. Last year, however, our funding was reduced by $50,000, significantly jeopardizing the program's continued operation. CRRC funding, over the past 16 years, has supported the development and operation of many programs that have assisted communities in providing meaningful employment opportunities as well as valuable services and products to the people of the State of Alaska.

If this funding is not restored, 35 Native people in the Chugach Region will lose their jobs. With the scarcity of employment opportunities in rural Alaska, the impact of approximately six families per village losing this income in a village with an average population of 100, strikes a devastating blow to the local community economy. In addition, these 20 families will create a much larger burden on state and federal financial resources as they will be forced to depend upon state and federal welfare programs to provide funding for necessary living expenses.

This funding also supports the base operating expenses of CRRC, and without it, our work will not be able to continue. A summary of some of these programs supported by this funding is provided to give you a better understanding of the integral role this funding plays in Tribal community development.

Alutiiq Pride Shellfish Hatchery.—The Alutiiq Pride Shellfish Hatchery is the only shellfish hatchery in the State of Alaska. A 20,000 sq. ft. shellfish hatchery located in Seward, Alaska, the hatchery houses shellfish seed, brood stock, and algae production facilities. Originally known as the Quteckak Shellfish Hatchery, the hatchery employs 4 individuals and is operated by the Chugach Regional Resources Commission. The Hatchery needs an additional $150,000 to facilitate its self-sustaining operations.

Alutiiq Pride has been successful in culturing goeduck and razor clam species but additional research and development funding is needed to assist in the nursery, growth and marketing stages. Last year, Alutiiq Pride produced 4 million oyster seeds. This year, the Hatchery anticipates sales of 8 million oyster seed. Revenue from such sales, however, is quite modest ($35,000). The goeduck shellfish farming industry is expected to grow rapidly. If Alutiiq Pride can sell goeducks and razor clam seeds, the production potential from only 2 million seed sales can approach $400,000, a tenfold revenue increase.

The shellfish industry in Alaska has not yet grown to the point where seed sales cover the cost of operations. Oyster sales have matured and goeduck seed sales will coincide with the expected growth of that industry. Alutiiq Pride is undertaking hatchery, nursery and grow out operations research to adapt mariculture techniques for the Alaskan shellfish industry. Until the hatchery is self-sufficient in 3–5 years,

however, it requires operations and research and development funds if it is to meet the State's growing demand for shellfish seed. The Hatchery seeks annual funding of $150,000 for hatchery operating expenses research and development funding to develop new shellfish species until we are self-sustaining.

In addition to our work at Alutiiq Pride, the CRRC has established a host of other projects that have restored salmon and sockeye runs to important areas, created important employment opportunities through mariculture project development, and initiated important educational projects that will lead to meaningful involvement of the Tribes in the management of their resources. These projects include:

Port Graham Salmon Hatchery.—The Port Graham Salmon Hatchery has been in operation since 1990, and raises sockeye, pink, and coho salmon. CRRC provided Port Graham with the technical and administrative assistance necessary to build the hatchery program. The hatchery's goal is to rebuild local salmon runs and provide economic opportunities for village residents. CRRC has funded the hatchery operations for many years and employed the hatchery staff consisting of 5–7 full time and seasonal employees.

The original hatchery was located in the net loft of the salmon cannery building. This building was completely destroyed by a fire in January of 1998. CRRC worked closely with the Port Graham Village Council to obtain funding and help to build a new hatchery. The new hatchery was completed in 2000 and is now in the process of bringing salmon production to full capacity, which is 110 million pink salmon eggs, 5 million sockeye salmon eggs and 2 million coho salmon eggs. The hatchery currently produces local stock pink and coho salmon and incubates sockeye salmon eggs for the nearby Native Village of Nanwalek. The hatchery is expecting about 300,000 adult pink salmon to return this year, which will be enough to fill it to capacity.

Tatitlek Mariculture Project.—The Tatitlek Mariculture Project has grown over the past few years to the point of the community constructing a processing facility for oysters, with plans to expand to Littleneck clams, scallops, mussels, and cockles. The project employs eight community members to care for the oysters until they reach a marketable size, at which time they are prepared for market. Another component of the project is to expand upon the existing marketing plan to ensure continuous funding for the project. This project has several funding sources as well, including the BIA, DCED, and revenue received from selling their oysters from the Tribal farm, after subsistence needs are met. Tatitlek has also received ANA funding in the past, which assisted them in getting the project started. This grant was administered by CRRC.

Tribal Education Initiative Project.—Under this project, the principal partners, CRRC, University of Alaska-Fairbanks and NOAA will work together to establish a coastal resources management technician training degree program. CRRC and its member villages are committed to greater employment and business development and to improving their capacity to play a meaningful role in research, monitoring and management of those resources on which their livelihood and culture depend. This project will integrate traditional knowledge and western science by involving Native Elders and traditional knowledge bearers from the region in curriculum development and project implementation.

As you can see, federal funding has played an integral role in allowing CRRC to develop and implement important community-based programs such as those described above. The Native people employed under this funding, the majority of whom live in remote villages, will lose their jobs if this funding is not restored; CRRC will be without operating funds, thus unable to facilitate the development of local community economies, and Tribes will no longer have a collective voice to address the environmental and resource issues that affect their lives.

We are respectfully requesting the Committee's support to restore the original amount of $350,000 to the BIA Fish, Wildlife and Parks Budget for the Chugach Regional Resources Commission and make it part of the recurring base budget. We also request a $150,000 increase to fund the continuing operations of the Alutiiq Pride Shellfish Hatchery. Due to the magnitude of this program to the people of the Chugach, as well as its far reaching impacts and high cost to benefit ratio, we are also requesting that this funding be included in the budget as part of the permanent base. We believe that making our funding a part of the permanent base will alleviate the need for us to spend what little funding we have on getting our BIA funding restored rather than on meaningful projects that will benefit the communities.

Once again, we ask the Subcommittee to restore these funds in behalf of the Native people of the Chugach Region and thank you for your support of our programs, as well as this opportunity to provide our written testimony.

BUDGET

	Amount
Personnel	$177,435
Travel for Board of Directors and Staff	21,000
Mariculture/Fisheries/Office Supplies	49,970
Technical Biological and Legal Assistance	43,200
Miscellaneous Expenses (Telephone, Office Space, etc.)	58,395
Alutiiq Pride Shellfish Hatchery Operations	150,000
Total request	500,000

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE CHEYENNE RIVER SIOUX TRIBE

As Chairman of the Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe, I am pleased to present this testimony on the Department of the Interior budget for fiscal year 2007. A summary of the Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe's fiscal year 2007 funding request for Interior is as follows:

1. To promote improved range management, an increase of $1,322,203.00 for Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe's Prairie Management Program is requested.
2. To improve service to sixteen (16) communities serviced by the Cheyenne River Sioux Law Enforcement Division in order to come into full compliance with the Tribe's 638 Law Enforcement Contract, $416,351.30 to meet minimum staffing levels for its Law Enforcement Division is requested. An increase of $1,225,698.70 is requested for adequate staffing levels.
3. To meet increased volume of caseloads and to address case backlog, an increase of $818,431.00 to hire minimum staff for the Cheyenne River Sioux Tribal Court System is requested. An increase of $1,164,290.00 is needed to bring the budget up to adequate staffing levels.
4. To fund Phase I of the Trust Asset Management Project for agency-level management of rangeland resources, $1,710,867.00 is requested.
5. To restore the Welfare Assistance Program funding to fiscal year 2006 levels and to specifically fund the Miscellaneous Assistance portion of the Program, $250,000.00 is requested.
6. To provide funding for expansion of the Indian Child Welfare Act Program to address a dramatic increase in caseload, $558,093.00 is requested.
7. To fund BIA Road Maintenance, $1,212,101.00 is requested in order to provide adequate maintenance for over 316 miles of reservation roads.

NARRATIVE JUSTIFICATION FOR FUNDING REQUEST INCREASE

Prairie Management Program.—This Program is responsible for restoring and preserving the mixed grass prairie ecosystem on the Reservation. Its goals are to improve land productivity by implementing range management practices that focus on the reduction of erosion, improvement of wildlife habitat, control of noxious weeds and the black-tailed prairie dog, as well as bison enhancement and endangered species recovery. This Program has been funded annually by a special congressional appropriation since 1995, however, it has been under-funded since its inception. During fiscal year 2006, its funding was reduced to approximately $416,000—far below the level necessary to sustain the Program. As a result of this reduction in funding, the Program was forced to reduce its workforce in fiscal year 2006 to 10 full-time workers from 18 full-time employees, six contract employees, and six seasonal employees in fiscal year 2005. Indeed, without adequate funding in fiscal year 2007, the Program will be forced to close down completely. Accordingly, we are requesting $1,322,203.00 to operate the Program so that improvements to the sustainable resource of our rangelands can continue.

Law Enforcement Division.—The Tribe is requesting $416,351.30 in order to meet minimum staffing levels for its Law Enforcement Division. An increase of $1,225,698.70 is needed to bring the budget up to adequate staffing levels. The Division in its current state is unable to provide adequate police protection to the 16 communities it serves. Emergency response time suffers due to the size of the Reservation and the distance between communities. Coverage is further limited by the staffing level—6 sergeants and 16 patrol officers. This is the same number of patrol officers the Tribe had in 1998—only now the Reservation population is over 20 percent larger.

BIA appropriations have not increased for Law Enforcement in the past five years. The Law Enforcement Division needs additional funding to increase staffing levels, so that is can come into compliance with the Tribe's 638 contract. With an increase in funding, salaries can be increased (patrol officers currently start at $25,771/year; that starting salary can be raised to $31,830/year) and new officers can attend certification training to better serve the public.

Tribal Court System.—The Tribe is requesting $818,431 in order to bring its Tribal Court System to minimum staffing levels. An increase of $1,164,290.00 is needed to bring the budget up to adequate staffing levels. In fiscal year 2006, the Tribe had to fund its Tribal Courts when the $458,345.21 total budget was expended on salaries and fringe benefits alone. The Tribe paid for supplies, communications, and building expenses from the CRST General Fund.

Inadequate staffing levels result in lengthy delays in trial, the issuance of orders, and appeals. This interferes with defendants' right to a speedy trial. The Tribal Courts are overburdened—there are 57 cases for every 100 Reservation residents. The additional funds would be used to hire one civil court judge, one staff attorney or law clerk, one additional criminal court judge, one additional juvenile court judge, one mediation clerk, one appellate court clerk, two probation officers (adult/juvenile), one compliance clerk and two court process servers. Money is also needed for basic operational costs such as communications, office supplies, and equipment.

Unless base funding is increased, a high number of cases will continue to be carried out into the next year resulting in violations of criminal defendants' sixth amendment rights, reduction in effective victim protection, and negative impacts on reservation businesses that must rely on the civil court for collection actions.

Trust Asset Management Program.—The Great Plains Region secured $1.825 million for fiscal year 2005 in Public Law 108–447 (Consolidated Appropriations Act) for use at the Agency level for staffing in the area of rangeland management. This Program, which focuses on the specific needs of large land-based agricultural tribal economies, is necessary since lease income from lands for agriculture and livestock grazing is a main source of revenue for the Tribe and requires intensive, on site operation to ensure range productivity. Neither the Region nor any of its tribes received funds for fiscal year 2006, however, and a result vital land management services, including lease compliance, resource management planning and IIM account management at the agency level, were not adequately addressed for that fiscal period. We are requesting $1,710,867.00 to complete Phase I of the Program.

Welfare Assistance Program.—The Administration is proposing to reduce funding by $11 million from the 2006 enacted level to $74.1 million for this Program, which will negatively impact many critical services and completely eliminate others. For instance, the General Assistance (GA) program, which was established by the BIA to provide necessary financial assistance to Indians in need when such assistance is not available through state or local agencies, would be reduced by $5.8 million in fiscal year 2007. Such reduction in funding will have a devastating effect on a majority of our most needy members, as we have an over 80 percent unemployment rate on our Reservation. Supportive services through the GA Program also provide assistance to individuals in overcoming personal or environmental handicaps that may inhibit their employability. Such services include transportation assistance, shelter costs, legal assistance and other critical tasks related to employment.

Miscellaneous Assistance would be eliminated under the Administration's fiscal year 2007 budget. Miscellaneous Assistance provides indigent Indians with burial assistance, disaster assistance and emergency aid, which are services that are not adequately addressed under local, state or Federal programs. Accordingly, retaining the BIA's responsibility for providing these services is critical. Accordingly, we request the Subcommittee's assistance in assuring that the Welfare Assistance Program is restored to its fiscal year 2006 enacted level and that Miscellaneous Assistance is re-funded. Specifically, we request $250,000.00 for Miscellaneous Assistance.

Indian Child Welfare Act Program.—The Administration is proposing to reduce funding for this Program by $690,000 from the 2006 enacted level, significantly impacting critical support from tribal social workers who have responsibility for providing counseling and other services to Indian families. The Tribe's Program determines which off-reservation proceedings involve our Tribal families and then decides whether to transfer the case to Tribal Court or to intervene and participate in state proceedings. Most importantly, the Program finds family placements for our Lakota children who are removed from their homes.

The Tribe received $79,563.47 in fiscal year 2006 for its Program. This amount is well below the funding necessary to run our program at adequate levels. The Program currently has 80 active cases (including three appeals to the State Supreme Court) and annually receives over 1,300 requests for assistance in 11 states and 8 counties in South Dakota. Due to a dramatic increase in caseload, the current budg-

et is inadequate to provide for more staffing. We are therefore requesting $558,093.00 to bring the budget up to adequate staffing levels to provide salaries for five additional staff positions (one attorney, two social workers, and one receptionist).

BIA Road Maintenance.—In 2005, through the enactment of SAFETEA–LU, Congress made a major commitment to address the poor state of transportation infrastructure on Indian reservations by increasing funding for road construction and improvement. The five year SAFETEA–LU authorization makes critical advances in reversing the historical neglect and underfunding for road construction on Indian reservations. While investing in the construction and improvement of reservation roads is vital to tribal economic development and self-determination, preserving that investment by maintaining the integrity of these roads is just as important. The Administration is proposing to cut the Tribal Priority Allocation amount for BIA road maintenance by $2.1 million from its 2006 enacted level. This proposal simply does not make sense as the lack of maintenance funding, for snow removal for instance, can put reservation road out of commission for significant periods of time—in the Northern Plains, snow covers roads for, on average, six months out of the year.

The BIA Agency received $462,101.00 for fiscal year 2006, an amount that has proven inadequate for actual road maintenance after deductions for staff salaries, transportation costs, building utilities, office supplies and contractual services. There are over 316 miles of road in the Tribe's Indian Reservation Roads (IRR) inventory. This leaves approximately $209.00 per road mile for annual maintenance, well below approximately $5,000.00 per road mile the amount that is spent by the State for the exact same purpose. The Tribe estimates its unmet need, at a minimum, of $750,000.00 for fiscal year 2006 alone. Thus, we are requesting that the annual allocation for the Tribe's road maintenance be increased to $1,212,101.00 annually for fiscal year 2007, which would allow for an annual average allocation per road mile of $2,582.00.

Prepared Statement of the Colorado River Water Conservation District

We are requesting your support for the following appropriations in fiscal year 2007 to the Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) for the Upper Colorado River Endangered Fish Recovery Program and the San Juan River Basin Recovery Implementation Program, as recommended in the President's budget.

1. Appropriation of $697,000 in "recovery" funds (Ecological Services Activity; Endangered Species Subactivity; Recovery Element; $697,000 within the $5,631,000 item entitled "General Program Activities") to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) to allow FWS to continue its necessary participation in the Upper Colorado River Endangered Fish Recovery Program.
2. Appropriation of $437,000 in operation and maintenance funds (Resource Management Appropriation; Fisheries Activity; Hatchery Operations & Maintenance Subactivity, Hatchery Operations Project) to support the ongoing operation of the FWS' Ouray National Fish Hatchery in Utah.
3. Allocation of $211,000 in "recovery" funds for the San Juan River Basin Recovery Implementation Program to the FWS for fiscal year 2007 to meet FWS' Region 2 expenses managing and implementing the San Juan Recovery Program.

We thank you for your past support and request the Subcommittee's assistance for fiscal year 2007 funding to ensure FWS' continuing financial participation in these vitally important programs.

Prepared Statement of the California State Coastal Conservancy

PROJECT REQUESTS

Project	Amount
Funding for the Don Edwards San Francisco Bay Wildlife Refuge (FWS, Partners for Fish and Wildlife)	$1,540,000
Monitoring of San Francisco Bay Salt Ponds (USGS, Biological Research and Monitoring)	900,000

SUMMARY

The following testimony is in support of the California State Coastal Conservancy's fiscal year 2007 Interior and Environment Appropriations request. The Conservancy respectfully requests needed funding for the following critical projects: $1.54 million, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Partners for Fish and Wildlife Pro-

gram (Base Budget would be preferable; Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program is second choice) and $900,000, U.S Geological Survey, Biological Research and Monitoring. Both of these requests are for the South Bay Salt Pond Restoration Project.

CONSERVANCY BACKGROUND

The California Coastal Conservancy, established in 1976, is a state agency that uses entrepreneurial techniques to purchase, protect, restore, and enhance coastal resources, and to provide access to the shore. We work in partnership with local governments, other public agencies, nonprofit organizations, and private landowners.

To date, the Conservancy has undertaken more than 950 projects along the 1,100 mile California coastline and around San Francisco Bay. Through such projects, the Conservancy: protects and improves coastal wetlands, streams, and watersheds; works with local communities to revitalize urban waterfronts; assists local communities in solving complex land-use problems and protects agricultural lands and supports coastal agriculture to list a few of our activities.

Since its establishment in 1976, the Coastal Conservancy has: helped build more than 300 access ways and trails, thus opening more than 80 miles of coastal and bay lands for public use; assisted in the completion of over 100 urban waterfront projects; joined in partnership endeavors with more than 100 local land trusts and other nonprofit groups, making local community involvement an integral part of the Coastal Conservancy's work and completed projects in every coastal county and all nine San Francisco Bay Area counties. In addition, we currently have over 300 active projects that are benefiting the citizens of California.

SOUTH SAN FRANCISCO BAY SALT POND RESTORATION PROJECT

This project is of national significance because in conjunction with the Napa River Salt Marsh Restoration project it will create the largest restored wetland on the west coast of the United States. In addition, the project will provide extensive habitat for federally endangered species and migratory waterfowl and will also provide tidal and fluvial flood protection in South San Francisco Bay protecting approximately 42,800 acres, 7,400 homes and businesses, and significant urban infrastructure, to include major highways, hospitals and airport facilities. Finally, the project will also improve wildlife-oriented public access and recreational opportunities. The combination of these extensive benefits make the project of critical importance to the State of California and the region which is evidenced by the amount of support this project enjoys in local, state and federal circles.

In order to continue to advance this important study it is imperative that local interests and the federal government work together to ensure a reliable funding stream for the project. In accordance substantial cost-sharing has already begun among the land management agencies. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service contributed $8 million toward the $100 million acquisition of the salt ponds. The State of California provided $72 million and the Hewlett Foundation, Packard Foundation, Moore Foundation, and Goldman Fund provided $20 million. The foundations are providing an additional $15 million for restoration planning and $9 million for land management. The State of California is providing over $8 million for planning and $6 million for land management.

FISH AND WILDLIFE FUNDING

For the upcoming fiscal year, we respectfully request the inclusion of $1,540,000 in funding for the Don Edwards San Francisco Bay National Wildlife Refuge for continued management and maintenance.

The Don Edwards San Francisco Bay National Wildlife Refuge is now managing 9,600 acres of the recently acquired South Bay Salt Ponds that were acquired from Cargill in 2003. In order to effectively manage these lands, including installation and management of water control structures, levee maintenance, and monitoring of salt ponds increased funding is needed through the Department of Fish and Wildlife. In 2004 $460,000 was added by the President to the Refuge's base budget in and $540,000 in appropriations in fiscal year 2005 and 2006 have allowed for the successful implementation of interim management of the site. The cost of maintenance has increased over what had originally been estimated by Cargill and an additional $1,000,000 is needed for levees maintenance to protect Silicon Valley from tidal flooding prior to implementation of the permanent flood control solution by the Corps, which will not commence until at least 2012 and will require years to complete.

USGS FUNDING

We respectfully request the inclusion of $900,000 in funding for the United States Geological Survey for the purpose of monitoring the San Francisco Bay.

The funds being requested for fiscal year 2007 would be used by the Geological Survey to conduct interdisciplinary monitoring, specifically USGS will be engaging in biological, hydrological, and water quality studies of Salt Ponds in San Pablo Bay and San Francisco Bay. This monitoring is essential to the health of the Bay Area and the future of the project as it will be critical in shaping the outcome of the feasibility study and future design and implementation of the project. Without the proposed monitoring activities, there will be little to no understanding of the benefits and impacts of the restoration activities that are being planned by the Army Corps of Engineers and local sponsors. The State of California is providing gap funding to USGS, but cannot continue to fund the monitoring without assistance from the Federal Government.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO

On behalf of the County of San Diego, please support full funding for the Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILT) program in fiscal year 2007.

With your assistance, Congress provided $233 million for PILT in fiscal year 2006. This funding provides important compensation to local communities that have significant amounts of Federal land in their counties. PILT partially offsets the costs of supplying many valuable services such as search and rescue, law enforcement, and road maintenance.

The County of San Diego strongly supports full funding for this program. The authorization for PILT would provide funding at an estimated $340 million annually, which is warranted by the fiscal pressures experienced by counties.

Please continue to work to increase the funding necessary for this program.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF COCONINO COUNTY, ARIZONA

Dear Chairman and Honorable Members of the Subcommittee: I appreciate the opportunity to present this testimony in support of an appropriation of $2.2 million from the USDA Forest Service's Forest Legacy Program for the Cedar Springs property near Flagstaff, Arizona. As you may know the President's budget is requesting $880,000 for Phase I of this project.

The conservation of the 800-acre Cedar Springs property is the top priority project for the Forest Legacy Program in Arizona. Riparian forests, including those on the property, are home to the most biologically diverse natural communities in the state. The project will also help maintain important habitat and migration corridors from the mixed conifer forest of the higher elevations, across the mid-elevation pinyon-juniper forest, to the grasslands at lower elevations.

Natural springs on the property provide important sources of water for wildlife on thousands of surrounding acres. These catchments are a potential refugia for the Little Colorado spinedace, a federally-listed, threatened fish species. A number of other important wildlife species rely on the springs and the property for wintering habitat.

The property is also home to a number of historical resources from pioneer days. Historical constructions include a homestead barn and corral, a cedar-post flume, the Grand Canyon Stage Coach line, and the Beale Wagon Road, built between 1857 and 1859 across New Mexico and Arizona as a route to California. Remnants of this road remain on the property, and the Forest Service has developed parts of the road into the 19.5-mile Beale Wagon Road Historic Trail.

The Cedar Springs project is consistent with Coconino County's regional conservation strategy and links protected lands in the Coconino National Forest, Northern Arizona University's Centennial Forest, and the Coconino Plateau Natural Reserve Lands. The project complements larger conservation easements to the north and west, and protects one of the last remaining private parcels of significant size in a landscape of otherwise conserved lands.

An appropriation of $2.2 million from the Forest Legacy Program in fiscal year 2007 will protect the Cedar Springs property in its entirety and preserve forestlands vital to the region's natural and historic character. The Forest Legacy Program and their non-governmental partners are working with the landowner to best conserve this property with the requested federal funding.

Thank you again, Mr. Chairman, for this opportunity to provide testimony in support of the Cedar Springs project.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE CONFEDERATED SALISH AND KOOTENAI TRIBES OF THE FLATHEAD NATION

Honorable Chairman Burns, Ranking Member Dorgan, and members of the subcommittee, the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes of the Flathead Nation (CSKT) appreciates this opportunity to present you with testimony on the President's fiscal year 2007 budget request for the Department of Interior. Before offering remarks on the overall budget for Indian programs and providing more information about the specific projects for which the CSKT request funding, here is the basic information about our budgetary requests:

—$100,000 for a feasibility study on the establishment of a Salish and Kootenai Judicial Center and Regional Detention Facility
—Continued funding for the CSKT land consolidation program
—$500,000 for tribal water rights negotiations
—Funding for the Indian Health Service to achieve parity with other federal beneficiaries

Background.—The CSKT reservation is a result of the cession of tribal lands made by the Salish, Kootenai, and Pend d'Oreilles Indians under the Hellgate Treaty of 1855. In the Hellgate Treaty the Tribes ceded over 20 million acres of ancestral land (much of what is now considered western Montana) in exchange for a reservation of title to lands within an area of 1.3 million acres in northwestern Montana. In 1904, Congress opened up the Flathead reservation to allotment and widespread transfer of tribal land into the hands of individual tribal members and ultimately to non-Indians took place. Beginning in the 1940's, the CSKT began to recover some of the lands over which the Tribes had lost ownership. Currently, we have over 600,000 acres of land in trust, almost 71,000 owned by the Tribe in fee, as well as over 36,000 acres owned in fee by individual tribal members, within the reservation. The Flathead Nation has been on the cutting edge not only of land consolidation in Indian Country, but also in the exercise of tribal self-determination.

The CSKT is a Self-Governance Compact tribe, which means that we operate almost all of the programs and services that the federal government, mainly through the Bureau of Indian Affairs and Indian Health Service, would be required to provide were the Tribes not operating them on behalf of the federal government. In addition to the more traditional programs that many tribes operate, we operate the Land Realty program, operate and manage the power utility (Mission Valley Power), and the Financial Trust Services program, including Individual Indian Money (IIM) accounts, as well as some IHS functions but not all of them. We recently had to give the Contract Care program back to the IHS to operate because we were going bankrupt operating this program for the IHS While we are confident that the Tribe is the entity best suited to carrying out all of these activities, they require major obligations of financial support from the federal government.

Fiscal Year 2007 Interior Budget.—We will not spend time in this testimony going over the national scope Indian programs but will say that we agree with the analysis of the budget prepared by the National Congress of American Indians and the other large Indian organizations. We share their concern about the degree to which the proposed budgets are wholly insufficient to do the job that the Congress has assigned the BIA and the IHS. We are concerned about programs slated for total elimination such as Johnson O'Malley education funding in the BIA.

For the Indian Health Service, the President's overall budget for service programs, including direct services and contract support costs, proposes an increase of approximately $130 million for the amount enacted for fiscal year 2006. While the majority of the budget items in the service programs subcategory remain flat, which is itself disappointing given the lack of acknowledgement of inflation and pay cost adjustments, it is also disconcerting to see the urban Indian health program subject to elimination. This program provides service to thousands of Indians throughout the United States that live in cities and certainly serves some CSKT tribal members. Among other things, this will lead to those people returning to the reservation for services and there is no corresponding increase that will allow us to serve them. The continuation of an effective moratorium on construction of new health facilities in Indian Country is another concern to the Flathead Nation, as we stand together with our fellow tribes in the position that health care facilities, as well as health care services, in Indian Country are lagging far behind the acceptable standards for the public at large.

Public Safety and Justice.—In BIA Construction of public safety and justice facilities, the President's fiscal year 2007 budget proposes $11.6 million. The National Congress of American Indians in its budget request for fiscal year 2007 has proposed a much more ambitious table that would fund 15 new detention facilities in Indian Country within the next three years, at a total cost of $150 million. Obvi-

ously, under the President's request, which is basically flat from the amount enacted by Congress for construction of public safety and justice facilities in fiscal year 2006, there is funding for little more than one facility per year. The CSKT have for over 10 years been considering the possibility of developing a tribal judicial center that better meets the needs of tribal police, prosecutors, courts, and probation officers, and now request $100,000 in funding for a study to determine the feasibility of a new judicial and regional detention facility on the Flathead Reservation.

The CSKT court system processes around 2,300 criminal cases annually and has concurrent jurisdiction with the State of Montana for felony cases under Public Law 280. While the tribal court generally takes a rehabilitative approach to criminal sentencing, referring offenders to services for alcohol treatment, mental health treatment, or anger management when appropriate; some violent offenders who we would prefer to be in jail have instead been released because of a lack of jail space. This is definitely not in the best interests of the Tribe or the surrounding communities, but is a reality of the limited capacity of our system. There are many other tribes in Montana, the Northwest, and throughout Indian Country, that have similar problems, and that is why the Interior budget for construction of public safety and justice facilities must reflect a much more ambitious effort to construct and improve facilities in Indian Country. This problem is not limited to Indian Country either, as the CSKT knows that some Montana counties, including Flathead, Lake and Missoula Counties have been forced to send their prisoners out to other jurisdictions because of a lack of capacity. The need for a new regional and tribal facility is clear, but a more formal study of the situation is needed to move forward.

In 1998 the Flathead Nation entered into a contract with EKM, Incorporated to conduct an assessment of the current and future needs of the CSKT court and detention services. The assessment showed that the existing facility that the Tribe has in place is insufficient to keep up with the needs of tribal justice system currently and into the future. The space at the existing facility is simply too limited to provide adequate services. Further, the assessment concluded, the mechanical and electrical systems are completely outdated and should be replaced entirely. The CSKT also does not have a juvenile facility, which results in additional expenditures of $250,000 to detain juveniles at off-reservation locations. The feasibility study we propose is a reasonable step to take in determining the likely benefits to not only the CSKT but to neighboring localities and counties of a new judicial and detention facility. Attached for your information and files is a more detailed description of what we would like to do with this study.

Indian Land Consolidation.—Indian lands are increasingly owned by a number of heirs who each hold a fractionated interest in parcels of property. This result of the allotment era when tribal lands were divided and parceled out to individual tribal members has resulted in a system where hundreds or even thousands of people hold property interests in a given parcel of land. The allotment period also resulted in "checkerboarding" of Indian land ownership between Indians and non-Indians and has created an entanglement of jurisdictional issues that the federal government, tribes, states, counties, and localities must work through together. The substantial increase in the overall budget for the Indian Land Consolidation Act (ILCA) program is a positive step for Indian Country. We are one of the tribes involved in the BIA's ILCA program. The Bureau approached our tribes to get involved because (a) we have plenty of fractionated land and (b) we are using our limited tribal dollars to repurchase land on the reservation whenever it comes up for sale. We are therefore able to use tribal dollars as a local match to BIA ILCA funds. We believe we may be the only tribes in the country doing so. OMB is pressuring the BIA to only target ILCA funds on the most fractionated reservations and we are not in the top 10 in that regard. Nonetheless we have a lot of fractionation and again are ensuring the BIA gets a good bang for its buck by supplementing the program with tribal funds. We therefore request that the Appropriations Committee include language in the fiscal year 2007 Interior Report directing the BIA to continue funding the ILCA program on our reservation at the same level at which is has been previously funded.

Water Rights Negotiations Funding.—The Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes are actively negotiating water rights with the Montana Water Rights Compact Commission. These negotiations began in the mid 1980's. During the late 1980's and early 1990's the State of Montana shifted priorities to other Montana Indian reservations. Then in 1995 the CSKT renewed active negotiations and the United States created the Federal Flathead Water Rights Negotiating Team. Negotiations have continued since this time and are getting progressively active requiring increasing funding especially with the Montana Water Rights Compact Commission scheduled to terminate in 2009.

The Tribes prepared a proposal for assistance in funding this effort in 2006 to the Portland Regional Office of the Bureau of Indian Affairs to be funded under the Water Resources Planning and Pre-Development Program for $707,625. The Tribes have been notified that only $31,694 will be made available to the Tribes. The Tribes have reviewed the proposal and have determined that $500,000 would be adequate per year to support our water rights negotiations effort.

While the level of negotiation activities increases the level of federal support continues to decrease. This continues to be a concern for the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes especially with the Montana Water Rights Compact Commission terminating in 2009.

IHS Budget.—As everyone knows, good health care systems are essential for maintaining health, and healthy individuals are the keystone of healthy families and healthy communities. Despite the federal governments trust obligations owed to Indian Tribes in the field of health care, Indians remain the minority population with the highest rate of a number of serious diseases in the United States. Further, Indian people have by far the lowest life expectancy of any minority population in the United States. Alcoholism, diabetes, drug abuse, cancer, heart disease, accidental deaths, and suicide are all rampant in Indian Country. While not all of the burden can be placed on the federal government for the well-being of Indian people, the federal government does have a legal obligation to fund Indian health care services, among other populations.

While Indian people rank highest among occurrences of a number of major diseases, among all of the groups for which the United States must pay for health care, Indians rank the lowest in terms of per person funding. According to a recent study conducted by the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, "A Quite Crisis: Federal Funding and Unmet Needs in Indian Country," the Federal Government pays $5,915 annual per Medicare recipient. It pays $5,214 on average annual per veteran through VA health care. The U.S. even pays $3,803 annually in health care for each federal prisoner. For Indian people, though, the federal government contributes only $1,914 per person annually. This disparity is completely unacceptable. The government is essentially saying we are only worth half as much a federal prisoner! The Congress must begin to address this stunning inequity and commit to parity funding between tribes and other federal health care beneficiaries. At this time, the CSKT would like to call for a ramping up of the IHS service budget over the next five to seven years to reach parity with other federal health care recipients. This is going to require a concentrated political effort on behalf of advocates for Indian Country in Congress, as nothing less than an increase of $500 million per year for the next five years will get Indian health care to a level of equity with other federal health care recipients. This must be a coordinated approach between the Budget Committees, the Authorizing Committees and the Appropriations Committee but it really must start in fiscal year 2007.

Section 122.—We do request that the language now appearing as Section 122 of the fiscal year 2006 Interior Appropriations be extended again in fiscal year 2007 and that the Committee consider an appropriate level of funding for the participating tribes so that we can fully meet trust standards as we are required by the language of the section.

Thank you.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF COLORADO SPRINGS UTILITIES

We are requesting your support for the following appropriations in fiscal year 2007 to the Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) for the Upper Colorado River Endangered Fish Recovery Program and the San Juan River Basin Recovery Implementation Program, as recommended in the President's budet.

1. Appropriation of $697,000 in "recovery" funds (Ecological Services Activity; Endangered Species Subactivity; Recovery Element; $697,000 within the $5,631,000 item entitled "General Program Activities") to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) to allow FWS to continue its necessary participation in the Upper Colorado River Endangered Fish Recovery Program.

2. Appropriation of $437,000 in operation and maintenance funds (Resource Management Appropriation; Fisheries Activity; Hatchery Operations & Maintenance Subactivity, Hatchery Operations Project) to support the ongoing operation of the FWS' Ouray National Fish Hatchery in Utah..

3. Allocation of $211,000 in "recovery" funds for the San Juan River Basin Recovery Implementation Program to the FWS for fiscal year 2007 to meet FWS' Region 2 expenses managing and implementing the San Juan Recovery Program.

We thank you for your past support and request the Subcommittee's assistance for fiscal year 2007 funding to ensure FWS' continuing financial participation in these vitally important programs.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE CONFEDERATED TRIBES AND BANDS OF THE YAKAMA NATION

Forestry.—The Yakama Nation seeks commitments from the Federal Government to ensure adequate funding to implement forest management measures designed to protect, maintain and enhance our sacred forest resource.

Background.—The Yakama Indian Reservation is located in south central Washington (Figure 1) on the east slope of the Cascade Mountain range. The reservation is approximately 1.3 million acres, of which more than 600,000 acres are forested. The Yakama forested area contains an estimated 10 billion board feet of timber and approximately 150 million board feet is harvested annually. It is the largest forestry operation nationally within the Bureau of Indian Affairs.

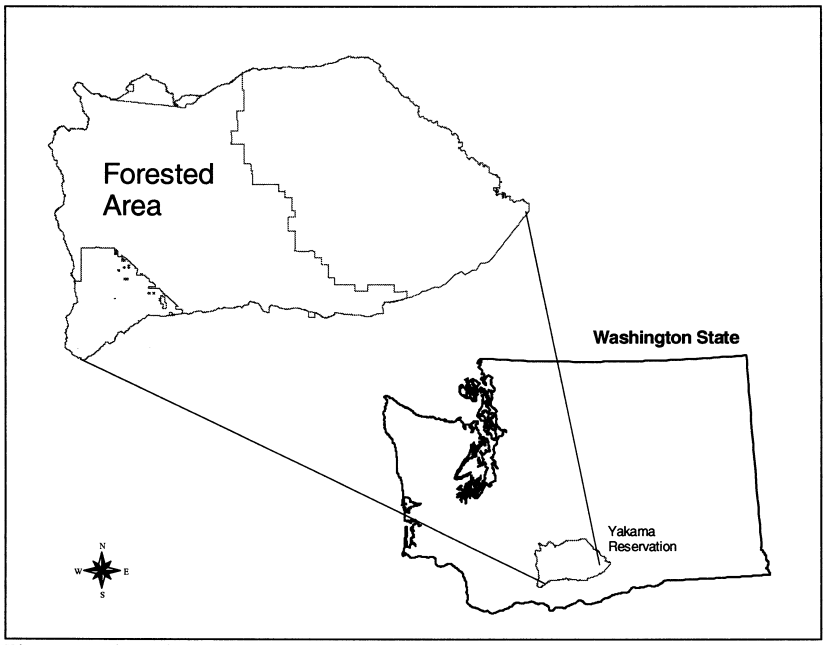
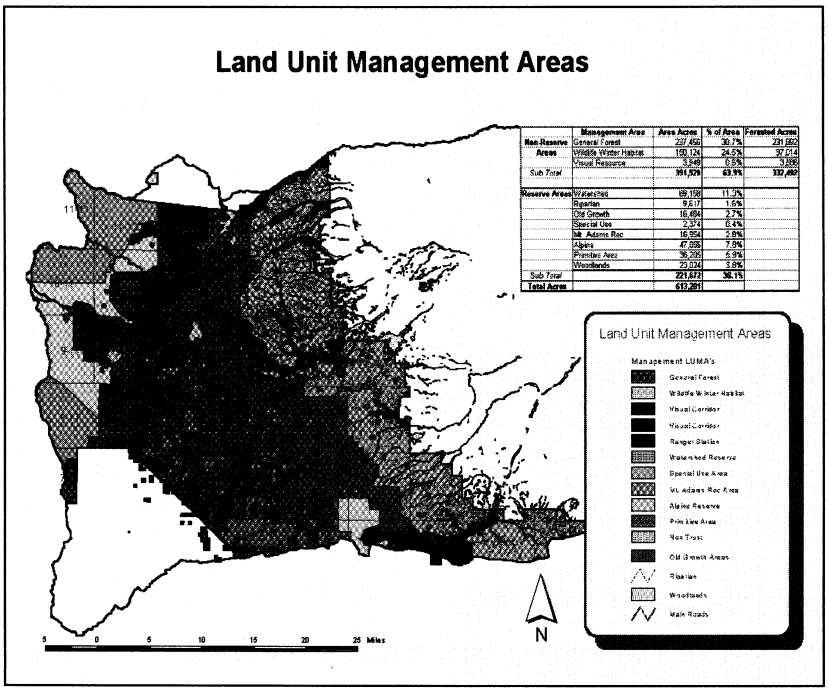


Figure 1 – The Yakama Reservation in southwest Washington.

The Yakama forest plays a vital role for the Yakama People. Our forest is used for subsistence living which includes traditional foods and medicines, big game and fish, and a spiritual setting for our enrolled members (Figure 2). It also is essential for both the Tribal economy and surrounding communities.



	Management Area	Area Acres	% of Area	Forested Acres
Non-Reserve Areas	General Forest	227,450	30.7%	231,662
	Wildlife Winter Habitat	180,124	24.5%	37,014
	Visual Resource	3,349	0.5%	3,086
Sub Total		391,929	53.9%	332,462
Reserve Areas	Watersheds	89,158	11.2%	
	Riparian	9,617	1.6%	
	Old Growth	16,494	2.7%	
	Special Use	2,374	0.4%	
	Mt. Adams Rec	16,954	2.8%	
	Alpine	47,056	7.9%	
	Primitive Area	36,295	6.9%	
	Woodlands	23,024	3.8%	
Sub Total		221,572	36.1%	
Total Acres		613,201		

Figure 2 – Management areas on the Yakama forest.

The Yakama Nation forest resource is the absolute core of our Tribe's economy. The timber harvesting program creates economic opportunities and includes employment within the forestry and natural resource programs, tribal logging operations, and tribal enterprises such as the lumber mill, Yakama Forest Products (YFP). YFP alone employs over 340 people, over 90 percent are tribal affiliated, with an annual payroll and benefits exceeding $11 million. More than 2,000 jobs are directly related to the Yakama forest and an estimated five times that amount indirectly benefit.

Although the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) continues to carry out its trust responsibility, the Yakama Nation is increasingly participating in the management of our forest resources. The BIA has contributed significantly to the management of our resources despite the budget limitations. The BIA forestry budgets have remained relatively flat over the past decade, while our forest has increasingly been impacted by insect and disease problems and a compounding increase in the risk of catastrophic wildfire.

From 1980 to the late 1990's, the BIA failed in offering the full amount of timber that was scheduled for harvest. The effects of this shortfall contributed to overstocked stands that were ravaged by a Western Spruce Budworm outbreak during the 1990's. The Yakama Nation accelerated the harvest levels in 1999 through 2001, but we are once again falling short of our annual allowable harvest levels. Although we achieved our allowable cut of 147 million board feet in 2004, we fell well short of this level in 2003 harvesting 131 million board feet. This past year in 2005, we were able to harvest only 128 million board feet.

These reduced harvest levels can be attributed directly to the funding levels. Along with BIA federal funds, the Yakama Nation retains 10 percent of the total value harvested and uses these administrative fees to fund nearly half of our forestry program. The combination of falling timber prices and the BIA failing to meet its trust obligation to offer the annual allowable harvest is causing severe budget shortfalls.

Many of the budget shortfalls are being met with tribal funds. In fiscal year 2006, the Yakama Nation will contribute more than $315,000 to pay for the shortfall in salaries of our tribal employees who receive their funding from the administrative

fees. Additionally, the Yakama Nation assists in the funding of many of our natural resource programs including archeology, cultural resources, fisheries and wildlife.

Forestry Recommendations.—The Yakama Nation requests a stronger commitment from the federal government in meeting its trust obligation to the Yakama Nation. At minimum, the BIA should offer the annual allowable harvest to the Yakama Nation. In order to prepare these timber sales to meet the standards in the National Environmental Policy Act, the Endangered Species Act, and the National Historic Preservation Act, additional funding is imperative. The Yakama Nation therefore requests the following.

—*Reallocation of the Increased Harvest Initiative Funds*.—These nonrecurring funds are allocated for the specific purpose of allowing tribes to achieve their annual allowable harvest levels. The Yakama Nation receives a portion of these funds but requests an additional $300,000 increase.

—*Reallocation of the Endangered Species Act Funds*.—These nonrecurring funds are allocated for the purpose of meeting the requirements of federally listed animal species. The Yakama Nation is required under federal law to survey for the Northern Spotted Owl, a federally listed species. We request an additional $200,000 increase.

—*Forest Development Funds*.—These funds are allocated for the maintenance and enhancement of commercial timberland to support the desired level of annual timber harvesting. Since the Yakama Nation operates the largest forestry program nationally, the Yakama Nation should receive the highest level possible from this funding source. We request an additional $200,000 increase.

The Yakama Nation further recommends supporting the "Indian Forest Management Assessment Team" report, December 2003. The report is a requirement of the National Indian Forest Resources Management Act, Public Law 101–630, which directs the Secretary of the Interior to obtain an independent assessment every 10 years. The report is the second independent congressionally mandated report on the state of Indian forests and forestry. The report contains an analysis of funding on Indian forest lands compared with similar federal and private forests.

The support of these recommendations will serve to better meet the trust obligations of the BIA and protect our sacred resources that are so vital to our traditional values and economic viability.

Johnson O'Malley.—The Yakama Nation strongly opposes the proposed total defunding of Johnson O'Malley (JOM) education funds. In fiscal year 2006, JOM was funded at $16.4 million. JOM provides financial assistance to Tribes through their Tribal Priority Allocations to supplement funding received by tribes from other federal, states, and tribal sources. Tribes have used JOM to help Indian students succeed in school by providing counseling, cultural activities, remedial education, and crucial school supplies, even extending to things like eyeglasses. JOM is a crucial program to the Yakama Nation because of the flexibility it provides in helping us meet the needs of our students. JOM should definitely not be eliminated, and should at least be funded at the level for fiscal year 2006, if not higher.

Attorney Fees.—We urge the Congress to return the $7 million that came from BIA accounts to pay the Cobell attorneys, most importantly the $2 million that was taken from attorney fees account and the $1 million from other across the board cuts in BIA programs. Tribes desperately need attorney fees funding to protect their natural resources and there are other sources that would have been far more appropriate to use to pay the Cobell attorneys

The Yakama Nation relies on the Interior litigation support and attorney fees to protect our treaty rights to fish, hunt, and gather in the Hanford Reach portion of the Columbia River Basin. In some cases, such as that concerning cleanup of the Hanford Nuclear Reservation, the United States has a conflict of interest that prevents it from bringing a suit on behalf of a tribe. This is the purpose of the litigation support and attorneys fees funds: to facilitate the ability of Indian tribes to litigate to protect their interests when they United States cannot do so. The Hanford Reach, located along the Columbia River within the Hanford Nuclear Reservation, is one of the most heavily contaminated sites of nuclear waste materials in the world. However, it also happens to be an area of usual and accustomed use for the Yakama people that carries major cultural, social, and spiritual significance. The Tribe continues to lead efforts to force the Department of Energy to abide by the terms of the Yakama's treaty with the United States through a professional cleanup of the Hanford site. We have used the funds to assess injury and recover damages to our trust resources harmed by nuclear waste facilities located on the Hanford Reach along the Columbia River. We request $750,000 for Litigation support and $450,000 for Attorneys Fees under the Rights Protection Implementation category of the Interior budget.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE CONFEDERATED TRIBES OF THE COLVILLE RESERVATION

Chairman Burns, Ranking Member Dorgan and members of the Subcommittee, on behalf of the Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation ("Colville Tribe" or the "Tribe") I thank you for this opportunity to submit written testimony to the Subcommittee. As you may know, the Colville Tribe has been working with Senators Patty Murray and Maria Cantwell to restore $630,000 in Lake Roosevelt Management/Enforcement funds to the Bureau of Indian Affairs ("BIA") that were not requested in the President's fiscal year 2007 Budget Request. These funds, administered in the "Other Recurring Programs" account of the BIA's budget, are vital to the continued public safety and the security of the United States/Canadian border.

Before discussing how the Colville Tribe uses these funds and why the funds are vital to ensure public safety, I would like to take this opportunity to provide some brief background on the Colville Tribe. Although now considered a single Indian tribe, the Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation is, as the name states, a confederation of twelve smaller aboriginal tribes and bands from all across eastern Washington State. The Colville Reservation encompasses approximately 1.4 million acres and is located in north central Washington State. The Colville Tribe has over 9,200 enrolled members, making it one of the largest Indian tribes in the Pacific Northwest. About half of the Tribe's members live on or near the Colville Reservation.

LAKE ROOSEVELT MANAGEMENT/ENFORCEMENT FUNDS

Lake Roosevelt Management/Enforcement funds enable both the Colville Tribe and the Spokane Tribe to employ law enforcement officers to patrol Lake Roosevelt and its shoreline to enforce federal laws (through cross-deputization arrangements) and tribal health and safety laws. Lake Roosevelt is the 151-mile reservoir of the Grand Coulee Dam, the largest hydroelectric power plant in the United States and the third largest in the world. As a national tourist destination, Lake Roosevelt receives approximately 1.5 million visitors annually.

Homeland Security

The law enforcement patrols funded by Lake Roosevelt Management/Enforcement funds have become increasingly critical since the September 11 terrorist attacks. As you can imagine, the Grand Coulee Dam is considered a "high-value" terrorist target. Indeed, in early 2002 media outlets reported that U.S. troops recovered materials relating to the Grand Coulee Dam in the rubble of Al-Qaeda hideouts in Afghanistan. Tribal personnel funded by Lake Roosevelt Management funds have in recent years worked cooperatively with the Bureau of Reclamation and the National Parks Service to increase their patrols to correspond with the heightened security of the Grand Coulee Dam. To this end, Lake Roosevelt Management/Enforcement funds play a direct role in protecting public safety by ensuring that a key access point to the Grand Coulee Dam, Lake Roosevelt, remains patrolled.

Border Security

The patrols funded by Lake Roosevelt/Management funds are also an integral part of securing the United States' northern border with Canada. The northern boundary of the present-day Colville Reservation is approximately 70 miles long and is within 35 miles of the U.S./Canadian border. In addition, the Tribe owns two large tracts of trust land and numerous smaller parcels that are either contiguous to or within 5 miles of the U.S./Canadian border. One of these tracts, a 562 acre parcel, abuts the U.S./Canadian border. Another 592 acre tract is within 5 miles of the border. Drug smuggling along the U.S./Canadian border, particularly in rural eastern Washington State, has become an increasing problem in recent years.

In recent weeks, numerous sightings of unmarked fixed-winged aircraft capable of landing on water have been reported on lakes and waterways within and near the Colville Reservation. Most significantly, on March 14, 2006, tribal law enforcement officers funded by Lake Roosevelt Management/Enforcement funds seized an unmarked float plane from Canada that was attempting to smuggle illegal drugs into the United States through the Colville Reservation. After being alerted to the plane and after a long chase, the Tribe's officers captured and detained the pilot the next day and handed over to federal law enforcement authorities an estimated $2 million in illegal drugs that had been dropped by the plane on the bank of Columbia River near the Grand Coulee Dam. The U.S. Border Patrol recently honored the Tribal officers that participated in this seizure.

In addition to this incident, three other incidents involving similar float planes smuggling drugs via waterways on the Colville Reservation have also resulted in arrests in recent weeks:

—On February 19, 2006, a float plane was spotted landing and depositing bags of illegal drugs on Omak Lake, a small lake within the Colville Reservation. Although that plane and its pilot managed to escape, the Tribe's law enforcement officers apprehended the driver of a vehicle that retrieved the bags and recovered an estimated $400,000 worth of illegal drugs.

—On March 23, 2006, a float plane landed on Soap Lake, another small lake within the Colville Reservation, and dropped yet another load of illegal drugs. That plane and its pilot were also able to escape but authorities were able to arrest two Canadian citizens who retrieved the drugs. The drugs seized in this incident were valued at $1.5 million.

—Earlier this month, the Tribe's law enforcement gave chase to yet another float plane, though the plane managed to escape.

The Colville Tribe's law enforcement personnel receive two to three reports of float plane sightings per week on the Colville Reservation. The Colville Tribe has reason to believe that up to 25 aircraft may be involved in cross-border drug smuggling activities using the Colville Reservation. The fact that these float planes are focusing their smuggling activities on waterways and other bodies of water within the Colville Reservation makes funding for Lake Roosevelt Management/Enforcement funds all the more critical.

FUNDING HISTORY AND MATCHING FUNDS

Congress has appropriated Lake Roosevelt Management/Enforcement funds to the BIA every year since the five parties executed the agreement in 1990. In turn, the BIA apportions the funds between the Colville Tribe (approximately two-thirds) and the Spokane Tribe (approximately one-third). From fiscal year 2001 through fiscal year 2005, Congress funded the program at $630,000. Congress funded the program at $350,000 in fiscal year 2006.

Matching funds for the Colville Tribe's activities under this program for fiscal year 2007 include the following: (1) the Tribe will contribute approximately $500,000 (the Spokane Tribe similarly contributes substantial tribal resources to its program); (2) the U.S. Department of Justice will contribute $175,000 through the COPS grant program; (3) the Tribe reprogrammed $170,000 in BIA tribal priority allocation funds from other BIA programs; and (4) the program will generate an estimated $90,000 from fines and fees. The Colville Tribe uses all the funds from the direct appropriations to fund the salaries of the program's 12 full-time officers.

CONCLUSION

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this important issue and to describe how important Lake Roosevelt Management/Enforcement funds are, both to the Tribe and to the continued public safety. The Colville Tribe appreciates the Subcommittee's consideration of the Tribe's request.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE CENTRAL UTAH WATER CONSERVANCY DISTRICT

We are requesting your support for the following appropriations in fiscal year 2007 to the Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) for the Upper Colorado River Endangered Fish Recovery Program and the San Juan River Basin Recovery Implementation Program, as recommended in the President's budget.

1. Appropriation of $697,000 in "recovery" funds (Ecological Services Activity; Endangered Species Sub-activity; Recovery Element; $697,000 within the $5,631,000 item entitled "General Program Activities") to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) to allow FWS to continue its necessary participation in the Upper Colorado River Endangered Fish Recovery Program.

2. Appropriation of $437,000 in operation and maintenance funds (Resource Management Appropriation; Fisheries Activity; Hatchery Operations & Maintenance Sub-activity, Hatchery Operations Project) to support the ongoing operation of the FWS' Ouray National Fish Hatchery in Utah.

3. Allocation of $211,000 in "recovery" funds for the San Juan River Basin Recovery Implementation Program to the FWS for fiscal year 2007 to meet FWS' Region 2 expenses managing and implementing the San Juan Recovery Program.

We thank you for your past support and request the Subcommittee's assistance for fiscal year 2007 funding to ensure FWS' continuing financial participation in these vitally important programs.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE COLORADO WATER CONGRESS

We are requesting your support for the following appropriations in fiscal year 2007 to the Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) for the Upper Colorado River Endangered Fish Recovery Program and the San Juan River Basin Recovery Implementation Program, as recommended in the President's budget.

1. Appropriation of $697,000 in "recovery" funds (Ecological Services Activity; Endangered Species Subactivity; Recovery Element; $697,000 within the $5,631,000 item entitled "General Program Activities") to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) to allow FWS to continue its necessary participation in the Upper Colorado River Endangered Fish Recovery Program.

2. Appropriation of $437,000 in operation and maintenance funds (Resource Management Appropriation; Fisheries Activity; Hatchery Operations & Maintenance Subactivity, Hatchery Operations Project) to support ongoing operation of the FWS' Ouray National Fish Hatchery in Utah.

3. Allocation of $211,000 in "recovery" funds for the San Juan River Basin Recovery Implementation Program to the FWS for fiscal year 2007 to meet FWS' Region 2 expenses managing and implementing the San Juan Recovery Program.

We thank you for your past support and request the Subcommittee's assistance for fiscal year 2007 funding to ensure FWS' continuing financial participation in these vitally important programs.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE DUCHESNE COUNTY WATER CONSERVANCY DISTRICT

We are writing to request your support for continued funding for the Colorado River Salinity Control Title II Program. This program has greatly assisted in removal of many tons of salt from the Colorado River, but there is still a great deal of work to be completed that will require an adequate level of funding. The seven Colorado River Basin states, as well as Mexico, have greatly benefitted from this important program. For many years high concentrations of salt in the Colorado River had severely damaged agricultural production in the West as well as resulting in poor quality water being delivered to Mexico.

Great strides have been made in improving water quality in the Colorado River since the inception of this program but we strongly feel that there is still a great deal to be done. We understand that the Colorado River Basin Salinity Control Forum is requesting $17,500,000 in funds be appropriated for this program for fiscal year 2007 and we would like to add our full support to that funding level request. We would also like to express support for the continued funding of the Natural Resource Conservation Service program, the Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP) which works closely with the Salinity Program. It is very important that adequate funding levels be maintained for it also.

We request the Subcommittee's assistance to ensure that the Colorado River Salinity Control Title II program and EQIP program are provided with continued adequate funding.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF DAVID J. BARDIN

Chairman Burns and Members of the Subcommittee: I urge Congressional actions of great potential benefit to citizens of Montana and North Dakota and to the national security of the United States.

—In 2000, USGS "misplaced" two virtually-finished studies that could help augment our country's domestic oil and gas supplies—studies made with taxpayer support by a prolific U.S. government scientist.

—Please direct the U.S. Geological Survey in the Department of the Interior to share with the entire exploration and development community (not just the private consultants to whom USGS transferred possession in 2000) two studies involving large amounts of crude oil in the Bakken Source System of the Williston Basin.

—Bakken oil is a very high quality, low sulfur, low asphalt, no tar crude oil.

—The two studies, prepared by the late Leigh C. Price, an award-winning scientist who died in August 2000, untimely ending a 27-year career at the USGS, are:

  —A comprehensive report, "Origins and characteristics of the basin-centered continuous-reservoir unconventional oil-resource base of the Bakken Source System, Williston Basin"—a 1999/2000 manuscript.[1]

[1] USGS identified this report as "in press" in 2001 (USGS Professional Paper 1653).

—An extensively-researched Hydrogen Index contour map of the Williston Basin, assembling results of analyzing some 1,700 rock samples.[2]

—Please also encourage USGS in its scheduled 2007/2008 reassessment of undiscovered, continuous-type, unconventional crude oil and associated gas resources of the Williston Basin to consider those studies (which supported 1,000 times more barrels of potential crude oil resource than the official USGS assessment) or openly explain its reasons for disregarding them.

These studies (and results of successful exploration by independent producers since 2000) cast doubts about an official "National Oil and Gas Assessment" (NOGA) as first issued by USGS in 1995 and updated in 2005. In 1995, USGS did not regard Price's resource assessment as sufficiently documented to be worthy of considering. Price laid it all out in the 1999/2000 manuscript, explaining bases for his assessment and criticizing flaws in the NOGA assessment (at pages 177–183). USGS silently buried the manuscript until 2006.[3]

Accepting Price's estimate of a recoverable, 200+ billion barrel continuous-type recoverable resource in Montana and North Dakota would multiply the official USGS NOGA estimate of total USA technically-recoverable resources onshore and state waters.

POTENTIAL UNDISCOVERED, TECHNICALLY-RECOVERABLE CRUDE OIL RESOURCES

Estimate	Assessment made		Mean estimate Crude oil barrels
	by	year	
NOGA (onshore & state waters, total USA)	USGS	1995	112,600,000,000
Including:			
Undiscovered conventional fields (includes North Slope ANWR)			30,300,000,000
Reserve growth in conventional field			60,000,000,000
Continuous-type accumulations			2,100,000,000
Of which Williston Basin Bakken oil			150,000,000
Measured (proven) reserves			20,200,000,000
Williston Basin Bakken oil	L.C. Price	1999	206,500,000,000
NOGA (onshore & state waters)—sum of conventional and continuous-type resources (includes North Slope ANWR at 10.36 BBO).	USGS	2005	47,340,000,000
Outer Continental Shelf:			
Alaska OCS	MMS	2006	26,610,000,000
Atlantic OCS	MMS	2006	3,820,000,000
Gulf of Mexico OCS	MMS	2006	44,920,000,000
Pacific OCS	MMS	2006	10,530,000,000
Proven reserves (onshore, state waters, OCS)	EIA	2004	21,371,000,000

Of course, Price's figures (like the NOGA) are just estimates. They are subject to uncertainty.[4] But hard evidence has mounted. The Bakken Source System is now a very hot "play." Although USGS was unaware until this year of the Elm Coulee Field, discovered in 2000, it is the largest onshore discovery in the lower 48 States in 50 years. USGS did not grasp that this rapidly growing Bakken oil production (which passed 50,000 barrels of oil per day late in 2005) is based on horizontal drilling of hundreds of oil wells into dolomites immediately adjacent to source rocks (where Julie LeFever, of the North Dakota Geological Survey, and Leigh Price predicted in the early 1990s that abundant oil would be found) rather than into the Bakken shale source rock layer which seems to be all that USGS considered in its NOGA assessment.[5]

[2] Price described this valuable map and its preparation in the report referred to above (e.g., at pages 217–218) and in a posthumous USGS publication (Chapter H in DDS–67, a book funded in part by the Department of Energy). USGS has received a FOIA request for the Hydrogen Index mapping information.

[3] USGS located internal copies of the manuscript only when furnished one of the external copies, this year.

[4] The Price manuscript details mass-balance calculations (while stressing inherent limits on its accuracy, at pages 210–211); it lays out estimates of in-place oil resources—413 BBO within a wide range of 271 to 503 BBO—and uses a recovery factor of at least 50 percent (page 235). The NOGA does not disclose estimates of oil resources in place or recovery factors for this unconventional, continuous-type resource.

[5] Annual growth of Elm Coulee Field, MT—actual production of Bakken oil (in barrels)—follows:

2000— 21,164

Continued

USGS has shown extreme caution as to continuous-type resources. A USGS culture of "scientific" and "unbiased" and "impartial" estimates may consider a high estimate to be "going out on a limb" but a low estimate to be just fine. For example, the 1995 NOGA assessment of undiscovered, continuous-type non-associated natural gas resources in the Barnett Shale formation in north Texas was zero—yes, nothing ("justified" by deliberately excluding from NOGA consideration the very prolific East Newark Field field near Dallas, TX). Yet development of this Barnett Shale resource into proven reserves (not merely potential resources)—one of the most successful natural gas projects in our country—checked and reversed a decline in Texas gas production. USGS was wrong—too low—and felt obliged to reassess in 2003 (at 26 trillion cubic feet).

In 2000, after Price's death, USGS transferred possession of much of his USGS research products to a private consultant associated with a private consulting firm—both in Colorado. As I wrote to USGS Acting Director Leahy on February 24, 2006, because the USGS "lost track of Price's extensive report [i]t is available to very few geoscientists and members of the exploration and development community. USGS should make it equally available to one and all." It is high time to retrieve Leigh Price's outputs and disseminate them. USGS should have released Price's outputs 5½ years ago. Now USGS should repair its omissions promptly rather than demand patience while it finds excuses for withholding information or further delays.

Congress can serve the national interest by helping convince USGS to air professional disagreements within its ranks and to foster professional debate in the sunshine.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE DEFENDERS OF WILDLIFE

Defenders of Wildlife is a national non-profit organization dedicated to saving and restoring wildlife and wildlife habitat. We have substantial concerns about the administration's fiscal year 2007 budget and make recommendations in the following priority areas.

Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS): Endangered Species (ESA) Program.—Defenders urges a total of $215.8 million for the four endangered species operations accounts, an increase of $68 million over fiscal year 2006 as follows: $30 million for Listing, an increase of $12.4 million; $113.6 million for Recovery, an increase of $40 million; $55.5 million for Consultation, an increase of $7.5 million; and $13.6 million for Candidate Conservation, an increase of $5 million. We are extremely disappointed that even though FWS biologists have estimated that about 200 currently listed species are on the verge of extinction primarily due to insufficient recovery funding, the president's budget cuts the Recovery account by $7.7 million or 10 percent and requests amounts far below the need for the other 3 accounts. Even though more than 280 candidates await proposal for protection under the Endangered Species Act, the president's request for programs that list new species as endangered or threatened and designate their critical habitat is virtually level. Many of these plants and animals have been waiting years for protection. While consultation does receive a modest increase, it is paid for by the cut in the Recovery budget; and Candidate Conservation is cut by more than $500,000. Both of these programs are in need of significant increases. Demand for efforts to conserve the long list of candidates while they await protection far exceeds funding; and increases are needed to fund projects with local stakeholders and partners. In addition, the number of projects reviewed under the Consultation program has increased from 40,000 in 1999 to about 77,000 in 2005 and further increases are expected. Finally, the development and implementation of Habitat Conservation Plans (HCPs), which allow activities to proceed while still protecting species, continues to grow, with funding critically needed to help ensure timely and effective development and monitoring of 500 existing and nearly 300 new HCPs that together will cover about 72 million acres when complete.

FWS: National Wildlife Refuge System Operations and Maintenance.—Defenders and the Cooperative Alliance for Refuge Enhancement, a diverse coalition of 21 conservation, recreation and scientific organizations, are requesting an fiscal year 2007 increase of $35 million over fiscal year 2006, a total of $417.5 million, to address fixed costs and to make progress on a small portion of the $2.46 billion operations and maintenance backlog. We are concerned that the president's budget includes a

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2001—277,784
2002—798,075
2003—2,710,095
2004—7,565,126
2005—15,713,513

Source: Jim Halvorson, Montana Oil & Gas Conservation Board.

nearly $1 million cut for operations and maintenance and fear that recent progress made in the refuge system budget will now be lost. Moreover, during the past year, more than $8 million has been reprogrammed to pay previously underestimated refuge system bills. We hope that this accounting problem has been addressed and that similar measures will not be necessary in the future. In addition, 61 refuges suffered unprecedented damage from last year's hurricanes, including the deposition of hazardous debris on a number of refuges. The worst impacts were to Sabine National Wildlife Refuge in Southwest Louisiana from as much as 350,000 gallons of hazardous materials in a six-mile debris field. FWS reported initial damages of $173.6 million to facilities, while habitat stabilization and monitoring needs total $96.7 million. The cost of hazardous materials cleanup remains unknown. We greatly appreciate the Subcommittee's support in providing supplemental funding to begin to repair this extensive damage and urge your continued strong support to once again make the Refuge System whole.

FWS: State and Tribal Wildlife Grants Program.—Defenders joins the Teaming With Wildlife Coalition in requesting at least $85 million, $17.5 million above the 2006 level, for this important program that channels money to states to protect at-risk wildlife before Endangered Species Act protection becomes necessary. The upcoming year is very important since each state for the first time has just completed a State Wildlife Action Plan under this program to help guide wildlife conservation more strategically and effectively. Funding increases are needed to begin implementation of key actions in the plans. The Action Plans are the key to the program's success in its ability ultimately to avert the need to list numerous species in the future. We urge the Subcommittee to continue its oversight of the plans and their implementation.

FWS: Migratory Bird Programs.—Defenders urges $45.2 million for Migratory Bird Management, an increase of $7 million over fiscal year 2006 and $5 million for the Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Fund, an increase of $1.1 million. The recommended increases for Migratory Bird Management include $1 million to begin implementation of new conservation plans for nine focal species, $500,000 to begin development of the next set of plans for focal species, $1 million to begin to address recent declines in webless game birds, $4 million to protect habitat through the Joint Ventures program and $500,000 for fixed costs. The president's budget does request a $3.1 million increase for Migratory Bird Management, but it falls far below the need. As funded, these programs cannot fulfill their mandates to adequately monitor and plan for the conservation of 825 species of migratory birds, including the 25 percent of all U.S. migratory birds in serious need of conservation to assure their long-term survival.

FWS: International Programs.—Defenders urges $12.9 million, an increase of $3 million over enacted for the International Affairs program and $8 million, an increase of $1.6 million over fiscal year 2007, for the Multinational Species Conservation Fund (MNSCF). Defenders is also opposed to a proposal in the budget to place the Neotropical Migratory Bird Fund under the MNSCF, a move that will help further the administration's tendency to play budgetary shell games. Moreover, the two programs are administered through different FWS divisions, so it makes no sense to combine them. In addition, the president's request provides only level funding for International Affairs, actually a cut when including fixed costs, and slashes the small but effective Multinational Species Conservation Fund by 33.4 percent below fiscal year 2006. Recommended increases in the International Affairs program would be allocated as follows: $1.4 million to replace key personnel; $1.1 million allocated among the four highly successful Wildlife Without Borders programs that work with resident peoples and develop locally adapted, long-term wildlife management and conservation programs; and $500,000 for fixed costs.

FWS: Law Enforcement.—Defenders requests a total of $61.5 million, an increase of $5.4 million over fiscal year 2006, allocated as follows: $2.5 million for needed special agents and wildlife inspectors; $500,000 for security clearances for inspectors so that they can have access to the International Trade Data System, an e-government interagency trade enforcement initiative; and $2.4 million for fixed costs. Although the administration requests a $1.2 million increase, it does not even fully fund fixed costs. With globalization, e-commerce and the ever-increasing complexity of our world, wildlife here at home and around the world are targets of escalating criminal activity. Increases are desperately needed to help the Law Enforcement program address these rapidly proliferating threats.

FWS: ESA Related Grant Programs.—Defenders recommends $100 million for the Cooperative Endangered Species Fund, $20 million over the 2006 level; $50 million for Landowner Incentive Grants, an increase of $28.3 million; and $10 million for Private Stewardship Grants, an increase of $2.7 million. Non-federal lands are crucial to the conservation of rare species. At least 65 percent of federally listed plants

and animals are found on non-federal lands, with many absolutely dependent upon these lands for their survival. The Cooperative Endangered Species Fund provides grants to states for conservation activities on non-federal lands both for listed and candidate species. Landowner Incentive and Private Stewardship Grants provide funding to states and private landowners for efforts to conserve species at risk on private lands. Funding for these programs falls far below current demand.

Bureau of Land Management (BLM): Wildlife and Fisheries Management (WFM) and Threatened and Endangered Species Management (TESM).—Defenders urges $45.5 million for WFM, an increase of $5 million above fiscal year 2006; and 23.8 million, an increase of $2.6 million for TESM. BLM manages more land, and more wildlife and fish habitat, than any other federal agency, administering half of the remaining habitat for the imperiled sage grouse and almost 15 million acres of prairie grasslands vital to many declining grassland dependent species. Yet funding and resources for these two key wildlife programs have been increasingly diverted to support energy development on BLM lands at the expense of their own proactive conservation projects—30 percent of funds are allocated to other programs. Given the major expansion of energy development on BLM lands included in the president's budget and proposed level funding for wildlife programs, it is highly likely that resources will continue to be siphoned away from wildlife conservation. An alternative to providing increased funding would be to include language in the committee report prohibiting the continued diversion of funds to other programs.

BLM: Challenge Cost Share.—Defenders recommends $14.4 million, an increase of $5 million over fiscal year 2006 for this effective program that allows the agency to work with partners to restore wildlife, habitat and other resources and averages a $2 match. Level funding in the president's budget fails to address gaping needs for sage grouse conservation, off-highway vehicle management and invasive species control.

BLM: Native Plant Materials Development.—Defenders recommends $9 million, an increase of $4.4 million over fiscal year 2006. This funding critically is needed as part of the Burned Area Rehabilitation account to provide for restoration of native plants after wild fires and other disturbances, and is vital to preventing the spread of invasive plants which degrade habitat.

Forest Service: Wildlife and Fisheries Habitat Management.—Defenders urges $188.5 million, an increase of $55.6 million. The president's budget slashes this account by almost $9 million, a 6.8 percent cut. The 193 million acre National Forest System is critically important to the conservation of wildlife, fish and their habitat—more than 425 species listed under the Endangered Species Act and an additional 3200 at risk species occur on Forest Service lands. Fish and wildlife resources on our National Forests are important to people all across the nation—about 40 million visits per year are primarily for hunting, fishing or wildlife viewing.

BLM and Forest Service Land Sales.—The president's budget contains two highly controversial proposals to raise funds for the federal treasury and rural schools through an expanded BLM land sale program and a new program to sell national forest lands. Defenders is opposed to these two proposals. Federal lands provide valuable resources for our nation's wildlife, unparalleled outdoor recreational opportunities for all Americans, and protection for our communities' water supplies. Selling these lands will deprive Americans today and in the future of these important recreational opportunities and essential national resources. Rather than selling off individual parcels of federal lands, the Bush administration should exchange isolated parcels for other lands connected to or near existing federal lands.

Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF).—The president's budget eviscerates LWCF, funding it at only $85.1 million. Yet habitat and wild places across the country are increasingly threatened and in dire need of protection. Defenders evaluated hundreds of federal land acquisition projects to determine some of the highest priority needs for wildlife conservation based on their importance to threatened and endangered species, nexus with the State and Tribal Wildlife Grant Program's State Wildlife Action Plans, and their degree of threat. Based on this analysis, Defenders recommends the Subcommittee fund the following 16 projects totaling $51.3 million. However, these projects are only a subset of the overall enormous need; we urge total federal LWCF funding for fiscal year 2007 to be no less than $220 million.

[Dollars in millions]

Project	Description	Agency	State	Funds
Blackwater NWR	Provides habitat for the endangered Delmarva fox squirrel and bald eagle.	FWS	MD	$1.8

[Dollars in millions]

Project	Description	Agency	State	Funds
Cache River NWR	The site of the recent rediscovery of the endangered Ivory-billed woodpecker.	FWS	AR	[1] .485
Driftless NWR	Protects remaining populations of two listed species.	FWS	IA	.550
Lower Rio Grande Valley NWR	Protects over 480 species of birds and at least seventeen listed species.	FWS	TX	1
Silvio O. Conte NWR	Supports ten listed species in the Connecticut River watershed.	FWS	CT, MA, NH, VT.	4
St. Marks NWR	Protects habitat for several endangered species, including the wood stork.	FWS	FL	[1] 1.5
Upper Klamath NWR	Protects wetlands for waterfowl and the largest bald eagle population in the Lower 48.	FWS	OR	[1] 3.4
Gulf Islands NS	The last remaining breeding habitat for the endangered diamond-backed terrapin.	NPS	MS, FL	2.1
Saguaro NP	The Park's only riparian hardwood forest for several listed species.	NPS	AZ	4.2
Wind Cave NP	Protects mixed-grass prairies for large herds of bison, deer, and elk.	NPS	SD	5
Cascade Checkerboard	Secures wildlife migration corridors for the greater Cascade Mountain area.	NFS	WA	3.3
Flathead NF	Provides habitat for listed species such as grizzly bear, lynx, and bald eagle.	NFS	MT	16.2
Gallatin NF	Establishes crucial habitat connectivity in the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem.	NFS	MT	1.6
Suwannee Wildlife Corridor	Protects habitat and migration corridors for the imperiled Florida black bear.	NFS	FL	5
Carrizo Plains NM	One of the largest grouping of listed species on public lands in the U.S.	BLM	CA	.700
Coachella Valley Preserve	Protects sand source vital to maintain endangered fringe-toed lizard habitat.	BLM	CA	[1] .250

[1] Fiscal year 2007 presidential request.

NWF:National wildlife refuge, NF: National Forest, NP: National Park, FWS: Fish and Wildlife Service, FS: Forest Service, NPS: National Park Service, BLM: Bureau of Land Management

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Prepared Statement of Denver Water

We are requesting your support for the following appropriations in fiscal year 2007 to the Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) for the Upper Colorado River Endangered Fish Recovery Program and the San Juan River Basin Recovery Implementation Program, as recommended in the President's budget.

1. Appropriation of $697,000 in "recovery" funds (Ecological Services Activity; Endangered Species Subactivity; Recovery Element; $697,000 within the $5,631,000 item entitled "General Program Activities") to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) to allow FWS to continue its necessary participation in the Upper Colorado River Endangered Fish Recovery Program.

2. Appropriation of $437,000 in operation and maintenance funds (Resource Management Appropriation; Fisheries Activity; Hatchery Operations & Maintenance Subactivity, Hatchery Operations Project) to support the ongoing operation of the FWS' Ouray National Fish Hatchery in Utah.

3. Allocation of $211,000 in "recovery" funds for the San Juan River Basin Recovery Implementation Program to the FWS for fiscal year 2007 to meet FWS' Region 2 expenses managing and implementing the San Juan Recovery Program.

We thank you for your past support and request the Subcommittee's assistance for fiscal year 2007 funding to ensure FWS' continuing financial participation in these vitally important programs.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE EASTERN FOREST PARTNERSHIP

On behalf of the Eastern Forest Partnership and our member groups representing citizens from Mississippi to Maine, I would like to offer testimony concerning fiscal year 2007 appropriations for the U.S. Forest Service and the Department of the Interior—specifically the Forest Legacy Program and Land and Water Conservation Fund. We feel that recent federal studies, most notably the U.S. Forest Service's recently released Forests on the Edge report, support our call for the strongest possible mark for conservation funding programs in the fiscal year 2007 Interior, Environment and Related Agencies Appropriations Bill, including $80 million for the U.S. Forest Service's Forest Legacy Program and $220 million for the Department of Interior's federal side of the Land & Water Conservation Fund. We have included at the end of this testimony a list of priority eastern projects that we feel are meritorious of fiscal year 2007 funding from these programs.

EASTERN FORESTS ON THE EDGE

Over the past fifteen years, federal agencies have been studying our eastern forests and the unique value of these lands as "green infrastructure" for the American people. In particular, forested watersheds play an essential role in the crowded eastern states providing clean drinking water supplies for rural communities and distant cities alike. Recent U.S. Forest Service studies have highlighted the acute threats to some of the most important forested water supply areas across the East, including the Southern Appalachians, Highlands, and Northern Forest.

However, until the release of the Forests on the Edge report this summer, the U.S. Forest Service had not been able to provide a clear and scientific assessment of exactly where and to what extent future development might compromise watersheds and other important forest resources, such as timber supply areas, wildlife habitat, and public recreation like hunting and fishing. The report gives a stark view of the future: it projects that through 2030 the nation will lose 44 million acres of private forestland to development. According to the report, the effects will be particularly acute in the East, with all of the top fifteen watersheds for projected future development in the eastern forests and three of those just in the State of Maine.

This rampant and likely increasing parcelization of forestland will continue to produce some short-term economic returns for landowners and in some important instances may produce needed housing units in undersupplied areas. However, much of this new development is often far from appropriate growth areas, especially development of large rural parcels of former working forestland for second homes, and will lead to long term economic decline and increasing threats to natural resources like drinking water. Parcelized forestlands are less valuable for forestry and often closed off from timber harvest or even basic forest stewardship. Parcelized lands are also more often posted and closed to any public recreational access like hunting—here in my home state of Vermont, the number of landowners controlling less than ten acres has doubled in the last fifteen years and posted land has increased by more than 1,200 percent over the same period. Finally, parcelized forestlands have significantly reduced value for watershed protection, wildlife habitat, and other natural values.

CONTROLLING FOREST PARCELIZATION: FOREST LEGACY AND LWCF

It is clearly in the national interest to manage this growing trend of forest parcelization on multiple fronts. The Eastern Forest Partnership is deeply engaged in conversations about forest programs in the 2007 Farm bill, and believes that technical assistance and cost-share programs through the U.S. Forest Service and our state foresters will play a significant role in helping landowners more effectively steward their lands while also lowering costs and increasing benefits of ownership so that these private owners will continue to hold their lands.

We also feel that an increased commitment to funding land conservation projects through Forest Legacy will play a significant role in keeping our eastern forestland and traditional way of life intact. Forest Legacy has now conserved more than one million acres of land, most often through conservation easements on private lands that allow public access and continued forestry operations. The program has leveraged one dollar of state, local, and private funding for every dollar spent. This catalytic role is appropriate and effective for the federal government.

Our top priority Forest Legacy projects for fiscal year 2007 are well-represented on the President's list, most notably the Grafton Notch project in Maine that was top-ranked, Cumberland Mountains project in Alabama, and Birdsboro Waters project in Pennsylvania. These three projects represent the kind of strategic landscape conservation that is the hallmark of the Forest Legacy Program. All three

projects will leverage past Forest Legacy investments, link to other conserved areas, and deliver critical conservation of high priority lands for multiple-use, including forestry, recreation, and natural resource protection.

These projects are also notable for the enthusiastic local support that has been evidenced through letters, communications with elected officials, and attendance at public meetings. In November, I traveled to Washington with local supporters for each of these projects to deliver their messages of support directly to key officials in the Bush administration. Back home the support and public interest in these projects is overwhelming. We had 112 local residents turn out for a recent public meeting on a cold February night in Bethel, Maine to discuss the Grafton Notch project and other local conservation efforts along the Mahoosuc Range of Maine and New Hampshire. I personally attended an event in Birdsboro, Pennsylvania that drew local, state, and federal officials into the pouring rain alongside local citizens to celebrate this popular project.

Due to conservation funding shortfalls in recent years, important Forest Legacy projects have been eliminated in conference, even some included in the House, Senate, and administration lists, as occurred with Birdsboro Waters in fiscal year 2005. Many other projects have been severely under-funded and end up coming back for a second phase of funding, including Connecticut's Skiff Mountain project that was only partially funded in fiscal year 2006 and returns in fiscal year 2007. The result is a severe loss of momentum in these states as the same projects continue to clog the pipeline. Even the President's strong Forest Legacy appropriation of $61 million and good list of projects excludes fourteen states entirely and many critical projects, such as North Carolina's Clarendon Plantation, the Skiff Mountain, Phase II and Sparta Mountain South, Phase II projects to complete important work in the Highlands, and the Phillips Brook project on New Hampshire's side of the Mahoosuc Range that lies just a few miles from the top-ranked Grafton Notch project.

For the federal side of the Land & Water Conservation Fund (LWCF), the rapid reduction below authorized levels continues to hamper federal agency land acquisition in the East, most notably for national forest and national wildlife refuge enhancement. The Region 8 list of national forest acquisitions in particular is annually full of time-sensitive opportunities that are being lost as funding does not come through. The agency describes this dire situation well in its testimony in support of the Georgia Mountains fiscal year 2007 LWCF project on the Chattahoochee National Forest:

"The watersheds of the Chattahoochee National Forest supply the drinking water for the largest urban areas in the State of Georgia . . . also provide unexcelled recreational opportunities for forest visitors, and are critical habitats . . . The Chattahoochee is an urban forest and under intense pressure from second home development . . . The cumulative impact from this development and population growth surrounding the Forest is seriously threatening water quality by generating non-point source pollution."

Eastern refuges are also in dire need of acquisition dollars: the Silvio Conte National Wildlife Refuge ranks fifth in the Land Acquisition Priority System (LAPS), in part because the Connecticut River watershed that the refuge covers is projected by the Forests on the Edge report as one of the top twenty in the nation for future development. Yet the refuge was excluded from the President's fiscal year 2007 list and only received a fraction of needed funding in fiscal year 2006.

In conclusion, it is our belief that the national interest demands continued investment in land conservation programs that will help protect the eastern forests. Forest Legacy has a proven track record of conserving private forestlands and assisting state acquisition as federal match to locally-led cooperative conservation efforts. We again urge an appropriation of $80 million with funding for the strong list of eastern projects at the end of this testimony. The Land and Water Conservation Fund is less widely applicable in the East, but critically important—at least $220 million should be available for federal acquisition of high value natural and recreational value lands from willing sellers, including the projects listed below. These acquisitions will benefit the public interest and greatly lessen management challenges for fragmented eastern federal lands. Thank you very much for your consideration of this testimony and the projects listed below.

EFP FOREST LEGACY—FISCAL YEAR 2007 REQUESTS

State	Project	Request
AL	Cumberland Mountains Preserve	$1,185,000
AL	Mobile Delta	1,000,000
AR	Morrow Big Pine	500,000

EFP FOREST LEGACY—FISCAL YEAR 2007 REQUESTS—Continued

State	Project	Request
CT	Skiff Mountain, phase II	1,200,000
DE	Green Horizons	2,000,000
FL	Northeast Florida Timberlands	2,225,000
GA	Paulding County Land Area	2,225,000
KY	Marrowbone Creek State Forest	1,000,000
MA	Southern Monadnock Plateau	2,500,000
ME	Grafton Notch	2,000,000
ME	Lower Penobscot Forest	5,500,000
ME	Machias River, phase III	2,000,000
NC	Whitehurst State Forest	4,500,000
NC	Clarendon Plantation	2,500,000
NH	Phillips Brook	3,500,000
NH	Willard Pond/Robb Res.	3,000,000
NJ	Sparta Mountain South, phase II	2,100,000
NJ	Mountain Gate	1,050,000
NY	Tahawus	5,000,000
PA	Birdsboro Waters	300,000
RI	North-South Corridor	3,000,000
SC	Pee Dee River	2,500,000
SC	Savannah River	2,500,000
VA	New River Corridor	2,100,000
VT	Orange County Headwaters	1,542,000
VT	Adams Pond	1,167,000
	Total	58,094,000

EFP LAND AND WATER CONSERVATION FUND—FISCAL YEAR 2007 REQUESTS

State	Project	Request
AL	Alabama National Forests	$1,500,000
AL	Bon Secour	1,500,000
AR	Ozark-St. Francis & Ouachita NF	834,000
FL	St. Marks NWR	1,700,000
FL	Suwannee Wildlife Corridor/Pinhook Swamp	2,000,000
FL	Florida National Scenic Trail	2,000,000
GA	Georgia Mountains	2,700,000
KY	Daniel Boone NF	4,615,000
KY/TN	Cumberland Gap NP (Fern Lake Watershed)	2,500,000
MS	Lower Yazoo Basin, Delta NF	2,500,000
MS	Horne Island	2,000,000
NC	Croatan NF (Onslow Bight)	5,000,000
NC	Uwharrie National Recreational Trail	1,600,000
NH	Lake Umbagog National Wildlife Refuge	1,000,000
NH/VT/MA/CT	Silvio Conte National Wildlife Refuge	4,000,000
OH	Wayne Select Lands	500,000
PA	Flight 93 Memorial	5,000,000
SC	Francis Marion Sumter NF	4,685,000
TN	Tennessee Mountains	3,000,000
VA	Eastern Shore of Virginia NWR	2,277,000
VA	Jefferson NF (Black Lick & Appalachian Trail)	2,850,000
VT	Green Mountain National Forest (Broad Brook Phase II)	1,100,000
	Total	54,861,000

PREPARED STATEMENT OF FRIENDS OF BALCONES CANYONLANDS NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE

Mr. Chairman and Honorable Members of the Subcommittee, my name is Heidi Wittenborn, President of Friends of Balcones Canyonlands National Wildlife Refuge. On behalf of Friends I would like to express my appreciation for this opportunity to testify. Friends urges you to appropriate $1.5 million from the Land and Water

Conservation Fund for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to acquire a conservation easement for Balcones Canyonlands National Wildlife Refuge. The tract this appropriation would protect is key habitat for the Golden-cheeked Warbler, a songbird Audubon lists as one of the ten most endangered. Its acquisition would be a significant step towards the long range goal of completing the Refuge. Acting now is extremely important, as the window of time for protecting habitat is closing rapidly in the face of accelerating urban expansion, and the opportunity for protecting this species is at risk.

Friends is a nonprofit, volunteer organization. Its mission is to support, complete, and enhance Balcones Canyonlands National Wildlife Refuge and its diverse ecology, and promote its use for recreational, educational, and scientific purposes. The organization's membership is drawn primarily from Central Texas communities situated near the Refuge.

Balcones Canyonlands Refuge is located in the Texas Hill Country northwest of Austin, Texas and resides in Burnet, Travis, and Williamson counties. The Refuge was formed in 1992 to conserve habitat of the endangered Golden-cheeked Warbler as a step towards recovery and eventual delisting of the species. In addition to the Golden-cheeked Warbler, the Refuge serves to protect the habitat of the endangered Black-capped Vireo and numerous other wildlife species.

State-sponsored biological studies show that to stabilize and sustain these endangered songbirds, Balcones Canyonlands needs a total of 46,000 acres of habitat. It presently has some 21,000 acres. The Refuge augments a similarly named Preserve in Austin, comprised of nearly 30,000 acres and operated by the City and Travis County. The two parts were established for the same purpose and together are intended to provide habitat needed to enable recovery of these species.

Balcones Canyonlands Refuge, although fourteen years old, is not yet half complete. It is particularly important to act now as time is a critical consideration in completing the Refuge. Because of the proximity of the Refuge to the rapidly expanding Austin metropolitan area, urban expansion is a serious threat to habitat needed by the Refuge. There are already three outlying real estate developments within the acquisition boundary of the Refuge and a rapidly advancing blanket of urban residential and commercial development is within sight.

This year, we would like to go forward with the partially completed acquisition of the Armstrong conservation easement, which contains substantial Golden-cheeked Warbler habitat. The property is in a strategic location, will alleviate cumulative habitat fragmentation within the approved acquisition area of the Refuge, and preclude development and land uses that would be incompatible with the Refuge's objectives. It is anticipated that the conservation easement covering this segment of the Refuge could be acquired for $1.5 million and that the transaction could be consummated within 6 months following appropriation of the needed funds.

In addition to the recovery of these endangered species, Balcones Canyonlands Refuge is a rapidly growing source of eco-tourism for the surrounding area. The Refuge's annual songbird festival continues to grow with record attendance predicted for this year. Our first annual winter sparrow festival also was a sell out. Over the longer term, Balcones Refuge is expected to become a major draw for birders interested in viewing the endangered Warbler and Vireo, as well as other bird species for which this area provides unique habitat. The Refuge has been described as one of the Last Great Places by the Nature Conservancy and as an "Important Bird Area" by two national conservation groups based on its "global importance" to the endangered Warbler and Vireo.

Also, Balcones Canyonlands offers Central Texas a variety of recreational opportunities compatible with wildlife protection. Once completed, Balcones Canyonlands will be a step towards providing additional accessible public outdoor areas, identified as a critical need in a recent study for Texas Parks and Wildlife.

For all of these reasons Friends of Balcones Canyonlands National Wildlife Refuge strongly recommends that you set aside $1.5 million from the Land and Water Conservation Fund for Balcones Canyonlands Refuge for fiscal year 2007.

Thank you again for the opportunity to present this statement to the Subcommittee.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF FRIENDS OF THE BOUNDARY WATERS WILDERNESS

Mr. Chairman and Honorable Members of the Committee: I appreciate the opportunity to present this testimony in support of a $2 million appropriation from the Land and Water Conservation Fund for the critical land protection in the Superior National Forest in Minnesota.

Long Island is the largest undeveloped island in Burntside Lake. Located 30 miles southeast of Crane Lake and 3 miles northwest of Ely, Burntside Lake is over 10,000 acres in size. The lake is an important recreational area, with two entry points into the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness (BWCAW), five public campsites and six public canoe launching points. The lake is also the start of a popular 11-mile canoe trail outside of the BWCAW, referred to as the Burntside-Dead River-Everett Trail. One of the few lakes in Minnesota that support a natural cold water fishery, the lake is renowned for its big lake trout and walleye and also supports one of the largest populations of loons in the state.

Beyond its current recreational and natural qualities, Burntside Lake holds significant historic and cultural value. It is the location of writer and conservationist Sigurd Olson's legendary Listening Point. As Walden was to Thoreau and Sand Country to Aldo Leopold, Listening Point was a place of inspiration for Olson and where he wrote many of his books and crafted aspects of the 1964 Wilderness Act.

Long Island is situated directly across from Olson's beloved Listening Point. When he first discovered the point, he had been looking for a long time throughout northern Minnesota for a place to listen, to contemplate "the grandeur of creation," and a place that would evoke the spirit and beauty of the northern wilderness. When he came to the point he wrote: "From the top of one of [the rocks] I could see the vistas across to the islands and knew the search was over. Here was everything I had ever hoped to find. I would never own the water or the horizons, but the sunsets, the moonrises and the vistas would belong as much to me as though written into the deed itself." Listen Point, Alfred A. Knopf, 1958.

While Listening Point is protected today, Long Island is not. Without that protection, the vista and much of what Sigurd Olson wrote about in his book will be lost.

Long Island would be an outstanding addition to the Superior NF, boasting one mile of undeveloped lakeshore. The island has a beautiful sand beach, which would be utilized by the public for recreation. There are limited numbers of public beach areas within the forest boundaries, and this would be a rare opportunity for the public. The island is home to nesting osprey, blue heron and nesting loons, and has potential for habitat for rare and sensitive species.

The 64-acre Burntside Islands Scientific and Natural Area (SNA), which features two virtually undisturbed islands, is located immediately southwest of Long Island. These two forested bedrock islands are home to old-growth Great Lakes pines forests that are extremely rare outside of the BWCAW. Public acquisition of the Long Island property will ensure that the attributes of the northwoods region so treasured by its many visitors will be protected in perpetuity.

Furthermore, Long Island, if protected, will offer the public a near-wilderness experience, a wonderful benefit to those who can not or choose not to go into the BWCAW itself.

An appropriation of $2 million from the Land and Water Conservation Fund in fiscal year 2007 will secure the acquisition of Long Island, protect its critical natural resources for the public, and maintain the integrity of the great northwoods.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for the opportunity to present this testimony.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF FRIENDS OF THE COLUMBIA RIVER GORGE

I thank you for the opportunity today to present this testimony in support of critical land acquisition projects in the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area. Appropriations totaling $2 million from the Land and Water Conservation Fund to the Forest Service will go a long way to protect a number of identified high-priority properties in the Gorge, including the Bridal Veil and Russell properties in Oregon and the Hopper and Grazini properties in Washington.

The Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area (CRGNSA) was created by Congress in 1986 "to protect and provide for the enhancement of the scenic, cultural, recreational, and natural resources of the Columbia River Gorge" and to encourage economic growth in nearby urban areas. The scenic area protects nearly 300,000 acres in both states and receives hundreds of thousands of visitors annually.

The 1986 act also declared the White Salmon River in Klickitat County, Washington as a National Wild and Scenic River. In 2005, Congress extended this designation to its headwaters on Mount Adams. The White Salmon is one of only three rivers in Washington to have such a listing.

The acquisition of key properties in fiscal year 2007 will benefit recreational access to areas in the Gorge and White Salmon:

The 17-acre Bridal Veil property in Oregon is located near Multnomah Falls at an intersection of Interstate 84. Protection of this property would conserve land

along the historic Columbia River Highway, serve as a potential site for interpretation, and would greatly improve public access to Bridal Veil Falls.

The Russell property is a 50 acre parcel located near Mosier just south of the Historic Columbia River Highway on the lower two-thirds of an open, grassy hillside, locally known as Hudson Hill. This north and west facing property provides a stunning panorama of the Columbia River Gorge with the show capped volcanic peaks of Mt. Adams and Mt. Hood visible in the distance. Acquisition of this property would provide an excellent recreation opportunity.

The 4.5-acre Hopper property in Washington is adjacent to a planned public boat launch site on the river. With the White Salmon River renowned for its kayaking and whitewater rafting opportunities, this acquisition is critical to ensuring recreational access to the river.

An appropriation of $2 million from the Land and Water Conservation Fund will protect these priority parcels in and around this a vital recreational and ecological corridor.

We thank you Mr. Chairman for the opportunity to present this testimony in favor of the appropriations for the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area and the Wild and Scenic Rivers administered by the NSA.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF FRIENDS OF CONGAREE SWAMP

On behalf of: Friends of Congaree Swamp; South Carolina Wildlife Federation; Audubon South Carolina; Columbia Audubon Society; South Carolina Coastal Conservation League; Sierra Club—South Carolina Chapter; and Congaree Land Trust

Mr. Chairman and Honorable Members of the Subcommittee: I appreciate the opportunity to present this testimony in support of an appropriation of $4.5 million from the Land and Water Conservation Fund to the National Park Service for land acquisition at Congaree National Park in South Carolina.

Congaree Swamp National Monument was authorized as a unit of the National Park Service in 1976. In 2003, Public Law 108–108 designated Congaree as a National Park—South Carolina's first and only national park—and also authorized a boundary expansion of 4,576 acres.

Congaree National Park rests on a floodplain of the Congaree River in central South Carolina, and is recognized as an International Biosphere Reserve, a National Natural Landmark, a Wilderness Area, and a Globally Important Bird Area. With its 75 species of trees, Congaree hosts the nation's largest tract of old-growth bottomland hardwood forest, and nurtures some of the tallest trees in the eastern United States with some pines reaching over 160 feet.

More than 190 species of birds have been observed within the park. Following rediscovery of the Ivory-billed Woodpecker in Arkansas, Congaree National Park is considered prime habitat for recovery of this species. Currently, the South Carolina Ivory-billed Woodpecker Working Group is coordinating searches within Congaree National Park.

Congaree National Park also offers excellent opportunities for recreation. A 2.5-mile boardwalk loop provides easy access into Congaree's forest, and more than 20 miles of trails are available for hiking. Visitors enjoy canoeing and kayaking on Cedar Creek, currently nominated for designation as the first Outstanding National Resource Waters in South Carolina. Outdoors enthusiasts can also enjoy fishing, camping, birding, and picnicking.

In fiscal year 2005, Congress appropriated $6 million from the Land and Water Conservation Fund to purchase the 2,395-acre Bates Fork tract—at the confluence of the Congaree and Wateree Rivers. This is the largest tract within the Congaree boundary expansion, authorized in 2003. The National Park Service completed this acquisition in November 2005.

Fiscal year 2007 presents the opportunity to acquire the 1,886-acre Riverstone tract—also within the boundary authorized in 2003. The Riverstone tract will connect the previously-acquired 22,000 acres of Congaree National Park with the recently-acquired 2,395-acre Bates Fork tract. The Bates Fork tract, in turn, adjoins the 16,700-acre Upper Santee Swamp Natural Area, owned by the South Carolina Public Service Authority. So, the Riverstone tract is the link to connect Congaree National Park and the Upper Santee Swamp Natural Area.

Resources on the Riverstone tract—including Bates Old River, Big Lake, Little Lake, Running Creek and Running Lake—have significant natural, recreational, and historical values. Bates Old River is the longest oxbow lake (4 miles) in the Congaree River floodplain and one of the longest oxbows in South Carolina. An unusual mix of sweetgum, bald cypress, water tupelo, and green ash dominates the Bates Old River ridge and swale system. The Riverstone tract harbors extensive

areas of early- and mid-successional plant communities rarely found in Congaree National Park, plus dwarf cypress and planer tree communities not represented at all on existing park lands. In addition, there are numerous large specimen swamp cottonwoods and water hickories. Acquisition of the Riverstone tract will provide new and diverse recreational and historical interpretation opportunities for park visitors while adding to the park's natural resources.

A fiscal year 2007 appropriation of $4.5 million from the Land and Water Conservation Fund will provide the National Park Service with funds to purchase this critical Riverstone tract, thereby ensuring permanent protection of its outstanding natural and cultural resources, and connecting the 22,000 acres upriver with the 19,000 acres downriver.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for the opportunity to present this testimony and for your consideration of our request.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE FOND DU LAC BAND OF LAKE SUPERIOR CHIPPEWA

Mr. Chairman, Members of the Committee, my name is Peter J. Defoe. I am the Chairman of the Reservation Business Committee of the Fond du Lac Band of Lake Superior Chippewas and would like to thank you for this opportunity to present testimony on fiscal year 2007 Appropriations. The Fond du Lac Band occupies a reservation in northeastern Minnesota, which encompasses 100,000 acres and was established by the Treaty of September 30, 1854. The Fond du Lac Band provides health, education, social and other governmental services to a population of 6,500 Indian people that live on or near the Fond du Lac Reservation.

We are deeply concerned about the very substantial cuts proposed in the President's fiscal year 2007 budget. Those budget cuts—if they stood—would severely reduce our ability to educate our children, care for our elderly and infirm, prevent crime, and protect and manage our natural resources. We urge Congress to restore or increase the funding on which we depend to provide essential services to our Band members. In particular, we ask that funding be restored or increased in the following areas:

Bureau of Indian Affairs

Johnson O'Malley—restore $16.3 million.
Early Childhood Development—restore $3.2 million.
Education Construction—restore $49 million.
Tribal Colleges & Universities—restore $824,000.
Tribal Colleges & Universities—reaffirm funding for the Fond du Lac Tribal College.
Circle of Flight—restore $600,000.
Tribal Courts—restore $5.3 million.
Fond du Lac Law Enforcement & Resource Management—increase by $9 million.
General Assistance Program—restore $11.3 million.

Indian Health Services

Increase funding for Indian health care.
Increase funding for contract support costs.

BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS

Education: Johnson O'Malley program, Early Childhood Development program, Education Construction and Tribal Colleges & Universities. Johnson O'Malley (JOM) funding helps Indian children with tutoring, cultural enrichment and Native language education, and is critical to tribal education programs. We request that Congress restore full funding to these vitally important education programs. A complete cut of funding for this program, as is proposed, would severely erode this irreplaceable source of funds for essential educational services. The Department has attempted to justify this amount by claiming that JOM funding duplicates funding provided by the Department of Education, but this is not the case. The Department of Education has testified that it has not adjusted its budget to cover this loss of funds.

The Early Childhood Development program, which enhances the school readiness of our young children, is also critical to preparing our youth for school and in meeting the President's "No Child Left Behind" standards. We ask Congress to restore $3.2 million to this program.

Additionally, we do not support the Bureau of Indian Affair's decreased funding for Education Construction, including significant cuts to Facilities Operations (O&M). Facilities O&M funding must be increased for fiscal year 2007 to the level

necessary to provide for the continued safety and utility of our educational facilities. Current funding levels are not keeping pace with the escalating costs of operating educational facilities. Rising fuel, utility costs, and the cost of living adjustments for skilled maintenance and custodial staff must be considered in adjusting adequate levels of Facilities O&M funding.

We ask Congress to restore the Tribal Colleges and Universities endowment grant funding by $824,000 to the fiscal year 2006 level. More importantly for the Band, we ask Congress to reaffirm funding to the Fond du Lac Tribal College. In 1987, the Fond du Lac Tribal College was chartered by the Band to provide post-secondary education to Indian students. The Tribal College currently provides post-secondary education to close to 500 Indian students. For many years, the Bureau of Indian Affairs provided funds to the Tribal College, recognizing it as an entity eligible for federal financial assistance for Tribal Colleges under the Tribally Controlled College or University Assistance Act. The President's Budget includes funding for Tribal Colleges under the Tribally Controlled College or University Assistance Act but it has not been determined whether the Bureau of Indian Affairs intends to include continued funding for the Fond du Lac Tribal College. Without the funds provided to the Tribal College under the Tribally Controlled College or University Assistance Act, the College will not be able to carry out its valuable mission: to provide higher education opportunities for its Indian students. Therefore, we ask Congress to reaffirm funding to the Fond du Lac Tribal College for fiscal year 2007.

Natural Resources: Circle of Flight.—We ask Congress to restore the Circle of Flight Wetland/Waterfowl Enhancement Program in the BIA's fiscal year 2007 budget to at least the fiscal year 2006 level of $600,000, and to consider providing the amount of $1,113,000 to cover actual program needs. Circle of Flight has been one of Interior's top trust resource programs for more than a decade. Since fiscal year 1991, Great Lakes tribes and our partners have restored or enhanced more than 66,000 wetland, grassland and native prairie acres. The Circle of Flight program has invested more than $6 million in habitat projects, and has leveraged these dollars for an additional $18 million in federal, state, private, and tribal funding, yielding an impressive match ratio of 3 to 1.

Public Safety and Justice: Tribal Courts.—We urge Congress to restore Tribal Court funding by increasing the appropriated amount by $5.3 million to fiscal year 2006 levels. We also support additional funding to meet detention facility needs, but believe that this increase should not come at the expense of a reduction in funding for Tribal Courts, which have been historically under-funded and which are essential to effective law enforcement efforts.

Public Safety and Justice: Fond du Lac Law Enforcement and Resource Management Program.—We request a one-time appropriation of $9 million to the Fond du Lac Resource Management Program for law enforcement and natural resource protection ($1.5 million in base funding for court operations and law enforcement, $1.5 million for resource management and conservation enforcement, and $6 million for expansion of office space to serve both). This additional funding is needed because of the Band's increased law enforcement responsibilities. Following a Minnesota Supreme Court decision in 1997 holding that the State did not have jurisdiction to enforce traffic laws on roads within Indian reservations, *State* v. *Stone*, 572 N.W.2d 725 (Minn. 1997), the Fond du Lac Band needed to establish a Tribal law enforcement department to address on-reservation law enforcement needs. The Band has done this, using a combination of tribal funds and federal funds (made available through the Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) program and the Bureau of Indian Affairs), and by entering into cooperative agreements with local law enforcement agencies. However, because of the short-term limited financial resources available, there are significant unmet needs in this area. At Fond du Lac, we need long term funding to pay for staff and equipment to adequately ensure the safety of the Reservation population. With the increased responsibility assumed by the Band there is an increased need to expand the staff and its capabilities. With this in mind, we request that $1.5 million be added to our base budget to continue to implement the enforcement systems for the Band.

Related to this are the Band's responsibilities for enforcing conservation laws that protect natural resources and regulate Band members who hunt, fish and gather those resources both within and outside the Reservation pursuant to rights reserved under Treaties with the United States in 1837 and 1854. The Band's rights to hunt, fish and gather on lands ceded under these treaties have been recognized and upheld by the federal courts and the United States Supreme Court. Under established Band conservation law, the Band is responsible for enforcing regulations over approximately 8,000,000 acres in northern and central Minnesota. It is also essential that the Band continue to manage its on-reservation resources in order to meet the demands of an increasing population. The on-reservation resources are vitally

important to Band members as they provide the foundation for our culture, subsistence, employment and recreation. Therefore, we are seeking an additional $1.5 million be added to the Band's base budget for the Fond du Lac Resource Management Division, for its Resource Management programs to enable us to continue to protect these resources for the future generations at Fond du Lac. The funds for this program have not been increased since 1991. We also request a one-time allocation of $6 million to the Band for the expansion of the office space, as our current building is inadequate to house both law enforcement and natural resource management staff.

General Assistance Program.—We urge Congress to restore $11.3 million in funds to this program. The General Assistance Program helps the Band ensure that its tribal members' health and general welfare needs are met by providing another form of assistance. The General Assistance Program is especially important for the Band's families with children, elders and tribal members with disabilities.

INDIAN HEALTH SERVICE

While we support the President's proposal to increase the budget for Indian Health Services, the amount of that increase ($130 million from fiscal year 2006 funding levels) still will not meet the actual costs of providing health care to Indian people. The proposed increase fails to address the high rates of medical inflation and the substantial unmet need for health care among Indian people. For instance, Indians at Fond du Lac, like Indians throughout the Nation, face disproportionately higher rates of diabetes and the complications associated with diabetes, than the rest of the population. Heart disease, cancer, obesity, chemical dependency and mental health problems are also prevalent among our people. While other federal programs, like Medicare and Medicaid, have seen annual increases in funding of 5–10 percent to address inflation, the budget for IHS has never had comparable increases, and, as a result, IHS programs have consistently fallen short of meeting the actual needs. The Band supports the efforts of all Indian tribes to receive 100 percent of the Level of Need Formula (LNF) so that it can address the serious and persistent health issues that confront its community. The Band serves about 5,800 Indian people at its clinics, but the current funding level meets only 40 percent of our health care funding needs. In addition, the Band requests an increase in funding for substance abuse and mental health programs in order to combat the growing methamphetamine problem on our Reservation. In addition, while this Administration seeks the use of electronic health records for all Americans, this is a seriously unfunded mandate for tribal organizations.. Therefore, the Band requests an increase in funding to continue the implementation of our Electronic Health Record (EHR) so that we may reduce medical errors and increase the quality of our patient care. We also urge the Committee to provide increased funding for contract support costs comparable to that provided by the Bureau of Indian Affairs.

SUPPORT FOR PROPOSED BUDGET INCREASES

Fish and Wildlife Service: Tribal Wildlife Grant program and Landowner Incentive Program.—We strongly support the President's proposed $5 million increase in funding for the Tribal Wildlife Grant (TWG) program, and the $2.7 million increase to the Landowner Incentive Program in the Interior Department's budget for the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service. Fond du Lac has received grants in these two programs this year, which will be used for important fisheries, wildlife, and wild rice management and restoration projects. These increases will help to address the considerable need for managing our shared natural resources.

In conclusion, the needs at Fond du Lac and throughout Indian Country remain massive. Your support to preserve the current BIA funding levels is essential to our ability to maintain vitally important programs. Your support of our additional funding requests will enable us to improve the delivery of services to Band members and help ensure that we enter the 21st Century with a renewed sense of hope. Miigwech. Thank you.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE FLORIDA FISH AND WILDLIFE CONSERVATION COMMISSION

We are seeking your support for the President's fiscal year 2007 Budget Request of $3 million to support the National Fish Habitat Initiative (NFHI) and, furthermore, we are asking you to support an additional $3 million to be appropriated to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Southeast Fisheries Program for the Southeast Aquatic Resources Partnership (SARP). The NFHI, lead by the International Asso-

ciation of Fish and Wildlife Agencies in partnership with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, seeks to develop a nationwide fisheries habitat restoration plan modeled on the successful North American Waterfowl Management Plan. The SARP is currently developing a Southeast Aquatic Habitat Plan that will help guide the implementation of the NFHI on a regional scale and serve as a model for other regions of the country. The SARP, through its aquatic habitat planning process, will identify and establish Fish Habitat Partnerships that will deliver the objectives of the NFHI in the Southeast.

The SARP was initiated in 2001 to better address the conservation and management of aquatic resources in the southeastern United States. This partnership developed from the realization that (1) the Southeast has the highest diversity of aquatic species and habitats of any region in the country; (2) that these resources are facing serious threats to their future existence; and (3) that no one state or federal agency has all the necessary resources and authority to address this impending aquatic crisis. It is only by working together through partnerships that we will make a difference.

The SARP is comprised of those state and federal agencies and organizations with management authority for fisheries and aquatic resources. It includes the fish and wildlife agencies from 13 states (Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, Missouri, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, and Texas), the Gulf and Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commissions, the Gulf of Mexico and South Atlantic Fishery Management Councils, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and NOAA Fisheries. These entities have signed an unprecedented Memorandum of Understanding pledging to work together for the conservation and management of aquatic resources in the Southeast. No similar multi-state, multi-agency partnership exists. To date, SARP has been successful in receiving over $700,000 in grant monies as well as contributions from the agency members. This unique and focused effort is poised to deliver a new regional approach to aquatic conservation for future generations. Securing $3 million in additional funding for the SARP is critical for the successful implementation of the Southeast Aquatic Habitat Plan.

Thank you for your consideration of this request. If you should have any questions or need further information, please contact Mr. Jim Estes at 850–488–5460.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE FRIENDS OF INDIAN HEALTH

The Friends of Indian Health is pleased to submit testimony on the fiscal year 2007 appropriation for the Indian Health Service. The Friends is a coalition of over 50 health organizations and individuals dedicated to improving the health care of American Indians/Alaska Native (AI/AN) people.

The Friends thanks the Committee for its past support for the Indian Health Service (IHS). The Committee's action has sent a strong message that addressing the health care needs of Indian people is a high priority of the federal government. With that thought in mind, we are recommending a funding level of $3,361,787,000 to sustain clinical and preventive services and to attract a viable workforce of health care providers that will lead to eliminating the disparity of disease and health care among AI/ANs.

Numerous studies have shown that the disparity in health care for Indian people has continued to increase since the early 1990's. AI/AN people have a lower life expectancy—nearly four years less—when compared to other populations. This occurs for a variety of reasons:

—Native American youth are more than twice as likely to commit suicide,
—AI/AN people are 670 percent more likely to die from alcoholism,
—650 percent more likely to die from tuberculosis,
—318 percent more likely to die from diabetes and
—204 percent more likely to suffer accidental death

At the center of this disparity is an inequity in funding for health care. The IHS operates with an estimated 55 percent of what it needs to provide adequate health care using the Federal Employee Health Benefits Programs as the benchmark. The service spends $2,130 per person per year for health care, which is more than 50 percent below similar expenditures by public and private health insurance plans. As organizations and individuals involved in health care, we know that additional funding can make a difference in eliminating disparities in disease rates and access to care.

The Friends recommends an increase of $192,000,000 above the President's request for IHS for fiscal year 2007. We believe that by targeting this increase to al-

ready proven IHS programs, access to health care can be improved and the rise in mortality rates reversed. Specifically, we recommend the following increases:

—+$22,000,000 for loan repayment. The quickest way to close the gap in health care access is to hire an adequate workforce. The current vacancy rate for IHS health professionals overall is approximately 16 percent with critical shortages in all fields. The IHS conducts an excellent recruiting program but there are more applicants than there are funds available. The ability to offer loan repayment is essential for recruiting and retaining health care professionals, many of whom graduate with over $200,000 of student loan debt.

—+$8,000,000 for prevention. The Friends is very pleased that the President's request includes $2,000,000 for prevention activities. The IHS has proven that being able to prevent disease can save lives. Surveys show that the average death rate for the AI/AN populations dropped 28 percent between 1972 and 2002. Additional resources are needed to reduce these rates even further.

—+$2 million for Tribal Epidemiology Centers. Activities of Tribal Epidemiology centers include the development of surveillance systems for disease conditions, investigation of disease outbreaks, development and implementation of disease control and prevention programs and coordination of activities with other public health authorities in the region. The data gathered by the centers helps the IHS to better target its prevention resources.

The Friends is pleased to see that the Administration has accounted for inflation, contract support costs and population growth in its fiscal year 2007 budget. These figures help provide a more realistic approach for budgeting for the IHS. However, in several of these accounts are still below actual need. If they are not fully funded then mandatory needs will drain resources from current programs creating even more disparity in health care for AI/AN people. We believe that the following increases reflect the actual level of need:

—+$31 million for Pay Act costs. The President's budget provides for a 2.2 percent salary raise for civil service employees and commissioned officers. However, it does not contain sufficient funding to cover "within-in grade" (WIGIS) increases.

—+$18 million for Contract Health Services (CHS). Funding for this program is used to purchase health care services outside IHS facilities through private health care providers in places where an IHS facility does not exist, or is not staffed or equipped to meet the health care needs of the AI/AN patients. CHS funding is used to address health care that has been deferred or denied such as: treatment for diabetes, cancer, heart disease, injuries, mental health, domestic/community/family abuse/violence, maternal and child health, elder care, refractions, physical therapy, and elective orthopedic services The President's budget provides for an increase of $36.9 million but it still leaves this fund short. One of the consequences of underfunding this account is that it creates a financial drain on non-IHS health communities.

—+$67 million for Health Care Facilities. The Friends of Indian Health was very pleased that last year this Committee appropriated $38 million for IHS health facilities construction. However, the agency still needed an additional $47 million to meet the facilities construction schedule. We are disappointed to see that the Administration is again proposing to decrease this account. The IHS has carefully planned its construction schedule and an interruption in that planning will only result in higher construction costs in the future.

—+$33 million for Urban Indian Health Program (UIHP). While the Friends appreciate the need not to duplicate federal programs, we do not agree with the Administration's analysis that the Community Health Center program can accommodate urban Indians. Indeed, the National Association of Community Health Centers has also opposed this proposal stating that, "the fiscal year 2007 budget [for the Community Health Centers] is not designed to meet the needs of the more than 1 million AI/ANs currently living in communities served by the UIHP." We strongly urge the Committee to restore this program until a better approach can be developed so that health care for urban Indians is not compromised.

—+$11 million for Indian Health Care Improvement. The President's budget for fiscal year 2007 does not include an increase for this fund, which was created to address deficiencies in health status and resources for all tribes. Funds are allocated using the Federal Disparity Index, which benchmarks the cost of providing personal health services by a mainstream health plan in comparison to the IHS.

Below are additional statements by groups represented by the Friends detailing the need for improved Indian health care. As health care organizations and providers, we know that there will ultimately be a cost savings to the government if

the disease disparity rates can be reduced and access to health care improved for AI/ANs.

The Friends recommends that the Committee continue its consistent funding approach for the IHS so that it can continue to address the health care needs of the AI/AN populations. Weakening the IHS public health infrastructure can only lead to even greater increases in mortality and morbidity rates of American Indians and Alaska Natives.

MENTAL HEALTH

Poverty is a significant contributing factor toward mental and substance abuse disorders. The poverty rate for American Indians and Alaska Natives (AI/AN) in 2001 was 24.5 percent, as compared to 7.8 percent for non-Hispanic whites. The median household income estimate for AI/ANs was $32,000 as compared to $46,000 for non-Hispanic whites.

Inadequate mental health and substance abuse services contribute to a suicide rate for AI/AN that is about 1.7 times the rate for all races in the United States and the suicide rate for males 15 to 34 years of age is over two times the national rate.

The suicide rate for Indian people is 60 percent higher than the general population.

Studies have shown that 69.9 percent of all suicidal acts (completions and attempts) in AI/AN country involved alcohol use.

KIDNEY DISEASE

American Indians have one of the highest rates of chronic, irreversible kidney failure or End Stage Renal Disease (ESRD) of any population with a prevalence rate 3.5 times that of white Americans.

Diabetes is the leading cause of all new cases of kidney failure for all Americans, and the explosion in the incidence of type 2 diabetes among American Indians is the driving force behind the AI/AN kidney disease prevalence rate.

ORAL HEALTH

79 percent of children aged 2–5 years had a history of decay.

78 percent of adults 35–44 years old and 98 percent of elders 55 years or older had lost at least one tooth because of dental decay, periodontal (gum) disease or oral trauma.

DIABETES

Today diabetes has reached epidemic proportions among Native Americans. Each year 54,000 people lose their feet or legs to diabetes. Amputation rates among Native Americans are 3–4 times higher than the general populations.

An Arizona tribe has the highest rate of diabetes in the world. About 50 percent of the adults between the ages of 30 and 64 have diabetes in this tribe.

VISION AND EYE HEALTH

A recent three year study of Navajo people (the largest native population) revealed that within the prior two years only about 33 percent had an eye exam and that only 20 percent had visual acuity good enough to qualify for a driver's license, even with their present eyeglasses.

With the high rate of diabetes, it is imperative that timely detection and treatment be available in Indian country. Diabetic retinopathy occurs in 24.4 percent of Oklahoma Indians.

PHARMACY

Pharmacists play an important role in disease state management, particularly the monitoring of patients suffering from diabetes.

Through the pharmacy training program, now in 13 sites, the IHS plays a significant role in the education of pharmacists interested in pursuing careers in the IHS.

WOMEN'S HEALTH CARE

AI/AN girls up through the age of 19 are approximately 3 times more likely to commit suicide than their white counterparts.

Although AI/AN women across Indian country have lower cancer death rates than United States all races, in Alaska and Northern Plains, the rates for AI/AN women are 22 percent and 42 percent higher, respectively, than for United States all races.

The 2002 United States prevalence of diagnosed diabetes in women 20 and over was 7.1 percent. For AI/AN women, it was 15.9 percent, more than double. This disease is devastating to the health of these women; in addition, it increases complications in childbearing, and elevates the risk that their children will also become diabetic.

CHILDREN'S HEALTH CARE

More than one-third of the nation's AI/AN population is under the age of 15, and the health of these children consistently lags behind other populations. For example, the SIDS rates among AI/AN infants are nearly twice that of the general population.

AI/AN children are more than twice as likely to die in the first four years of life than the general population, and remain twice as likely to die through age 24.

The rate of type 2 diabetes among AI/AN teens aged 15–19 has increased 109 percent since 1990.

CARDIOVASCULAR DISEASE (CVD)

While the general U.S. population has seen a 50 percent decline in cardiovascular mortality, the AI/AN population rates are rapidly and dramatically increasing.

CVD is the leading cause of death among AI/ANs and is double the rate of the general U.S. population.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE NEW MEXICO INTERSTATE STREAM COMMISSION

SUMMARY

This statement is submitted in support of fiscal year 2007 appropriations for Colorado River Basin salinity control program activities of the Bureau of Land Management. I urge that $5,200,000 be appropriated for the Bureau of Land Management for activities that benefit the control of salinity in the Colorado River Basin, and of that amount, $1,500,000 be marked specifically for the Colorado River Basin Salinity Control Program. In addition, I support the President's requested appropriation of $33,343,000 for the Land Resources Subactivity: Soil, Water, and Air Management, but request an increase of $700,000 in that amount to provide for the needed Colorado River Basin salinity control activities of the Bureau of Land Management.

STATEMENT

The Colorado River Basin Salinity Control Forum (Forum) is comprised of representatives of the seven Colorado River Basin States appointed by the respective Governors of the States. The Forum has examined all of the features needed to control the salinity of the Colorado River. Those features include activities by the cooperating States, the Bureau of Reclamation, the Department of Agriculture, and the Bureau of Land Management (BLM). The salinity control program has been adopted by the seven Colorado River Basin States and approved by the EPA as a part of each state's water quality standards. Also, water delivered to Mexico in the Colorado River is subject to Minute 242 of the U.S. treaty with Mexico that sets limits on the salinity of the water.

About 75 percent of the land in the Colorado River basin is owned, administered or held in trust by the federal government. BLM is the largest landowner in the Colorado River Basin, and manages public lands that are heavily laden with salt. When salt-laden soils erode, the salts dissolve and remain in the river system, affecting the quality of water used from the Colorado River by the Lower Basin States and Mexico. BLM needs to target the expenditure of at least $5.2 million for activities in fiscal year 2007 that benefit salinity control in the Colorado River Basin. In addition, BLM needs to target the expenditure of $1,500,000 of the $5.2 million specifically for salinity control projects and technical investigations. Experience in past years has shown that BLM projects are among the most cost-effective of the salinity control projects.

As one of the five principal Soil, Water and Air Management program activities, BLM needs to specifically target $5.2 million to activities that benefit the control of salinity on lands of the Colorado River Basin. In the past, BLM has allocated $800,000 of the Soil Water and Air Management appropriation for funding specific project proposals submitted by BLM staff to the BLM salinity control coordinator. However, some of that funding has been eliminated in recent years by budget rescissions or transfers to other uses to balance budget needs. Consequently, the $800,000 allocated by BLM from the Soil, Water and Air Management Subactivity for Colo-

rado River Basin salinity control has been reduced, limiting the implementation of needed salinity control efforts. The recently released annual report of the federally chartered Colorado River Basin Salinity Control Advisory Council reports that BLM has identified projects that could utilize funding in the amount of $1.5 million for fiscal year 2007. Consequently, I request that $1.5 million of the Soil, Water and Air Management Subactivity be marked specifically for Colorado River Basin salinity control activities. Achieving this level of appropriation for the critically needed cost effective salinity control work by BLM may require an increase of $700,000 in the BLM budget request of $33,343,000 for the Soil, Water and Air Management Subactivity.

I believe and support past federal legislation that finds that the federal government has a major and important responsibility with respect to controlling salt discharge from public lands. Congress has charged the federal agencies to proceed with programs to control the salinity of the Colorado River Basin with a strong mandate to seek out the most cost-effective solutions. BLM's rangeland improvement programs can lead to some of the most cost-effective salinity control measures available. In addition, these programs are environmentally acceptable and control erosion, increase grazing opportunities, produce dependable stream run-off and enhance wildlife habitat.

The water quality standards adopted by the Colorado River Basin States contain a plan of implementation that includes BLM participation to implement cost effective measures of salinity control. BLM participation in the salinity control program is critical and essential to actively pursue the identification, implementation and quantification of cost effective salinity control measures on public lands.

Bureau of Reclamation studies show that damages from the Colorado River to United States water users are about $330 million per year. For every increase of 30 milligrams per liter in salinity concentration in the waters of the Colorado River, an increase in damages of $75 million is experienced by the water users of the Colorado River Basin in the United States. Control of salinity is necessary for the Basin States, including New Mexico, to continue to develop their compact-apportioned waters of the Colorado River. The Basin States are proceeding with an independent program to control salt discharges to the Colorado River, in addition to up-front cost sharing with Bureau of Reclamation and Department of Agriculture salinity control programs. It is vitally important that BLM pursue salinity control projects within its jurisdiction to maintain the cost effectiveness of the program and the timely implementation of salinity control projects to avoid unnecessary damages in the United States and Mexico.

At the urging of the Basin States, BLM has created a full time position to coordinate its activities among the BLM state offices and other federal agencies involved in implementation of the salinity control program. The BLM 2007 Budget Justification states that BLM continues to implement on-the-ground projects, evaluate progress in cooperation with the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation and the U.S. Department of Agriculture and reports salt retention measures to implement and maintain salinity control measures of the federal salinity control program in the Colorado River Basin. BLM is to be commended for its commitment to cooperate and coordinate with the Basin States and other federal agencies. The Basin States and I are pleased with the BLM administration's responsiveness in addressing the need for renewed emphasis on its efforts to control salinity sources and to comply with BLM responsibilities pursuant to the Colorado River Basin Salinity Control Act, as amended. While it is commendable that BLM's budget focuses on ecosystems and watershed management, it is essential that funds be targeted on specific subactivities and the results of those expenditures reported. This is necessary for accountability and effectiveness of the use of the funds.

I request the appropriation of at least $5.2 million in fiscal year 2007 for Colorado River salinity control activities of BLM, and that $1,500,000 of that amount be marked specifically for the Colorado River Basin Salinity Control Program, including projects and technical investigations. In addition, I request the appropriation of a minimum of $33,343,000 for the Land Resources Subactivity: Soil, Water, and Air Management as requested by the President. However, I request that $34,043,000 be appropriated for the Land Resources Subactivity: Soil, Water, and Air Management to provide for the increase of $700,000 needed for a total of $1.5 million marked specifically for Colorado River salinity control activities without causing any reduction of other activities funded from the Soil, Water and Air Management appropriation. I very much appreciate favorable consideration of these requests. I fully support the statement of the Colorado River Basin Salinity Control Forum submitted by Jack Barnett, the Forum's Executive Director, in request of appropriations for BLM for Colorado River salinity control activities.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF FRIENDS OF RACHEL CARSON NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE

Mr. Chairman and Honorable Members of the Committee: On Behalf of the Friends of the Rachel Carson National Wildlife Refuge, I appreciate the opportunity to present this testimony in support of a $650,000 appropriation from the Land and Water Conservation Fund for land acquisition within the Rachel Carson National Wildlife Refuge.

The Rachel Carson NWR plays a critical role in land protection efforts in southern Maine, serving as an anchor around which numerous local conservation organizations focus their efforts to protect land along the river corridors that flow through the refuge to the sea. The refuge and its supporters are working to effectively stitch together conserved properties into a greenbelt for habitat and water quality protection and public enjoyment. Previous years' appropriations have allowed the USFWS to conserve several properties within the refuge at Biddeford Pool and Parson's Beach, providing an important buffer between the intense development pressure along the southern Maine coast and its fragile coastal estuaries. While significant acreage within the refuge is protected today, additional areas of concern remain in need of protection.

Available for immediate acquisition from a willing landowner in fiscal year 2007 is the 49-acre Parsons Woods property, located in the Parson's Beach area of the refuge near Kennebunkport. Consisting of wooded uplands, the property lies immediately adjacent to existing refuge lands and land being acquired with previously appropriated funds. The Parson's Woods tract contains the headwaters of a tributary of the Little River, the bulk of which flows through existing refuge lands and empties into the Atlantic between Laudholm and Crescent Surf beaches. If acquired, this parcel will allow the refuge to protect important wildlife habitat and link it to already protected refuge lands. Located in a rapidly developing part of Maine, this acquisition offers the refuge an outstanding opportunity to conserve southern Maine's coastal landscape and further consolidate the fragile habitat that exists on the marshes, uplands, creeks, and the estuaries of the coast.

The Friends of Rachel Carson National Wildlife Refuge is the longest standing Friends of the National Wildlife Refuge system groups in the northeast, voicing support for the acquisition and protection of lands vital to the health of the refuge and the communities of southern Maine. We are a 501c3 organization, and our board leadership represents all ten of the refuge's districts. Our local roots recognize and speak for the benefits the refuge brings to our southern Maine communities, the critical plant and animal habitat of our unique coast, and the generations of visitors to the Rachel Carson Wildlife Refuge.

We are fast approaching the 100th anniversary of Rachel Carson's birth in May 2007, and urge you to ensure that her legacy of protection for critical coastal areas is honored through an appropriation to the refuge. Given the development pressures in this part of the state, the opportunity to permanently protect the Parsons Woods property only exists for a limited time. An appropriation of $650,000 for the Rachel Carson NWR in fiscal year 2007 will yield enormous public benefits for generations to come.

Thank you for the opportunity to present this request.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE FORT RIVER PARTNERSHIP

Mr. Chairman and Honorable Members of the Committee, I appreciate the opportunity to present this testimony in support of a $2 million appropriation to the Fish and Wildlife Service from the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) for the Silvio O. Conte National Fish and Wildlife Refuge (Conte NFWR) in Massachusetts.

The Fort River Partnership coordinates the work of federal, state, and nonprofit partners [1] to protect wildlife habitat, working farms, and water quality in the Fort River region of the Connecticut River valley in Massachusetts. As a board member of Valley Land Fund I strongly support the efforts of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to expand the Fort River Division of the Conte NFWR through land acquisitions that protect grassland bird habitat along and near the Fort River.

Silvio O. Conte was a conservationist, fisherman, and champion of the Connecticut River who served as a U.S. Representative for Massachusetts' 1st District from 1959 until his death in 1991. Just before he died, Congressman Conte introduced legislation to establish a national wildlife refuge in the Connecticut River watershed, and his congressional colleagues paid tribute to his conservation legacy by

[1] The Fort River Partnership participants include representatives from the USFWS Conte NFWR, the Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation, the Kestrel Trust, Valley Land Fund, Franklin Land Trust, the Conservation Fund, and the Trust for Public Land.

authorizing the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) to establish the Silvio O. Conte National Fish and Wildlife Refuge in 1991. The refuge, officially established in 1997, protects native and endangered fish, wildlife, and plant species throughout the 7.2 million acre Connecticut River watershed, located in portions of Massachusetts, Connecticut, Vermont, and New Hampshire.

Available for acquisition this year in the Conte NFWR in Massachusetts are three tracts in Hadley, that total 82 acres and complement the Refuge's recent acquisition of 23 acres nearby. These parcels are part of the Grasslands Complex Special Focus Area and are prized for their potential to provide habitat to grassland bird species such as the grasshopper sparrow, bobolink, and upland sandpiper, as well as for their frontage on the Fort River. The Fort River is the longest free-flowing tributary of the Connecticut River in Massachusetts.

With roughly two and a half million people in the Connecticut River watershed, the threat from development poses a challenge to the mission of the refuge and the protection of the valley's resources. Hadley, a traditional farming town rich in prime soils, is increasingly facing the challenges of rising land values and loss of rural character. The addition of these parcels to the Refuge's Fort River Division will contribute strongly to the creation of a viable land base for grassland bird species and to the health of other critical Fort River species, including the federally endangered dwarf wedgemussel. Failure to protect these parcels will inevitably lead to housing developments in this sensitive area. The Select Board of the Town of Hadley has declared its support for the establishment and expansion of this Division. The FWS and its partners are working closely with local land trusts to ensure that the refuge additions are leveraged through local, state, and federal investments in farmland protection, creating a conservation mosaic in the focus area that preserves its rural, historic and scenic character and protects the quality of the town's drinking water aquifer.

The estimated value of the Fort River Grasslands properties is $2 million, which is part of a larger $4 million request to fund other conservation opportunities throughout the four Conte NFWR states in fiscal year 2007. The $2 million appropriation to protect these Fort River properties will allow the Conte NFWR to continue to provide valuable resource protection within the Connecticut River valley in Massachusetts.

I respectfully request that you include an appropriation of $2 million for the Silvio O. Conte NFWR in Massachusetts in the fiscal year 2007 Interior and Related Agencies Appropriations bill. I also support the request of the Friends of the Silvio O. Conte National Fish and Wildlife Refuge for a total of at least $4 million for the entire four-state refuge. This amount will help fund the $5.25 million in current high-priority Conte NFWR projects that are at risk of being lost in the Connecticut River watershed, a region comprising one sixth of New England's land mass and providing over 70 percent of the freshwater inflow to Long Island Sound.

Thank you for your attention to this request.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF FRIENDS OF THE SILVIO O. CONTE NATIONAL FISH AND WILDLIFE REFUGE

Mr. Chairman and Honorable Members of the Committee: I appreciate the opportunity to present this testimony in support of a $4 million appropriation to the Fish and Wildlife Service from the Land and Water Conservation Fund for the Silvio O. Conte National Fish and Wildlife Refuge. This amount will help fund the $5.25 million in current high-priority Conte NFWR projects that are at risk of being lost in the Connecticut River watershed.

The Friends of the Silvio O. Conte National Fish and Wildlife Refuge (SOC Friends) respectfully request your support for our fiscal year 2007 budget priorities. The pages that follow summarize our collective vision for what it will take in the fiscal year 2007 budget cycle to achieve the conservation results that the late congressman and champion of the Connecticut River, Silvio O. Conte, dreamed of. While $4 million will not fully fund all of the priority projects listed below, we hope that it will be sufficient to leverage additional funding to complete these projects if the Service has sufficient flexibility to apply the funds where they are most needed.

Our unified request reflects the unique nature of the Silvio O. Conte National Fish and Wildlife Refuge, which encompasses 7.2 million acres in New England's largest watershed, comprising one sixth of New England's land mass and providing over 70 percent of the freshwater inflow to Long Island Sound. The Refuge's diverse natural habitats help it rank as the top refuge in the region in the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Land Acquisition Priority System. Uniting four states, encom-

passing nine congressional districts and a constituency of more than 2 million citizens, the Conte Refuge is a New England treasure that provides tremendous opportunity to create permanent public benefits.

The SOC Friends group includes the following organizations: The Nature Conservancy; The Trust for Public Land; The Conservation Fund; Society for the Protection of New Hampshire Forests; Connecticut River Watershed Council; Appalachian Mountain Club; Northern Forest Alliance; Connecticut Audubon; New Hampshire Audubon; Massachusetts Audubon; National Audubon Society; Friends of the Discovery Center; Friends of Pondicherry; Nulhegan Gateway Association; and Fort River Partnership.

As conservation partners with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, we stand ready to help make Silvio Conte's vision a reality, and respectfully request the support of Congress in this effort.

Our identified requests include:

Connecticut.—Salmon River Division:

—Cost: $2,000,000

—Acreage: 289 acres

The Salmon River division is comprised of a range of important natural features, including free-flowing rivers, thriving freshwater tidal marshes, forested wetlands, floodplain forests, and rare plant and animal species. The Elm Camp/Johnson property would be the first acquisition in this division and is a keystone property containing 3,360 feet of frontage on Pine Brook, a high-quality stream that provides remarkable cold-water fish habitat; and 1,440 feet on the west bank of Salmon River, site of extensive state and federal efforts to restore anadromous fish runs, including the Atlantic salmon. Pine Brook is the only major Salmon tributary free of artificial barriers to migratory fish.

Massachusetts.—Fort River Division:

—Cost: $2,000,000

—Acreage: 82 acres

These parcels are prized for their potential to provide habitat to grassland bird species such as the grasshopper sparrow, bobolink, and upland sandpiper, and for more than a mile of frontage on the Fort River. The Fort River is the longest free-flowing tributary of the Connecticut River in Massachusetts, home to the federally-listed endangered dwarf wedgemussel and other rate mussels, fish, dragonflies, and turtles. At the center of a mosaic that includes over 600 acres of the protected farmland and new refuge holdings, these parcels are subject to development proposals that would drastically reduce the tremendous habitat potential of this rural landscape.

New Hampshire—Ashuelot River Division:

—Cost: $500,000

—Acreage: 1,400 acres

The Ashuelot River and its watershed are remarkable for their biodiversity and natural features, including: diverse freshwater wetlands, large unfragmented forest blocks, high quality wild brook trout streams, spawning habitat for anadromous fish, and rare species and natural communities, including the federally endangered dwarf wedge mussel. The subject property includes the headwaters of the high quality Roaring Brook stream system, and supports an exemplary wetland ecosystem containing a complex of emergent marsh, beaver flowages, scrub-shrub floodplain, riverbanks, and seepage swamps. Roaring Brook is a free-flowing tributary of the Ashuelot, supports a key Atlantic salmon stocking site, and provides excellent habitat for 63 species of birds and an abundance of other wildlife.

—Pondicherry Division:

—Cost: $180,000

—Acreage: 98 acres

Pondicherry was designated as a National Natural Landmark in 1974, and was recently designated as the first Important Bird Area in New Hampshire. The area has long been known to offer exceptional avian habitat supporting approximately 230 species of birds of which 125 species have been confirmed as breeding. Species of particular conservation interest include common loon, northern harrier, sore, rusty blackbird, whip-poor-will, and American black duck. 20 species of reptiles and amphibians, 41 species of mammals, and 17 species of fish have also been documented to use the Pondicherry Refuge site. Recent ecological surveys have identified and documented a variety of exemplary natural communities including peat bogs, fens, deep emergent marshes, and increasingly threatened.

—Mohawk River Division:

—Cost: $320,000

—Acreage:126 acres

This River, located in New Hampshire's North Country is remarkable for its remote, boreal forests, rugged mountain peaks, abundant clear streams, lush wetlands, and rich lowland forests. Its habitats include mature conifer forests, mixed northern hardwoods, boreal peat bogs and freshwater wetlands. The Mohawk River provides nursery and rearing habitat for juvenile Atlantic salmon. It also provides high quality habitat for native brook trout.

Vermont.—Nulhegan Division:

—Cost: $250,000

—Acreage: 116 acres

The Nulhegan Basin includes a complex of bogs, freshwater wetlands and spruce forest. These habitats provide nesting areas for loon, hooded mergansers, black, ring-necked and wood ducks. The Nulhegan Basin supports the only viable population of spruce grouse in the Connecticut River Watershed. More than a dozen rare plants and animals are also known to occur in this area.

On behalf of the SOC Friends, I respectfully request that you include an appropriation of $4 million for the Silvio O. Conte NFWR in the fiscal year 2007 Interior and Related Agencies Appropriations bill.

I thank you in advance for your attention and your support as we endeavor to promote this investment in the natural and human environment.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY

Mr. Chairman, I would like to thank you and the Members of the Subcommittee for this opportunity to present testimony before this Committee. I would like to take a moment to briefly acquaint you with Florida State University.

Located in Tallahassee, Florida's capitol, FSU is a comprehensive Research I university with a rapidly growing research base. The University serves as a center for advanced graduate and professional studies, exemplary research, and top-quality undergraduate programs. Faculty members at FSU maintain a strong commitment to quality in teaching, to performance of research and creative activities, and have a strong commitment to public service. Among the current or former faculty are numerous recipients of national and international honors including Nobel laureates, Pulitzer Prize winners, and several members of the National Academy of Sciences. Our scientists and engineers do excellent research, have strong interdisciplinary interests, and often work closely with industrial partners in the commercialization of the results of their research. Florida State University had over $182 million this past year in research awards.

Florida State University attracts students from every state in the nation and more than 100 foreign countries. The University is committed to high admission standards that ensure quality in its student body, which currently includes National Merit and National Achievement Scholars, as well as students with superior creative talent. We consistently rank in the top 25 among U.S. colleges and universities in attracting National Merit Scholars to our campus.

At Florida State University, we are very proud of our successes as well as our emerging reputation as one of the nation's top public research universities.

Mr. Chairman, let me tell you about two projects we are pursuing at FSU. Our first project centers around the creation of a Coastal Marine Institute.

Beach erosion and renourishment are critical issues in regions that are dependent on tourism and recreation. Florida's beaches and barrier islands protect $150 billion in coastal structures and infrastructure. Beach-related tourism generates approximately $40 billion in direct and indirect annual spending. More than half of Florida's sandy beaches are classified as critically eroding, the result of frequent storms, sea-level rise, and the loss of sand sources due to coastal development. Recent hurricanes have drastically added to the erosion problem.

To that end, Florida State University propose to create an MMS Florida Coastal Marine Institute (FCMI), for the purpose of bringing researchers on southeastern coastal marine environments together with MMS scientists on projects related to MMS' work on the marine resources of the outer continental shelf (OCS).

Our work will predominantly entail research into the environmental effects of extracting OCS sand resources for beach renourishment in the Southeast. Sand for renourishment is nearly always sought offshore, where the extraction process is potentially disruptive to the marine environment. The state's beaches comprise a quarter of America's sandy shorelines. Beach renourishment is the principal tool employed in Florida to address coastal erosion. State government agencies alone spend about $30 million annually on beach renourishment-related activities. Similar amounts come from local sources and the federal government, for a total of nearly $100 million annually expended on beach restoration in Florida.

The readily available sand resources close to shore are rapidly being depleted. OCS sand is being used more and more frequently for replenishing Florida's eroded beaches, on both coasts. Such use will accelerate in the future, as sources further and further offshore are tapped for sand.

Research into the environmental effects of sand extraction is multi-faceted. The offshore resource itself needs to be quantified and evaluated. Environmentally sensitive zones on the shelf need to be identified. The potential biological and physical impact on offshore extraction sites needs to be carefully evaluated. The proposed Florida CMI would be a source of much-needed expertise into these issues. We are requesting $750,000 for this activity.

Our second project involves the creation of a southeast regional Center to focus research on the long-term sources and fates of mercury delivered to the global atmosphere. We will focus on the most critical piece of the puzzle—gaseous elemental mercury. The Center will be partnered between Florida State University and Georgia Institute of Technology. FSU's Oceanography Department and Geochemistry Program of the National High Magnetic Field Lab excel in the collection and analyses of ultra-trace element chemistry and isotopes globally—including mercury—in both atmospheric and aquatic environments. Georgia Tech's Schools of Earth & Atmospheric Sciences and Civil & Environmental Engineering have extensive national and international programs in urban photochemical chemistry, tracing of "tailpipe" and "smoke stack" gases, and global atmospheric mapping of trace gases from research airplanes and satellites. The Center will be a component of the "Geotraces" program, a new international 10-year effort starting in 2006 to map for the first time the global distributions of ultra-trace elements and isotopes in the ocean.

Mercury is one of two trace elements known to have a large source to the surface ocean via deposition from the atmosphere. Mercury is thus targeted by Geotraces. The source of lead is known to be tetraethyl-lead additives in gasoline (now banned in the United States). In south Florida, the anthropogenic lead source is European, the source of vapor mercury to the ocean's surface is unknown.

Although there is agreement that the atmosphere dominates the transport pathways for mercury, there is controversy regarding what fraction of mercury entering lakes and rivers is natural vs. man-made and global vs. local. Most mercury emissions are in the northeast United States, yet most mercury deposition is in the southeast. Patterns of mercury in rainfall have been interpreted as both "local source" and "global long-distance source". Local, regional, and global distributions of gaseous elemental mercury are unknown yet elemental mercury is thought to represent the most important source of anthropogenic mercury to the atmosphere. Because of the critical importance of mercury emissions to ecosystem and human health, and because of the increasing reliance of America's electric power plants on coal, a concentrated and well-focused effort on the atmospheric portion of the mercury cycle is required. In order to correctly regulate the "correct" man-made source it is essential to establish a scientific basis for quantifying the global array of atmospheric sources. We are seeking $2,000,000 for this activity.

Mr. Chairman, these are just two projects that Florida State University is working on that will have long reaching and positive outcomes for our country's future. Your consideration is greatly appreciated.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE FRIENDS OF WESTWATER CANYON

Mr. Chairman and Honorable Members of the Committee: The Friends of Westwater Canyon appreciates the opportunity to present this testimony in support of a $1.3 million appropriation from the Land and Water Conservation Fund for the second phase of the Westwater Ranch conservation project in the Colorado River Special Recreation Management Area.

Westwater Canyon and Colorado River SMRA.—The Colorado River has carved some of nature's greatest wonders in its long and sometimes tortuous path: the Grand Canyon, the vanished but once hauntingly beautiful Glen Canyon and the fearsome waters of Cataract Canyon in Canyonlands National Park. Just as remarkable is Westwater Canyon in southeastern Utah, some 40 miles west of Grand Junction, Colorado and 40 miles northeast of Moab, Utah.

Visitors to Westwater Canyon experience a wild whitewater river, a truly unique contrast of land formations as well as a remote, prospering habitat for both plant and wildlife. Treasures unfold in the canyon: beautiful geologic formations, ephemeral streams and seeps, wildflowers, petroglyphs and potholes. Its cliffs are home to the endangered Peregrine Falcon, Golden and Bald Eagles, and Desert Bighorn sheep. The canyon's entrance hosts a unique Cottonwood-Willow forest—one of the rarest forest types in the United States. Critical habitat is found here for endan-

gered native Colorado River fishes: the Colorado Squawfish, Bonytail Chub, Humpback Chub and the Razorback Sucker.

Westwater Canyon is located within the Westwater Canyon Wilderness Study Area and Bureau of Land Management's (BLM) Colorado River Special Recreation Management Area. The BLM Westwater Ranger Station, located on the Colorado River less than an hour's drive from both Moab, Utah and Grand Junction, Colorado, serves as both a takeout for many rafters coming downriver from the McInnis Canyons National Conservation Area (in Colorado) and a launching point for the whitewater trip through Westwater Canyon. This canyon is the first whitewater stretch of the Colorado River in Utah and is an exceedingly popular trip due to the canyon's relative proximity to metropolitan areas, its classic desert scenery, and numerous challenging rapids.

Friends of Westwater Canyon.—The Friends of Westwater Canyon was incorporated as a non-profit organization in 1997 by community members to achieve a number of goals:

1. Preserve the unique desert river canyon of Westwater,
2. Educate the public as to qualities of Westwater Canyon,
3. Work with the Bureau of Land Management to ensure Westwater Canyon is not impaired by development and indiscriminate destruction of its natural resources.

The preservation of Westwater Canyon enjoys the ongoing support of many commercial and conservation organizations such as: the Utah Guides and Outfitters Association, Colorado Plateau River Guides Association, Colorado River Outfitters Association, Utah Rivers Council, Southern Utah Wilderness Alliance, American Rivers, Mineral Policy Center, Western Mining Action Project and Friends of Westwater Canyon. In addition, hundreds of individuals have taken action on behalf of Westwater Canyon.

Support of LWCF Funding Request.—Available for acquisition in fiscal year 2007 is the second phase of a conservation easement on the 1,100-acre Westwater Ranch at the mouth of Westwater Canyon on the Colorado River. The ranch is one of the largest remaining private parcels along the Colorado River between the McInnis Canyons NCA in Colorado and the Westwater Wilderness Study Area. The property has over three miles of river frontage, which is lined with cottonwood, willow and other riparian vegetation. For the thousands of rafters who put in at the BLM Ranger Station, located immediately upstream of Westwater Ranch, these three miles of river frontage on the ranch before entering Westwater Canyon itself are an important element of the recreational experience. Wildlife often observed on the ranch from the river include wild turkeys, deer and bald eagles, which frequently nest in the riparian corridor on the ranch property.

New owners recently acquired the ranch and are working to restore the ranch to agricultural uses, including removal of invasive Russian knapweed and Tamarisk. BLM and The Trust for Public Land are now working with these new owners to protect the remainder of the ranch with the purchase of a conservation easement. In fiscal year 2006, Land and Water Conservation Funds were secured to protect 500 acres of the ranch.

Without protection, this property faces an imminent threat from rural residential development. Protecting the ranch will provide scenic benefits along the Colorado River, provide the public with additional camping and recreational facilities at the current ranger station, and protect the area's unique richness of natural and recreational resources. I respectfully request you include an LWCF appropriation of $1.3 million in the fiscal year 2007 Interior and Related Agencies Appropriations bill to complete the acquisition of the remaining acreage of Westwater Ranch.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF GRAND COUNTY, UTAH

Mr. Chairman and Honorable Members of the Committee: Grand County appreciates the opportunity to present this testimony in support of a $1.3 million appropriation from the Land and Water Conservation Fund for the second phase of the Westwater Ranch conservation easement project in the Colorado River Special Recreation Management Area.

Grand County is located in eastern Utah with county seat in Moab, and population of approximately 8,700. The County contains some of the world's most spectacular scenery. Within its boundaries lie Arches and Canyonlands National Parks, Dead Horse Point State Park, Manti-La Sal National Forest, the Colorado River, and an abundance of Bureau of Land Management Recreation Areas. This region is an outdoor wonderland for hikers, bikers, sightseers, photography buffs, rafters,

golfers, four wheel drive enthusiasts and much more. Moab, the county seat, is the only town in Utah located on the Colorado River.

The County has always had deep ties to the Colorado River, having been named after the river when the County was founded in 1890 (and river was then known as the Grand River). Over its history, Grand County's economy has been greatly benefited by farming, ranching, mining, oil exploration and more recently, by tourism generated by the numerous natural resource and recreational and hunting opportunities in the area.

The area along the Colorado River near BLM's Westwater Ranger Station is one of those important recreation and hunting areas in Grand County. We understand that funding provided by Congress in the fiscal year 2006 federal budget will allow for the first phase of a conservation easement to be acquired by BLM, which will protect a portion of the privately-owned Westwater Ranch. Additional funding of $1.3 million is being requested in the fiscal year 2007 budget for this Westwater Ranch conservation easement to be completed. The owners of Westwater Ranch have also indicated their willingness to sell a small portion of the ranch adjacent to the Ranger Station to BLM that would enable expansion of the public facilities at the Ranger Station.

The purchase by BLM of a conservation easement on Westwater Ranch will enhance the visitor experience in Grand County by preservation of scenic values. The purchase of private land for expansion of BLM's Westwater Rnager Station will do much to ease congestion at the Station. Additionally, the acquisition of other private parcels located between the Utah/Colorado state line and the Westwater Ranger Station will resolve public access problems on existing roads with locked gates, with which we are very familiar.

We strongly support an LWCF appropriation of $1.3 million in the fiscal year 2007 Interior and Related Agencies Appropriations bill, and BLM's plans to acquire a conservation easement on Westwater Ranch, lands adjacent to the existing Westwater Ranger Station for expansion of the public facilities, and acquisitions of selected lands along the Colorado River and upstream of the Station to protect the riverfront and provide for improved public access.

Thank you for your consideration.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE GREAT LAKES INDIAN FISH & WILDLIFE COMMISSION (GLIFWC)

AGENCIES—BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

1. BIA TREATY RIGHTS PROTECTION/IMPLEMENTATION: $4,174,000 ($382,000 above fiscal year 2006 enacted).

Agency/Program Line Item: Dept. of Interior, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Operation of Indian Programs, Trust-Natural Resources Management, Rights Protection Implementation, Great Lakes Area Resource Management.[1]

Funding Authorizations: Snyder Act, 25 U.S.C. § 13; Indian Self-Determination and Educational Assistance Act, 25 U.S.C. §§ 450f and 450h; and the treaties between the United States and GLIFWC's member Ojibwe Tribes, specifically Treaty of 1836, 7 Stat. 491, Treaty of 1837, 7 Stat. 536, Treaty of 1842, 7 Stat. 591, and Treaty of 1854, 10 Stat. 1109.[2]

2. EPA ENVIRONMENTAL PROGRAMS AND MANAGEMENT: $300,000 (fiscal year 2004 enacted).

Agency/Program Line Item: Environmental Protection Agency, Environmental Programs and Management (funneled through the EPA's Great Lakes National Program Office).

Funding Authorizations: Clean Water Act, 33 U.S.C. § 1268(c); and treaties cited above.

GLIFWC'S GOAL—A SECURE FUNDING BASE TO FULFILL TREATY PURPOSES

As Congress has recognized for over 20 years, funding for GLIFWC's conservation, natural resource protection, and law enforcement programs: (i) honors federal treaty obligations to eleven Ojibwe Tribes; and (ii) provides a wide range of associated public benefits. The lack of a secure funding base jeopardizes GLIFWC's ability to: (i)

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[1] The requested BIA funds reflect GLIFWC's allocation of this line item that also funds the 1854 Authority.

[2] The rights guaranteed by these treaties, and the associated tribal regulatory and management responsibilities, have been affirmed by various court decisions, including a 1999 U.S. Supreme Court case.

implement federal court orders and intergovernmental agreements governing the exercise of treaty-guaranteed hunting, fishing and gathering rights; and (ii) participate in cooperative management partnerships in Wisconsin, Michigan and Minnesota.

1. BIA TREATY RIGHTS PROTECTION/IMPLEMENTATION: $4,174,000. As its primary Indian Self-Determination and Educational Assistance Act funding base, GLIFWC seeks to:

a. Restore $157,000 in base funding lost over the last four years that is not included in the Administration's fiscal year 2007 budget proposal;

b. Restore $75,000 of base funding for annual pay cost adjustments that the BIA routinely has not included in its budget request to Congress; and

c. Provide $150,000 in additional base funding to sustain enhancements in conservation law enforcement and emergency services capabilities.

2. EPA ENVIRONMENTAL PROGRAMS AND MANAGEMENT: $300,000. As an EPA funding base for its primary environmental program elements, GLIFWC seeks to:

a. Provide $189,700 for basic scientific/technical capabilities to: (i) continue participation in a number of Great Lakes initiatives (including the Binational Program to Restore and Protect Lake Superior, the Lake Superior Lakewide Management Plan (LaMP), and the Great Lakes Regional Collaboration); (ii) carry out habitat and human-health related research; and (iii) provide the requisite analysis and data to support participation in regional initiatives and to assess the impact of particular projects on tribal treaty rights.

b. Provide $110,300 to undertake three habitat and human health-related research projects regarding: (i) GLIFWC's fish consumption mercury advisory program; (ii) ceded territory sulfide mining site evaluation and monitoring; and (iii) a Lake Superior herring contaminant assessment.

CEDED TERRITORY TREATY RIGHTS—GLIFWC'S ROLE AND PROGRAMS

Established in 1984, GLIFWC is a natural resources management agency for its 11 member Ojibwe Tribes regarding their ceded territory (off-reservation) hunting, fishing and gathering treaty rights. Its mission is twofold:

—Ensure that its member Tribes are able to exercise their rights for the purposes of meeting subsistence, economic, cultural, medicinal, and spiritual needs; and

—Ensure a healthy, sustainable natural resource base that supports those rights.

GLIFWC is a "tribal organization" within the meaning of the Indian Self-Determination and Educational Assistance Act (Public Law 93–638). It is governed by a Constitution developed and ratified by its member Tribes and by a board comprised of the Chairs of those Tribes.

GLIFWC operates a comprehensive ceded territory hunting, fishing, and gathering rights protection/implementation program through its staff of biologists, scientists, technicians, conservation enforcement officers, policy specialists, and public information specialists.

Its activities include: (i) natural resource population assessments and studies; (ii) harvest monitoring and reporting; (iii) enforcement of tribal conservation codes in tribal courts; (iv) funding for tribal courts and tribal registration/permit stations; (v) development of natural resource management plans and tribal regulations; (vi) negotiation and implementation of agreements with state, federal and local agencies; (vii) invasive species eradication and control projects; (viii) biological and scientific research, including fish contaminant testing; and (ix) development and dissemination of public information materials.

JUSTIFICATION & USE OF THE REQUESTED FUNDS

For over 20 years, Congress has recognized GLIFWC as a cost efficient agency that plays a necessary role in: (i) meeting specific federal treaty and statutory obligations toward GLIFWC's member Tribes; (ii) fulfilling conservation, habitat protection, and law enforcement functions required by federal court decisions affirming the Tribes' treaty rights; (iii) effectively regulating harvests of natural resources shared among the treaty signatory Tribes; and (iv) serving as an active partner with state, federal and local governments, with educational institutions, and with conservation organizations and other non-profit agencies.

Particularly relevant to the requested EPA funds, Tribal members rely upon treaty-protected natural resources for religious, cultural, medicinal, subsistence, and economic purposes. Their treaty rights mean little if contamination of these resources threatens their health, safety, and economy, or if the habitats supporting these resources are degraded.

With the requested stable funding base, GLIFWC will:

1. MAINTAIN ITS CORE CAPABILITIES TO CONSERVE NATURAL RESOURCES AND TO REGULATE TREATY HARVESTS: As was the case with the BIA funding base provided by Congress for the past 5 years, GLIFWC would: (i) restore program cuts caused by chronic under-funding;[3] (ii) provide cost-of-living pay increases to staff;[4] and (iii) solidify law enforcement and emergency response infrastructure improvements that have been instituted with a combination of BIA and U.S. Department of Justice COPS funds.[5]

2. REMAIN A TRUSTED ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT PARTNER AND SCIENTIFIC CONTRIBUTOR IN THE GREAT LAKES REGION: With the requested EPA funding base, GLIFWC would maintain its ability to bring a tribal perspective to the interjurisdictional mix of Great Lakes managers.[6] It also would use its scientific expertise to study issues and geographic areas that are important to its member Tribes but that others may not be examining.[7]

The lack of a secure, ongoing EPA funding base jeopardizes GLIFWC's role as a trusted environmental management partner and scientific contributor in the Great Lakes Region. The federal government's treaty obligations to GLIFWC's member Tribes compel more than the mere opportunity to compete for a diminishing patchwork of discretionary EPA grants. This is particularly true given important current initiatives such as the Great Lakes Regional Collaboration in which GLIFWC participates as a full partner.

3. MAINTAIN THE OVERALL PUBLIC BENEFITS THAT DERIVE FROM ITS PROGRAMS: Over the years, GLIFWC has become a recognized and valued partner in natural resource management, in emergency services networks, and in providing accurate information to the public. Because of its institutional experience and staff expertise, GLIFWC provides continuity and stability in interagency relationships and among its member Tribes, and contributes to social stability in the context of ceded territory treaty rights issues.

Over the past 20 years, GLIFWC has built many partnerships that: (i) provide accurate information and data to counter social misconceptions about tribal treaty harvests and the status of ceded territory natural resources; (ii) maximize each partner's financial resources; (iii) avoid duplication of effort and costs; (iv) engender cooperation rather than competition; and (v) undertake projects and achieve public benefits that no one partner could accomplish alone.

OTHER RELATED APPROPRIATIONS CONCERNS

1. Fully Funded BIA Contract Support Costs: Since 1995, GLIFWC has experienced a $372,000 shortfall in contract support costs despite its historically low indirect cost rates that never exceeded 15.25 percent. This is unsustainable and, when combined with increased administrative costs, will force GLIFWC to increase its fiscal year 2006 rate by over 3 percent from its fiscal year 2005 rate.

2. BIA Circle of Flight Tribal Wetland & Waterfowl Initiative: Once again, Congress should fully fund this long-standing tribal contribution to the North American Waterfowl Management Plan that the Administration again proposes to eliminate.

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[3] For example, the previously restored funding base was used to: (i) reinstitute fall juvenile walleye recruitment surveys to previous levels; (ii) restore tribal court and registration station funding cuts; (iii) restore Lake Superior lamprey control and whitefish assessment programs; (iv) restore GLIFWC's share in cooperative wildlife and wild rice enhancement projects; (v) replace aging equipment; (vi) meet expanding harvest monitoring needs; and (vii) meet uncontrollable increases in employee benefit costs.

[4] Since fiscal year 2002, the Administration has not included funding for GLIFWC employee cost of living pay adjustments in GLIFWC's base funding levels. Failure to include these adjustments in succeeding budgets negates their very purpose and results in recurring de facto budget cuts if the adjusted salaries are to be paid in subsequent years.

[5] GLIFWC has: (i) upgraded its patrol capabilities with new vehicles, boats, snowmobiles, and off-road vehicles; (ii) increased officer medical training and upgraded first aid equipment; (iii) upgraded its radio systems to be compatible with surrounding agencies; and (iv) established ongoing joint training with federal, state, and local agencies.

[6] GLIFWC currently participates on a regular basis in the Binational Program to Restore and Protect Lake Superior, International Joint Commission and SOLEC forums, the Great Lakes Regional Collaboration, and the implementation of agreements to regulate water diversions and withdrawals under the Great Lakes Charter, Annex 2001.

[7] With the requested fiscal year 2007 EPA funds, GLIFWC would: (i) continue its long-standing program to collect and test fish for mercury and to communicate testing results through health care providers and GIS maps; (ii) assess the impacts of contaminants leaking from a closed mine in Wisconsin; (iii) conduct water testing and baseline monitoring of heavy metals in the area of a proposed sulfide mine in Michigan's Upper Peninsula near pristine Lake Superior tributaries where native coaster brook trout spawn; and (iv) assess mercury, PCB and organochlorine levels in Lake Superior herring, the second most commercially-harvested fish in the U.S. waters of Lake Superior.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE GREAT LAKES TASK FORCE

As members of the Great Lakes delegation, we are writing to express our strong support for the many programs in the Department of Interior, the Environmental Protection Agency, and the Agency for Toxic Substances & Disease Registry that protect the human health as well as fish and wildlife resources in the Great Lakes. In particular, we ask that you consider the following requests.

—We urge the Committee to provide the fully authorized amount of funding ($54 million) for the Great Lakes Legacy Program.

The Great Lakes are plagued by contaminants from years of industrial pollution that have settled into the sediments of tributaries to the lakes. These pollutants degrade the health of both humans and wildlife. The worst of these polluted areas are known as Areas of Concern (AOC). The Great Lakes Legacy Act was enacted in 2002 in order for the EPA to clean-up contaminated sediments in the Great Lakes. The Great Lakes Legacy program will provide funds to the EPA in order to address contaminated sediments at AOCs, and we support funding at the fully authorized amount ($54 million) for the Great Lakes Legacy program as well as language to allow the life of these funds to extend beyond 2 years. The EPA completed the first Legacy project in November of 2005, and of the four projects that have received funding, EPA estimates that over 1.2 million cubic yards of contaminated sediment will be removed. This program represents how federal funding can leverage significant private funds. Although the President's budget requested $50 million in fiscal year 2006, the program received $30.0 million, and the President included $49.60 million in his proposed budget for fiscal year 2007.

—We urge the Committee to provide $4 million for the Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) Great Lakes Fish and Wildlife Restoration Program with language directing at least $2 million towards the grant program established by the Great Lakes Fish and Wildlife Restoration Act of 1998.

The Great Lakes Fish and Wildlife Restoration Act calls for the implementation of proposals to restore the fish and wildlife resources in the Great Lakes Basin based on the Great Lakes Fishery Restoration Study and authorizes grants to encourage cooperative conservation, restoration and management of the fish and wildlife resources and their habitat in the Great Lakes Basin. The Fish and Wildlife Service will only be able to implement restoration projects and meet the purposes of the Act if funding is provided for the continuation of the FWS Great Lakes Regional Offices (authorized at $3.5 million) and for the grants program to implement restoration projects (authorized at $4.5 million). In fiscal year 2006, $1.27 million was appropriated for the FWS Regional Offices and $500,000 for the grants program, and the fiscal year 2007 budget proposes $1.27 million for the Regional Offices.

—We request that the Committee provide $25 million for EPA's Great Lakes National Program Office.

The Great Lakes National Program Office (GLNPO) is responsible for overseeing the U.S. commitment to the U.S.-Canadian Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement, establishing a Great Lakes system-wide surveillance network to monitor water quality, serving as the liaison with the International Joint Commission, and coordinating EPA's Great Lakes activities as well as coordinating those activities with other Federal, State and Local authorities. Additionally, GLNPO is responsible for implementing the Great Lakes Legacy Program, and it has considerable responsibility for implementing Executive Order 13340 which was signed in an effort to improve coordination of all of the federal Great Lakes programs. GLNPO carries out a program that combines research and monitoring with education and outreach, and supports grants for specific activities to enhance and protect the Great Lakes environment. Approximately 60 percent of GLNPO's budget is allocated towards making grants and cooperative agreements to organizations in the state, tribal, or local sector. GLNPO received $22.072 million in fiscal year 2006, and the fiscal year 2007 proposed budget provides $20.571, a $1.5 million decrease. To meet the growing demand for work on the Great Lakes, $5 million in additional funding is needed

—We support the Administration's request for $10 million for the BEACH Act.

Each year state, local and tribal health and environmental protection agencies monitor the quality of water at our nation's beaches. When measured bacteria levels in the water are too high, these agencies notify the public of beach warnings or closings. State and local monitoring and notification programs differ across the country and provide varying levels of swimmer protection. In an effort to improve water quality testing at the beach and public notification when water quality problems exist, the Beaches Environmental Assessment and Coastal Health Act (BEACH Act) authorizes EPA to award grants to states, tribes, and territories to develop and implement beach water quality monitoring programs at coastal and Great Lakes rec-

reational waters near beaches. These grants also provide support for the development and implementation of programs to reduce the risk of exposure to disease-causing microorganisms in the water to users of the Nation's beaches. There is a great demand for these grants throughout the Great Lakes states, and we support the Administration's request for funds.

The work carried out by the EPA, FWS and USGS is of critical importance to the sustainability of the Great Lakes' natural resources. We urge the Committee to carefully consider these requests and thank you for your attention to this matter. If you have questions, please contact Joy Mulinex at 224–1211.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE GLACIER PARK, INC.

The purpose of this statement is to bring to your attention a very unfair amendment inserted into the 2005 Interior Appropriation Bill and continues today, and done so in secrecy and without congressional hearings, or concessionaires' knowledge. In-other-words, done through the back door, undercover, and most importantly, in violation of the National Parks Omnibus Management Act of 1998 known as Public Law 105–391. The violating amendment is known as the "De Novo" Amendment. Public Law 105–391 allows for binding arbitration between the National Park Service and concessionaires if a dispute arise over the value of the concessionaire's assets. With the "De Novo" Amendment only the park service has the right to take the arbitrators ruling to the Court of Federal Claims for another ruling, which violates "Binding Arbitration." It is totally unfair that concessionaires must respect the law, but the government (National Park Service) has a second chance to possibly get a more favorable ruling. This Amendment is one-sided, unfair and unethical. This Amendment must be eliminated and prevented from happening again. The 2007 Interior Appropriation Bill is underway now and I ask that you do all in your power to speak out against this type of unfair action and vote against any further "De Novo" Amendment.

Thanks in advance for your immediate action before it's too late! I appreciate your help and your consideration for fairness.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE GALLATIN VALLEY LAND TRUST

Mr. Chairman and Honorable Members of the Committee: On behalf of the Gallatin Valley Land Trust, I appreciate the opportunity to present this testimony in support of a $1.6 million appropriation from the Land and Water Conservation Fund for the second phase of the Bozeman Pass (Schmidt) conservation project in the Gallatin National Forest.

Gallatin Valley Land Trust (GVLT) is a nonprofit land trust that serves Gallatin, Park, Madison, Jefferson, Broadwater and Meagher counties in Montana. Founded in 1995, GVLT has worked with willing landowners to secure conservation easements over 25,000 acres of land that provides exceptional habitat, unspoiled scenery, and protection of water and soil resources. Additionally, GVLT has been the catalyst behind a 45 mile long public trail system in the Bozeman area. In the heart of our service area, Gallatin County is the fastest growing county in Montana, and still is a vital part of the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem (GYE). Conservation and responsible use of our spectacular natural resources is also fundamental to our region's continued economic development. I write to seek your support for the permanent conservation of a very critical element of that ecosystem and one of GVLT's highest priority projects.

Remarkably diverse, the GYE provides some of the best wildlife habitat in the country, including home for one of the last viable grizzly bear populations in the lower 48 states. It hosts the largest elk and free-roaming bison herds in North America, and provides the only U.S. wintering ground for the rare trumpeter swan. Wolverines, lynx, fishers, and martens still roam the GYE's mountains, as do bighorn sheep, black bears, and mountain goats. Other flourishing species include pronghorn antelope, wolves, moose, mountain lions, mule deer, beavers, coyotes, osprey, bald eagles, and peregrine falcons. The rich biological diversity of the GYE is truly exceptional—nowhere else in the lower 48 states can you find a large and relatively intact ecosystem containing nearly all the living organisms present in pre-Columbian times.

In addition to its impressive wildlife values, the GYE offers some of the best recreational opportunities in North America. Its fisheries are world-renowned and attract fly fishers from all over the globe. Big game hunting opportunities are abundant. In addition to these sporting opportunities, the GYE offers a wide range of

backcountry recreational opportunities including skiing, snowshoeing, snowmobiling, hiking, camping, whitewater rafting, horseback riding, and wildlife viewing.

Available for acquisition in the GYE in fiscal year 2007 is the second phase of the 2,055-acre Schmidt property. Located five miles east of downtown Bozeman and straddling Interstate 90 between the Bear Canyon and Trail Creek exits, this property has become available for protection through a combination of fee and conservation easement acquisitions. Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks (MFWP) has called this project one of the most unique and important acquisitions for wildlife and its habitat to be proposed in the Gallatin Valley, largely due to the property's strategic location between the Gallatin Mountains to the south and the Bridger/Bangtail Mountains to the north, its close proximity to downtown Bozeman and I–90, and its high subdivision value.

This project conserves important habitat and connects existing protected habitat for a wide range of species. A recent study shows that one of the most important highway crossing points for wildlife in the Bozeman Pass area is located between the Bear Canyon and Trail Creek exits and that this area offers the best route for connectivity between secure habitats on either side of the interstate. Three large properties, covering almost 1,100 acres, have already been protected adjacent to the Schmidt property through donated conservation easements. Completing this project will ensure that a fivesquare-mile, contiguous block of wildlife corridor between the two mountain ranges will be permanently protected.

In the coming months, approximately 250 acres in the first phase of the project will be purchased and conveyed to the Forest Service using an appropriation of $1.0 million from fiscal year 2006. Another 390 acres are available for purchase this year in the second phase of the project. If these acres are successfully acquired, another 175 acres will be donated to the Forest Service outright. An additional 1,240 acres will also be conserved through a conservation easement to be purchased by Gallatin County and conveyed to the Gallatin Valley Land Trust for long-term monitoring and enforcement. Sufficient non-federal funding for this easement purchase has already been secured. While funding from the Land and Water Conservation Fund will be used to purchase only 640 acres, it will ultimately be responsible for triggering the permanent conservation of almost 2,100 acres.

The project will also provide significant public access benefits. A new trail easement is included which would allow a new public trail to be built, starting at the Trail Creek Road on the south side of Interstate 90 and leading up to the 640 acres that would be conveyed to the Forest Service as part of this project and to existing National Forest lands beyond. It also includes guaranteed public access to a popular local rock climbing area, which would be donated to the Forest Service.

Given its spectacular views of the Gallatin Valley and the Bridger Mountains, its gently sloping terrain and its close proximity to downtown Bozeman, the Schmidt property is extremely vulnerable to development. If full-scale development were ever allowed to occur on this property, critical wildlife habitat and scenic open space would be lost forever.

An appropriation of $1.6 million in fiscal year 2007 from the Land and Water Conservation Fund will leverage more than $4 million worth of additional conservation and recreation benefits (paid for entirely with nonfederal dollars) and ensure that 2,055 acres are permanently conserved.

I respectfully request that you include an appropriation of $1.6 million for the final phase of the Bozeman Pass (Schmidt) conservation project in the Gallatin National Forest in the fiscal year 2007 Interior and Related Agencies Appropriations bill.

Thank you for your attention to this request.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE GRAND VALLEY WATER USERS' ASSOCIATION

We are requesting your support for the following appropriations in fiscal year 2007 to the Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) for the Upper Colorado River Endangered Fish Recovery Program and the San Juan River Basin Recovery Implementation Program, as recommended in the President's budget.

1. Appropriation of $697,000 in "recovery" funds (Ecological Services Activity; Endangered Species Subactivity; Recovery Element; $697,000 within the $5,631,000 item entitled "General Program Activities") to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) to allow FWS to continue its necessary participation in the Upper Colorado River Endangered Fish Recovery Program.

2. Appropriation of $437,000 in operation and maintenance funds (Resource Management Appropriation; Fisheries Activity; Hatchery Operations & Maintenance

Subactivity, Hatchery Operations Project) to support the ongoing operation of the FWS' Ouray National Fish Hatchery in Utah.

3. Allocation of $211,000 in "recovery" funds for the San Juan River Basin Recovery Implementation Program to the FWS for fiscal year 2007 to meet FWS' Region 2 expenses managing and implementing the San Juan Recovery Program.

We thank you for your past support and request the Subcommittee's assistance for fiscal year 2007 funding to ensure FWS' continuing financial participation in these vitally important programs.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE GATHERING WATERWAYS CONSERVANCY

Mr. Chairman and Honorable Members of the Subcommittee: I appreciate the opportunity to present testimony for you today. On behalf of the land trusts of Wisconsin, Gathering Waters Conservancy supports the appropriation of $2.5 million from the Land and Water Conservation Fund for acquisition projects in the Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest in Wisconsin.

The beauty and ecological importance of this area are impressive. And with the number of lakes, and trails, the Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest provides some of the best recreational opportunities in the country. We now have the opportunity to acquire two additional tracks, totaling 1,390 acres: Venison Creek and Indian Farms. This will continue the success of this landscape as an area where people can hike, camp, hunt, and ski.

The protection of this area has been well-supported in the past. The Forest Service's Wild Wisconsin Waterways program recognizes the special value of Wisconsin's northern forests. This program works to protect undeveloped properties along lakes and rivers to enhance natural resources and to provide areas for recreation. Congress has provided annual funding for land protection through the Wild Wisconsin Waterways program through the Land and Water Conservation Fund. So far, 8,500 acres have been protected. This year, Congress has the opportunity to fund the acquisition of two additional parcels of land.

The acquisition of this property has already been a model of private-public partnerships. When Plum Creek decided to sell the land, the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation stepped up and agreed to purchase and hold the property for one year while funds are secured through the Land and Water Conservation Fund. An appropriation by Congress of $2.5 million will protect these properties in the Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest and ensure the continued success of the Wild Wisconsin Waterways program.

Thank you for your consideration of this testimony! We hope that you will help us save special places for the future by funding the acquisition of Venison Creek and Indian Farms.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE HIGHLANDS COALITION

On behalf of the regional Board of the Highlands Coalition, which includes over 150 organizations working together to conserve priority lands in the Highlands region of CT, NY, NJ, and PA, we would like to thank you for the opportunity to comment on the fiscal year 2007 Department of the Interior, Environment and Related Agencies Appropriations bill.

Our top priorities include:

—$11 million for the Highlands Conservation Act, including $10 million for land conservation partnership projects through the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, and $1 million for USDA Forest Service technical assistance and research programs in the Highlands; and

—$80 million for the Forest Legacy program, including $1.22 million for Skiff Mountain—phase II (CT), $2.1 million for Sparta Mountain South—phase II (NJ), and $300,000 for Birdsboro Waters (PA).

HIGHLANDS CONSERVATION ACT

In the fall of 2004, Congress enacted and President Bush signed the Highlands Conservation Act, recognizing the national significance of the more than three-million acre Highlands region as a source of drinking water, productive forests and farms, wildlife habitat and recreation within an hour of major metropolitan areas including Philadelphia, New York City and Hartford. The Act authorized $10 million annually to assist the Highlands states in conserving priority lands from willing landowners, and to continue USDA Forest Service research and assistance to private landowners in the Highlands. Under the Act, the states are required to match

federal funds for land conservation partnership projects on an equal basis to greater leverage these funds.

In his budget for fiscal year 2007, President Bush has included $2 million for the Highlands Conservation Act (HCA), through the Fish & Wildlife Service, to support land conservation partnership projects in the four Highland states of Pennsylvania, New Jersey, New York and Connecticut. The Governors of the four Highlands States have jointly submitted projects totaling $10 million in need to the Department of the Interior for funding in fiscal year 2007, including:

Litchfield Farms (CT)

Cost: $10,000,000
HCA Request: $2,500,000
Size: 753 Acres
Matching Funds: State of Connecticut; Town of Litchfield; private donations

Description: The State of Connecticut requests funds for Litchfield Farms which contains large areas of wetlands, prime agricultural soils, and diverse forests. The site hosts a known state-listed endangered species and contains several vernal pools. Litchfield Farms lies within both the Bantam and the Naugatuck watersheds. All waterways on the property that drain into the Bantam River are AA, or the highest-level water quality. Elevations on the property reach up to 1,300 feet making it one of the highest points in Litchfield. Preservation of this property would provide ridgeline and scenic vista protection for both the towns of Torrington and Litchfield.

Wyanokie Highlands (NJ)

Cost: $7,700,000 HCA
Request: $2,500,000
Size: Four parcels totaling 1,288 Acres

Description: New Jersey requests funds for this focal area which is ranked highly due to its value for water resources and recreation, and secondarily for biodiversity and forest land. The Wyanokie Highlands form the headwaters of Burnt Meadow and West Brooks that flow into North Jersey's Wanaque Reservoir, which provides drinking water for nearly two million NJ residents. These acquisitions will help complete a critical greenway in the Wyanokies linking Long Pond Ironworks State Park with Norvin Green State Forest. These parcels are the largest portion of the missing link and include waterways of exceptional ecological significance, which drain into the Wanaque Reservoir.

Oley Hills (PA)

Cost: $5,000,000
HCA Request: $2,500,000
Size: 2,263

Description: The Oley Hills is a Critical Treasure within the Highlands Region. This assemblage of properties is located within the Oley Hills core conservation area of the Reading Prong, the geologic formation that lies at the heart of the Pennsylvania Highlands. The Oley Hills project encompasses three state-designated "Exceptional Value" streams (the Pine, Oysterville, and Saucony creeks). These pristine waterways provide drinking water to the surrounding communities, and important water quality protection for the Schuylkill River, Pennsylvania's first designated Scenic River and the spine of the Schuylkill River Heritage Corridor. The Oley Hills are known to provide habitat that supports substantial populations of the endangered Bog Turtle. The area also contains sweeping scenic vistas of the Highlands Region and woodlands that are exceedingly rare in southeast Pennsylvania.

Great Swamp and Sterling Forest Areas (NY)

Cost: $10,600,000
HCA Request: $2,500,000
Size: 1,300 Acres

Description.—Great Swamp: New York State requests funds to assist in the acquisition of properties that will further protect the Great Swamp, one of New York's most important wetland complexes and the largest and highest quality red maple hardwood swamp in the State. It also contains breeding habitat for more than 80 bird species and migratory habitat for more than 150 species of waterfowl and other birds. The Great Swamp also contains a south flowing section based on the East Branch Croton River, a critical part of New York City's water supply system; and a north flow section based on the Swamp River which flows into the Housatonic and, ultimately, to Long Island Sound.

Arrow Park: New York requests funds to assist in the acquisition of an addition to Sterling Forest State Park. The Arrow Park property is situated adjacent to the northeastern corner of Sterling Forest State Park and in close proximity to the Ap-

palachian National Scenic Trail. The property contains a highly scenic lake, woodlands and wetlands, as well as significant frontage on Orange Turnpike. Portions of the property were acquired in 2002 as additions to the Park, while the disposition of the remaining 350 acres was being considered by the owners.

The USDA Forest Service has been a valuable partner and catalyst in the region and $1 million is needed to allow the Forest Service to continue the expansion of the NY-NJ Highlands Regional Study to Pennsylvania and Connecticut, and to provide increased technical assistance to private landowners and local communities to advance stewardship and management of priority lands in the region.

FOREST LEGACY PROGRAM AND PROJECTS

We also support funding for critical Forest Legacy projects in the Highlands region including: $1.22 million for Skiff Mountain (phase II)—Connecticut, $2.1 million for Sparta Mountain South (phase II)—New Jersey, and $300,000 for Birdsboro Waters—Pennsylvania. In order to ensure that there is adequate program funding for these critical projects in the Highlands, we urge your support for funding Forest Legacy at $80 million in fiscal year 2007.

Skiff Mountain (CT)

$1.22 million in Legacy funding requested for phase II
Conservation easement on 510 acres
$1.2 million provided in fiscal year 2006 for easement on 427 acres
Innovative project involving 8 contiguous landowners
Directly abuts Appalachian Trail & 5,000 protected acres

Sparta Mountain South (NJ)

$2.1 million in Legacy funding requested for phase II
Conservation easement on 800 acres, 200 acres in fee
$1.8 million provided in fiscal year 2006—easement on 1,200 acres
Key linkage between state parks and wildlife areas
Recent development on adjacent parcels

Birdsboro Waters (PA)

$300,000 requested in the President's budget
Funding would complete $2.3 million project
Conservation easement on 1,958 acres
$500,000 received in fiscal year 2005 from PA startup funds
Exceptional Value Watershed, Class A trout stream
Part of larger 12,000 acre block of contiguous forest

Finally, we are very concerned about the proposed cuts to the Land & Water Conservation Fund, which is slated to receive only $85 million in the President's budget, which would be the lowest level of funding in over three decades. Without adequate funding to the Highlands Conservation Act, Forest Legacy Program and Land & Water Conservation Fund, precious natural treasures of the Highlands may be developed and lost to conservation forever.

Thank you again for considering our comments on the fiscal year 2007 Interior, Environment and Related Agencies Appropriations bill.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE HUALAPAI INDIAN TRIBE

As the Chairman of the Hualapai Indian Tribe, I am writing to request your immediate attention concerning the inequity which exists with respect to the administration of the. Clean Water Act's (CWA's) Section 106—Water Pollution Control Program for Indian Tribes. The 1987 Clean Water Act Amendments (i.e., Section 518 of the Clean Water Act, 33 U.S.C. 1251 et seq.) added a new section titled "Indian Tribes" which authorizes the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to treat Federally recognized Indian Tribes as States for certain provisions, including financial assistance under such programs as the Water Pollution Control Program. Section 518 is commonly known as the "Treatment as a State (TAS) section", and it would be an appropriate name for this section if in fact Indian Tribes were treated as States with respect to equity of funding.

Currently, once an Indian Tribe qualifies to be treated as a State, it can receive Section 106 funds from EPA to administer its own water pollution control program. A few examples of the type of activities which are funded under Section 106 include:

—Developing water quality management plans;
—Hiring staff and purchasing equipment;
—Conducting water quality monitoring;
—Establishing water quality standards; and

—Developing and administering Nonpoint Source and National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Permit Programs.

The inequity exists in the way, the EPA allocates Section 106 funds to Indian Tribes and the amount of funding which tribes receive.

States receive Section 106 funds from EPA through an EPA funding formula which establishes funding targets for each state and territory of the United States (see Enclosures—Section 106 Funding Targets for Fiscal Years 2004–2006). These funding targets do not vary significantly from year to year especially since states and territories would not be able to maintain staffing levels if program funding were to be drastically reduced.

Individual Indian Tribes on the other hand do not have funding targets provided by EPA once they have qualified to be treated as a State. Instead, Indian Tribes are required by EPA to play a guessing game on how much funding they will receive through Section 106 each year.

The EPA has developed a funding formula which is used to allocate funds to each of the appropriate EPA Regional Offices and these allocated amounts appear as Tribal Set-Asides (see Enclosures). Region 9 now has ninety-seven (97) Sec. 106 TAS Tribes. This more than likely will mean that my Tribe's Section 106 grant award for the coming fiscal year will be significantly reduced which could have severe negative impacts upon our Hualapai Water Pollution Control Program such as having to lay off key environmental program staff and delaying the implementation of the monitoring of our water quality standards attainment.

If we were to be really treated as a state, we would have a funding target which would assure us level program funding from year to year such that staff and program continuity could be maintained. Indeed, each Indian Tribe who has met TAS qualifications should have a funding target just as states do. Notice that there are no funding targets for the Hualapai Tribe (see Enclosure) or any other of the other 97 Indian Tribes within our Nation (see Enclosure) who have qualified to be treated as a state, but there should be. This arrangement is definitely neither fair nor equitable.

The amount of Section 106 funding ($260,000 for fiscal year 2007) for the Hualapai Tribe is insufficient to administer an adequate water pollution program for 1,000,000 acres of reservation. Over a very short time span of the last eight to nine years, our Tribe has made tremendous strides with respect to our program accomplishments which are intended to restore and protect our waters. We believe that these accomplishments are significant especially when viewed from the perspective that states have been receiving Section 106 funds from EPA for over forty years. Some of these accomplishments are as follows:

1. The hiring and training of our environmental staff.
2. The identification and assessment of all of the waters within our Reservation.
3. The development of our Nonpoint Source Assessment and Management Program.
4. The development of the Tribe's Water Quality Standards and enaction of our Water Resource Ordinance into Law for all Tribal Waters.
5. The restoration of Tribal lands and waters through the implementation of nonpoint source projects.

Four years ago, an EPA workgroup developed the following proposed criteria for determining eligibilty of Indian Tribes to receive a funding target or to be considered as a Mature Program. The target could then be set as a weighted average throughout the EPA Regions. The proposed criteria which we heartily endorse follows:

1. Program Structure: The Tribe has programs, policies, procedures in place to develop and implement a water quality program.
2. Program Management: The Tribe has a demonstrated ability to manage a continuing water quality program.
3. Information Management and Reporting: The Tribe has ability to gather, assess and report on the conditions of tribal water quality.

Our major concern with the Workgroup's effort is that it has not addressed the methodology for determining funding targets for Indian Tribes. What is even more troubling is that Section 106 budget funding for fiscal year 2007 is proposed by the Administration to be reduced when the number of applicants within Region 9 is anticipated to increase significantly. If this occurs, I fear, many existing tribal programs maybe forced out of existence.

For the Hualapai Tribe to implement an adequate water pollution control program, I request that you establish a reasonable funding target for us of $297,000 per year. We appreciate the budget constraints that Congress has to deal with each year. We only hope, however, that Congress appreciates its Trust responsibilities to insure that the Tribe's most precious Trust Asset, water, is not polluted and if it

is, we get your help. This is critically important after the events of September 11, 2001 for Hualapai Homeland Security. As you probably already know the Tribe's Northern boundary is 108 miles of the Colorado River through Grand Canyon. Water Sampling in this reach of the reservation to insure compliance of our water quality standards now also serves as a critical monitoring exercise for our Homeland Security and yours. The cities of Las Vegas, Los Angles and San Diego are the downstream users of our water resources and can also be protected by our monitoring for pollutants. We are equally certain that other tribes are also facing numerous threats from pollution and that there is a great need for additional funding to remedy these serious problems.

I also personally want to thank you for lifting the one-third of one percent cap that was on Section 319 Nonpoint Source Funding to Tribes again this year. I only hope that this lifting of the cap can be permanent next year. Lastly, the Tribe wishes to continue to protect it's critical Wetlands. We therefore ask you in your funding of EPA Office of Water allocations in 2007 to consider allowing a base amount for Tribes as you have in 319 funding to begin to protect these fragile environments in the southwest. Any assistance you can give us in this matter would be greatly appreciated. If you should have any questions or concerns please don't hesitate to call myself or Don Bay, Director of Hualapai Natural Resources Department (928) 769–2254.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE FRIENDS OF THE HEALTH RESOURCES AND SERVICES ADMINISTRATION

The Friends of the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) is an advocacy coalition of more than 100 national organizations, collectively representing millions of public health and health care professionals, academicians and consumers. Our member organizations strongly support the programs at HRSA designed to ensure Americans' access to health services.

Through its programs in thousands of communities across the country, HRSA provides a health safety net for medically underserved individuals and families, including 45 million Americans who lack health insurance; 49 million Americans who live in neighborhoods where primary health care services are scarce; African American infants, whose infant mortality rate is more than double that of whites; and the estimated 850,000 to 950,000 people living with HIV/AIDS. Programs to support the underserved place HRSA on the front lines in responding to our nation's racial/ethnic and rural/urban disparities in health status. HRSA funding goes where the need exists, in communities all over America. We support a growing trend in HRSA programs to increase flexibility of service delivery at the local level, necessary to tailor programs to the unique needs of America's many varied communities. The agency's overriding goal is to achieve 100 percent access to health care, with zero disparities. In the best professional judgment of the members of the Friends of HRSA, to respond to this challenge, the agency will require an overall funding level of at least $7.5 billion for fiscal year 2007.

The Friends of HRSA are gravely concerned about the president's budget recommendation of a $255 million overall cut for fiscal year 2007, including over 12 program eliminations. This is in addition to the 12 programs that were eliminated in the fiscal year 2006 appropriations bill and other programs that received deep cuts in both years.

Through its many programs and new initiatives, HRSA helps countless individuals live healthier, more productive lives. In the 21st century, rapid advances in research and technology promise unparalleled change in the nation's health care delivery system. HRSA could be well positioned to meet these new challenges as it continues to provide needed health care to the nation's most vulnerable citizens.

The Primary Care Bureau received a $181 million increase, all of which is designated for the Community Health Centers. Community-based health centers and National Health Service Corps-supported clinics form the backbone of the nation's safety net. More than 4,000 of these sites across the nation provide needed primary and preventive care to nearly 13 million poor and near-poor Americans. HRSA primary care centers include community health centers, migrant health centers, health care for the homeless programs, public housing primary care programs and school-based health centers. Health centers provide access to high-quality, family-oriented, culturally and linguistically competent primary care and preventive services, including mental and behavioral health, dental and support services. Nearly three-fourths of health center patients are uninsured or on Medicaid, approximately two-thirds are people of color, and more than 85 percent live below 200 percent of the poverty level. Additional primary care is provided by 2,700 clinicians in the National Health

Service Corps. Corps members work in communities with a shortage of health professionals in exchange for scholarships and loan repayments.

The Bureau of Health Professions received $342 million in cuts in fiscal year 2007 budget which is 46 percent of its budget. Health professions and nursing education programs, authorized under Titles VII and VIII of the Public Health Service Act, are essential components of American's health care safety net, bringing health care services to our underserved communities. An adequate, diverse, well-distributed and culturally competent health workforce is indispensable to our national readiness efforts. The health professions programs support the training and education of health care providers with the aim of enhancing the supply, diversity, and distribution of the workforce, filling the gaps in the health professions' supply not met by traditional market forces. Through loans, loan guarantees, and scholarships to students, and grants and contracts to academic institutions and non-profit organizations, the Title VII and VIII health professions programs are the only federal programs designed to train providers in interdisciplinary settings to meet the needs of special and underserved populations, as well as increase minority representation in the health care workforce. We are concerned that cuts to Title VII health professions programs will exacerbate existing provider shortages in rural, medically underserved, and federally designated health professions shortage areas. While we applaud the $181 million increase in the President's budget for Community Health Centers, these cuts to the Health Professions raise the question of whether there will be a sufficient number of health care providers to staff these clinics. These programs provide up-front incentives for dozens of types of health professionals—not only physicians, but mental health, public health and dental providers as well—encouraging them to pursue health careers in areas that would otherwise go unserved. Cuts will also impede recruitment of underrepresented minorities and students of disadvantaged backgrounds into the health professions. This action will have the further consequence of intensifying already problematic health disparities. We are also concerned about the impact health professions cuts will have on vulnerable populations such as the elderly. Adequate funding for HRSA Health Professions Programs under Title VII and VIII will help to create a prepared national workforce by reversing projected nationwide shortages of nurses, pharmacists, and other professionals. In addition to the dismay we have aboutthe Health Professions programs that were eliminated this year, we are deeply concerned about the program cuts and eliminations proposed in the Title VII and VIII programs in fiscal year 2007. We strongly encourage the Subcommittee to restore cuts to these vital Health Professions programs.

The Maternal and Child Health Bureau was cut by $36 million to $780 million. Valuable programs like the Traumatic Brain Injury program, Universal Newborn Hearing Screening, and Emergency Medical Services for Children were zeroed out and the Maternal and Child Health Block Grant was level funded. The Maternal and Child Health Block Grant is a source of flexible funding for states and territories to address their unique needs, and remains in great need of increased funding. The Title V Maternal and Child Health Block (MCH) Grant received a $31 million cut in the fiscal year 2006 budget. The president's budget for fiscal year 2007 proposed level funding for the block grant at the fiscal year 2006 level. Operating for a second year with less funds than in fiscal year 2005, and greater needs among more pregnant women, infants, and children, particularly those with special health care needs presents daunting challenges to the state maternal and child health programs. Furthermore, if programs like the Traumatic Brain Injury program, Universal Newborn Hearing Screening, and Emergency Medical Services for Children program are eliminated, those costs will be borne by the MCH Block Grant. Each year, a MCH program serves more than 26 million pregnant women, infants and children nationwide. Of the nearly 4 million mothers who give birth annually, almost half receive some prenatal or postnatal service from a MCH-funded program. MCH programs increase immunizations and newborn screening, reduce infant mortality and developmentally handicapping conditions, prevent childhood accidents and injuries, and reduce adolescent pregnancy.

Nationally there are 1.4 million brain injuries per year, with an estimated societal cost of over $60 billion per year, including direct care and lost productivity. Research indicates that 50,000 individuals die as a result of Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) each year in the United States and an additional 80,000 survive with residual long-term impairments. Today over 5.3 million Americans are living with a TBI-related disability. TBI can strike at anyone at any time—from falls, vehicle crashes, sports injuries, violence, and other causes. HRSA's Traumatic Brain Injury program makes grants to states to coordinate, expand and enhance service delivery systems in order to improve access to services and support for persons with TBI and their families. Despite increasing numbers of soldiers returning from war with head inju-

ries, increasing numbers of children being identified as disabled due to head injuries, and the release of an Institute of Medicine Report stating the importance of the program to brain injury survivors and their families, the Administration's fiscal year 2007 budget eliminates the TBI State Grant program. We encourage the Subcommittee to restore cuts to the TBI State Grant program. Furthermore, individuals with traumatic brain injury have an array of protection and advocacy needs, including assistance with returning to work; finding a place to live; accessing needed supports and services, such as attendant care and assistive technology; and obtaining appropriate mental health, substance abuse, and rehabilitation services. Very often, these individuals are the victims of stigma and discrimination because so little is understood about the effects of TBI. In addition, many people with TBI—including returning veterans—are forced to remain in extremely expensive institutional settings far longer than necessary because community-based supports and services they need are not available. We encourage the Subcommittee to restore funding for the Protection and Advocacy for Traumatic Brain Injury Program.

The Children's Health Act of 2000 authorized funding for grants and programs to improve state-based newborn screening. Newborn screening is a public health activity used for early identification of infants affected by certain genetic, metabolic, hormonal or functional conditions for which there is effective treatment or intervention. Screening detects disorders in newborns that, left untreated, can cause death, disability, mental retardation and other serious illnesses. Parents are often unaware that while nearly all babies born in the United States undergo newborn screening tests for genetic birth defects, the number and quality of these tests vary from state to state. Screening programs coordinated through the HRSA Bureau of Maternal and Child health help to ensure that every baby born in the United States receives, at a minimum, a universal core group of screening tests regardless of the state in which he or she is born. However, the Administration again proposes eliminating the universal newborn hearing screening program. It goes without saying that more disorders will go unnoticed if the affected newborns are not screened. We encourage the Subcommittee to restore funding for the newborn hearing screening program.

The proposed elimination of the Emergency Medical Services for Children (EMSC) Program is also concerning to us, especially considering the many children who are eligible for Medicaid and SCHIP but who cannot enroll due to enrollment limits and budgetary pressures. The Emergency Medical Services for Children Program, administered by HRSA, is a national initiative designed to reduce child and youth disability and death due to severe illness and injury. The federal funds that are contributed to this program are supplemented by funding from private sources, including parents and volunteers. HRSA administers the program in partnership with the U.S. Department of Transportation's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. EMSC grants fund States and U.S. Territories to improve existing emergency medical services (EMS) systems and to develop and evaluate improved procedures and protocols for treating children. Children are not merely small adults. They have very unique and specific concerns that this programs works to address. We request that the $20 million funding level be restored.

The Healthcare Systems Bureau received a cut of $13 million to $536 million. We are concerned with the funding level in the hospital preparedness program. Although the Administration proposes level funding, we are concerned with the $13 million cut the program took in fiscal year 2006. In the post 9/11 era, all responders, providers and facilities must be ready to detect and respond to complex disasters, including terrorism, and HRSA must continue to support these vital hospital preparedness programs.

Furthermore, HRSA's Trauma-EMS Systems Program was eliminated in the fiscal year 2006 appropriations bill. This program facilitates the development of effective and comprehensive statewide trauma systems. This program is critical in order to ensure that our response to local, state and federal emergencies is effective and reflects the best clinical practice in trauma and emergency medicine. We request that the $3.5 million funding level be restored.

The Office of Rural Health Policy was cut by 83 percent in the President's budget. HRSA programs improve health care service for the more than 61 million people who live in rural America. Although almost a quarter of the population lives in rural areas, only an eighth of our doctors work there. Because rural families generally earn less than urban families, many health problems associated with poverty are more serious, including high rates of chronic disease and infant mortality. We encourage the Subcommittee to restore funding for rural health programs.

An estimated 163,221 Americans experience out-of-hospital sudden cardiac arrests each year. Only an estimated 6 percent of them survive. Immediate CPR and early defibrillation using an automated external defibrillator (AED) can more than double a victim's chance of survival. For every minute that passes without CPR and

defibrillation, the chances of survival decrease by 7 to 10 percent. The HRSA Rural and Community Access to Emergency Devices Program provides grants to states to train lay rescuers and first responders to use AEDs and purchase and place these devices in public areas where cardiac arrests are likely to occur. We encourage the Subcommittee to restore funding for this program to the fiscal year 2005 level of $8.927 million.

The HIV/AIDS Bureau received a $95 million increase. The Ryan White CARE Act programs, administered by HRSA's HIV/AIDS Bureau, are the largest single source of federal discretionary funding for HIV/AIDS health care for low-income, uninsured and underinsured Americans. Although we are pleased with the additional funds for comprehensive care and early intervention, we are concerned that previous years cuts has diminished the reach of the Ryan White CARE Act has been diminished. Since fiscal year 2003, funding to the most impacted cities has been cut by $15 million and funding to the states has been cut by $8 million. These cuts have forced state and local HIV/AIDS programs to stretch already thin CARE Act dollars to treat existing clients while trying to provide care and treatment to those newly diagnosed as HIV-positive. We request an increase of $577 million for CARE Act programs in fiscal year 2007.

In fiscal year 2006 the AIDS Drug Assistance Programs (ADAP) received a $2 million increase. Unfortunately, this program, which provides life-sustaining treatment to thousands of people living with HIV/AIDS, cannot be sustained on such an increase. By the end of fiscal year 2006 it is expected that hundreds more individuals will be added to ADAP waiting lists and that states will have had to institute other cost-containment measures such as reduced formularies, increased cost-sharing for ADAP clients and lowered eligibility requirements for enrollment. We request an increase of $197 million for the ADAP program.

Title X of the Public Health Service Act was enacted to provide high-quality, subsidized contraceptive care to those who need but cannot afford such services, to improve women's health, reduce unintended pregnancies, and decrease infant mortality and morbidity. Title X programs provide comprehensive, voluntary and affordable family planning services to millions of low-income women and men—many of whom are uninsured—at more than 4,600 clinics nationwide. People who visit Title X funded clinics receive a broad package of preventive health services, including breast and cervical cancer screening, blood pressure checks, anemia testing, and STD/HIV screening.

A major source of HRSA's strength is its many linkages and partnerships with other federal agencies, state, national and local organizations. For example, HRSA and the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) are jointly implementing outreach on the new State Children's Health Insurance Program in addition to working together to improve data sharing and coordination, particularly on Medicaid. Work also is ongoing with the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) to integrate behavioral health and substance abuse screening, early intervention, referral and follow-up into primary health care settings funded through HRSA grants. HRSA and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) cooperate on a variety of disease prevention and health promotion activities.

Cross-cutting HRSA programs continually respond to new public health challenges. For instance, tooth decay remains the single most chronic childhood disease in the nation. However, about 125 million Americans have no dental insurance. Lack of access to dental care is especially severe among children of poor, rural and minority families. A quarter of the nation's school-age children have 80 percent of all dental disease, putting them at risk for a host of related illnesses. And as new drugs help people with HIV/AIDS live longer, healthier lives, their need for regular oral health care will continue to increase. HRSA can help both groups by increasing the number of dentists in community and school-based centers and by providing greater reimbursements to hospital dental clinics and dental schools for the growing costs of treating people living with HIV/AIDS.

Among the programs that were eliminated in the fiscal year 2006 appropriations bill are Healthy Community Access Program and the State Planning Grants program. Each of these programs helps communities and states provide access to health care for those who need it most. We encourage the Subcommittee to restore funding to these and other programs eliminated in the fiscal year 2006 appropriations bill.

We urge the members of the Subcommittee to restore the cuts and fund the agency at a level that allows HRSA to effectively implement these important programs. The members of the Friends of HRSA are grateful for this opportunity to present our views to the Subcommittee.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE HOOSIC RIVER WATERSHED ASSOCIATION

Mr. Chairman and Honorable Members of the Committee: I appreciate the opportunity to present this testimony in support of a $1.1 million appropriation from the Land and Water Conservation Fund for the acquisition of Broad Brook watershed project in the Green Mountain National Forest.

The mission of the Hoosic River Watershed Association is to protect and improve the 750-square-mile Hoosic watershed in Massachusetts, Vermont and New York State. Braod Brook is a tributary to the Hoosic. The conservation of the Broad Brook watershed property as an addition to the Green Mountain National Forest is important to our organization, because it protects the property's forests and water quality, excellent wildlife habitat, and recreational opportunities. The Green Mountains of Vermont are one of the northeast region's most popular and heavily-visited areas, which each year draw millions of tourists attracted to its scenic beauty. The Green Mountains region contains outstanding natural resources such as wildlife habitat for black bear, deer, and neotropical songbirds, as well as extensive timber resources. The area boasts excellent trout streams and encompasses the watersheds that provide drinking water for many Vermont communities. The acquisition of properties in the Green Mountain National Forest protects recreational opportunities that have long been important to residents and visitors alike, such as camping, hiking, hunting, and cross-country skiing.

Available for acquisition in fiscal year 2007 are the final 970 acres of the 3,921-acre Broad Brook watershed property, located in the southernmost portion of the forest just north of the Massachusetts border. For many years, the Massachusetts city of North Adams, which owns this parcel, used the Broad Brook watershed as a source of drinking water for city residents. However, several years ago the city ceased depending on Broad Brook for its water and is now interested in selling the property. Located within the boundaries of the Green Mountain NF in the towns of Pownal and Stamford, the Broad Brook property would be an outstanding addition to this forest, known for its excellent recreational opportunities and critical wildlife habitat.

The State of Vermont has mapped this parcel as being entirely within black bear production habitat, regions which support high densities of cub producing females. On the property there can be found a large and healthy population of the state threatened Large Whorled Pogonia (Isotria verticillata), and close to 7 miles of pristine headwater streams. A portion of the Appalachian National Scenic Trail, which in this part of Vermont coincides with the Long Trail, passes across the Broad Brook property. The tract is adjacent to other Forest Service ownership, the Stamford Meadows Wildlife Management Area—a state-owned sanctuary—as well as other conservation lands near the town of Pownal.

Residents and officials in both Vermont and Massachusetts have displayed exceptional commitment to completing this important transaction. The City of North Adams has agreed to sell the Broad Brook property at 25 percent below fair market value, providing significant savings to the federal government. On November 2, 2004, Pownal residents voted by a margin of two-to-one in favor of purchase of the Broad Brook parcel by the Green Mountain NF.

With that vote of approval and with congressional appropriations in fiscal years 2004, 2005, and 2006 the first phase of the property, 2,450 acres, has already been completed. An appropriation of $1.1 million from the LWCF in fiscal year 2007 will permit the Forest Service to complete this critical acquisition, allowing for continued management of important wildlife species as well as ensuring public access to the Appalachian Trail and other recreation opportunities in this popular national forest.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for the opportunity to present this testimony in support of the appropriation for the Broad Brook property in Vermont.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE HOSPITAL FOR SPECIAL SURGERY

Mr. Chairman, and Members of the Subcommittee, thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony to the hearing record regarding Hospital for Special Surgery (HSS) in New York, New York. Since its founding over 140 years ago, HSS has been the hospital of choice for countless individuals of all ages—from infants to older adults—suffering from musculoskeletal conditions. Today, HSS is considered the premier specialty hospital for orthopedics and rheumatology in the United States and abroad.

As you know, funds to support the establishment of the National Center for Musculoskeletal Research at Hospital for Special Surgery were included in Labor, HHS and Education Appropriations in fiscal year 2002 and fiscal year 2005. First, I

would like to take this opportunity to thank the Subcommittee for its support and to report on the excellent progress that has been made in achieving this goal.

With a combination of institutional, private, and government support, HSS has transformed its research enterprise over the past six years, from the physical plant to the depth and focus of its scientific expertise. HSS has conducted the largest recruitment drive in its history. Expanded, state-of-the-art laboratories have increased the quality and quantity of investigations. Today, 70 percent of HSS' basic research activity is federally funded, meeting national benchmarks. Our critical mass of expertise is composed of 34 bench scientists and 129 full-time laboratory fellows, technicians, and support. Of course, the most important measure of success is HSS's capacity to improve quality of life through treatments derived from a greater understanding of disease. This has been fortified by the scientific talent and new resources made possible by the Hospital's generous supporters. Today, the National Center for Musculoskeletal Research at HSS is an internationally recognized leader whose pioneering scientists are making significant contributions to understanding diseases like arthritis, osteoporosis, and lupus, and advancing progress toward the development of better treatments and cures.

The Hospital's groundbreaking basic, translational, and clinical research efforts are unique in that they are informed by its very sizeable patient base, which is the largest of any musculoskeletal hospital in the world. HSS's surgical techniques, rehabilitation practices, orthopedic imaging, anesthesiology and pain management, and non-surgical interventions are the "best practices" in the field. To continue to advance the state-of-the-art, while meeting the needs of increasing numbers of patients, HSS is now working to create an entirely new platform of patient care for the 21st century. The centerpiece of this initiative is the expansion and modernization of its clinical facilities to provide the highest level of care to the increasing number of patients seeking the expertise of the Hospital's extraordinary medical staff. HSS has requested a fiscal year 2007 Appropriation of $4 million to advance this important project.

The Hospital last expanded in 1996 when facilities meant for polio patients and lengthy hospitalizations were redesigned and modernized. In the succeeding years, pioneering advances in musculoskeletal medicine have taken place, many of them using biosynthetic materials, molecular diagnostics, innovative surgical tools and techniques, and computer guidance and modeling. Since 1996, HSS has added 65 medical staff and numerous specialized centers dedicated to research and clinical care in orthopedics, rheumatology, complementary medicine, sports medicine, non-surgical interventions, imaging, and pain prevention.

New medical staff have the opportunity to learn from surgeons and physicians who have practiced at HSS for decades, embracing a great breadth and depth of experience, historical knowledge of the field, and insight into patients' needs, expectations, and potential for recovery. Building on experience, we have increased our efficiencies and ability to help increasing numbers of patients from all over the world. For example, the average length of stay for joint replacement has been reduced from 6 days (1996) to less than 4.5 days. For patients who qualify for minimally invasive surgery, many can leave the hospital within 2–3 days. In the future, we feel certain some joint replacement surgery will be carried out on an ambulatory basis.

The major demographic and sociological trends observed worldwide are fueling a demand for care at HSS that is unprecedented. There has been an extraordinary increase in the over-sixty population and their need for musculoskeletal medicine; and there is a more active, younger population desiring to remain mobile and play sports as they grow older. From 1996 to 2005, Special Surgery's annual surgical volume rose from 10,700 to 17,500 and its annual outpatient visits rose from 147,000 to 230,000, a total increase of approximately 60 percent. Special Surgery is also a magnet referral center for complex surgeries, with growing numbers of patients requiring extensive, high-level care.

Meeting demand is only part of the equation. Bringing improved treatments and interventions to patients is of utmost importance. HSS continues to be a leader in advancing clinical treatments that enable patients to recuperate more quickly and regain mobility. HSS-led innovations on the horizon include:

—Minimally invasive knee, hip, and shoulder implants for younger patients. "Baby boomers" are our fastest growing patient segment.

—Spinal disc replacement surgery for degenerative disc disease, and spinal stabilization without fusion.

—Effective treatments for early arthritic patients when there is a "window of opportunity" to slow and perhaps halt the progression of disease.

—Biosynthetic materials that mimic everyday movements to repair sports injuries to ligaments, tendons, meniscus, and cartilage.

—Biological solutions with minimal side effects to treat and prevent the progress of a wide range of inflammatory conditions.
—New diagnostics to predict the efficacy of medical treatments.
—Advanced imaging techniques that can diagnose disease at the pre-clinical stage, enabling earlier and more effective treatment.
—New medications to intervene before nerve injury and remold pain pathways, minimizing post-operative pain.
—Computer-assisted surgical procedures.

An expanded clinical facility will enable the countless patients who seek our help to have the benefit of these medical innovations.

Our new clinical facilities and extraordinary volume of patients will also provide an unparalleled opportunity to create a robust clinical research program. The potential for new knowledge in joint replacement is significant, since HSS performs the greatest number of hip and knee replacements in the world, more than 4,000 annually. The clinical research program will be built on a strong basic research foundation, which was strengthened over the past several years with the vital support of the Labor, Health and Human Services Subcommittee.

In our "new hospital" every patient would have an opportunity to partner with us as a research patient in the effort to gain a deeper understanding of bone and joint disease to perfect treatment for future generations. With advanced technology, patients will help create their own research records, containing uniform, prospective data on the nuances of their treatment and progress. Each specialty service will have its own clinical research coordinator, and patients will have "real time" access to information about clinical trials. Clinical research analysis, coupled with our knowledge of disease at the basic science level—particularly arthritis and inflammatory disease—will provide a powerful resource for advancing musculoskeletal health and restoring patients' mobility. We are currently recruiting new leadership for this program and developing the required infrastructure to successfully launch this initiative in our expanded facilities.

The Hospital's new facilities will be completed by 2009 and encompass 201,000 square feet of new construction and 75,000 square feet of renovated existing space. On-site patient services will be significantly expanded and redesigned for greater efficiency and comfort. Highlights include a modernized, expanded ambulatory surgery center; enhanced rehabilitation facilities; new imaging, pain management, and minor procedures facilities; and an enhanced sports medicine rehabilitation center. In addition, the Hospital is refurbishing the lobby of the Main Building to better serve patients and their families. HSS took a unique approach to the design of this project, forming a collaborative team of physicians, nurses, architects, and planners to develop an optimum healing environment that flows efficiently for both patients and medical staff.

Mr. Chairman, the objectives of Hospital for Special Surgery's Clinical Facilities Expansion and Modernization Project are consistent with those historically funded by the Department of Health and Human Services in the Labor, HHS and Education Appropriations Bill. We hope that the subcommittee will provide $4 million in fiscal year 2007 toward this capital expansion, which will benefit countless patients as they grow older and seek help for a range of musculoskeletal conditions. The chances are, no matter where patients live, they will be helped by a medical advance pioneered at HSS or by an HSS-trained physician. To keep this promise alive, we must be able to expand clinically and lead the way, as we have done since opening our doors as America's oldest existing orthopedic hospital.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE HUMANE SOCIETY OF THE UNITED STATES

Thank you for the opportunity to offer testimony to the Interior and Related Agencies Subcommittee on several funding items of importance to The Humane Society of the United States (HSUS) and its 9.6 million supporters nationwide. The HSUS urges the Committee to address these priority issues in the fiscal year 2007 budget.

LAW ENFORCEMENT DIVISION OF THE FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

After illegal drugs and arms, trade in wildlife parts is the third most lucrative smuggling enterprise in this country. New technology and a full complement of Special Agents are essential if law enforcement is to have any hope of effectively enforcing the nation's endangered species trade laws. We commend the Administration's $1.2 million increase for the Law Enforcement Division in fiscal year 2007. The HSUS strongly supports an additional increase of $1.3 million over the Administration's request for U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Law Enforcement Operations and

Maintenance, to better house and equip the Wildlife Forensics Laboratory and to hire and train additional new Special Agents for proper enforcement of the Captive Wildlife Safety Act.

The Captive Wildlife Safety Act was signed into law in December 2003, as Public Law 108–191. It passed unanimously in both the House and Senate and takes aim at the problem of private ownership of big cats as pets. We are pleased that the Service has now proposed regulations to implement this important law. According to some estimates, there are as many as 15,000 big cats kept as pets in the United States. A modest increase of $1.3 million over the President's fiscal year 2007 request should be appropriated to hire and train one new Special Agent for each of the Fish and Wildlife Service's seven regions. This additional funding will allow for better enforcement of this and other vital wildlife protection laws.

MULTINATIONAL SPECIES CONSERVATION FUND

The HSUS joins a broad coalition of organizations in requesting an increase over the Administration's request for the Multinational Species Conservation Fund (MNSCF) and Wildlife Without Borders. The MNSCF was established by Congress to benefit African and Asian elephants, rhinos, tigers, great apes, neotropical migratory birds, and marine turtles. Congress has been very supportive of these programs in the past. Unfortunately, the Administration's fiscal year 2007 request falls short of the funds necessary to carry out these valuable missions. We ask that you continue to support these highly threatened mammals and birds in fiscal year 2007 by appropriating $1.6 million each for the African Elephant Conservation Fund, the Asian Elephant Conservation Fund, and the Great Ape Conservation Fund and $1.2 for the Marine Turtle Conservation Fund. We further request $2 million for the combined Rhinoceros and Tiger Conservation Fund, $5 million for the Neotropical Migratory Birds Conservation Fund, and $500,000 for Wildlife Without Borders. This request totals $13.5 million.

While there are threats to the long-term survival of elephants, rhinos, tigers, great apes, neotropical migratory birds, and marine turtles, there have been improvements attributable to funds made available through the MNSCF. Grants made from the MNSCF provide a stable funding source that has leveraged over four times as much in additional contributions from range states, non-governmental organizations, and others.

While The HSUS wholeheartedly supports increased funding for the MNSCF, we are concerned about past incidents and future opportunities for funds from these conservation programs to be allocated to promote trophy hunting, trade in animal parts, and other consumptive uses—including live capture for trade, captive breeding, entertainment, and public display—under the guise of conservation for these animals. Grants made to projects under the MNSCF must be consistent with the spirit of the law.

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY—OFFICE OF RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT

In 2000, the ICCVAM Authorization Act (Public Law 106–545) created a new paradigm for regulatory toxicology, by promoting chemical testing methods that are often faster and more economical than existing methods, as well as more responsive to public concerns about the use of animals in toxicity testing. The new paradigm requires federal agencies to ensure that new and revised animal and alternative test methods be scientifically validated prior to recommending or requiring use by industry. All 15 federal regulatory and research agencies that compose the Interagency Coordinating Committee on the Validation of Alternative Methods (ICCVAM) agree on a common definition of validation as "the process by which the reliability and relevance of a procedure are established for a specific use."

In recent years, Congress has provided specific funding for research, development and validation of non-animal and other alternative test methods that replace, reduce, or refine the use of animals in toxicity testing. However, EPA has been underfunding validation studies of non-animal and other alternative methods.

For several years, the budget for the Office of Research and Development (ORD) has hovered at approximately $500 million. Animal protection organizations have supported a request for 1–2 percent of this budget to go for research, development and validation of non-animal, alternative test methods. Then-Chairman Walsh secured a $4 million appropriation for research, development and validation of non-animal test methods in EPA's fiscal year 2002 budget. While the animal protection community is greatly appreciative of that first-ever directive, we have yet to receive a detailed accounting of the expenditure of funds. The agency has stated that funding has been provided for bench science that may have future relevant applications. EPA contends it has used monies from the ORD's Science and Technology Account

to fund research and development of non-animal and other alternative test methods, but the funding stops at the stage when a test method must be scientifically validated. Consequently, this approach does little to support the necessary validation studies for non-animal test methods with potential application in reducing costs and increasing efficiency in existing EPA programs. Moreover, no detailed reporting on the actual expenditure of funds under the Computational Toxicology Program to promote alternative methods has ever been submitted to the Congress. Therefore, we join with the American Chemistry Council, the Procter & Gamble Company, and the Doris Day Animal League, in support of including the following report language in the appropriations bill:

"The Committee recognizes the EPA's commitment to developing a Computational Toxicology Program to reduce the use of animal testing and the cost of such testing. It is the Committee's expectation that, commensurate with Committee support for funding of the Computational Toxicology Program for the last several years, EPA demonstrate real progress not only in development of computational toxicology methods, but importantly, in validation of new and revised test methods, non-animal methods, and alternative methods so that these can be utilized in regulatory program activities. The Committee encourages EPA to develop, integrate, and implement specific plans for validation studies of new and revised, non-animal and alternative methods for chemical screening and priority setting within the Agency's Computational Toxicology Program. The Committee requests that EPA submit an annual report, due by March 31 of the following fiscal year, detailing results of its Computational Toxicology program, to include a section on EPA's overall activities and itemized expenditures in a manner where both specific activities and specific expenditures devoted to validation of new, revised test methods, non-animal methods, and alternative methods are broken out from expenditures on research and development."

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT—WILD HORSE AND BURRO PROGRAM

The BLM is charged with the management of approximately 32,000 wild horses in 10 Western States. The fiscal year 2007 budget for the maintenance of this herd is $36.4 million. That is a little over $1,100 per animal. This inadequate budget is further augmented through the unacceptable practice of selling "unadoptable" animals to individuals who often consider them no more than horsemeat for French and Belgian menus. The massive public outcry resulting from sales of wild horses to slaughter reflects revulsion Americans feel about the brutality and unseemly nature of this practice. The BLM should have only two mechanisms for dealing with "surplus" wild horses and burros; (1) long-term, humane pasturing and (2) adoption.

The budget for the wild horse and burro program should be increased by at least $12 million for a total of $48.4 million or $1,500 per animal. This would allow for more intensive herd monitoring and range inventory to assist in the continuance of accurate herd censuses and the reinstatement of mandatory biennial reports to Congress. These additional funds could also contribute to non-lethal methods of horse and burro population control including contraception, an approach the HSUS is working collaboratively with the BLM to implement. A renewed marketing strategy for publicizing the wild horse and burro adoption program could also be funded through additional appropriations. This supplementary money could be re-appropriated from the energy and minerals management line item that includes a funding increase of $12.4 million ". . . to support preparation and implementation of an ANWR leasing program . . ." that has yet to be approved by Congress.

PROTECTION FOR WALRUSES

We urge this subcommittee to appropriate $500,000 in fiscal year 2007 to fund the continuation of much-needed research on the Pacific walrus. New promising methodologies for surveying walrus populations have been developed and require sustained funding support. A comprehensive walrus survey was begun in 2005—the effort must receive continued support to maximize the utility of its results. Walruses are targeted by Native hunters for subsistence, despite a paucity of data regarding their current population status or population structure. Hundreds of walruses are killed annually; in some years this number has climbed to as many as 7,000. Moreover, in some hunting villages, females and their calves are preferentially killed, against the recommendation of the USFWS and standard management practice. A portion of the research funds could also be used to improve the Walrus Harvest Monitor Project, which collects basic management data.

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICES—ENDANGERED SPECIES PROGRAMS

The President's fiscal year 2007 budget for the FWS endangered species program recommends a cut of more than $6 million from fiscal year 2006. In addition to this reduction, the President proposes transferring over $4 million away from actual species protection measures to land owner incentive and stewardship grant programs. Overall, these cuts short-change this important legislation which had actually experienced an increased budget between fiscal year 2005 and fiscal year 2006. This program should not be funded at under $175 million.

Candidate Conservation: This portion of the budget would be cut by almost $600,000 from fiscal year 2006 funding. These cuts are primarily focused on slashing funding for research efforts on the Idaho sage grouse and the California fisher. Both of these species' population reductions have been primarily due to habitat fragmentation and loss which need to be monitored or reversed in order to prevent the listing of these species. Additionally, no new programs for any of the 282 candidate species were added for fiscal year 2007. Reallocating money from the general operations budget to the candidate conservation line item would assist in the protection of species on the brink of listing. The $1.8 million slated to fund "results-based performance management" training would be better spent on threatened species in need of preservation.

Listing: Although the funding of this element is steady compared with fiscal year 2006, additional funds are desperately needed. This aspect of the program allows for the designation of critical habitat for species to be listed in addition to evaluating petitions to list candidate species. Of the 565 listed animals, only about 170 have critical habitat designations. Additional funds of at least $5 million should be added to alleviate the backlog of animals with no defined critical habitats.

Consultation: This item of the endangered species budget includes an increase, but this increase is only to provide for expedited permit processing to "directly support national energy production". This program is designed to foster dialog between different federal and non-federal entities under the Habitat Conservation Planning (HCP) program. The HCP program is designed to identify and resolve potential species conflicts in the early stages of federal project planning and to ensure that projects will be implemented in a manner consistent with the conservation needs of listed species, not the energy needs of our nation. Therefore, funds for this portion of the program should go towards conflict management and conservation needs, and not towards the approval of permits for natural resource mining and drilling.

Recovery: This component has been cut over $8.5 million. These reductions are primarily aimed at severely diminishing and completely terminating funding for a number of endangered species and their habitats. Notable among the budget casualties are funds for Yellowstone Grizzly Conservation Strategy and wolf monitoring and recovery. Although the budget states that the Partners for Fish and Wildlife program and the National Park Service (NPS) will take over funding these programs, there is only $495,000 for Yellowstone grizzlies and $800,000 for wolf monitoring. There is no mention of either of these programs in the NPS budget statement.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE HOUSATONIC VALLEY ASSOCIATION

The Housatonic Valley Association appreciates the opportunity to present this testimony in support of a $1.22 million appropriation to the State of Connecticut from the Forest Legacy Program for the second phase of the Skiff Mountain project. The Housatonic Valley Association, founded in 1941, works to conserve the natural character and environmental health of our communities in the Housatonic River watershed by restoring and protecting our lands and waters for future generations. Skiff Mountain is one of our most urgent conservation priorities, and we strongly support our local and regional partners working for its protection.

The Highlands region of the East Coast is virtually in the backyard of the nation's largest metropolitan area. Located within an hour of nearly 25 million Americans, the Highlands form a greenbelt of forests and farmland adjacent to the sprawling Hartford-New York-Philadelphia urban corridor. Two million acres of glacial bogs, hardwood-conifer swamps, rock outcrop communities, and chestnut oak forests stretch from western Connecticut across the Lower Hudson River Valley and northern New Jersey into Pennsylvania, enticing more than 14 million visitors each year—more than Yellowstone and Yosemite National Parks combined.

The state has identified the Connecticut portion of the Highlands as a critical focus area under its Forest Legacy Program. Right now there are four separate parcels of land in this focus area that are available for protection in fiscal year 2007. These parcels total approximately 510 acres of Skiff Mountain Forest in north-

western Connecticut. They form a network of forested properties in Litchfield County straddling the Kent-Sharon town line, an area under tremendous large-lot development pressures. Strategically located among already existing conservation lands, part of the Housatonic River Greenway corridor of state significance, and immediately adjacent to the federally protected and world-renowned Appalachian National Scenic Trail, the Skiff Mountain assemblage has been identified by the state as its top priority for Forest Legacy funding this year completing the second and final phase of this outstanding conservation effort.

In fiscal year 2007, $1.22 million is needed from the Forest Legacy program to help preserve 510 acres of Skiff Mountain, and keep intact this conservation corridor of the Housatonic River Watershed and four-state Highlands region. Local funding and land value donation will match these funds. We hope that you will provide $1.22 million to ensure the success of this effort in the fiscal year 2007 Interior appropriations bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to present this request.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF FISH AND WILDLIFE AGENCIES

On behalf of our America's fish and wildlife agencies, I urge the Subcommittee on Interior and Related Agencies to support funding in the amount of $85 million for the State Wildlife Grants Program in the fiscal year 2007 Interior and Related Agencies Appropriations Act.

The State Wildlife Grants Program is our nation's core program for keeping wildlife from becoming endangered. State fish and wildlife agencies enjoy a strong partnership with the federal government in managing our nation's wildlife resources. Working together, we are able to ensure robust fish and wildlife populations and keep species from declining to the point of becoming endangered. State Wildlife Grants is an integral element of this partnership, providing the federal government's share of support for proactive on-the-ground conservation projects aimed at declining fish and wildlife species and their habitats. State Wildlife Grants is not just a grants program. It truly is a core program of the Department of Interior for advancing a pressing national need.

The President's budget includes $74.7 million, an increase of $5 million above the fiscal year 2006 enacted level of $68.5 million. We appreciate the Administration's continued support for this program as a core component of their collaborative conservation agenda.

Although the budget is tight, America's fish and wildlife agencies are recommending that Congress provide a funding level of at least $85 million in order to restore this program back up to the highest level of funding it has ever received, in fiscal year 2002. Consistent funding is essential to the long-term success of this program, and the completion of wildlife action plans in every state and territory only underscores the need for adequate and reliable resources. A funding level of $85 million would send an important message about the Congress's commitment to following through on providing the support needed to implement the wildlife action plans. We are pleased that 170 Representatives have already formally signed on to this commitment in the form of a "dear colleague" and we hope you will match that strong demonstration of support.

We also urge your consideration of additional language to provide an incentive for states to cooperate on projects with other states as well as federal agencies when implementing the actions in their plans. Allowing implementation projects that include several states working together to implement actions identified in their comprehensive state wildlife strategies at a 75:25 match (vs. 50:50) will provide greater benefits to the nation. In addition, allowing federal funds to be used as a match for a particular State Wildlife Grants project will encourage greater cooperation between a federal entity within that state and the state wildlife agency in implementing the strategies/plans together. The strategies/plans have the potential to encourage everyone to work together resulting in a greater cumulative impact as well as avoiding costly duplication and unnecessary overlap.

The President's budget includes a proposal to set aside $5 million of the new funds recommended for State Wildlife Grants for a new program of competitive grants. While we appreciate the intent to reward effective conservation proposals, we believe that the time is not yet right for a new competitive program to be created within State Wildlife Grants. The creation of such a program should be predicated on the attainment of higher levels of funding. State Wildlife Grants has provided a tremendous enhancement to the capacity of every state to address wildlife conservation. While we cannot currently support the creation of a competitive funding

program, we are committed to making any programs that are enacted by Congress a success. If Congress deems that this is an appropriate course of action, we will work together with the Fish and Wildlife Service to make it a success.

In closing, I again extend the appreciation of America's wildlife agencies for your continued support for the state-federal wildlife conservation partnership. We sincerely urge you to provide our requested level of $85 million for State Wildlife Grants.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE INDUSTRIAL MINERALS ASSOCIATION—NORTH AMERICA

Dear Chairman Burns and Ranking Member Dorgan: The President's 2007 Budget for the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) includes a proposed reduction of $22 million in funding for mineral resources programs that will discontinue or reduce, among other things, global mineral resource assessments of critical mineral commodities. The Industrial Minerals Association—North America (IMA–NA) is opposed to reducing authorizations and appropriations below current levels of $53 million, believing rather that our national capacity regarding economic intelligence should be strengthened.

The proposed reduction will terminate data collection and analysis for 100 mineral commodities in 180 countries outside the United States.—The budget cuts have the potential to limit severely available data on global industrial minerals production and consumption, while continuing to make domestic data readily available outside the United States. In a globally competitive marketplace, that means that global competitors will know more about U.S. production and consumption than U.S. producers will know about their global competition.

IMA–NA believes the United States should promote an environment conducive to competition in the global marketplace and collection and analysis of mineral commodity data on an international basis serves that end.—In today's global environment, the United States must maintain its capacity to assess critical mineral resources both within and outside the United States. The private sector cannot perform this comprehensive assessment itself. To do so collectively could raise antitrust issues. The collection, analysis and dissemination of mineral commodity data on an international basis are inherently governmental functions and USGS is best prepared to continue to perform them.

IMA–NA believes that the United States should continue industrial minerals research to ensure a stable supply of materials essential to our national economy and to our way of life.—The United States is the world's largest user of mineral commodities. Every year about 25,000 pounds of new non-fuel mineral materials from the earth must be provided for every person in the United States. just to maintain our current standard of living. USGS is uniquely situated in the federal government to provide scientific information for objective resource assessments and unbiased research results on mineral potential, production and consumption.

We respectfully request your support for continued funding of collection and analysis of economic intelligence on the broad array of mineral commodities produced and consumed outside the United States. We also request your support for continued funding of industrial minerals research.

The Industrial Minerals Association—North America (IMA–NA) is a trade association organized to advance the interests of North American companies that mine or process industrial minerals. These minerals are used as feedstocks for the manufacturing and agricultural industries and are used to produce such essential products are glass, paints and coatings, ceramics, detergents and fertilizers. The IMA–NA membership includes producers of ball clay, bentonite, borates, feldspar, industrial sand, mica, soda ash (trona), sodium silicate, talc and wollastonite. IMA–NA's membership also includes many of the suppliers to the industrial minerals industry, including equipment manufacturers, railroads and trucking companies, and consultants.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE INTERSTATE MINING COMPACT COMMISSION

My name is Gregory E. Conrad and I am Executive Director of the Interstate Mining Compact Commission. I appreciate the opportunity to present this statement to the Committee regarding the views of the Compact's member states on the fiscal year 2007 Budget Request for the Office of Surface Mining (OSM) within the U.S. Department of the Interior. In its proposed budget, OSM is requesting $58.3 million to fund Title V grants to states and Indian tribes for the implementation of their regulatory programs and $145.4 million for state and tribal Title IV abandoned

mine land (AML) program grants. Our statement will address both of these budgeted items.

The Compact is comprised of 22 states that together produce some 90 percent of the Nation's coal as well as important noncoal minerals. The Compact's purposes are to advance the protection and restoration of land, water and other resources affected by mining through the encouragement of programs in each of the party states that will achieve comparable results in protecting, conserving and improving the usefulness of natural resources and to assist in achieving and maintaining an efficient, productive and economically viable mining industry.

OSM has projected an amount of $58.3 million for Title V grants to states, an amount which is matched by the states each year. As you know, these grants support the implementation of state regulatory programs under the Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act (SMCRA) and as such are essential to the full and effective operation of those programs. For the past few fiscal years, we have seen a very modest trend to increase Title V grants in an effort to assist the states in meeting their uncontrollable cost increases. This year, in particular, OSM has proposed a $2 million increase, the largest over the past five fiscal years. Just as with the federal government, state regulatory programs are personnel intensive, with salaries and benefits constituting upwards of 80 percent of total program costs. States must have sufficient staff to complete permitting, inspection and enforcement actions needed to protect citizens of the coalfields. When funding falls below program needs, states may struggle to keep active sites free of offsite impacts, reclaim mined areas, and prevent injuries.

When it comes to funding state programs, we believe it is critical to investigate the potential mechanisms for assisting the states to meet their financial requirements, either through increased overall grant funding or through adjustments to the current funding formula. For instance, OSM's budgeted amount does not meet the states' own estimates for their projected program operating costs in fiscal year 2007, which total $63 million. While OSM's estimates will allow us to meet our most direct and critical responsibilities for conducting regulatory operations to minimize the impact of coal extraction operations on people and the environment, the gap of $5 million between the two estimates eliminates the cushion for inflation and uncontrollable costs. It also undermines our efforts to realize needed program improvements and enhancements. This will become increasingly important as the federal government is faced with the dilemma of either securing the necessary funding for state programs or implementing those programs (or portions thereof) themselves—at significantly higher costs.

OSM's own Budget Justification Document acknowledges the importance of the states receiving adequate program funding:

The States have the unique capabilities and knowledge to regulate the lands within their borders. Providing a 50 percent match of Federal funds to primacy States in the form of Administration and Enforcement (A&E) Grants results in the highest benefit and the lowest cost to the Federal government. If a State were to relinquish primacy, OSM would have to hire sufficient numbers and types of Federal employees to implement the program. The cost to the Federal government would be significantly higher. [OSM Budget Justification Document, "Environmental Protection", page 76.]

The states continue to work cooperatively with OSM to develop realistic and meaningful estimates for state regulatory program costs. Our recent efforts have focused on insuring that all funds received each year are in fact obligated, despite the fact that states often face significant challenges related to differences in grant/fiscal year cycles and accounting methods. Some of these issues can be addressed through regular reviews of grant expenditures. Others require some hard choices concerning regulatory program adjustments or enhancements. In the end, the states are committed to effectively and efficiently managing their programs to accomplish both state and federal outcome-based performance goals.

It must be kept in mind that where there is inadequate funding to support state programs, some states will be faced with either turning all or portions of their programs back to OSM or, in other cases, will face potential lawsuits for failing to fulfill mandatory duties in an effective manner. Of course, where a state does, in fact, turn all or part of its Title V program back to OSM (or if OSM forces this issue based on an OSM determination of ineffective state program implementation), the state would be ineligible for Title IV funds to reclaim abandoned mine lands. This would be the height of irony, as the states have recently worked diligently with the Interior Department, OMB and Congress to reauthorize Title IV and to increase funding for state AML work.

With regard to funding for state Title IV Abandoned Mine Land (AML) program grants, OSM has proposed a decrease for the fourth year in a row for state and trib-

al AML grants. These grants are separate from moneys allocated to the states for the Appalachian Clean Streams Initiative (ACSI) and for state-administered emergency programs. The non-ACSI, non-emergency state AML grants are the lifeblood of state programs and represent the primary source of funding for the majority of priority 1 and 2 AML work that is undertaken each year. Over the past three fiscal years, and now again this year, we have seen a disturbing downward trend in these critical baseline grants: $142 million in fiscal year 2004; $136 million in fiscal year 2005; $130 million in fiscal year 2006, and now $127 million for fiscal year 2007. These numbers are based on a detailed analysis of information contained in OSM's budget justification document.

We are at a total loss to understand how OSM can, on the one hand, advocate a strong position for reauthorization of Title IV (including a proposal to extend fee collection through September of 2007 and continued support for comprehensive reform of Title IV), while on the other hand undercutting the essential annual funding for existing state AML programs. We are losing ground in the battle to address high priority AML sites that threaten our citizens. It is essential that this trend be reversed immediately if we are to accomplish the goals and objectives of the AML program. We therefore request that these baseline state AML grants be restored to at least their fiscal year 2004 level of $142 million.

The future of the AML Fund and its potential impacts on the economy, public safety, the land, our Nation's waters and the environment will depend upon how we manage the Fund and how we adjust the current provisions of SMCRA concerning the Fund. As we draw closer to the June 30, 2006 expiration of fee collection authority, we are hopeful that we will see Congressional action to finally and comprehensively reauthorize the AML program. The states and tribes, through IMCC, the National Association of Abandoned Mine Land Programs and the Western Governors Association have over the past several years advanced proposed amendments to SMCRA that are few in number and scope and that reflect a minimalist approach to adjusting the existing language in SMCRA and to incorporate only those changes necessary to accomplish several key objectives. They are as follows:

—To extend fee collection authority for at least 12 years.

—To significantly increase annual allocations to states and tribes to address AML problems. This has been one of the greatest inhibitions to progress under Title IV of SMCRA in recent years and must be addressed if we are to enhance the ability of the states and tribes to get more work done on the ground within the extended time frame of 12 years or longer.

—To assure adequate funding for minimum program (under-funded) states who have consistently received less than their promised share of funding ($2 million) over the past several years, thereby undermining the effectiveness of their AML programs. In fiscal year 2007, OSM's budget once again funds the minimum program states at only $1.5 million.

—To address a few other select provisions of Title IV that will enhance the overall effectiveness of the AML program, including remining incentives, handling of liens, and enhancing the ability of states to undertake water line projects.

—Finally, to address how the accumulated, unappropriated state and tribal share balances in the Fund will be handled (assuming that the interest in the Fund is no longer needed to address shortfalls in the UMW Combined Benefit Fund), while at the same time assuring that an adequate state share continues for the balance of the program to insure that all states and tribes are well-positioned and funded to address existing AML problems.

Mr. Chairman, it is obvious from an assessment of the current inventory of priority 1 and 2 sites that there will not be enough money in the AML Trust Fund to address all of these sites before fee collection is set to expire in June. It is even more obvious that, regardless of what the unappropriated balance in the Fund is (currently $1.7 billion) and what future fee collections will add to that balance over the next year (approximately $300 million), recent Congressional appropriations for state and tribal AML program grants have been woefully inadequate and have not kept pace with our ability and desire to address the backlog of old as well as continually developing high priority AML problems. We are therefore faced with a significant challenge over the next few months—and that is to reconcile all of the various interests and concerns attending the administration of the AML program under Title IV of SMCRA in a way that assures the continuing integrity, credibility and effectiveness of this successful and meaningful program under SMCRA. We welcome the opportunity to work with your committee, Mr. Chairman, and with other affected parties to address the myriad issues that attend the future ability of the AML program to address the needs of coalfield citizens.

We also urge the Committee to support adequate funding for OSM's training program, including moneys for state travel. These programs are central to the effective

implementation of state regulatory programs as they provide necessary training and continuing education for state agency personnel. Additionally, the states are key players in OSM's training program, providing instructors for many of the courses. IMCC also urges the Committee to support adequate funding for TIPS, a program that directly benefits the states by providing needed upgrades to computer software and hardware. In this regard, we strongly support the proposed amounts for the training program and TIPS in OSM's fiscal year 2007 budget.

Finally, IMCC requests continuing support for the Acid Draining Technology Initiative (ADTI), a nationwide technology development program with a guiding principle of building consensus among Federal and State regulatory agencies, universities and the coal industry to predict and remediate acid drainage from active and inactive coal and metal mines. This collaborative effort receives funding and other support from industry and several federal agencies for specific projects. OSM has provided ADTI $200,000 for the last several fiscal years, which has been a consistent source of funding for activities related to acid mine drainage from coal mines and has been instrumental in accomplishing ADTI's goals. We support continued funding for this vital initiative.

In conclusion, we want to reiterate that adequate Title V grants are the lifeblood of effective state regulatory programs. Should states be unable to operate these programs due to funding constraints, the federal government will be faced with the burden of operating regulatory programs at a substantially increased cost (generally 30 to 50 percent more). Further, without Title V programs in place, states are unable to access Title IV funds. In the final analysis, it behooves everyone—OSM, the Congress and the states—to commit the resources necessary to assure strong and effective state programs that will achieve the purposes and objectives of SMCRA, thereby protecting the environment where active mining operations occur and enhancing the environment through remediation of past problems associated with abandoned mines.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE INDEPENDENT PETROLEUM ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA

On behalf of various stakeholders who collectively play important roles in the development of America's domestic energy resources, we are writing to you to urge full funding for the "National Geological and Geophysical Data Preservation Program Act of 2005." Specifically, we would request that the subcommittee fund this program (Section 315 of the Energy Policy Act of 2005), at the authorized level of $30 million, which is $29 million above the amount included in the Administration's Budget Request for the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) for fiscal year 2007.

Geoscience data and collections are critical to government and industry's discovery and development of the nation's energy and mineral resources. Fundamental to any scientific and engineering endeavor are the collection of high quality data. Subsurface data—rock cores, cuttings, and geophysical measurements valued in the tens of billions of dollars—have been collected and housed by the private oil and gas sector for 70 years in the United States. The private sector is now clearing out these collections with two end member options: make gifts to qualified curation facilities or dispose of the one of a kind information permanently. The data must be saved, not just because they are unique and irreplaceable, but because they have immeasurable future value to oil, natural gas, coal, water, CO_2 sequestration and other key resource issues facing the United States.

A key component to domestic energy and mineral resource production and security lies in preservation and ready access of samples and data. Volumes of expensive and difficult to obtain subsurface information (cores, cuttings and geophysical data) are currently being disposed of by oil, gas and mineral exploration companies: these rock samples are like one of a kind rare books; once lost they can never be replaced. These subsurface data, however, are critical to efficient exploration and production of the nation's energy resources. In addition to being applied toward conventional oil, gas and mineral production, subsurface data are now being applied in the areas of non-conventional energy development, CO_2 sequestration, and mineral exploration as well as the preservation of water supply, and the training of a new generation of geologists and geophysicists. Additionally, geoscience data and collections support sound decisions on resource utilization, environmental protection, and disaster preparedness. In addition, data and collections perform a critical role in the academic research and education of both informed citizens and future geoscientists.

Over the course of many years, significant financial investments have been made to compile geoscience data and collections. As an example, core reposited at the USGS's Core Research Center in Colorado is estimated to have a current replacement value of $10 billion and seismic data sets represent tens of billions of dollars

of geophysical data. The acquisition costs of maintaining and preserving is minimal to that of replacement costs, if indeed cores can ever be replaced. Through preservation, existing geoscience data and collections can be utilized again and again as new technologies are developed and new scientific hypothesis are tested.

State geological surveys have historically collected geoscience data, typically consisting of geological, geochemical, geophysical and engineering data; maps; well logs; and samples of rocks, minerals, and fossils that are representative of a particular state's geology. Consequently, state geological surveys have substantial experience in the cataloging, preserving and archiving of both physical and digital data that characterize surface and subsurface geology in each state, and are experienced in providing ready access to others for examination, study, and sampling of these data and Earth materials.

In authorizing legislation (Section 315 of the Energy Policy Act of 2005), also known as the National Geological and Geophysical Data Preservation Program Act of 2005, funding would go towards the establishment of regional geoscience data and collection centers with a mission of: (1) preserving and improving access to domestic geoscience data through Federal, State and private-sector partnerships; (2) supporting development of a comprehensive, integrated, long-term management plan to ensure preservation of geoscience information, and (3) encouraging all stakeholders in geoscience data utilization to coordinate their efforts and provide access to data.

The breadth of effort that can be undertaken in the states to secure these important data and collections is extensive. The budget request represents a small down payment on a significant task. Therefore, we ask the subcommittee to consider full funding this important program at the authorized level of $30 million for fiscal year 2007.

The Independent Petroleum Association of America, the U.S. Oil and Gas Association, the International Association of Drilling Contractors, the International Association of Geophysical Contractors, the National Stripper Well Association, the Petroleum Equipment Suppliers Association, the Association of Energy Service Companies, Public Lands Advocacy, California Independent Petroleum Association, Colorado Oil & Gas Association, East Texas Producers & Royalty Owners Association, Eastern Kansas Oil & Gas Association, Florida Independent Petroleum Association, Illinois Oil & Gas Association, Independent Oil & Gas Association of New York, Independent Oil & Gas Association of Pennsylvania, Independent Oil & Gas Association of West Virginia, Independent Oil Producers Association Tri-State, Independent Petroleum Association of Mountain States, Independent Petroleum Association of New Mexico, Indiana Oil & Gas Association, Kansas Independent Oil & Gas Association, Kentucky Oil & Gas Association, Louisiana Independent Oil & Gas Association, Michigan Oil & Gas Association, Mississippi Independent Producers & Royalty Association, Montana Oil & Gas Association, National Association of Royalty Owners, Nebraska Independent Oil & Gas Association, New Mexico Oil & Gas Association, New York State Oil Producers Association, Northern Alliance of Energy Producers, Ohio Oil & Gas Association, Oklahoma Independent Petroleum Association, Oklahoma Commission on Marginally Producing Oil and Gas Wells, Panhandle Producers & Royalty Owners Association, Pennsylvania Oil & Gas Association, Permian Basin Petroleum Association, Petroleum Association of Wyoming, Tennessee Oil & Gas Association, Texas Alliance of Energy Producers, Texas Independent Producers and Royalty Owners, Virginia Oil & Gas Association, and Wyoming Independent Producers Association.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE INTERTRIBAL BISON COOPERATIVE

INTRODUCTION & BACKGROUND

My name is Ervin Carlson, a member of the Blackfeet Nation of Montana and President of the InterTribal Bison Cooperative (ITBC). Please accept my sincere appreciation for this opportunity to submit written testimony to honorable members of the Appropriation Subcommittee on Interior. ITBC is a Native American nonprofit organization, headquartered in Rapid City, South Dakota, comprised of fifty-seven (57) federally recognized Indian Tribes within a 19 state region. On behalf of these members of ITBC, I would like to address the following issues: (1) request an appropriation of $4,150,000 for fiscal year 2007, to continue our restoration effort, implement our marketing initiative and to continue our health initiative, utilizing buffalo to treat and prevent diet related diseases among Native Americans, (2) ex-

plain to the committee ITBC's unmet funding need of $28 million, and (3) update the committee on ITBC's present initiatives.

Buffalo thrived in abundance throughout North America for many centuries before they were hunted to near extinction in the 1800's. During this period of history, buffalo were critical to survival of the American Indian. Buffalo provided food, shelter, clothing and essential tools for Indian people and insured continuance of their subsistence way of life. Naturally, Indian people developed a strong spiritual and cultural relationship with the buffalo that has not diminished with the passage of time.

Numerous tribes that were committed to preserving the sacred relationship between Indian people and buffalo established the ITBC as an effort to restore buffalo to Indian lands. ITBC focused upon raising buffalo on Indian Reservation lands in order to foster sustainable economic development in a manner compatible with each of the Tribal cultures. Significant portions of Indian Reservations consist of poor quality lands for farming or raising livestock. Although a large portion of these reservation lands are unproductive for typical farming practices, most are ideal for raising buffalo. ITBC began actively restoring buffalo to Indian lands after receiving funding in 1992 as an initiative of the first Bush Administration.

Federal appropriations have allowed ITBC to successfully restore buffalo to numerous Indian Reservation lands, thereby preserving the sacred relationship between Indian people and buffalo. The respect that Indian tribes have maintained for buffalo has fostered a serious commitment by ITBC member Tribes for successful buffalo herd development. With healthy, viable buffalo herds, opportunities now exist for Tribes to utilize buffalo for treatment and prevention of diet related diseases among Native American populations and for tribal economic development efforts. The primary focus of ITBC is to help develop and assure economic sustainability of bison herds and the promotion of buffalo as a healthy food source, thus allowing Tribes to utilize a culturally relevant resource as a means to achieve self-sufficiency.

FUNDING REQUEST

The InterTribal Bison Cooperative respectfully requests an appropriation for fiscal year 2007 in the amount of $4,150,000. This amount would maintain the fiscal year 2006 appropriation for ITBC and is greatly needed to successfully accomplish our goals and objectives. This request will help balance our continuing growth in membership with our funding level. The $4,150,000 funding level would restore vital funding that has been cut from the administration's fiscal year 2007 budget. Our requested funding level of $4.15 million will allow our member Tribes to continue their successful restoration effort, to implement our marketing initiative, and to continue the health initiative for the treatment and prevention of diet related diseases among Native American populations, while simultaneously building economic sustainability to the Tribal projects.

FUNDING SHORTFALL & UNMET NEED

In fiscal year 2006, the ITBC and its member tribes were funded through appropriations at $4,150,000. The President's budget for fiscal year 2007 recommends a decrease of funding in the amount of $4,150,000, which would eliminate our funding, just as many Tribes are recovering from a long lasting drought, and just as we are beginning the health initiative to address diet related health problems that are epidemic on most of our reservations.

Without the restoration of funding at last years level ITBC new member tribes will not receive adequate funding to begin buffalo restoration efforts. Other tribes that have successfully restored buffalo to Tribal lands will not receive adequate technical assistance and resource development funds to ensure the sustainability of existing herds. Furthermore, the investment made by Congress in fiscal year 2006 towards ITBC's health care initiative would need to be discontinued. This was designed to utilize buffalo for treatment and prevention of diet related diseases among Native American populations.

ITBC is structured as a member cooperative and 100 percent of the appropriated funds are expended on the development and support of Tribal buffalo herds and buffalo product business ventures. ITBC funding is distributed to ITBC member Tribes via a proposal review process developed by the consensus of members. ITBC surveys member tribes, annually, to determine unmet project needs and currently the total unmet need for ITBC member projects is $28,000,000.

ITBC GOALS & INITIATIVES

The immediate goal of ITBC is restoration of buffalo to Indian lands for Tribes to utilize for sustainable economic development in a manner that is compatible with their Tribal culture. ITBC's ultimate goal is for Tribal buffalo herds to achieve self-sufficiency and once again become a daily part of Tribal cultures.

Economic Development

In 1991, seven Indian tribes had small buffalo herds, with a combined total of 1,500 animals. The buffalo provided little or no economic benefit to the tribal owners. ITBC has proven extremely successful at buffalo restoration during its relatively short 10-year history. Today, with the support and technical assistance of ITBC, 57 Indian Tribes are engaged in raising buffalo or developing plans to raise buffalo, with approximately 15,000 animals owned and managed by ITBC member tribes.

Many of these tribal buffalo programs have developed herds large enough to justify and develop plans for marketing products as a step toward self-sufficiency. Of great significance for Indian reservation economies, buffalo production has resulted in a new industry creating hundreds of direct and indirect jobs relating to the buffalo management and production. As a result, a significant amount of revenue derived from buffalo products is beginning to circulate through Indian reservation economies.

However, Tribes must have the resources to build solid foundations for this new industry to become fully self-sufficient and maintain sustainable buffalo herds. ITBC provides critical technical assistance to member Tribes that have developed sustainable management and infrastructure development plans. Additionally, ITBC provides training curriculum for the newly created jobs and marketing plans as Tribal herds reach marketing capabilities. ITBC has begun implementation of a marketing initiative to provide member Tribes with viable marketing options for utilization of buffalo as economic development efforts. This marketing initiative is in an infancy phase and continued funding is critical to achieve success.

Tribal Buffalo Marketing Initiative

When the tribal buffalo are ready for market, ITBC member tribes face another obstacle to economic success. Few meat processing plants exist that are willing to process range-fed buffalo. Shipping buffalo far distances to be processed increases operating costs and reduces the quality of the meat by introducing unnecessary and harmful stress to the animals. Further compounding the problem, existing processing plants often will not process buffalo unless the buffalo are finished in feedlots, which compromises the objective of ITBC to provide a healthy range-fed product. ITBC believes the development of tribally owned processing facilities that will process range fed buffalo will provide a solution to the processing plant obstacle.

ITBC has assisted the Gros Ventre and Assiniboine Tribes of the Fort Belknap Indian Community in northern Montana with the development of a meat packing facility acquired by the Tribe in Malta, Montana. ITBC also assisted the Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe in South Dakota with the expansion of their USDA approved meat packing facility. As a part of the ITBC marketing initiative, ITBC is also working with other member Tribes to develop Tribally owned processing plants in strategic regions in order to provide the infrastructure for member Tribes to get their buffalo processed and develop a cooperative market for the Tribally produced range fed buffalo. Development of Tribally owned processing facilities would create the necessary infrastructure to ensure the sustainability of Tribal buffalo production. Additionally, ITBC hopes to provide technical assistance in areas of meat processing, cold storage facility development, processing plant enhancement, development of distribution systems for Buffalo meat and by-products, and develop a cooperative brand name with standards and labeling guarantees for Native American produced buffalo. It is our firm belief that Tribally owned buffalo processing plants are necessary to maintain the integrity of the buffalo meat as a healthy food source, and provide culturally appropriate processing methods and jobs to our member Tribes.

Preventive Health Care Initiative

ITBC is committed to providing buffalo meat to Indian reservation families both as an economic development effort for Native American producers and, more critically, as a healthy food to reintroduce into the diets of Native American populations. Current research indicates that the diet of most Indian reservation families includes large amounts of high cholesterol, processed meats that contribute to diabetes, heart disease and other diet related illnesses.

ITBC member Tribes are just beginning to implement a preventive health care initiative with fiscal year 2006 year's funding, which will provide easy access to buffalo meat on Indian reservations and will educate more Indian families of the health benefits of range fed buffalo meat in their daily diets. Generally, buffalo meat is not sold in small quantities at the Indian reservation grocery and convenience stores leaving Native American families with few alternatives to the high fat, high cholesterol processed meats stocked in reservation stores.

ITBC seeks to remedy this concern by providing buffalo meat in family sized quantities to Indian reservation markets and interact with Federal Food programs. So far ITBC has purchased approximately 300 buffalo from our member Tribes to be used for the health initiative. ITBC is currently developing a distribution plan to be coordinated with Trial health officials at participating Tribes. A scientific study is also being planned, that will provide scientific data and support regarding the benefits of buffalo meat to the Native American diet.

CONCLUSION

ITBC has demonstrated success over the years by assisting its member tribes restore buffalo to their native lands for cultural purposes and economic development. ITBC will continue to provide technical assistance and funding to its member tribes to facilitate the development of sustainable buffalo herds.

ITBC and its member tribes have created a successful new Indian reservation industry, tribal buffalo production, resulting in new money for reservation economies. In addition, ITBC continues to support methods to market buffalo meat by providing easy access on the reservation and education efforts to the health benefits of buffalo meat in the Native diet. The ultimate goal is to restore the Tribal herds to a size large enough to support the local health needs of their Tribal members and also generate enough revenue through a cooperative marketing effort to achieve economic self-sufficiency.

ITBC and its member tribes are appreciative of past and current support from the Congress and the Administration. I urge the committee to consider restoring ITBC funding to the fiscal year 2006 level of $4.15 million, which will allow ITBC to continue, without interruption, the important and successful efforts of buffalo restoration and development of buffalo production as viable Reservation based economic development efforts.

I would like to thank this Committee for the opportunity to present testimony and the members of ITBC invite the honorable members of the Committee to visit our Tribal buffalo projects and experience first hand their successes.

Questions and/or comments regarding any of the issues presented within this testimony may be directed to Mr. Ervin Carlson, President or to Mr. Fred DuBray, Executive Director at (605) 394–9730.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE NATIONAL WILDLIFE FEDERATION

Mr. Chairman, on behalf of the more than 4 million members and supporters of the National Wildlife Federation (NWF), thank you for the opportunity to provide funding recommendations for Department of the Interior and U.S. Forest Service programs for fiscal year 2007. The purpose of our testimony is to recommend levels of funding for a few specific programs that are vital to NWF's mission to inspire Americans to protect wildlife for our children's future.

In addition to the following funding recommendations, NWF would also like to take this opportunity to respectfully urge the members of the subcommittee to reject the legislative proposals in the President's budget to sell hundreds of thousands of acres of BLM and USFS land to secure revenues to reduce the federal budget deficit and to fund the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act. The National Wildlife Federation and our state affiliates are in strong and unanimous opposition to these land sales proposals. The President's budget fails to recognize the incredible value of the nation's public lands. Public lands encompass a wonderful diversity of fish and wildlife habitats, and provide millions of Americans opportunities to fish, hunt, hike, camp, observe wildlife and otherwise experience nature. Every year, these lands become more valuable and more important, and to propose selling them off in order to secure one-time solutions for budget shortfalls is to rob this, and future, generations of a great national legacy.

State and Tribal Wildlife Grants

The State and Tribal Wildlife Grants program is the nation's core program to prevent wildlife from becoming endangered in every state. It is a mission-critical element of the Interior Department's budget as no other federal program is focused on this goal. It provides states and their partners a broad suite of conservation tools early enough to allow for meaningful and cost-effective species conservation. When Congress created the program in fiscal year 2001, every state wildlife agency was asked to complete a state wildlife action plan. These action plans, many of which have now been completed and approved, were developed by scientists, sportsmen, environmentalists, private landowners, and communities who worked together to identify the actions that are needed to prevent species from becoming endangered. The state wildlife agencies and their many conservation partners are already moving ahead with implementing their wildlife action plans. Congress needs to honor its commitment to this effort by providing the federal share of support for this program as it enters this new phase of implementation. The Administration's request for $74 million is an increase in funding for this program from the 2006 enacted level, but is insufficient to meet the large and growing needs of this program. We respectfully request that the subcommittee provide $85 million, an increase of $11 million over the President's request.

National Wildlife Refuge System Operations and Maintenance

The President's budget calls for a $763,000 cut to the National Wildlife Refuge System Operations and Maintenance budget. We note with concern that when inflation and increases in salaries, rents, cost-of-living adjustments, energy prices, and increasing levels of visitor services and wildlife management requirements are taken into account, this would be an effective cut in refuge funding of approximately $17 million, and thus a significant decrease in refuge services. NWF supports the Cooperative Alliance for Refuge Enhancement (CARE) recommendation of $415 million, which would equal the fiscal year 2004 Refuge System budget ($406.5 million) when adjusted for inflation. This level of funding would ensure a "no-net-loss" budget which would allow the Refuge System to avoid layoffs and reductions in services, maintain protections for wildlife and habitat, and provide for addressing the backlog in coming years.

Endangered Species Program

The Endangered Species Act (ESA) is one of our nation's most important environmental laws and we are disappointed that the Endangered Species Program has not been funded at the level needed to carry out its critical purpose of preventing extinction and recovering our irreplaceable wildlife. In fact, the Presidents budget proposal is seeking to cut funding for the endangered species program by $6.7 million, or over 4.5 percent. Out of the four core endangered species programs, the species recovery program was hit the hardest again, with cuts of more then 10 percent. Funding for candidate conservation also faces significant reductions—over 6 percent. All told, President Bush's budget will allot only $141.4 million to ESA protection, although FWS's needs are demonstrably much greater. We urge the subcommittee to appropriate at least $212 million toward the Endangered Species Program (an increase of $71 million) for the following critical activities:

—*Listing Program*.—While the President proposes a $129,000 (less then one percent) increase in the listing and critical habitat account, that amount will not begin to cover the backlog of species awaiting action on proposed listings and critical habitat designations. More than 280 candidate species—i.e., species deemed by FWS to be at risk of extinction and warranting ESA protection—have been denied the benefits of the ESA due to lack of resources. The Fish and Wildlife Service has estimated a need of at least $153 million to alleviate the backlog. The President's budget requested $17.75 million. This is well below the actual need. To begin to address the backlog, the Listing line item should be funded at no less than $30 million for fiscal year 2007.

—*Recovery Program*.—Recovery funding faces the biggest reduction. Under the President's budget it would be reduced by $7.68 million, or 10.4 percent below fiscal year 2006, even though FWS has said that more than 200 species currently listed under the Act are on the verge of extinction, primarily because not enough funds are available for recovery activities. Recovery should be funded at no less than $113.6 million.

—*Consultation Program*.—Consultation is an important part of the checks and balance system to ensure that endangered species are protected on the ground. Consultation was increased by only $1.3 million, or 2.8 percent, even though it

is projected that FWS will review approximately 77,000 federal actions under Section 7 in 2007. On top of this, FWS is responsible for monitoring nearly 400 approved Habitat Conservation Plans and will be reviewing 250 more that are currently in the pipeline. Consultation should be funded at $55.5 million.

—*Candidate Conservation*.—Candidate species are plants and animals for which the Service has sufficient information on their biological status and threats to propose them for listing as endangered or threatened, but for which listing is precluded due to lack of resources and other higher priority listing activities. The President has also proposed reducing the Candidate Conservation program by $556,000, or 6.5 percent, despite the fact that efforts to protect candidate species at an early stage are cost-effective, reducing the difficulty and expense of species recovery. Candidate Conservation should be funded at $13.6 million.

Multinational Species Conservation Fund

NWF is concerned to see that the President's budget reduces total funding for the Multinational Species Conservation Fund by $2 million. For fiscal year 2007, we ask the subcommittee to again support these successful programs by appropriating $2 million each for the African Elephant, Asian Elephant, Great Apes and Marine Turtle Conservation Funds, $3 million for the combined Rhinoceros and Tiger Conservation Funds, and $5 million for the Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Fund, for a total of $16 million, or an increase of $7.7 million above the President's request. These funds will enable the Department of Interior to expand critical support for these imperiled species in their natural habitats. We also urge the subcommittee to continue to treat the Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Fund as a separate account.

BLM NATIONAL LANDSCAPE CONSERVATION SYSTEM (NLCS)

The NLCS is an American treasure that consists of 26 million acres of BLM's most spectacular lands. Since its creation in June 2000, however, the System has been chronically under-funded, and starved for adequate resources to meet its core responsibilities and manage the growing number of visitors. The President's budget slashes $5.7 million from NLCS operations. This cut will cause mission critical needs to go unmet, such as contending with increases in illegal and irresponsible off-road vehicle traffic, the spread of invasive species, and the vandalism of ancient artifacts. We note with concern that when inflation and increases in salaries, rents, cost-of-living adjustments, energy prices, and increasing levels of visitor services and management requirements are taken into account, the President's budget represents an effective cut of approximately $8 million. This will result in a significant decrease in NLCS services. We respectfully request an increase of $3 million in operations and planning funding for the NLCS over the fiscal year 2006 enacted budget, for a total of $46 million. This funding level would enable the BLM to maintain services at the fiscal year 2006 enacted level, including restoring $1.2 million for law enforcement in the Four Corners region, while also providing capacity for the following activities:

—*Law Enforcement and Visitor Management—$1.5 million*.—The NLCS faces a serious shortage of law-enforcement rangers and outreach/public education specialists. In many units, individual NLCS rangers must patrol hundreds of thousands of acres. We suggest an additional $1.5 million in funding to cover the cost of hiring fifteen additional law enforcement rangers and public education outreach specialists.

—*Science and Natural Resource Monitoring—$1.5 million*.—It is essential for the BLM to obtain adequate information on the health of flora and fauna, riparian conditions, water quality, and other critical natural resources. Yet the BLM does not have adequate science personnel to collect and assess quality data for decision-making, a problem recently highlighted by the Heinz Center and a Government Accountability Report. We strongly suggest funding to enable BLM to hire seven natural resource specialists to expand biological monitoring and partnerships with other agencies and research institutions.

NLCS LWCF Projects.—We support the President's fiscal year 2007 request for Land and Water Conservation Fund projects for California Wilderness, and the Chain of Lakes Recreation Management Area/Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail (Montana). We recommend that the President's request for $750,000 for Sandy River/Oregon National Historic Trail be increased to $1 million, and we support $4.9 million for six additional projects:

—Canyons of the Ancients National Monument, Colorado: $1.1 million to acquire inholdings.

—McInnis Canyons National Conservation Area, Colorado: $1.1 million to purchase properties within and adjacent to this NCA.

—Carrizo Plain National Monument, California: $500,000 to acquire inholdings.
—Cascade-Siskiyou National Monument, Oregon: $700,000 to acquire Soda Mountain inholdings.
—Pacific Crest Trail, Cascade-Siskiyou National Monument, Oregon: $1.5 million to acquire the Sky King Cole Ranch.

U.S. FOREST SERVICE FOREST LEGACY PROGRAM

NWF is concerned by the President's request of $61.5 million for the Forest Legacy Program, almost $20 million less than last year's request. The needs of this program are much larger and growing, so we ask the subcommittee to appropriate $100 million for the program, or an increase of $38.5 million. Forest Legacy protects environmentally important forests that are threatened with conversion to non-forest uses, while protecting local communities and their way of life. The program has been especially important in states where there are few federal land holdings and timber companies are in the process of consolidating and selling their lands.

LAND AND WATER CONSERVATION FUND (LWCF)

NWF is concerned to see that the President's budget slashes federal LWCF funding to only $83.6 million, the lowest request in more than three decades. LWCF has been cut by more than 75 percent since 2001. We urge the subcommittee to provide at least $220 million for total federal LWCF funding, with at least $5 million for the Pinhook Swamp project in Florida and $16.2 million for the Swan Valley project in Montana.

We are extremely disappointed to see that the Administration's budget cuts all funding for stateside LWCF. State-side LWCF provides matching funds for state and local recreation and conservation programs. Eliminating this fund would seriously impact locally sponsored recreation projects that provide opportunities for youth, seniors and the physically challenged. We ask the subcommittee to restore $100 million for Stateside LWCF.

Thank you for providing us with this opportunity to testify on the budget requests for the Interior Department and U.S. Forest Service.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE KANSAS ARKANSAS RIVER BASIN INTERSTATE COMMITTEE

The critical water resource projects in the Kansas portion of the Arkansas River Basin are summarized below. The projects are safety, environmental and conservation oriented. In addition, we state our unanimous support for the fiscal year 2007 request of $40 million to maintain the channel depth on the McClellan-Kerr Navigation System to 12 feet as authorized by Public Law 108–137.

We are encouraged about water resource development opportunities in the Arkansas River. In addition to traditional uses, we also support the promotion of economic development around Corps reservoirs. While encouraged, we are also concerned that funding levels will not support the needs. Therefore, we encourage your continued investment in our infrastructure with enhanced funding.

We request your continued support for this important Bureau of Reclamation project:

1. Equus Beds Aquifer Storage and Recovery Project—continuation of a City of Wichita, Groundwater Management District No. 2 and State of Kansas project to construct storage and recovery facilities for a major groundwater resource supplying water to more than 20 percent of Kansas municipal, industrial and irrigation users. The project will capture and recharge in excess of 100 million gallons per day and will also reduce on-going degradation of the existing groundwater by minimizing migration of saline water. Federal authorization of the project through House Bill 1327 introduce last year or through similar legislation this year. Construction Phase One is scheduled for completion in 2007. Continued federal funding is requested for fiscal year 2007 consistent with this legislation which will authorize funding for 25 percent of the project cost up to a maximum of $30 million during the construction phases.

We request your support of these equally important Corps of Engineers projects:

1. Walnut River (El Dorado Lake) Watershed Feasibility Study—feasibility study is needed to fully understand and recommend restoration strategies to reduce sedimentation and meet TMDL issues to preserve the El Dorado public water supply. Funding is requested in the amount of $80,000 for fiscal year 2007.

2. Grand (Neosho) Basin Reconnaissance Study—to address watershed and reservoir restoration issues in the Grand Lake Watershed. Funding request is for $450,000 in fiscal year 2007 to continue the study.

3. Grand Lake Feasibility Study—follow-on flood control study to determine the most cost-effective solution to real estate inadequacies of federal flood control easements around Grand Lake. Funding request in the amount of $500,000 for fiscal year 2007.

4. Continuing Authorities Program—Wichita and many small Kansas communities including Kinsley, Newton, Parsons, Arkansas City, Augusta, Butler County and Coffeyville are requesting Corps of Engineers assistance through the Small Flood Control Projects, Aquatic Ecosystem Restoration, Ecosystem Restoration and the Emergency Streambank Stabilization programs. The CAP limits have been held level for many years and the federal funds are not available when a community has a need. We request increased annual program limits so that the communities who are willing to cost-share have the opportunity to do so.

Finally, we are very grateful that the Corps of Engineers and Bureau of Reclamation have the expertise needed for the development and protection of water resources infrastructure. It is essential to have the integrity and continuity these agencies provide. Your continued support of these vital agencies, including funding, will be appreciated.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE KENTUCKY DEPARTMENT OF FISH & WILDLIFE RESOURCES

We are seeking your support for the President's fiscal year 2007 Budget Request of $3 million to support the National Fish Habitat Initiative (NFHI) and, furthermore, we ask you to support an additional $3 million to be appropriated to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Southeast Fisheries Program for the Southeast Aquatic Resources Partnership (SARP). The NFHI, lead by the International Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies in partnership with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, is a nationwide fisheries habitat restoration plan modeled on the successful North American Waterfowl Management Plan. The SARP is developing a Southeast Aquatic Habitat Plan that will guide the implementation of the NFHI on a regional scale and serve as a model for other regions of the country. The Southeast Aquatic Habitat Plan will identify and establish Fish Habitat Partnerships that will deliver the objectives of the NFHI in the Southeast.

The SARP was initiated in 2001 to better address the conservation and management of aquatic resources in the Southeastern United States. This partnership developed because: (1) the Southeast has the highest diversity of aquatic species and habitats of any region in the country, (2) these resources are facing serious threats to their future existence, and (3) no single State or Federal agency has the necessary resources and authority to address this impending aquatic crisis. It is only by working together through partnerships that we will make a difference. SARP includes the fish and wildlife agencies from 13 States (Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, Missouri, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, and Texas), the Gulf and Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commissions, the Gulf of Mexico and South Atlantic Fishery Management Councils, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and NOAA Fisheries.

This unique and focused effort is poised to deliver a new regional approach to aquatic conservation for future generations. Securing $3 million in additional funding for the SARP is critical for the successful implementation of the Southeast Aquatic Habitat Plan.

Thank you for your consideration of this request. If you should have any questions or need further information, please contact my Fisheries Division Director, Benjy Kinman, at (502) 564–3400.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF KENNEBUNKPORT CONSERVATION TRUST

Mr. Chairman and Honorable Members of the Committee: On Behalf of the Kennebunkport Conservation Trust, I appreciate the opportunity to present this testimony in support of a $650,000 appropriation from the Land and Water Conservation Fund for land acquisition within the Rachel Carson National Wildlife Refuge.

The Rachel Carson NWR plays a critical role in land protection efforts in southern Maine, serving as an anchor around which numerous local conservation organizations focus their efforts to protect land along the river corridors that flow through the refuge to the sea. The refuge and its supporters are working to effectively stitch

together conserved properties into a greenbelt for habitat and water quality protection and public enjoyment.

Previous years' appropriations have allowed the USFWS to conserve several properties within the refuge at Biddeford Pool and Parson's Beach, providing an important buffer between the intense development pressure along the southern Maine coast and its fragile coastal estuaries. While significant acreage within the refuge is protected today, additional areas of concern remain in need of protection.

Available for immediate acquisition from a willing landowner in fiscal year 2007 is the 49-acre Parsons Woods property, located in the Parson's Beach area of the refuge near Kennebunkport. Consisting of wooded uplands, the property lies immediately adjacent to existing refuge lands and land being acquired with previously appropriated funds. The Parson's Woods tract contains the headwaters of a tributary of the Little River, the bulk of which flows through existing refuge lands and empties into the Atlantic between Laudholm and Crescent Surf beaches. If acquired, this parcel will allow the refuge to protect important wildlife habitat and link it to already protected refuge lands. Located in a rapidly developing part of Maine, this acquisition offers the refuge an outstanding opportunity to conserve southern Maine's coastal landscape and further consolidate the fragile habitat that exists on the marshes, uplands, creeks, and the estuaries of the coast.

The Friends of Rachel Carson National Wildlife Refuge is the longest standing Friends of the National Wildlife Refuge system groups in the northeast, voicing support for the acquisition and protection of lands vital to the health of the refuge and the communities of southern Maine. We are a 501c3 organization, and our board leadership represents all ten of the refuge's districts. Our local roots recognize and speak for the benefits the refuge brings to our southern Maine communities, the critical plant and animal habitat of our unique coast, and the generations of visitors to the Rachel Carson Wildlife Refuge.

We are fast approaching the 100th anniversary of Rachel Carson's birth in May 2007, and urge you to ensure that her legacy of protection for critical coastal areas is honored through an appropriation to the refuge. Given the development pressures in this part of the state, the opportunity to permanently protect the Parsons Woods property only exists for a limited time. An appropriation of $650,000 for the Rachel Carson NWR in fiscal year 2007 will yield enormous public benefits for generations to come.

Thank you for the opportunity to present this request.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF CARL AND DINNI FABIANI

Mr. Chairman and Honorable Members of the Subcommittee: We appreciate the opportunity to present this testimony pertaining to an appropriation of $5 million from the Land and Water Conservation Fund to acquire 800 acres at Mount Rainier National Park in Washington.

I am a lifelong resident (59 years) of the Town of Wilkeson a small community which has for many years labeled itself as "The Gateway to the Carbon Glacier". My wife and I have been nearly lifelong users of the Carbon River area of Mount Rainier National Park.

While we strongly support the addition of lands along the Carbon River to Mount Rainier National Park, we feel as strongly that the rationale often quoted for this boundary expansion will have a very negative impact on the many thousands of people who currently use the "Carbon River area" of the Park. A reason given for the expansion is that the government will save money by not having to make expensive repairs to the 5 mile road from the Carbon River Entrance to the Carbon Glacier trailhead.

The obvious implication is that the road will no longer be repaired. The Trust for Public Lands has in fact stated in their literature that the road will be converted to a hiking and biking trail. Currently the hike to the Carbon Glacier is a 7 mile round trip of moderately easy walking. If driving access is eliminated this popular hike will become a 17 mile trip which effectively eliminates 90 percent of the users of this trail. 17 miles is not a day hike for most people, especially those with young families and those with limited abilities. The greatest majority of people using this area do so on a day-use basis.

Much of the literature supporting the boundary expansion has stated that new roads, campgrounds and trails would be built which will improve visitor access to the Park. However these proposed new facilities are planned to be built in the newly added lands and will in no way improve access to what is currently considered the "Carbon River area". The slight odor of "red herring" here.

The Carbon Glacier Trail is a very special place in Mount Rainier National Park. Every year the trail takes thousands of visitors of all ages and a wide range of abilities through dense old growth forest, along a raging glacial river, through a rugged rock walled canyon to the lowest glacier terminus in the 48 states. Along the trail are views of Mount Rainier, many wildflowers through the summer, clear streams cascading off the mountains and a variety of wildlife. This trail is the epitome of what National Parks are supposed to be, some of the most unique places on Earth.

If Mount Rainier Park boundaries are extended at the expense of the current Carbon River road from the Carbon River Ranger Station to the Carbon Glacier trail as an excuse to save a few tax dollars, you will be doing the people of this country a disservice that far outweighs any gains made through the boundary expansion.

We have attended a number of public hearings in recent years regarding the Carbon River corridor. Maintaining the current access to the area has always been heavily supported at these hearings and has been a primary topic of interest among attendees of the hearings.

In addition people have been vocal about protecting the very rural and in some areas even pristine character of the Carbon River corridor. Land development is happening at a rapid rate in this part of the country and even now Forest Lands along the Carbon River are being developed for home sites.

Adding 800 acres along Carbon River to the Park for the long term protection of the Carbon River with its Marbled Murrelet, Northern Spotted owl and salmon habitat is reason enough to add these lands. Do not base the expansion on the excuse of expensive road repairs. The repairs are not as expensive as presented and the real loss to people would be priceless.

Thank you for the opportunity to express these views.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE LITCHFIELD HILLS GREENPRINT PROGRAM

Mr. Chairman and Honorable Members of the Committee: The Litchfield Hills Greenprint Program appreciates the opportunity to present this testimony in support of a $1.22 million appropriation to the State of Connecticut from the Forest Legacy Program for the second phase of the Skiff Mountain project. The Litchfield Hills Greenprint is an initiative sponsored by the Housatonic Valley Association (HVA), the Trust for Public Land (TPL), and area land trusts to conserve the ecological integrity of this landscape and the rural character of its communities. A greenprint is a land use plan created by community leaders and residents that identifies and prioritizes important lands and those most vulnerable to development at local and regional scales. The Litchfield Hills Greenprint has identified Skiff Mountain in Kent, CT as one of the area's top conservation priorities

Skiff Mountain lies within the Highlands region of the East Coast, virtually in the backyard of the nation's largest metropolitan area. Located within an hour of nearly 25 million Americans, the Highlands form a greenbelt of forests and farmland adjacent to the sprawling Hartford-New York-Philadelphia urban corridor. Two million acres of glacial bogs, hardwood-conifer swamps, rock outcrop communities, and chestnut oak forests stretch from western Connecticut across the Lower Hudson River Valley and northern New Jersey into Pennsylvania, enticing more than 14 million visitors each year—more than Yellowstone and Yosemite National Parks combined.

The state has identified the Connecticut portion of the Highlands as a critical focus area under its Forest Legacy Program. Right now there are four separate parcels of land in this focus area that are available for protection in fiscal year 2007. These parcels total approximately 510 acres of Skiff Mountain Forest in northwestern Connecticut. They form a network of forested properties in Litchfield County straddling the Kent-Sharon town line, an area under tremendous large-lot development pressures. Strategically located among already existing conservation lands, and immediately adjacent to the federally protected and world-renowned Appalachian National Scenic Trail, the Skiff Mountain assemblage has been identified by the state as its top priority for Forest Legacy funding this year completing the second and final phase of this outstanding conservation effort.

In fiscal year 2007, $1.22 million is needed from the Forest Legacy program to help preserve 510 acres of Skiff Mountain, and keep intact this conservation corridor of the Housatonic River Watershed and four-state Highlands region. Local funding and land value donation will match these funds. We hope that you will provide $1.22 million to ensure the success of this effort in the fiscal year 2007 Interior appropriations bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to present this request.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE MISSOULA COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee: The Missoula County Commissioners are in strong support of the conservation initiatives being implemented in the Swan Valley. Over the past seven years, constituents in the Valley have been working together with landowners, public resource and land management agencies and non-governmental organizations to address issues of concern. This effort has included identification of community values, science-based assessments of natural resources and development of a strategy to conserve resource values important to the community.

The Swan Valley forest landscape provides for a rich diversity of wildlife and fisheries habitat, outdoor recreation opportunities and variety of forest-based livelihoods. Its location between the Bob Marshall Wilderness complex and the Mission Mountains Wilderness provides a critical link between natural areas in our State. Maintaining the connectivity between these areas and avoiding habitat fragmentation are critical to a variety of wildlife species. Avoiding residential development within rural forestlands reduces the potential for property loss, human injury and wildfires.

As part of a collaborative effort, the Plum Creek Timber Company has made available a portion of its land in the Swan Valley for conservation sale to the public. Missoula County lends its support to the U.S. Forest Service's fiscal year 2007 request for a $16.2 million appropriation from the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF). This would allow the Flathead National Forest (FNF) to acquire lands in the southern part of the Valley (within Missoula County), which are important for wildlife habitat and public recreation. Such acquisitions would reduce fragmentation and lead to more effective and efficient land management. The Swan Valley request is a high priority for the U.S. Forest Service-Northern Region this year.

Of particular interest to the County is an emergency communications facility located on the Pierce Lake property, east of Highway 83. This site is leased by Missoula County Emergency Services and provides important public safety benefits. Use of the site will be continued under a special use permit with the Flathead NF.

Additionally, the Condon Creek properties include a critical portion of a grizzly bear linkage zone, wetlands and riparian areas, big game winter range and about a mile of Swan River frontage. The local community places a high value on these parcels, which are adjacent to or near Highway 83, important for public access, and susceptible to subdivision and development. Conversion of these forestland parcels would lead to habitat fragmentation, conflicts with forest management of the Flathead NF, reduction of public recreation opportunities, and the creation of a residential/wildland interface zone.

The LWCF funding is one of several complementary efforts being implemented to achieve community goals in the Valley, including an impressive array of both public and private funding resources.

We recognize the Committee's support over the past few years to secure LWCF funding, and we encourage complete funding of this high-priority Swan Valley project. We appreciate your support for this funding request, which will promote our rural forest-based economies and provide recreational opportunities for the residents of the County and State—as well as visitors from elsewhere—for generations to come.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide our support.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF MARINE RESOURCES

The Mississippi Department of Marine Resources wishes to join the list of agencies seeking your support for the President's fiscal year 2007 Budget Request of $3 million for the National Fish Habitat Initiative (NFHI) program and a supplemental appropriation of $3 million to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Southeast Fisheries Program for the Southeast Aquatic Resources Partnership (SARP).

The NFHI, lead by the International Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies in partnership with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, is a nationwide fisheries habitat restoration plan modeled on the successful North American Waterfowl Management Plan. The SARP is developing a Southeast Aquatic Habitat Plan that will guide the implementation of the NFHI on a regional scale and serve as a model for other regions of the country. The Southeast Aquatic Habitat Plan seeks to identify and establish Fish Habitat Partnerships to meet the objectives of the NFHI.

The SARP was initiated in 2001 to better address the conservation and management of aquatic resources in the Southeastern United States. This partnership developed because (1) the Southeast has the highest diversity of aquatic species and habitats of any region in the country, (2) these resources are facing serious threats

to their future existence, and (3) no single State or Federal agency has the necessary resources and authority to address these threats. It is only by working together through partnerships that this issue can be effectively resolved. SARP includes fish and wildlife agencies from Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, Missouri, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, and Texas as well as the Gulf and Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commissions, the Gulf of Mexico and South Atlantic Fishery Management Councils, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and NOAA Fisheries.

This unique and focused effort is poised to deliver a new regional approach to aquatic conservation for future generations. Securing $3 million in additional funding for the SARP is critical for the successful implementation of the Southeast Aquatic Habitat Plan.

We thank you for your valuable time and consideration.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF WILDLIFE, FISHERIES AND PARKS

We are seeking your support for the President's fiscal year 2007 Budget Request of $3 million to support the National Fish Habitat Initiative (NFHJ) and, furthermore, we ask you to support an additional $3 million to be appropriated to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Southeast Fisheries Program for the Southeast Aquatic Resources Partnership (SARP). The NFHI, lead by the International Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies in partnership with the U.S. dish and Wildlife Service, is a nationwide fisheries habitat restoration plan modeled on the successful North American, Waterfowl Management flan. The SARP is developing a Southeast Aquatic Habitat Plan that will guide the implementation of the NFHI on a regional scale and serve as a model for other regions of the country. The Southeast Aquatic Habitat plan will identify and establish Fish Habitat Partnerships that will deliver the objectives of the NFHJ in the Southeast (Attachment).

The SARP was initiated in 2001 to better address the conservation and management of aquatic resources in the Southeastern United States. This partnership developed because (1) the Southeast has the highest diversity of aquatic species and habitats of any region in the country, (2) these resources are facing serious threats to their future existence, and (3) no single State or Federal agency has the necessary resources and authority to address this impending aquatic crisis. It is only by working together through partnerships that we will make a difference. SARP includes the fish and wildlife agencies from 13 States (Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, Missouri, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, and Texas), the Gulf and Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commissions, the Gruff of Mexico and South Atlantic Fishery Management Councils, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and NOAA Fisheries.

This unique and focused effort is poised to deliver a new regional approach to aquatic conservation for future generations. Securing $3 million in additional funding for the SARP is critical for the successful implementation of the Southeast Aquatic Habitat Plan.

Thank you for your consideration of this request. If you should have any questions or need further information, please contact Mr. Walter Hubbard, 601–432–2208.

Attachments.

SOUTHEAST AQUATIC RESOURCES PARTNERSHIP

With partners, protect, conserve, and restore aquatic resources including habitats throughout the Southeast, for the continuing benefit, use, and enjoyment of the American people.

The Southeast Aquatic Resources Partnership (SARP) supports the President's fiscal year 2007 Budget Request of $3 million for the National Fish Habitat Initiative (NFHI) and, furthermore, recommends that an additional $3 million be allocated to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Southeast Fisheries Program for implementation of the SARP Aquatic Habitat Plan.

Recognizing the Southeast's unique biological diversity, looming threats to critical habitats and limited resources to meet the immense challenges, States and Federal agencies and organizations with management authority for fisheries and aquatic resources in the Southeast joined forces to form a ground-breaking partnership five years ago. The Southeast Aquatic Resources Partnership (SARP) includes fish and wildlife agencies from 13 States (Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, Missouri, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, and Texas); the Gulf and Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commissions; the Gulf of Mexico and South Atlantic Fishery Management Councils; the U.S. Fish and

Wildlife Service; and NOAA Fisheries. These entities have signed an unprecedented Memorandum of Understanding pledging to work together for the conservation and management of aquatic resources in the Southeast. The SARP also involves a number of other Federal agency partners and non-governmental organizations.

THE SOUTHEAST—AQUATIC DIVERSITY OF GLOBAL IMPORTANCE

The people of the Southeastern United States live in an area that has more aquatic freshwater species (62 percent of the freshwater fishes and 75 percent of the freshwater mussels) than any region of the country. The Southeast has the most aquatic diversity in the country, more than 70 major river basins, more miles of coastal shoreline (26,000 miles), the highest economic return on recreational fishing ($17 billion in total economic output), and thebulk of thecountry's wetlands important to fisheries and other aquatic organisms (45 percent of the country's wetlands and 78 percent of its coastal marsh).

THE SOUTHEAST—A CRISIS UNFOLDING

Human populations in the Southeastern United States are projected to grow by about 25 percent between 2005 and 2025. Five of the top 10 most sprawling U.S. metropolitan areas of 1 million people or more are in the Southeastern United States—Nashville, Charlotte, Greensboro, Atlanta, and Memphis. Nine Southeastern States are among the top 20 States that lost the most open space and farmland to urban sprawl during the 1990's. New and expanding communities will exhaust water supplies and place increased threats to fishery habitats in rivers, lakes, and coastal waters. Water resource needs that support outdoor recreational pursuits will compete with agricultural interests, waterborne transportation interests, and water supply needs for more and more communities. The challenge will be to develop sustainable uses of fresh water and aquatic resources. The predictable increase in public recreation will require everyone to work even closer together to ensure that economic vitality and human health are not at odds with fisheries and aquatic resource conservation, but rather are seen as the results of healthy aquatic resources.

SARP ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Since its inception in 2001, the SARP has realized significant accomplishments. The SARP has achieved more than $700,000 in grants, as well as substantial contributions from the SARP members to begin laying the foundation for the creation of a Southeast Region Aquatic Habitat Plan—which will be the first regional component completed under the National Fish Habitat Plan, and the national plan's primary delivery mechanism for—the Southeast Region. Successful steps in this process have included:

—*Pilot Rivers Aquatic Habitat Planning Project*.—The SARP worked with The Nature Conservancy to complete pilot aquatic habitat plans for 4 priority watersheds in the Southeast Region—Roanoke River (NC), Altamaha River (GA), Pascagoula River (MS), and Duck River (TN). This project was supported by a $75,000 grant from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) and a $75,000 matching grant from the SARP partner agencies.

—*SARP Coordinator*.—The SARP coordinator's position was filled in Fall 2005. This was supported by the Southeastern Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies who committed funding for the position and by a $40,000 grant from the NFWF.

—*Regional Integration of State Wildlife Action Plans*.—The SARP is conducting a southeastern regional assessment of aquatic species identified in recently completed State Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategies as being of the greatest conservation need, developing a process for integrating the aquatic elements of the plans, and identifying areas of regional importance for aquatic diversity. This project was supported by a $90,000 grant from the NFWF.

—*Aquatic Nuisance Species Coordinator*.—The SARP is developing aquatic nuisance species (ANS) management plans for all SARP States. State plans are scheduled to be completed in late 2007. Development and implementation of these plans will enhance the capabilities of the States to detect and respond to ANS introductions. This was supported by a $232,500 Multi-state Conservation Grant from the International Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (IAFWA).

—*Southeast Aquatic Habitat Plan*.—The SARP is developing a regional Aquatic Habitat Plan. With the completion of the pilot rivers project, the results and planning methodologies developed in that process will be employed in the development of the regional plan. The Southeast Aquatic Habitat Plan will be com-

pleted in 2007, and will be the regional component of the National Fish Habitat Plan. This project was supported by a $257,000 Multi-state Conservation Grant from IAFWA.

The Southeast Aquatic Habitat Plan will identify the highest priority aquatic habitat needs and how to better address the conservation and management of aquatic resources across the region. Securing $3 million in additional funding for the SARP is critical for the successful implementation of the Southeast plan. The SARP's efforts at regional planning will serve as a model for other regions identified in the NFHI and as components of the national plan itself. Through this process, the SARP will identify and establish Fish Habitat Partnerships that will deliver the objectives of the NFHI in the Southeast.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE MONTANA FISH, WILDLIFE & PARKS

Montana has a great deal of interest in locating and developing wild rainbow trout strains, that has some significant level of resistance to the whirling disease parasite Myxobolus cerebralis. Montana's management of its salmonid fisheries differs somewhat from other western states in that it manages most of its cold-water salmonid streams as wild fisheries and stocking of hatchery strains of rainbow trout is not allowed in these waters. Because of this management philosophy, it would be essential that any whirling disease resistant strain(s) of rainbow trout developed through strain resistant research would fit the wild trout management strategy. Rainbow trout which show some ability to resist whirling disease infections would have to be capable reproducing and surviving in the wild environment, plus they would have to be compatible with the other wild salmonids, such as native cutthroat trout, residing in these streams.

Whirling disease research conducted over the last several years has uncovered two wild strains of rainbow trout, which has shown some significant resistance to the whirling disease parasite, Myxobolus cerebralis. The first strain is primarily found in lake environments with the only source being in Harrison Reservoir located 50 miles west of Bozeman, MT. The strain was introduced into Harrison Reservoir in late 1970's from Lake DeSmet, Wyoming. A four-year imprint series from 1977–81 established a self-sustaining wild rainbow trout population, which sustained itself on wild reproduction until the whirling disease parasite was introduced in the mid 1990's. Initially, the introduction caused a large (50 percent) decline in this wild population. Early whirling disease research at the Pony Whirling Disease Lab showed that this strain of rainbow trout (DeSmet) had a measurable resistance to the parasite even without any known previous contact with the WD parasite. Early tests showed that approximately 50 percent of the Harrsion/DeSmet rainbow trout were resistant to the parasite. More recent research has shown the strain has increased its level of resistance after 10 years of exposure to the WD parasite to where nearly 90 percent are resistant to infection. Montana has decided that this WD resistant strain of rainbow trout is a very valuable stock and may play an important role in solutions to whirling disease, especially in lake environments. In partnership with the USFWL Service, Montana is beginning the development a Harrison/DeSmet rainbow brood stock to be maintained and held by the Ennis National Fish Hatchery. This strain should have wide spread use in areas where whirling disease is a problem in lake environments.

A second wild rainbow trout strain has been identified, as partially resistant to the whirling disease parasite and is found in the upper Madison River. Initially when the parasite was introduced into the Madison River in the late 1980's, this strain had almost no resistance to whirling disease infections resulting in large (90 percent) losses in the wild population. After approximately 15 years of exposure to M. cerebralis, this strain appears to have developed enough resistance to the parasite to allow some survival to the second and third year of life. Prior to this development of whirling disease resistance, young-of-the-year wild Madison River rainbow trout experienced a 95 percent or greater loss during their first year of life. While this is good news for the upper Madison River fisheries, some disturbing problems have accompanied this new resistance. The resistant offspring has a much slower growth rate than observed previously measured and appears to have a very high mortality rate during its third year of life. Because of these two problems with the WD resistant offspring, there has been little improvement in the number of larger wild rainbow trout in the upper Madison River. More research needs to been done on this resistant stream rainbow trout to determine if this problem can be resolved or is this condition of the new found resistance. To date this is the only instance where whirling disease resistance has developed in a wild stream strain of rainbow trout after 10–20 years of exposure to the parasite. Development of salmonid strains

resistant to whirling disease infections may be one of the most promising areas of research and may offer solutions to this problem in some wild trout waters. The rainbow trout resistant strain research may offer an important insight to whirling disease resistance in other susceptible salmonid species.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE MOUNTAIN GROUP SIERRA CLUB

Mr. Chairman and Honorable Members of the Committee: The Mountain Group Sierra Club appreciates this opportunity to present this testimony in support of a $800,000 appropriation from the Land and Water Conservation Fund for the Wild Horse Creek conservation project in the San Bernardino National Forest.

The Mountain Group Sierra Club has over 200 members and represents the mountain communities from Crestline to Green Valley Lake. All the communities are within the San Bernardino National Forest.

For over a hundred years, the San Bernardino National Forest has protected portions of the San Gabriel, San Bernardino, San Jacinto, and Santa Rosa mountains. The nearly 660,000 acres of the national forest located about 60 miles east of Los Angeles provide a wide variety of climates, vegetation, scenery, and wildlife. Nearly two million people visit the forest each year for activities such as hiking, camping, horseback riding, fishing, and skiing. This high rate of use is steadily increasing due to the close proximity of large and rapidly growing metropolitan areas in and around the greater Los Angeles Basin. More than half of the state's population lives within a two-hour drive of this popular forest.

Available for acquisition in fiscal year 2007 is the 273-acre Wildhorse Creek property, located in the San Gorgonio Ranger District on State Highway 38. The property is the last significant remnant of an old cattle ranch and is surrounded on three sides by the national forest and on the fourth side by the state highway. This key inholding in the forest has nesting habitat for the California spotted owl and the southwestern willow flycatcher. It also provides critical wintering range for western mule deer, and supports mountain lions, bears, weasels, and other species typically found in the San Bernardino National Forest. There are willows located along the creek at the lower end of the property where Wildhorse Creek meets the Santa Ana River. In the more forested portions of the property, there are Jeffrey pines and western juniper.

A historic trailhead is located where Wildhorse Creek crosses Highway 38. The Wildhorse Meadow Trail was a main thoroughfare for the indigenous people of the area before the first wagon trails were built. Later, when the early homesteaders moved into Big Bear Valley, it became a major cattle route. Over the years, gold miners, deer hunters, and equestrians have used the trail. Since the property has been in private ownership and there are alternative routes into the upper Santa Ana Mountains, the Forest Service has blocked access to the Wildhorse Meadow Trail. Public acquisition of this property would allow the Forest Service to reopen this popular trail, which wanders through picturesque granite boulders. This historic trail would take hikers and equestrian visitors to Sugarloaf Mountain for overnight camping. A proposed wilderness area, Sugarloaf Mountain is not far from Big Bear Lake and would provide a less visited alternative to the nearby San Gorgonio Wilderness. The Heart Bar Recreation Area lies to the south of the parcel and the Barton Flats Recreation Area is to the west. Once acquired by the Forest Service, the Wildhorse Creek property would be accessible to family campers, day users, and organization campers from these recreation areas. With its convenient location on Highway 38 and its moderately sloping lower portions, the Wildhorse Creek property is highly developable due to the easy access and suitable topography. In addition, some of the development proposals have been related to the export of water from the area, which contains the headwaters of the Santa Ana River. Such proposals pose a threat to the management and resources of the surrounding USFS lands and have made this acquisition a priority for the forest.

An fiscal year 2007 appropriation of $800,000 from the Land and Water Conservation Fund is needed for the Forest Service to acquire this key property. Federal acquisition is essential in order to avoid development and protect this property's excellent wildland character.

The Mountain Group Sierra Club urges you to include this project in the fiscal year 2007 Interior and Related Agencies Appropriations bill.

Thank you for considering this request.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE MOUNTAINS TO SOUND GREENWAY TRUST

Mr. Chairman and Honorable Members of the Subcommittee: I write on behalf of the Mountains to Sound Greenway Trust to urge your support of an appropriation of $1.7 million for the Cascade Checkerboard Program in the Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest (MBSNF) in Washington. The Greenway Trust is the private, nonprofit conservation organization that has successfully protected over 130,000 acres of farm and forest land along Interstate 90, a National Scenic Byway, that gives millions of people access to outdoor recreation in the MBSNF.

For over a century, the central Cascades have been marked by the checkerboard land patterns resulting from the 19th century land grant system. This mix of public and private forest lands has made coherent and efficient management for forestry and wildlife habitat difficult for both public and private landowners.

Two important land parcels proposed for acquisition in fiscal year 2007, in the vicinity of Stampede Pass and Dandy Pass along the crest of the Cascade Mountains. Located less than 50 miles from Seattle, these proposed acquisitions are primarily within the boundaries of the Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie NF, with a corner of the Stampede Pass parcel lying in the adjacent Wenatchee NF. In addition to their key role in providing wildlife connectivity, they are important for recreational assets.

The 618-acre Stampede Pass parcel, which is available for $975,000, contains two miles of the internationally famous Pacific Crest Scenic Trail (PCT) running from Mexico to Canada along the spine of Western mountains. This project is a top priority of the Pacific Crest Trail Association and its acquisition will provide permanent protection for this segment of the trail.

The 640-acre Dandy Pass parcel lies just south of the PCT and is available for $725,000. Its acquisition will provide additional protection for the landscape surrounding and visible from the trail. In addition to hiking, visitors can enjoy camping and cross-country skiing. Public ownership will also ensure public access to adjacent Forest Service lands.

Acquisition of these parcels is part of an ongoing program of consolidating lands in the central Cascades, which has long been a Forest Service priority. The acquisitions of the Stampede Pass and Dandy Pass parcels will improve forest management, enhance recreational activities, and secure vital wildlife migration corridors. An fiscal year 2007 appropriation of $1.7 million from the Land and Water Conservation Fund for the Forest Service Cascade Checkerboard program is necessary to bring these lands into protected public ownership.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, the opportunity to present this testimony and for your consideration of this request.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF MACK TAYLOR, GEOLOGIST

This is to request that you maintain current funding for the Mineral Resources Program of the U.S. Geological Survey.

The Mineral Resources Program produces Mineral Industry Surveys and Mineral Resource Assessments which are used by the mining and mineral resource industries throughout the world as the only authoritative source of fundamental data on the changing status of the world's mineral resources. Those of us in the mining industry use these reports constantly in planning and assessment of development and production activities.

There is no other source, anywhere, for these basic studies. The research and assessments produced by this group, derived from a baseline stretching back over a century, could not be equaled by any other agency, public or private, anywhere in the world.

This is one of the most efficient and effective groups in the U.S. Government. Without the studies and information that this small group of people provide on a continuing basis, it would be very difficult to maintain the current relatively highly efficient balance between resource supply and demand.

I'm a geologist not an economist, but it seems evident that severe dislocations in resource supply will be felt fairly quickly throughout U.S. industry, and shortly thereafter in increased inflation. Nominal funding by the U.S. Government supports a program with a very large positive impact.

Please reconsider the proposal to greatly reduce or eliminate funding for the Mineral Resources Program.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE METROPOLITAN WATER DISTRICT OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

The Metropolitan Water District of Southern California is writing in support of the following federal programs, in priority order, under the Bureau of Land Management and Environmental Protection Agency's budgets, that we believe are deserving of your Subcommittee's support during the fiscal year 2007 budget process:

California Bay-Delta Program

EPA funding for CALFED related programs: water quality, ecosystem restoration, watershed protection, water use efficiency, science and coordination.

Soil, Water, and Air Management Subactivity

$5.2 million designation for Colorado River Basin Salinity Control Program.

The Metropolitan Water District of Southern California is a public agency that was created in 1928 to meet the supplemental water demands of people living in what is now portions of a six-county region of southern California. Today, the region served by Metropolitan includes approximately 18 million people living on the coastal plain between Ventura and the international boundary with Mexico.

Included in our region are more than 300 cities and unincorporated areas in the counties of Los Angeles, Orange, San Diego, Riverside, San Bernardino, and Ventura. We provide over half of the water used in our 5,200-square-mile service area and help our members to develop local supplies through increased water conservation, recycling, storage and other resource-management programs. Metropolitan's imported water supplies come from the Colorado River via our Colorado River Aqueduct and from northern California via the State Water Project's California Aqueduct.

We are sensitive to the magnitude of these program requests during tight budget times. We are also committed to supporting these federal programs as they are critical to meeting the challenges of water resources management and source water quality protection throughout California. These programs help to ensure long-term water security and meet the water quality requirements necessary to provide our member agencies with a safe, reliable water supply. We strongly urge your support for these funding requests.

CALIFORNIA BAY-DELTA PROGRAM

Metropolitan strongly supports Environmental Protection Agency funding needed to supplement the State of California's cost share of implementing the CALFED Bay-Delta Program, including water quality, ecosystem restoration, watershed protection, water use efficiency, science and coordination. In particular, we support funding for implementation of key water quality activities, including the San Joaquin River drainage and salinity management, source control programs in the Delta and its tributaries, and water treatment demonstration projects.

SOIL, WATER AND AIR MANAGEMENT

The BLM 2007 General Statement providing budget justifications includes five long-term vision components for the Soil, Water and Air Management Program (Subactivity). One of these components is meeting state water quality standards in all stream miles flowing on BLM managed lands. Included in one of the means and strategies for achieving BLM's performance goals is tracking compliance with BLM obligations to maintain state water quality standards under the Clean Water Act and the Colorado River Basin Salinity Control Act. Reducing saline runoff to meet the interstate, federal, and international agreements to control the salinity of the Colorado River is a critical element of the Soil, Water and Air Management Program. Metropolitan supports the Administration's funding request of $32.053 million for the Soil, Water and Air Management Subactivity under the Land Resources Activity. BLM riparian restoration treatments were in part responsible for the retention of about 90,000 tons of salinity in six Colorado River Basin states, assisting with the objective of preventing further degradation of water quality in the Colorado River. As such, Metropolitan urges that BLM target $5.2 million to activities that help control salt contributions from BLM managed lands in the Colorado River Basin. Of that amount, $1.5 million should be distributed based on proposals submitted by BLM staff to BLM's salinity control coordinator for consideration for funding. Basin states' monies have been utilized to cost share a 2006 BLM proposal stretching the federal funding provided this fiscal year.

Much of the land that is controlled and managed by BLM in the Colorado River Basin is heavily laden with salt. Past management practices, which include the use of lands for recreation; for road building and transportation; and for oil, gas, and

mineral exploration have led to man-induced and accelerated erosion processes. When soil and rocks heavily laden with salt erode, the silt is carried along for some distance and ultimately settles in the streambed or flood plain. The salts, however, are dissolved and remain in the river system causing water quality problems downstream.

Rangeland management can bring about some of the most cost-effective salinity control actions available. BLM's control of erosion from public lands, and thus salt contributions to the Colorado River and its tributaries, is essential to the success of the Colorado River Basin Salinity Control Program. Acceleration of BLM salinity control efforts will result in very significant economic benefits to Colorado River water users. Concentrations of salts in the river cause hundreds of millions in damage in the United States.

We look forward to working with your office to further advance sound water management activities in California. Please contact me, at (213) 217–6211, if I can answer any questions or provide additional information.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF ABANDONED MINE LAND PROGRAMS

As the President of the National Association of Abandoned Mine Land Programs (NAAMLP), I submit this statement on the proposed fiscal year 2007 Office of Surface Mining budget.

The NAAMLP is a tax-exempt organization consisting of 29 states and Indian tribes with histories of coal mining and coalmine related hazards. These states and tribes are responsible for 99.5 percent of the Nation's coal production. Each NAAMLP member administers an abandoned mine land (AML) reclamation program funded and overseen by the Office of Surface Mining (OSM) pursuant to Title IV of SMCRA, Public Law 95–87.

This statement reflects the NAAMLP position on the proposed fiscal year 2007 budget for the Office of Surface Mining, which requests $185.9 million for the Abandoned Mine Land Reclamation Program.

We strongly feel that the future of the AML program should continue to focus on the underlying principles and priorities upon which SMCRA was founded—protection of the public health and safety, environmental restoration, and economic development in the coalfields and mining-impacted areas of America. Over the past 29 years, tens of thousands of acres of mined land have been reclaimed, thousands of mine openings have been closed, and safeguards for people, property and the environment have been put into place.

Please remember that the AML program is first and foremost designed to protect public health and safety. The bulk of state and tribal AML projects directly mitigate AML features that threaten personal safety or welfare. While state and tribal AML programs complete significant projects that benefit the environment, the primary focus has been first on eliminating health and safety hazards and the OSM inventory of completed work reflects this fact.

What the AML inventory of completed work over time, also reflects, at least to some degree, is the escalating cost of addressing these problems as they continue to go unattended due to insufficient appropriations from the AML Trust Fund for state and tribal AML programs. Un-reclaimed sites tend to get worse over time and this results in increased reclamation costs. Inflation combined with increased fuel and material costs, further increases the cost of reclamation. The longer reclamation is postponed, the less reclamation will be accomplished and it will cost more.

The AML inventory is dynamic. We believe the dynamic nature of the inventory was anticipated from the AML program's inception. States and tribes find new high priority problems each year. This is especially true where new communities develop in rural areas formerly used for mining. New sites also manifest themselves due to time, weather and the forces of nature. As a result, new landslides and mine subsidence events will develop and threaten homes, highways, and the health and safety of our nation's residents. This underscores the need for continual updates to the inventory, as well as constant vigilance to protect citizens.

In the end, the real cost of addressing Priority 1 and 2 AML hazards exceed $3 billion. The cost of remediating all mining-related AML problems, including acid mine drainage (Priority 3 sites), could be 5 to 10 times this amount and far exceeds available funds.

These funds also promote development in economically depressed areas. Since grants were first awarded to the states and tribes for AML reclamation, over $3 billion has been infused into the local economies of mining-impacted communities. These are the same communities that have been at least partially depressed by the

same abandoned mine land problems that the program is designed to correct. In fact, those dollars spent in economically depressed parts of the country, such as Appalachia, could be considered part of an investment in the redevelopment of those regions. The AML program translates into jobs, additional local taxes, and an increase in personal income. According to a United States Forest Service 1992 IMPLAN study, for each $1 spent on reclamation construction, $1.23 returns to the nation's economy, and for each $1 million in construction, 48.7 jobs are created. The AML expenditures over the past 29 years have returned over $4 billion to the economy and have created some 150,000 jobs.

The ability to accomplish the high priority reclamation identified in the current inventory is being severely constrained by a declining level of funding for state and tribal AML programs.

While we are aware of the Administration's budgetary efforts to meet other priorities related to Homeland Security, the War on Terrorism, and Hurricane Katrina, we believe it is vital to release AML money that has already been statutorily dedicated for protecting the nation's citizen's health and safety from the threats associated with past mining.

Lack of adequate funding has been and continues to be the greatest barrier to progress under Title IV of SMCRA in recent years and this issue must be addressed if we are to enhance the ability of the states and tribes to get more work done on-the-ground within the foreseeable future.

Although OSM's budget overview, seen at the following link, (http://www.osmre.gov/news/OSM%20FY07%20Budget%20Highlights.pdf) shows $145.2 million for state and tribal reclamation grants, that figure is misleading, as it does not account for money that will go to Clean Streams and Emergency programs. Assuming that OSM will fund Emergency programs at the same level as last year and the Clean Streams program at the projected amount of $6.9 million, the funding for state and tribal AML reclamation grants will be cut from $145.4 million down to the projected $127.2 million as shown above.

The OSM proposed budget for fiscal year 2007 includes an increase over the fiscal year 2006 budget of $688,000 to cover increases in OSM's fixed costs. These include and cover expenditures such as vehicle purchases, building rent, increased fuel costs, etc. States and tribes have also seen dramatic increases in these expenses, yet our grants show no increase to cover these costs.

This reduced level of funding will result in falling far short of meeting the needs AML programs have to correct health and safety hazards in the coalfields. Less reclamation will be completed and citizens living near these hazards will remain at risk.

The NAAMLP firmly believes that the two most important factors in combating the nation's AML problems are reauthorizing the AML program and guaranteeing state and tribal reclamation grants at a level similar to those seen in fiscal year 2001. In addition, we support a return of the state share balances to certified states.

Thank you for the opportunity to present the NAAMLP's perspective. Please contact me if the NAAMLP can provide more information or assist the subcommittee in any way.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE NATIONAL ALTERNATIVE FUELS TRAINING CONSORTIUM

Chairman Burns and Members of the Interior and Related Agencies Subcommittee on Appropriations: The National Alternative Fuels Training Consortium (NAFTC) requests funding of $2.5 million for fiscal year 2007 to continue the important work of our organization in supporting the use of alternative fuel vehicles (AFVs) and alternative technology vehicles. The benefits of our program include improved air quality and decreasing dependence on foreign oil. The NAFTC is funded in fiscal year 2006 for $2 million in the Science and Technology account in the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency budget.

I am Al Ebron, Executive Director of the NAFTC, a consortium of 27 educational institutions listed in the attached table. Our programs are dedicated to the use of AFVs and advanced technology vehicles (such as hybrid gasoline-electric vehicles). The NAFTC supports our nation's energy independence and assists in improving our air quality by: (1) Developing curricula for AFVs and advanced technology vehicles; (2) Conducting training for technicians, fleet managers, government officials, students, instructors and others to maintain AFVs/advanced technology vehicles; and, (3) Conducting education and awareness events to educate the American public about AFVs/advanced technology vehicles. The NAFTC is the only nationwide orga-

nization that develops curricula and disseminates training for AFVs and advanced technology vehicles. The NAFTC is headquartered at West Virginia University.

Our continued dependence as a nation on foreign oil, largely to fuel our transportation systems, is a major weakness in our National Security. The demand for oil drives our foreign policy and strains our relationships both with other countries and with our environment. President Bush, in his State of the Union Address on January 31, 2006, stated, "Keeping America competitive requires affordable energy. And here we have a serious problem: America is addicted to oil, which is often imported from unstable parts of the world. The best way to break this addiction is through technology." The United States Congress passed the Energy Policy Act of 2005 on July 29, 2005 to establish a comprehensive, long-range energy policy. The Act provides incentives for newer and more efficient energy technologies, as well as conservation.

In the transportation sector, important energy-saving options include using AFVs and advanced technology vehicles. According to the Energy Information Administration, 20 percent of the millions of vehicles to be sold over the next 20 years will be AFVs and advanced technology vehicles. Traditional AFVs have increased dramatically in the 1990s. With more hybrid models being offered by automobile manufacturers, thousands of hybrids are now being sold each year.

As the number of AFVs/advanced technology vehicles increases in the United States, the need for properly trained technicians and fleet managers will increase. AFV/advanced technology vehicle trained technicians have greater job opportunities with the promise of higher salaries. The NAFTC has been a catalyst in providing the curricula and training to support this need.

As vehicle technologies change, the NAFTC will revise and develop new curricula and training to support these vehicles. The NAFTC is currently developing programs for hybrid and hydrogen-powered vehicles to support the use of these advanced transportation technologies to reduce our dependence on foreign sources of oil. In addition, the NAFTC is developing training programs for First Responders to instruct these personnel on how to safely address accidents involving hybrid vehicles. We will expand this program to other alternative fuels and Homeland Security issues.

The NAFTC has developed AFV/advanced technology vehicle training for CNG, LPG, Electric, Hybrid, Fuel Cell, Biodiesel, Ethanol and Hydrogen vehicles. Deployment and use of these vehicles will ensure a clean and affordable diversity of options to meet our transportation needs. Trained technicians will ensure the continued use of these vehicles rather than shunting them aside when service or repairs are needed.

Many in the automotive industry predict a shortage of between 250,000 and 300,000 technicians over the next ten years. The training conducted by the NAFTC's National Training Centers is directly impacting the shortage of technicians to maintain AFVs/advanced technology vehicles. NAFTC training programs provide workforce development opportunities in the regional areas of the member National Training Centers.

The NAFTC is making a difference. Some highlights are as follows:

—The NAFTC conducted over 40 classes with over 500 attendees last year. The NAFTC has delivered over 700 courses and trained over 7,000 technicians, students and others nationwide in AFVs/advanced technology vehicles. Many class participants are themselves trainers who in turn train others on AFVs/alternative technology vehicles.

—The NAFTC completed a Biodiesel Training Manual, revised our AFV Overview Manual and conducted nine workshops last year. The NAFTC has developed 20 major curricula and workshop programs for AFVs/advanced technology vehicles.

—The NAFTC has conducted over 750 workshops and education/outreach events with over 160,000 attendees. The highlight of these outreach activities has been National AFV Day Odyssey, a biennial event held in 2002 and 2004. This nationwide event was established to bring awareness and to promote the use of AFVs and advanced technology vehicles to policymakers, instructors, students, fleet managers and the general public. The 2004 event had nearly 25,000 attendees at 54 different sites in 34 states across the country and 2 sites in Canada. Over 24 million individuals were reached through media outlets across the country.

The NAFTC will accomplish the following goals with fiscal year 2006 funding:

—Continue to conduct training on AFVs and advanced technology vehicles across the country. An additional 10 educational institutions will be added to the consortium, enhancing the number of qualified faculty to train students and in-service technicians.

—Develop a new Hybrid Vehicle Training Manual, highlighting the changes in hybrid technology and providing technicians new information on available vehicles.

—Complete the development of the First Responders Safety Training Course. Coordination with Homeland Security, State Fire Marshals, Rescue Organizations, Police and Sheriff Departments, U.S. Department of Transportation, U.S. Department of Energy, U.S. EPA and other organizations for dissemination of this vitally important training has already started.

—Conduct National AFV Day Odyssey 2006. This nationwide event will continue to build on the success of the 2002 and 2004 events. Efforts will be made to reach even more educators, policy makers, fleet managers, students and the general public than previous events. A concentrated effort will be made to ensure the maximum possible media coverage to spread the message of the benefits of AFVs/advanced technology vehicles.

The funding for fiscal year 2007 will be used to:

—Continue to build the program's success, conducting AFV and advanced technology vehicle training across the United States. An additional 10 NTCs will be targeted for addition to the consortium.

—Develop curricula in support of AFV and advanced technology vehicle needs. Heavy-duty hybrid vehicles, such as municipal buses, are being developed and put into service. Training for these vehicles will be developed for the large group of municipal fleet technicians. The Hybrid Vehicle Training Manual will be updated to include new vehicles released by Vehicle Manufacturers.

—Follow-on educational and awareness events will be conducted to reinforce the message of the 2006 National AFV Day Odyssey on the merits of AFVs and advanced technology vehicles in improving air quality and decreasing U.S. dependence on foreign oil.

Fiscal year 2007 funds will support between 35 and 45 schools, as new schools are joining the NAFTC monthly. The NAFTC is at the front of the effort to clean the air of our nation and reduce its dependence on foreign oil. We have taken the initial steps to bring these options to those who work on our cars and to the general public. The Subcommittee should continue the NAFTC program to continue the benefits that our unique nationwide organization can provide in stimulating the increased deployment of AFVs and advanced technology vehicles.

The NAFTC and all of its current and projected members ask that you support a continued appropriation of $2.5 million in the fiscal year 2007 Science and Technology account of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency budget.

Thank You,

CURRENT NATIONAL TRAINING CENTERS

State	Educational Institution	City
Arizona	Gateway Community College	Phoenix
California	Cypress College	Cypress
	Rio Hondo College	Whittier
Connecticut	Gateway Community College	North Haven
Florida	Traviss Career Center	Lakeland
Illinois	Morton College	Cicero
Indiana	Ivy Tech Community College of Indiana	Gary
Iowa	Des Moines Area Community College	Ankeny
Louisiana	Louisiana Technical College	Baton Rouge
Maryland	Com. Col. of Baltimore County (Catonsville)	Baltimore
Massachusetts	Wentworth Institute of Technology	Arlington
Michigan	Lansing Community College	Lansing
	Kalamazoo Valley Community College	Kalamazoo
Missouri	Ranken Technical College	St. Louis
Nebraska	Central Community College	Columbus
Nevada	Community College of Southern Nevada	North Las Vegas
New York	Onondaga Community College	Syracuse
North Carolina	Wake Technical College	Raleigh
Ohio	University of Northwestern Ohio	Lima
	Ohio Technical College	Cleveland
Oregon	Portland Community College	Portland
South Carolina	York Technical College	Rock Hill
Tennessee	Nashville Auto-Diesel College	Nashville
Texas	Tarrant County College	Ft. Worth
Washington	Shoreline Community College	Shoreline

CURRENT NATIONAL TRAINING CENTERS—Continued

State	Educational Institution	City
West Virginia	West Virginia University	Morgantown

PROPOSED NEW NATIONAL TRAINING CENTERS

State	Educational Institution [1]	City
Alaska	University of Alaska	Anchorage
Utah	Salt Lake Community College	Salt Lake City
Vermont	Vermont Technical College	Randolph Center
Virginia	Northern Virginia Community College	Alexandria

[1] Additional training centers are being recruited in Alabama, California, Colorado, Hawaii, Idaho, Minnesota, New Mexico, New York, North & South Dakota, Oklahoma, and Pennsylvania.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT ENVIRONMENTAL PROFESSIONALS; U.S. CONFERENCE OF MAYORS; NORTHEAST-MIDWEST INSTITUTE; NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF COUNTIES; INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL OF SHOPPING CENTERS; INTERNATIONAL CITY MANAGERS ASSOCIATION; CHEROKEE INVESTMENT PARTNERS, LLC; THE TRUST FOR PUBLIC LAND; LOCAL INITIATIVES SUPPORT CORPORATION; REAL ESTATE ROUNDTABLE; AND THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF INDUSTRIAL & OFFICE PROPERTIES

As your Subcommittee prepares the fiscal year 2007 Interior and Environment Appropriations bill, we urge you to include the full $250 million for the U.S. EPA Brownfields Program, which was authorized by the Small Business Liability Relief and Brownfields Revitalization Act of 2001 (the "Brownfields Revitalization Act").

The EPA Brownfields Program has broad-based, bipartisan support as evidenced by the 99–0 Senate vote and the unanimous consent House vote to pass the Brownfields Revitalization Act in 2001. Funds under this program are used to assess and clean up brownfields such as abandoned or under-utilized warehouses, inactive factories, gas stations, salvage yards, vacant lots, contaminated properties, and other eyesores that plague virtually every community. These properties cause blight to neighborhoods, inhibit economic development, pose risks to public health and the environment, and erode the tax base of communities.

The undersigned coalition of organizations represents thousands of communities and tens of millions of Americans who have been working during the past decade to promote the reuse of contaminated properties. Our coalition together with Federal and state government agencies have demonstrated that a strategic combination of public and private investment can return brownfield properties to productive use. The U.S. EPA Brownfields program has been critical to helping hundreds of communities clean up and redevelop these properties, creating thousands of jobs, increasing local tax revenue, creating urban green space, and bringing new vitality to struggling neighborhoods.

By any measure, the EPA Brownfields program has been tremendously successful. EPA has invested about $800 million in the assessment and cleanup of brownfields since 1995. According to EPA, this relatively modest investment has leveraged more than $9 billion in cleanup and redevelopment monies—a return of more than 10 to 1. In addition, this investment has resulted in the assessment of more than 8,000 properties and helped to create more than 35,000 new jobs.

While the EPA Brownfields Program has helped numerous communities, much remains to be done. Experts estimate there remain as many as 1 million brownfield properties nationwide. These sites continue to blight neighborhoods, discourage new investment, and undermine economic progress in many communities. Moreover, at current funding levels, EPA can only fund about one-third of the applicants for Federal brownfields grants. Attachment 1 shows that EPA has turned away approximately 800 applicants over the past 2 years. Without these critical seed funds, thousands of sites will continue to remain idle, blighting neighborhoods and undermining local revitalization.

Despite the tremendous success of the program and the compelling need in communities across the country, the Administration and Congress have significantly under-funded the brownfields program during the past four years. Attachment 2 shows that Congress has only appropriated an average of $165.6 million a year for the period of fiscal year 2003 through fiscal year 2006 for the Brownfields program.

This represents a 34 percent reduction from the $250 million per year authorized for the overall program under the Brownfields Revitalization Act. Moreover, between fiscal year 2003 and fiscal year 2006, Congress has only appropriated an average of $90.2 million for brownfields assessment and cleanup grants to local communities—the most critical component of the brownfields program. This funding level represents a 45 percent reduction from the $165 million authorized for assessment and cleanup grants under the Brownfields Revitalization Act.

Consequently, we request that the Subcommittee fully fund EPA's Brownfields program at the authorized level of $250 million for fiscal year 2007. This modest investment will help hundreds of additional communities clean up and reuse thousands of contaminated properties, thereby bringing new hope and vitality to millions of Americans nationwide.

We also ask that you resolve a technical problem with the Brownfields Revitalization Act, which prevents brownfield grant recipients from using a small portion of their grant to cover reasonable administrative costs such as rent, utilities and other costs necessary to carry out a project. This limitation makes it extremely difficult for local governments, community organizations and non—profit entities to effectively develop and implement their site assessment and cleanup programs and projects. All other EPA programs (Clean Water, Drinking Water, Superfund, RCRA, etc) and virtually all Federal grant programs allow a portion of grant funds to be allocated to cover reasonable administrative costs.

State agencies that receive brownfield funding from EPA are permitted to pay administrative costs with their grants. Only local governments and non-profit organizations are penalized by this prohibition and only the Brownfields program is singled out for this unfair treatment. As a result, many localities and organizations are unable to use brownfields funds. We have heard from a number of communities—especially small and rural communities—who have indicated that they are unable to apply for EPA brownfield funding due to the prohibition on the use of funds for administrative costs.

The fiscal year 2006 Senate appropriations bill for EPA eliminated this prohibition on the use of brownfield grants to cover reasonable administrative costs. Unfortunately, this important provision was dropped during Conference Committee consideration of the bill. Therefore, we ask you to include this provision again in the fiscal year 2007 appropriations bill.

Finally, we thank you for your leadership in eliminating a significant barrier to brownfields redevelopment. Your language in the August 2005 SAFETEA–LU legislation made innocent landowners, who purchased property before the enactment of the Brownfields law, eligible for EPA brownfields grants. This technical correction will enable hundreds of additional localities to assess, clean up and redevelop blighted property, but it will also increase the demand for EPA's brownfields grants.

Thank you for considering our request to enhance EPA's Brownfields Program. The Program is making a critical difference to communities across the country, and fully funding this program would enable more communities to return blighted property to productive use. The technical fix would open the door to hundreds of additional communities who could apply for a brownfield grant and see the benefits of revitalization.

If you have questions or want additional information, please contact Paul Connor of the National Association of Local Government Environmental Professionals at 202–638–6254, Judy Sheahan of the U.S. Conference of Mayors at 202–861–6775, or Ken Brown of the Ferguson Group at 202–331–8500.

ATTACHMENT 1.—UN-FUNDED BROWNFIELDS GRANT APPLICATIONS

Fiscal year	Type of Grants	Grants received	Grants awarded [1]	Un-Funded applications
2004	Assessment	325	153	172
	Cleanup	370	77	293
	RLF	61	15	46
	Total	756	245	511
2005	Assessment	362	170	192
	Cleanup	267	100	167
	RLF	44	13	31
	Total	673	283	390

[1] The awarded grants in 2005 are approximate numbers.

ATTACHMENT 2.—ANALYSIS OF FEDERAL FUNDING FOR THE U.S. EPA BROWNFIELDS PROGRAM: FISCAL YEAR 2003–2007

BACKGROUND

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency established the federal brownfields program in 1995 as a demonstration program, which provided seed funding to several types of demonstration pilots across the country. The brownfields pilots helped demonstrate how federal funding for assessment and cleanup could leverage billions in private sector investment to help bring contaminated properties back into productive use. In 2002, Congress enacted the Small Business Liability Relief and Brownfields Revitalization Act, which provided the brownfields program with a Congressional mandate, new liability tools to promote reuse, and increased funding at a level of $250 million per year.

Specifically, the law authorizes $200 million a year for brownfields assessment and clean-up grants to local communities. The $200 million a year includes direct grants for assessment and clean-up, as well as funding for EPA to administer the program (see table below). The law also authorizes $50 million a year in grants to States and Indian tribes to help them implement state brownfields programs.

By any measure, the federal brownfields program has been a tremendous success. The EPA has invested approximately $800 million in brownfields site assessment and cleanup since 1995. According to EPA, the program's relatively modest investment has leveraged $9 billion in cleanup and redevelopment monies—a more than ten to one return on investment. In addition, this investment has resulted in the assessment of more than 8,000 properties and helped to create more than 35,000 new jobs nationwide.

Unfortunately, both the Administration and the Congress have consistently under-funded the EPA Brownfields Program during the past four years. The result is that hundreds of thousands of brownfields sites remain idle and continue to blight neighborhoods across the country. Below is a summary of EPA Brownfields funding for the period of fiscal year 2003-fiscal year 2007, since the new law was enacted.

EPA BROWNFIELDS FUNDING FISCAL YEAR 2003–2007

[In millions of dollars]

	Law [1]	Fiscal year									
		2003 request	2003 enacted	2004 request	2004 enacted	2005 request	2005 enacted	2006 request	2006 enacted	2007 request	2007 enacted
Assessment, cleanup grants	[1] 165	120.5	89.9	120.5	92.9	120.5	89.3	120.5	88.7	89.1	?
EPA Administration expenses	[1] 35	30.5	27.0	29.5	27.3	28.0	24.3	29.5	24.5	24.6	?
State Grants	50	60.0	49.7	60.0	49.7	60.0	49.6	60.0	49.3	49.5	?
Total	250	211	166.6	210	169.9	208.5	163.2	210	162.5	163.2	?

[1] The federal brownfields law authorizes $200 million a year for brownfields assessment and clean-up grants to local communities. The $200 million a year includes direct grants for assessment and clean-up, as well as funding for EPA to administer the program. The $165 million for direct assessment and clean-up grants and the $35 million for EPA administrative expenses represent EPA estimates for those categories if the Brownfields Program were fully funded at the level authorized by the brownfields law.

THE ADMINISTRATION IS EPA BROWNFIELDS BUDGET REQUEST FOR FISCAL YEAR 2003–2006

The Administration requested only $120.5 million a year for brownfields assessment and cleanup grants to local communities—the most critical component of the brownfields program. This represents a 27 percent reduction from the $165 million per year authorized for assessment and cleanup grants under the Brownfields Revitalization Act.

The Administration requested only $210 million a year for the overall Brownfields program, including grants for assessment and cleanup, grants to the States, and administrative expenses for EPA to administer the program. This represents a 16 percent reduction from the $250 million per year authorized for the overall program under the Brownfields Revitalization Act.

THE ADMINISTRATION IS EPA BROWNFIELDS BUDGET REQUEST FOR FISCAL YEAR 2007

The Administration has requested only $89.1 million in fiscal year 2007 for brownfields assessment and cleanup grants to local communities—the most critical

component of the brownfields program. This represents a 46 percent reduction from the $165 million authorized for assessment and cleanup grants under the Brownfields Revitalization Act. It also represents a 26 percent reduction from the Administration request for fiscal years 2003–2006.

The Administration requested only $163.2 million in fiscal year 2007 for the overall Brownfields program, including grants for assessment and cleanup, grants to the States, and administrative expenses for EPA to administer the program. This represents a 35 percent reduction from the $250 million per year authorized for the overall program under the Brownfields Revitalization Act. It also represents a 22 percent reduction from the Administration request for fiscal years 2003–2006.

CONGRESSIONAL APPROPRIATIONS FOR EPA BROWNFIELDS PROGRAM FISCAL YEAR 2003–2006

Congress has appropriated an average of $90.2 million for brownfields assessment and cleanup grants to local communities—the most critical component of the brownfields program. The funding has ranged from a high of $92.9 million in fiscal year 2004 to a low of $88.7 million in fiscal year 2006. This funding level represents a 45 percent reduction from the $165 million per year authorized for assessment and cleanup grants under the Brownfields Revitalization Act.

Congress has appropriated an average of $165.6 million a year for the overall Brownfields program, including grants for assessment and cleanup, grants to the States, and administrative expenses for EPA to administer the program for the period of fiscal year 2003 through fiscal year 2006. The funding has ranged from a high of $169.9 million in fiscal year 2004 to a low of $162.5 million in fiscal year 2006. This represents a 34 percent reduction from the $250 million per year authorized for the overall program under the Brownfields Revitalization Act.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF SERVICE AND CONSERVATION CORPS (NASCC)

The National Association of Service and Conservation Corps (NASCC) urges you to fully fund, at $12,000,000, the Public Lands Corps Healthy Forests Restoration Act of 2005 (Public Law 109–154) which was signed into law on December 30, 2005.

When funded, the Act will enable the Departments of Agriculture and Interior to engage Service and Conservation Corps in projects: "(A) To reduce wildfire risk to a community, municipal water supply, or other at-risk Federal land; (B) To protect a watershed or address a threat to forest and rangeland health, including catastrophic wildfire; (C) To address the impact of insect or disease infestations or other damaging agents on forest and rangeland health" and for other purposes. Funding the Public Lands Corps will enable federal land managers to cost-effectively complete critical backlogged maintenance projects on federal lands.

NASCC is the voice of the nation's 108 Service and Conservation Corps. Currently there are Corps operating in 40 states and the District of Columbia that annually enroll more than 23,000 young people who contribute about 13 million hours or service to their communities.

NASCC Corps are direct descendents of the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) of the Depression-era that provided work and vocational training for unemployed single young men through conserving and developing the country's natural resources. Between 1933 and 1941 when it was disbanded, the CCC had employed almost 3.5 million men who planted an estimated 2.5 billion trees, protected 40 million acres of farmland from erosion, drained 248,000 acres of swamp land, replanted almost a million acres of grazing land, built 125,000 miles of roads, fought fires, and created 800 state parks and 52,000 acres of campgrounds. But the biggest legacy of the CCC may have been the hope it provided both the young men and their families.

Today's Corps are a proven strategy for giving young men and women, many of whom are economically or otherwise disadvantaged and out-of-work and/or out-of-school, the chance to change their own lives and those of their families, as well as improve their communities. Of the 23,000 Corpsmembers enrolled in 2004–2005, 55 percent had no High School diploma, 64 percent reported family income below the federal poverty level, 30 percent had previous court involvement and, at least 10 percent had been in foster care. Contemporary Corps provide thousands of 16–24 year olds the In return for their efforts to restore and strengthen their communities, Corpsmembers receive: (1) a living allowance, (2) classroom training to improve basic competencies and, if necessary, to secure a GED or high school diploma, (3) experiential and environmental service-learning based education, (4) generic and technical skills training, and (5) a wide range of supportive services.

Research has shown that youth who complete Corps programs have higher rates of employment and earn more than their counterparts. Corpsmembers also score higher on measures of personal and social responsibility and are more likely to earn a college degree. Corps generate a positive return for every dollar invested.

Public Law 109–154 authorizes $12 million for the Secretaries of Agriculture and Interior to contract with qualified youth and conservation Corps to carry out projects on public lands that are consistent with the goals of the Healthy Forests Act. It authorizes $8 million for priority projects and $4 million for other appropriate conservation projects.

The Act creates two preferences; one for projects and the other for Corps. With regard to contracts and cooperative agreements to work on "appropriate" conservation projects, the Secretaries "may give preference to qualified youth or conservation Corps located in a specific area that have a substantial portion of members who are economically, physically, or educationally disadvantaged to carry out projects within the area." With regard to priority projects as defined by the Healthy Forests Restoration Act, the Secretaries "shall to the maximum extent practicable, give preference to qualified youth or conservation Corps located in that specific area that have a substantial portion of members who are economically, physically, or educationally disadvantaged." The Secretaries may also authorize projects to be carried out on Federal, State, local, or private land as part of a Federal disaster prevention or relief effort.

Thus, the purposes of the Public Lands Corps Healthy Forests Restoration Act are twofold: to participate in the fight against wildfires, invasive species, other threats to our public lands and other disaster prevention and relief activities, and to engage young people, particularly those who are disadvantaged, in these efforts. A third benefit of the PLC is that the government may not pay more than 75 percent of the cost of any project. The remaining 25 percent may be provided in cash or in-kind from nonfederal sources.

According to Congressional testimony provided by the Department of the Interior on April 5, "the 2006 fire season started early this year, and fire activity has been well above normal in the Southern and Eastern areas of the United States. The National Interagency Fire Center (NIFC) Predictive Service Office expects fire potential to be significantly higher than normal across most of the Southwest, southern California, portions of the Rocky Mountain area, Texas, Oklahoma, and central Alaska. . . . Overall, we anticipate a very active fire season for the remainder of 2006." According to the NIFC, so far this year 18 states have reported fires that consumed at least 10,000 acres.

In 2004 the National Fire News noted that "as firefighters control wildland fires, another group of quiet heroes move into the area to start the healing. After a wildland fire, the land may need stabilization to prevent loss of topsoil through erosion and prevent the movement of dirt into rivers and streams. Land management specialists and volunteers jump start the renewal of plant life through seeding and planting with annuals, trees, and native species that help retain soils and fight invasive weeds. It's a long term process that comes alive as the wildland fires die down."

This is the kind of work at which Corps excel and can play an increasingly important role. Service and Conservation Corps are an experienced, cost-effective, and valuable resource in the fight against fires and infestation. Corps do fuels reduction work, create firescapes around new communities as cities spread into previously rural areas, provide logistical support to firefighters, remove invasive species like Tamarisk, Leafy Spurge and Russian Olive, combat agricultural pests and insects such as the Bark Beetle and Pine Beetle, and educate homeowners and others about how to prevent fires. They also partner with community-based organizations in disaster preparedness and relief activities.

Some examples of the work performed by Corps are:

—Eleven Corps have sent more than 300 young people and staff to the Gulf Coast. Corps from California, Minnesota, Montana, New York, Pennsylvania, Texas, Alaska, Vermont, Florida and Washington State are helping residents rebuild their homes and their lives by clearing debris, repairing roofs in Mississippi, managing a supply warehouse in Louisiana, serving displaced residents aboard ships in Alabama, and installing temporary "hard roofs" on historic buildings in New Orleans.

—In 2004, the Montana Conservation Corps (MCC) completed over 600 acres of wildfire fuels reduction projects in partnership with national parks, state agencies on private lands, and local conservation districts. Its priority has been to create defensible space around historic buildings in the national parks and around campgrounds. In West Yellowstone, MCC partnered with the Chamber of Commerce to remove 300 hazardous trees lining the popular Rendezvous Ski

Trails, site of national ski races, and an important economic asset in a community trying to diversify from the traditional snowmobile-based economy.

—The Western Colorado Conservation Corps (WCCC) has done work in the urban interface in the Black Canyon of the Gunnison National Park housing area to insure safe passage for emergency response workers. Corpsmembers have been trained in firescaping around new suburban neighborhoods as cities spread into rural areas. They help to provide both visually aesthetic and fire resistant landscape around structures and along the avenues of emergency response.

—The California Conservation Corps (CCC) is the nation's oldest, largest and longest-running Conservation Corps. Nearly 90,000 young men and women have worked more than 50 million hours to protect and enhance California's environment and communities and have provided six million hours of assistance with emergencies like fires, floods and earthquakes.

—The Coconino Rural Environment Corps located in Flagstaff, Arizona, thins hundreds of acres of federal, state, county, city, and private lands every year. The Corps has created multiple partnerships in local communities to mitigate the hazards of catastrophic wild fires including one to provide local Native American communities with more than 400 cords of fire wood. The Corps has increased community awareness to the dangers of wildfire and the risks associated with living in one of the most fire prone forests in the world, thus creating a more fire wise community. The CREC thins more than 500 acres a year and returns more than 4000 acres to native grasslands.

Invasive species are another large and growing threat to our public lands. Almost half of the plants and animals listed as endangered species by the federal government have been negatively affected by invasive species. Purple loosestrife, for example, diminishes waterfowl habitats, alters wetland structure and function, and chokes out native plants. The Asian long horned beetle destroys valuable city trees and could spread. Invasive plants are estimated to infest 100 million acres in the United States. A Bureau of Land Management study (1996) estimated that 4,600 acres of additional Federal public natural areas in the Western United States are negatively affected by invasive plant species every day. One report indicates that invasive species cost the United States an estimated $137 billion a year.

Corps have also been mobilized in California, Montana, Colorado, New Mexico, Washington, Utah and elsewhere to fight invasive species; a growing problem on our public lands. For example:

The Montana Conservation Corps is partnering with the National Forest Foundation, Gallatin National Forest, and Gallatin/Big Sky Weed Management Area Committee to undertake an extensive invasive weed mapping and removal project in the Lee Metcalf Wilderness. In 2003, partnering with the Charles M. Russell National Wildlife Refuge, MCC floated sections of the Missouri Breaks Wild and Scenic River to inventory and map patches of invasive Leafy Spurge using hand-held GPS units and data loggers. The crews collected thousands of Flea Beetles, a tested and successful biological control method for leafy spurge, and returned to the surveyed sites to release the flea beetles in the most sensitive areas.

—The Rocky Mountain Youth Corps (RMYC), based in Taos and the Western Colorado Conservation Corps (WCCC), based in Grand Junction, Colorado, have been actively involved in tamarisk removal for several years. The WCCC has partnered with the Colorado State Parks Department and the state Division of Wildlife, the Audubon Society, and the Tamarisk Coalition to control acres of Tamarisk and Russian Olive, Hounds Tongue, Canada Thistle and other species, as well as 15 miles of Salsafy, Russian Thistle, and Storks Bill.

The Public Lands Corps will provide work experience to low-income, disadvantaged youth between the ages of 16–24 who are enrolled in the Corps, giving them the chance to develop the skills and habits they will need to become employed and productive citizens. This experience will help them help themselves, their families, and their communities. It will also enable federal land managers to cost-effectively complete critical backlogged maintenance projects. We urge you to provide $12 million to support this program and we appreciate your attention to this request.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE NEW YORK STATE ENERGY RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY AND THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF STATE ENERGY OFFICIALS

Mr. Chairman and members of the Subcommittee, I am Peter Smith of New York, and Chair of the National Association of State Energy Officials (NASEO). NASEO represents the energy offices in the states, territories and the District of Columbia. NASEO is submitting this testimony in support of funding for the Energy Star program (within the Climate Protection Division of the Office of Air and Radiation) at

the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). NASEO supports funding of at least $15 million above the Administration's fiscal year 2007 request of $45 million, to a level of $60 million, including specific report language directing that the funds be utilized only for the Energy Star program.

The Energy Star program is focused on voluntary efforts that reduce the use of energy, promotes energy efficiency and renewable energy, and works with states, local governments and business to achieve these goals in a cooperative manner. NASEO has worked very closely with EPA and over thirty-five states are Energy Star Partners. In 2005, EPA and NASEO announced a new Clean Energy and Environment State Partnership program, which already has approximately fifteen state members. We are working closely with EPA on a new Energy Efficiency Action Plan and the Energy Star Challenge. On October 5, 2005 we worked with EPA to have over half the states declare "Change a Light" Day. With very limited funding, EPA's Energy Star program works closely with the state energy offices to give consumers and businesses the opportunity to make better energy decisions, without regulation or mandates. As we are facing an energy emergency, these programs are even more urgently needed today.

Energy Star focuses on energy efficient products as well as buildings. In 2005, 175 million Energy Star products were purchased. The Energy Star label is recognized across the United States. It makes the work of the state energy offices much easier, by working with the public on easily recognized products, services and targets. In order to obtain the Energy Star label a product has to meet established guidelines. Energy Star's voluntary partnership programs include Energy Star Buildings, Energy Star Homes, Energy Star Small Business and Energy Star Labeled Products. The program operates by encouraging consumers, working closely with state and local governments, to purchase these products and services. Marketplace barriers are also eradicated through education.

In addition to the state partners, the program has more than 8,000 company partners. More than 500,000 families now live in Energy Star homes, saving $110 million annually. We are working with EPA, DOE and HUD on the development of a "Home Performance" with Energy Star activity. This allows us to focus on whole-house improvements, not simply a single product or service. This will be extremely beneficial to homeowners. Pilots have already been undertaken in New York, Illinois and Wisconsin. We are also working closely with EPA in the implementation of the new Energy Star Challenge, which is encouraging businesses and institutions to reduce energy use by 10 percent or more, usually through very simple actions. We will work with the building owners to identify the level of energy use and compare that to a national metric, establish goals and work with them to make the specified improvements. Again, this is being done without mandates.

The state energy offices are very encouraged with progress made at EPA and in our states to promote programs to make schools more energy efficient, in addition to an expanding Energy Star business partners program. This expansion will continue. EPA has been expanding the technical assistance work with the state energy offices in such areas as benchmark training (how to rate the performance of buildings), setting an energy target and training in such areas as financing options for building improvements and building upgrade strategies.

The state energy offices are working cooperatively with our peers in the state environmental agencies and state public utilities commissions to ensure that programs, regulations, projects and policies are developed recognizing both energy and environmental concerns. We have worked closely with this program at EPA to address these issues. The level of cooperation from the agency has been extraordinary and we encourage these continued efforts.

STATE EXAMPLES

In the examples noted below, the state energy offices have been active program participants and promotion agents for Energy Star. We can provide a myriad of other state examples at your request.

Alaska.—Thirty companies and public entities in the State are now working with the Energy Star program, with 7,200 homes already earning the Energy Star label. With high energy costs, the evaluation tools prepared by Energy Star have been very helpful in assessing building performance and recommending and implementing improvements. For example, the Matanuska-Susitna Borough School District has upgraded lighting, installed programmable thermostats and taken other measures to reduce energy usage.

California.—More than 1,850 companies and public entities are participating in the program, with 202 manufacturers of Energy Star products located in the State. More than 21,100 homes have already earned the Energy Star label (D.R. Horton

Homes built 1,049 homes in 2005 to Energy Star standards). The State is focusing on a new homes program, there is a State "Energy Star" purchase requirement and companies as varied as Intel Corporation and Hilton Hotels have been program participants.

Colorado.—Energy Star initiatives and projects have been implemented throughout the State. Some notable examples include the: (1) Poudre School District in Fort Collins, which completed 95 projects saving over $300,000/year; (2) Jefferson County Public Schools in Golden, which are saving $2.8 million each year; and (3) 26 different homebuilders constructing Energy Star homes (Aspen Homes now builds 100 percent of its homes to Energy Star standards). Hundreds of companies and public entities are participating in the program.

Idaho.—Twenty-eight companies are building Energy Star homes in the State. Western Window in Caldwell is producing Energy Star windows for use in the southern part of the State. Utilities are actively participating in the program, including both investor-owned and municipal utilities. The State's "GemStar" program is promoting the use of high performance homes. Over 100 companies and other public entities are involved in the program.

Maryland.—Almost 800 companies and public agencies are involved in Maryland. Over 4,000 homes have earned the Energy Star label. State legislation has promoted the use of Energy Star appliances, including making some energy efficient models tax free. Partners include such diverse entities as Harley-Davidson, Howard County Public Schools and Archstone Smith Realty.

Mississippi.—With 60 companies and public entities, numerous manufacturers and many homes participating in Energy Star and earning the Energy Star label, Mississippi is moving aggressively to promote the program. Retailers stocking Energy Star products include Wal-Mart, Best Buy, Circuit City, Home Depot, Lowe's, Sam's Club and Sears. Five companies are now building Energy Star homes. This has taken on added urgency in the wake of Hurricane Katrina.

Montana.—Over 50 companies and public entities are participating in the program, with 210 retail locations selling Energy Star products. Executive Order 03–01 has directed that Energy Star be included in state procurement. Active partners include the Northwest Energy Efficiency Alliance, Montana State University, hospitals, schools districts, etc. The State has forcefully promoted the program.

Nevada.—Over 100 companies and public entities are program participants. The state energy office and the public utility commission are working together to promote a variety of activities, including a recent Energy Star appliance rebate program for utilities. The Nevada Energy Star Partners Campaign has increased consumer awareness to 90 percent. The Clark County School District has reduced annual utility costs by $4 million through energy efficiency efforts across 147 schools. The City of Las Vegas has saved 4.8 million kWh through aggressive energy efficiency measures. Thirty-three companies are now building Energy Star homes. 3,600 homes built by Astoria Homes have now earned the Energy Star label.

New Hampshire.—Over 110 companies and numerous public entities are program participants. Hundreds of retail locations are selling Energy Star products. Rebates for Energy Star products are now offered by the utilities as a result of regulatory actions. The State initiated a master lease program to promote performance contracting for energy efficiency initiatives. Over 500 State-owned buildings are either being evaluated or undergoing modifications.

New Mexico.—Over 80 companies and public entities are participating in the program, with over 2,200 homes already receiving the Energy Star rating. Active participants thus far include Two Park Square in Albuquerque, the federal buildings in Gallup and Roswell, the Albuquerque Indian Hospital and the VA Health Center and scores of schools in Albuquerque. Six companies are now building Energy Star homes, led by Artistic Homes.

North Dakota.—Thirty companies and public entities are participating, with 3 manufacturers of Energy Star products located in the State. Numerous schools have been involved, including, for example, Grand Forks West Elementary School, Grand Forks Winship Elementary School, Cavalier Public Schools and Walhalla Public Schools. A variety of retailers sell these products and Thermal Line Windows in Mandan sells Energy Star windows in 12 states.

Utah.—Over 110 companies and public entities are program participants, with over 170 retail outlets selling Energy Star products. For example, more than 1,800 Energy Star homes have been constructed by Ence Homes (St. George). Thirty-two companies are now building Energy Star homes. Amsco Windows of Salt Lake City is a major seller of Energy Star windows. The University of Utah has now retrofitted 81 buildings with significant energy efficiency improvements.

Vermont.—Over 150 companies and public entities are program participants, with 5 manufacturers of Energy Star products located in the State. Over 1,900 homes

have already earned the Energy Star rating, with active promotion of the program accelerating market penetration and acceptance. The State has created three Energy Star Retail Centers with associated training programs. The state energy office, the Vermont Energy Investment Corporation (operating public benefit programs), Efficiency Vermont (composed of 20 utilities and others), Green Mountain College, Killington Ski Resort and the University of Vermont are all aggressive program participants. Vermont is also part of the Northeast Energy Star Lighting and Appliance Initiative that has saved 8 billion kWh in a five-state region.

West Virginia.—Seventy companies and public entities are participating in the program. The state energy office has provided technical assistance to industries, public institutions and local governments to promote Energy Star products and services, including over 100 energy audits leading to significant improvements. Individual participants have included Royal Vendors, Inc. (Kearneysville), Simonton Windows (Parkersburg) and Marion County Schools (Fairmont). Expanded public information initiatives focus on Energy Star.

Wisconsin.—Almost 800 companies and public entities are participating in Energy Star. For example, over 1,900 homes constructed by Veridian Homes have earned Energy Star status. In addition, 45 schools, 6 office buildings, 4 supermarkets and 3,000 existing homes have now earned Energy Star recognition. In addition to active promotion work by the state energy office having spearheaded the implementation of 22 facility upgrades leading to $2.6 million in annual savings, 350 builders are constructing Energy Star homes. Johnson Controls, based in Milwaukee, has been an industry leader in promoting Energy Star through their performance contracting activities. A new promotional campaign has led to the sale of more than 900,000 Energy Star qualified products.

CONCLUSION

Increases in funding for the Energy Star Programs are justified. NASEO endorses these activities and the state energy offices are working very closely with EPA to cooperatively implement a variety of critical national programs.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF STATE FORESTERS

INTRODUCTION

The National Association of State Foresters (NASF) is pleased to provide testimony on the U.S. Forest Service (USFS) budget request for fiscal year 2007. Representing the directors of state forestry agencies from all fifty states, eight U.S. territories, and the District of Columbia, our testimony centers around those program areas most relevant to the long-term forestry operations of our constituents. State and Private Forestry programs multiply the public benefits of federal funding by leveraging in-kind contributions through cost-share programs and matching funds from states. These programs assist private landowners in providing society with such public benefits as clean water, wildlife habitat, carbon sequestration, and flood control. Wildland Fire Management supports essential State and Private Forestry and federal programs that address wildland fire.

Our recommendations include restoring funding to our top three priorities (State Fire Assistance, Cooperative Forest Health Management, and Urban and Community Forestry) and discussing other opportunities for Congress to further the advancement of sustainable management on both public and private forestlands nationwide.

NASF FUNDING RECOMMENDATIONS FOR USDA FOREST SERVICE IN FISCAL YEAR 2007

[In millions of dollars]

	2006 Enacted	President's proposed 2007	Proposed 2007 NASF
State Fire Assistance:			
State and Private Forestry	32.9	27.0	35.0
Wildland Fire Management	45.8	29.1	55.0
Total	78.7	56.1	90.0
Cooperative Forest Health Management:			
State and Private Forestry	46.9	34.6	48.0

NASF FUNDING RECOMMENDATIONS FOR USDA FOREST SERVICE IN FISCAL YEAR 2007—Continued

[In millions of dollars]

	2006 Enacted	President's proposed 2007	Proposed 2007 NASF
Wildland Fire Management	9.9	4.6	10.0
Total	56.8	39.2	58.0
Urban and Community Forestry	28.5	26.8	36.0
Forest Inventory and Analysis:			
Research and Development	59.4	59.3	60.0
State and Private Forestry	4.6	.....	5.0
Total	64.0	59.3	65.0
Forest Stewardship	34.2	33.9	37.0

STATE AND PRIVATE FORESTRY PROGRAMS

State Fire Assistance (SFA)

State Fire Assistance (SFA) provides crucial financial and technical assistance to states and local fire departments for wildland fire management. SFA helps to ensure preparedness of local resources, which serve as the first line of defense for their forests and communities. These fire fighting resources function as both "first responders" for local incidents and as "ready reserves" for large federally managed catastrophic fires. Further, SFA is the only federal program that currently provides funding for fuel reduction work on non-federal lands, regardless of their proximity to federal lands. It is also one of the few programs that helps communities develop Community Wildfire Protection Plans, which are an important component of the Healthy Forests Restoration Act. SFA also helps prepare states for dealing with non-fire emergencies, such as hurricane recovery and other all-hazard events.

SFA provides the flexibility to meet different state needs, which may include firefighting preparedness, firefighter training, fire suppression, and hazardous fuel reduction, Community Wildfire Protection Plans, as well as prevention activities. SFA is funded under both Cooperative Fire Protection (State and Private Forestry) and Wildland Fire Management in the Forest Service budget. Funds under State and Private Forestry are used to help states increase preparedness at the local level through training, coordination, and communication to local firefighters. Funding under Wildland Fire Management is used for both preparedness and hazard mitigation. Reducing these funds would seriously hamper the states' ability to treat hazardous fuels on private lands and to work with communities to complete Community Wildfire Protection Plans.

NASF recommends increased funding for State Fire Assistance at $35 million under Cooperative Fire Protection and $55 million under Wildland Fire Management. Increasing funding for these line items will provide continued protection for local communities from catastrophic wildland fires, many of which originate on federal lands.

Cooperative Forest Health Management

The Cooperative Forest Health Management program provides funding assistance to address forest health issues on non-federal forestland. Cooperative Forest Health Management activities include prevention, detection, and suppression of damaging insects, diseases, and plants. Every year, the American public loses billions of dollars to damage by invasive species and the cost of insect and disease detection and control. To illustrate the extent of the cost, the potential losses from damage by one insect pest, the emerald ash borer, are $25 million in ash timber and an additional $20 to $60 billion in street tree losses across the nation. The Cooperative Forest Health Management program assists in the development and application of new technologies that mitigate these forest health concerns and reduce public expenses. Forest pests know no land ownership boundaries and often move to and from federal lands. These funds, from both State and Private Forestry (S&PF) and Wildland Fire Management, are critical to the maintenance of healthy and sustainable forests.

Funding for Cooperative Forest Health Management under Wildland Fire Management is used primarily for forest insect and disease mitigation in high hazard areas, such as forests at high risk of fire or those recently burned and susceptible to insect and disease attack. Funding under State and Private Forestry provides states with support for prevention, detection, and suppression of harmful insects and diseases.

NASF recommends funding S&PF Cooperative Forest Health Management at the fiscal year 2006 level of $48 million to provide the tools needed to address forest health issues across the many non-federal forest types and ownerships in the United States.

NASF also recommends $10 million to continue level support for Cooperative Forest Health Management under Wildland Fire Management to address forest health problems that increase the risk of catastrophic wildland fire. Cooperative Forest Health Management funds help states achieve the goals of the Healthy Forests Initiative by restoring healthy forests across ownership types.

Urban and Community Forestry

The Urban and Community Forestry program provides technical and financial assistance to promote the stewardship of urban and community trees and forest resources. The program leverages existing local efforts that help urban areas and rural communities manage, maintain, and improve their tree cover and green spaces. Such efforts emphasize the vital connection between human and natural environments, and create social and aesthetic benefits. These efforts also reduce energy consumption, create healthier human environments, and reduce the prevalence and severity of flooding in our communities.

NASF worked with the Forest Service to develop a new allocation formula to distribute funding among the states and territories. This new formula more closely aligns state funding allocation with program goals and objectives.

NASF recommends funding the Urban and Community Forestry program at the fiscal year 2003 level of $36 million to enhance the quality of life for communities in urban and rural areas.

Forest Inventory and Analysis (FIA)

The Forest Inventory and Analysis program provides crucial forest information to policy makers and land managers, enabling them to make informed decisions about our nation's forested lands. FIA data provides users with relevant information on the condition, extent, use, and health of forests across ownerships. Because of this benchmark accomplishment, FIA must continue to provide essential inventory data for addressing long-term forest management needs. Funding for FIA from State and Private Forestry is essential for supporting state inventory crews, an integral component of the program. NASF recommends funding FIA at $60 million through Research and Development and $5 million through State and Private Forestry, for a total of $65 million. The program must continue to advance toward full implementation in all states. Together with a well-funded research program, FIA will continue to provide essential inventory data for addressing long-term forest management needs.

Forest Stewardship Program

The Forest Stewardship Program continues to serve as the primary program for promoting sustainable forest management on family forest lands. Since its inception in 1991, the Forest Stewardship Program has turned out 240,000 Stewardship Plans covering 30 million acres. By expanding the sustainable management of private forest land, the public receives an array of benefits including increased water quality, improved plant and animal habitat, carbon sequestration, and wood products that support local economies. NASF recommends increasing funding to meet the President's fiscal year 2006 request of $37 for the Forest Stewardship Program. We encourage efforts to better target the delivery of the Forest Stewardship Program in order to focus on priority resources concerns.

OTHER FEDERAL PROGRAMS

Federal Wildland Fire Management

NASF recommends continued funding of federal wildland fire management at the 10-year average. Funding is integral to rapid suppression of small fires before they grow into large and costly fires. The increasing costs of wildfires—due mainly to drought, fuel accumulation, and the rapid expansion of the wildland-urban interface—makes adequate suppression funding critical. We support continued funding for preparedness, fire operations, and hazardous fuels treatment on federal land, including the $15 million provided under State and Private Forestry appropriations

that may be used on non-federal land to protect communities at risk from adjacent USFS lands where hazard reduction activities are planned.

DOI conservation grant programs

NASF supports the Department of the Interior conservation grant programs for private landowners to manage their land for a variety of public benefits. Continued funding will ensure these programs remain viable.

CONCLUSION

NASF seeks the Subcommittee's support for a Forest Service fiscal year 2007 budget that will ensure the continued delivery of a broad range of public benefits from privately owned forest lands. Collaboration among stakeholders across the landscape—federal, state, and local government agencies, private landowners, industry, and non-profit organizations—is necessary to manage for the wide range of forest resources found on all ownerships and the values derived from those lands. Cooperative Forestry, State and Private Forestry (S&PF), and Wildland Fire Management provide these links. The federal share leverages private dollars and provides an important catalyst for collaboration in order to take the work far beyond the usual boundaries of federal land management.

We realize that the Subcommittee will be faced with some difficult funding decisions this year and will have to make sacrifices and tradeoffs to some programs. NASF encourages you to keep our priorities in mind when making these decisions.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide our testimony.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF STATE UNIVERSITIES AND LAND-GRANT COLLEGES (NASULGC)

On behalf of the NASULGC Board on Natural Resources, we thank you for your support of science and research programs within the United States Geological Survey (USGS) and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). We appreciate the opportunity to provide detailed recommendations for: $788 million for the EPA Office of Science & Technology, and the efforts of the American Competitiveness Initiative (ACI); $100 million for the EPA Science to Achieve Results program; and $1.2 billion for the USGS.

NASULGC Supports the American Competitiveness Initiative and the Administration's request of $788 million for the EPA Office of Science and Technology.—State universities and land-grant colleges truly welcome and are excited by the President's American Competitiveness Initiative (ACI) and the renewed national focus on scientific research and education. Education and scientific research have served as the infrastructure and foundation for much of Nation's economic and national security. We feel targeted federal investments in our top priority programs, will provide America with secure economic, environmental, and homeland security. $788 million of the EPA of Science and Technology would provide small increases to maintain ongoing programs. Without sound science, EPA will be unable to correctly identify and develop sound management and mitigation strategies for critical environmental problems. Any cuts to EPA S&T would result in drastic reductions in essential extramural research funded by the Office of Research and Development (ORD) and education and outreach carried out by the Office of Education. Within the EPA we further recommend:

The NASULGC Board on Natural Resources requests that the Committee restore EPA STAR funding to $100 million for competitive grants and $10 million for graduate fellowships.—One of the most effective programs for improving the agency's science capabilities is the Science to Achieve Results (STAR) program. The investment EPA ORD makes in STAR is especially significant and effective because STAR is not a stand-alone grants program. It is coordinated with EPA program and regional offices, and targeted at high-priority needs that support the agency's mission. The program is leveraged by the participation of other federal agencies and the private sector, and involves thousands of research scholars in universities.

NASULGC universities have used STAR extramural research funding to:

—Develop evaluations of U.S. estuarine and coastal water quality degradation,
—Analyze ecosystem health and impairment,
—Establish effective multi-university research collaborations, and
—Develop techniques to assess the risks to fish in the Great Lakes associated with exposure to endocrine disrupting chemicals.

Grants from the STAR program have provided financial support for several of the top graduate students. These students are now working at colleges and universities

to educate others in society about sustainable management of the Earth's natural resources and maintenance of the ecological services that support all life.

STAR graduate fellowships help move America towards becoming more competitive by investing in the next generation of scientists and engineers, and providing opportunities for students to develop the skills needed to enhance this nation's environmental science expertise. Moreover, these grants are often a way to get minority graduate students engaged in high-level scientific research. STAR investigator-initiated research grants are a very important tool to address future workforce needs and are significantly expanding the number of scientists conducting EPA-related research and enhancing the overall quality of EPA Science and Technology.

NASULGC recommends $1.2 billion for the United States Geological Survey, an increase of $200 million above the fiscal year 2006 conference report. This increase would restore cuts proposed in the President's budget; cover rising fixed costs such as salaries and rent; accomplish core tasks that have been under-funded for years; and keep up with inflation.

NASULGC supports this amount in coordination with the USGS Coalition an alliance of organizations united by a commitment to the continued vitality of the unique combination of biological, geographical, geological, and hydrological programs of the United States Geological Survey.

In the wake of Hurricane Katrina, the United States Geological Survey (USGS) was praised for quickly arriving on the scene and providing reliable data that assisted recovery teams. As members of academic community that have partnered with the USGS for the past several decades, we were very pleased with their performance during this catastrophe. We have worked with the USGS to provide the public and private sector, as well as policymakers, with crucial information about natural resources, natural hazards and wildlife diversity. Furthermore, the USGS provides geospatial data, from maps to satellite images, for improved land and wildlife management. Our universities provide necessary expertise to complement the USGS workforce, and the land-grant missions of our universities dovetail appropriately with the resource development and conservation missions of the Department of Interior. We further recommend that part of the $1.2 billion request be used to support:

The NASULGC Board on Natural Resources requests $8,775,000 for the Water Resources Research Institutes, an increase of $2,275,000 over the fiscal year 2006 appropriation. This request is based on:

—$7,000,000 in base grants for the water resources research institutes as authorized by Section 104(b) of the Water Resources Research Act, including state-based competitive grants;

—$1,500,000 to support activities authorized by section 104(g) of the Act, a national competitive grants program, and

—$275,000 for program administration.

The Administration's proposal to eliminate funding for this excellent partnership with state governments and universities is unjustified. Federal funding for the water resources research institute program is the catalyst that moves states and cities to invest in university-based research to address their own water management issues. The added benefit is that research to address state and local problems often helps solve problems that are of regional and national importance. Many of the projects funded through this program provide the knowledge for state or local managers to implement new federal laws and regulations. Perhaps most important, the federal funding provides the driving force of collaboration in water research and education among local, state, federal and university water professionals.

This program is essential to solving emerging and future state, regional and interjurisdictional water resources problems. Institutes in Louisiana, California and North Carolina, made major contributions in emergency planning and hurricane recovery, protecting groundwater aquifers from sea water intrusion and reducing water treatment costs. The institutes also provide training for the next generation of water resource managers and scientists.

The water resources research institute program is constantly striving for efficiency in research administration and collaboration. State water resources research institutes take the relatively modest amount of federal funding appropriated by this Subcommittee, match it 2:1 with state, local and other funds and use it to put university scientists to work finding solutions to the most pressing local and state water problems that are of national importance. The Institutes have raised more than $15 in other funds for every dollar funded through this program.

The NASULGC Board on Natural Resources supports $61 million for the Mineral Resources Program (MRP), which would restore cuts made over the past 5 years, and is a modest increase of about $7 million above fiscal year 2006. Our request should set aside $5 million for the creation of a Mineral Education and Research

Initiative (MERIT), a peer-reviewed external grants program for applied research and education in mineral resources and material flows analysis conducted by universities, state organizations, and individuals in the private sector. Last year, the Senate appropriated and the USGS committed $1,000,000 toward Mineral Resources External Research, but additional funds are needed to expand upon this first step. Apart from this small program, there is virtually no funding to sustain applied science research and education related to mineral resources.

The establishment of a consistently well-funded MERIT would follow the recommendations of three recent National Research Council reports and would help arrest the dramatic decline of minerals expertise in the United States. Funding levels of $5 million in fiscal year 2007, and $8 million in fiscal year 2008, is an appropriate ramp-up for the external grants program, which ideally should reach a level of $20 million per year. Modest levels ($1,000,000) of external research funding by the MRP in fiscal year 2005 to six universities supported graduate student research and education.

The NASULGC Board on Natural Resources supports funding the USGS National Cooperative Geologic Mapping Program at a level of $31.5 million.—This is a $6.1 million increase above the Administration's request. Universities are involved in this program through competitive grants for both the training of scientists. These scientists posses special skills needed in geologic mapping and the production of new geologic maps to meet needs in stewardship of water, energy, and mineral resources; risk reduction from natural hazards; and environmental protection.

The NASULGC Board on Natural Resources supports $17.5 million for the Cooperative Fish and Wildlife Research Unit Program of the USGS.—This is a $2.6 million increase above the Administration's request. The additional funds will be critical in filling the many vacant scientist positions in the Cooperative Fish and Wildlife Research Unit Program throughout the nation. This program has proven to be a remarkably successful investment. Unit scientists also play a vital role in practical, real-world training of the next generation of natural resource managers, who will be needed soon to replace a significant professional workforce component that is nearing retirement.

Thank you for the opportunity to share our views with the Committee.

About NASULGC

NASULGC is the nation's oldest higher education association. Currently the association has over 200 member institutions—including the historically black land-grant institutions—located in all fifty states. The Association's overriding mission is to support high quality public education through efforts that enhance the capacity of member institutions to perform their traditional teaching, research, and public service roles.

About the Board on Natural Resources

The Board's mission is to promote university-based programs dealing with natural resources, wildlife, ecology, energy, and the environment. Most NASULGC institutions are represented on the Board. Present membership exceeds 500 scientists and educators, who are some of the nation's leading research and educational experts in environmental and natural-resource disciplines.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE NATIONAL COOPERATORS' COALITION

SUMMARY

The National Cooperators' Coalition (NCC) urges Congress to increase the budget of the U.S. Geological Survey's Cooperative Fish and Wildlife Research Units to $17.5 million in fiscal year 2007. This increase of $2.6 million above the fiscal year 2007 request is essential to fill the growing number of vacant scientist positions in the USGS program and restore the program's integrity.

The National Cooperators' Coalition is an alliance of more than 60 nonfederal CRU program cooperators and other supporters of the CRU program. Its members include state wildlife agencies, universities, and non-governmental organizations. The mission of the NCC is to build a stronger and more coordinated base of support to serve research, education, and technical assistance needs of the nonfederal CRU program cooperators.

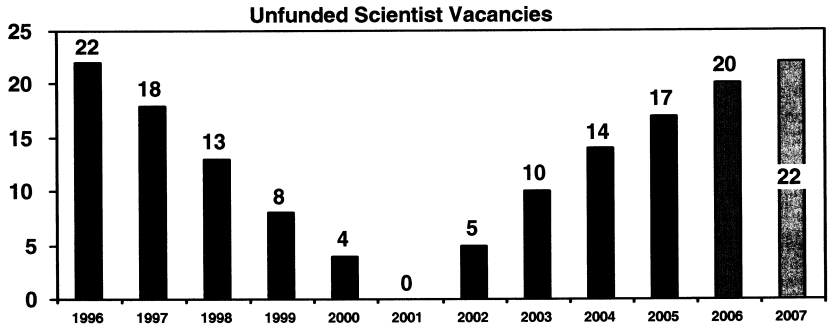
FUNDING SHORTFALL AND LOSS OF SCIENTISTS

The NCC requests your support in providing $17.5 million in fiscal year 2007 to fill the many vacant scientist positions in the Cooperative Fish and Wildlife Research Unit Program of the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS). We greatly appreciate

your past efforts in behalf of the Cooperative Fish and Wildlife Research Units, especially given difficult budgetary constraints.

As you know, the 40 Cooperative Fish and Wildlife Research Units across the country provide very important and cost-effective products and services to state and federal agencies, universities, and private landowners in the form of management-oriented research, graduate level education, and technical assistance. Unlike other programs, this one co-locates substantial numbers of federal scientists at universities who serve as graduate research/teaching faculty. These federal scientists understand (and communicate to their students) the nature of conducting research within a government agency to address real-world problems.

Full funding and scientist staffing for the Cooperative Fish and Wildlife Research Units, which was achieved through your support in fiscal year 2001, resulted in unparalleled cooperation, productivity, and service in the management of our natural resources. Unfortunately, The $14.938 million requested by the Administration for fiscal year 2007 is $2.6 million less than the amount needed to fill the vacant Unit scientist positions and meet congressionally mandated increases in federal salaries and benefits, and is only $861,000 more than the amount appropriated 6 years earlier. During that same time the Cooperative Fish and Wildlife Research Units will have been required to absorb $3.0 million in uncontrollable salary and benefit costs, while being directed to establish and staff a new Unit. The result is that a record number of Unit scientist positions (22) will need to be vacant by the end of fiscal year 2007 in order to meet the funding level in the current budget request. For the cooperators in any given affected state, these vacancies have caused an enormous 25 percent to 67 percent reduction in the number of Unit scientists and their contributions to research, education, and technical assistance.



The Cooperative Fish and Wildlife Research Units have been a remarkably successful investment. Unit scientists leverage the USGS base funding provided by Congress more than 3:1 with funds from other sources. Unit scientists also play a vital role in practical, real-world training of the next generation of natural resource managers, who will be needed soon to replace a significant professional workforce component that is nearing retirement. Scientist vacancies hamper the ability of the program to leverage funding from state, federal, and private sources for addressing key natural resource problems and training tomorrow's managers.

The Cooperative Fish and Wildlife Research Unit program is a synergistic one that requires each cooperator (federal, state, university, and private) in a Unit to make its agreed upon investments under negotiated agreements. Under the fiscal year 2007 budget request, however, for the fifth year in a row, the federal government is not making its agreed-upon contribution, particularly in the nearly half of all Units across the country that have one or more scientist vacancies.

We urge you, therefore, to support providing $17.5 million for the Cooperative Fish and Wildlife Research Unit Program in fiscal year 2007. This action will fill vacant scientist positions at the Units and ensure that the Units can continue to support the needs of state, university, and private cooperators in your states and elsewhere across the country.

We thank you for consideration of our request.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR SCIENCE AND THE ENVIRONMENT

SUMMARY

The National Council for Science and the Environment (NCSE) urges Congress to appropriate $1.2 billion for the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) in fiscal year 2007. NCSE recommends a minimum funding level of $900 million for the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Science and Technology account, including at least $150 million for the Science to Achieve Results (STAR) research grants program and $20 million for the STAR graduate fellowship program, as well as $10 million for the Office of Environmental Education.

The National Council for Science and the Environment is dedicated to improving the scientific basis for environmental decisionmaking. We are supported by over 500 organizations, including universities, scientific societies, government associations, businesses and chambers of commerce, and environmental and other civic organizations. NCSE promotes science and its essential role in decisionmaking but does not take positions on environmental issues themselves.

U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY

The vital importance of the U.S. Geological Survey in protecting public safety has been brought home by a series of devastating natural disasters over the past several years. Investments in the USGS pay enormous dividends by reducing risks from earthquakes, tsunamis, floods, hurricanes, landslides, wildfires, and volcanic eruptions. The USGS plays a pivotal role in preventing natural hazards from becoming natural disasters. Likewise, the USGS helps provide a scientific basis for managing critical natural resources—from energy to wildlife to water resources.

As a founding member and co-chair of the USGS Coalition, NCSE joins with nearly 70 other organizations in recommending an appropriation of $1.2 billion for the USGS in fiscal year 2007. This increase would enable the USGS to restore the science cuts proposed in the budget request, accelerate the timetable for deployment of critical projects (e.g., Advanced National Seismic System, National Map, and National Streamflow Information Program), and launch new science initiatives that would begin to reverse the cumulative effects of the long-term funding shortfall that has left the USGS budget stagnant for the past decade.

The President's budget request would cut funding for the USGS by $20.6 million or 2.1 percent to $944.8 million. In real dollars, the USGS budget would fall to its lowest level since 1996, when the National Biological Service was integrated into the USGS. The fiscal year 2007 request would add $40.1 million in new programs and fixed costs, which would be offset by redirecting $50.7 million from "lower priority" activities and eliminating $10.0 million in earmarked funds, according to USGS budget documents.

Funding is requested for a multi-hazards pilot initiative, development of Landsat 8, increased energy research, and regular testing for avian influenza in wild birds as part of an expanding detection effort. These and other USGS initiatives deserve the support of Congress.

Two proposed large program cuts are of special concern to NCSE. First, $22.0 million would be cut from the Mineral Resources program, a devastating 42 percent decrease in funding. Second, the entire $6.4 million budget for the Water Resources Research Institutes, which are located in all 50 states, would be eliminated. These and other proposed budget cuts would adversely affect the ability of the USGS to achieve its mission. We encourage Congress to restore the cuts, but this funding should not come at the expense of other high priority programs in the USGS.

The USGS Mineral Resources program is an essential source of objective guidance and unbiased research on our mineral resources that helps guide economic development of natural resources and protection of the environment. This guidance and research is important to reduce the environmental impacts of mining and to maintain the growing value of processed materials from mineral resources that accounted for $478 billion in the U.S. economy in 2005, an increase of 8 percent over the previous year. The proposed cuts in the Minerals program would terminate multidisciplinary research that has important implications for public health (such as studies on mercury, arsenic and other inorganic toxins), environmental protection, infrastructure, economic development, and national security.

The Water Resources Research Institutes have been highly successful in developing cooperative programs that leverage federal investments with funds from other sources. The proposal to eliminate all funding for this partnership is inconsistent with guidance from the House Appropriations Committee: "The Administration has placed a high priority on cooperative programs that leverage funds from State and

local governments as well as private entities. The Committee believes that Bureaus that are successful in implementing these policies should be rewarded and not penalized" (H. Rpt. 108–542).

The request includes an increase of $20.7 million for non-discretionary "fixed cost" increases (such as salaries and rent), of which $15.2 million are budgeted and $5.5 million are "absorbed." The cumulative effect of absorbing fixed cost increases over many years has had a disproportionate impact on core USGS programs which cannot absorb cuts without affecting scientific research and monitoring activities. Without full funding of fixed cost increases, the USGS may be forced to curtail ongoing activities, hindering or preventing the delivery of data needed by resource managers and emergency planners. This would increase our vulnerability to disasters and increase the costs of recovery.

In addition to restoring the proposed program cuts, we encourage Congress to provide additional increases that would enable the USGS to meet the tremendous need for science in support of decisionmaking. More investment is needed to strengthen USGS partnerships, improve monitoring networks, produce high-quality digital geospatial data and deliver the best possible science to address societally important problems. The USGS has a national mission that addresses the needs of all citizens through natural hazards monitoring, drinking water studies, biological and geological resource assessments, and other activities.

From 1996 to 2006, total federal funding for research and development has risen by 55 percent from $87 billion to $134 billion in constant dollars. By contrast, real funding for the USGS has been nearly flat after adjusting for inflation. Even this flat funding for the USGS reflects congressional restoration of proposed budget cuts.

We encourage Congress to provide the USGS with a budget that will allow for the growth necessary to address emerging needs for science. After years of stagnant funding and absorption of uncontrollable cost increases, the USGS has a large and growing backlog of monitoring and science needs.

The National Council for Science and the Environment urges Congress to appropriate $1.2 billion for the USGS in fiscal year 2007. This investment will help the USGS improve monitoring networks, strengthen partnerships, produce high-quality data, and deliver impartial science that serves the needs of the nation.

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

In order to fulfill its mission, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) needs increased investments in both its intramural and extramural science programs. The National Council for Science and the Environment (NCSE) urges Congress to appropriate a minimum of $700 million for EPA's Office of Research and Development (bringing it back to fiscal year 2004 levels), including at least $150 million for EPA's Science to Achieve Results (STAR) research grants program and $20 million for EPA's STAR graduate fellowship program. We recommend a total of $900 million for EPA's Science and Technology account. NCSE also urges Congress to restore full funding for the Office of Environmental Education at a level of at least $10 million.

EPA's research and development portfolio has stagnated while the complexity of environmental challenges continues to grow. In real dollar terms, EPA's funding of science has been nearly unchanged for more than two decades. Under the fiscal year 2007 budget request, funding for EPA's R&D portfolio would fall to its lowest level since 1987.

EPA's strategic plan calls for science-based decisionmaking, but the agency will be unable to achieve this goal if its capacity to conduct science is not improved. According to its strategic plan, "EPA has identified reliance on sound science and credible data among the guiding principles we will follow to fulfill our mission to protect human health and the environment." EPA needs to reverse the decline in its capacity to conduct science in order to fulfill its mission.

Under the President's fiscal year 2007 budget, EPA's total budget would decline by $310 million or 4.1 percent to $7.3 billion, after a similar cut in fiscal year 2006. EPA's R&D portfolio would be cut by $43 million or 7.1 percent to $557 million, after a similar cut in fiscal year 2006. Funding for most EPA research areas would decline. If EPA's fiscal year 2007 budget proposal is enacted, funding for the Office of Research and Development would $90 million or 14 percent below its peak funding level of $646.5 million in fiscal year 2004.

EPA created the extramural Science to Achieve Results (STAR) program as part of a set of reforms to EPA science proposed by the National Academy of Sciences in the 1990s. The STAR research grants program expands the scientific expertise available to EPA by awarding competitive grants to universities and independent

institutions in order to investigate scientific questions of particular relevance to the agency's mission.

The EPA's STAR program has been widely praised. The National Academies issued a laudatory report, The Measure of STAR, which concludes that the program supports excellent science that is directly relevant to the agency's mission. It says, "The STAR program should continue to be an important part of EPA's research program." According to the report, the STAR program has "yielded significant new findings and knowledge critical for regulatory decision making." The report says, "The program has established and maintains a high degree of scientific excellence." It also concludes, "The STAR program funds important research that is not conducted or funded by other agencies. The STAR program has also made commendable efforts to leverage funds through establishment of research partnerships with other agencies and organizations."

The EPA STAR research program compares favorably with programs at other science agencies. According to the National Academies report, "The STAR program has developed a grant-award process that compares favorably with and in some ways exceeds that in place at other agencies that have extramural research programs, such as the National Science Foundation and the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences."

Funding for the STAR program has been cut repeatedly over the past several years. The fiscal year 2007 request for the STAR research grants program is $65.3 million, which is 38 percent below the fiscal year 2004 request of $104.7 million and 24 percent below the fiscal year 2004 enacted level. NCSE proposes that the STAR research budget be increased to $150 million, which would allow expansion of areas and scientists supported and would send a signal that Congress is serious about science for environmental decisionmaking.

EPA created the STAR graduate fellowship program to ensure a strong supply of future environmental scientists and engineers. It is the only federal program aimed specifically at students pursuing advanced degrees in environmental sciences. According to the National Academies, "The STAR fellowship program is a valuable mechanism for enabling a continuing supply of graduate students in environmental sciences and engineering to help build a stronger scientific foundation for the nation's environmental research and management efforts."

For the fifth consecutive year, the President's budget request has proposed deep cuts in the STAR graduate fellowship program. Congress restored full funding in each previous year. The fiscal year 2007 budget request would cut funding by 26 percent in fiscal year 2007. The current level of funding is insufficient to allow all students whose applications are rated as excellent to receive fellowships and it is insufficient to meet national needs for a scientifically trained workforce. NCSE recommends doubling the funding for STAR fellowships to $20 million, which can be accomplished without any decrease in the quality of the awardees.

The fiscal year 2007 budget request proposes no funding for the EPA Office of Environmental Education. NCSE strongly encourages Congress to restore full funding of at least $10 million to support the congressionally mandated programs administered by this office. These programs provide national leadership for environmental education at the local, state, national and international levels, encourage careers related to the environment, and leverage non-federal investment in environmental education and training programs.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE NATIONAL CONFERENCE OF STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICERS

Request.—$50,000,000 from the Historic Preservation Fund, National Park Service, the Department of Interior, for the States to carry out the National Historic Preservation Pro-gram Administration.

SUMMARY

The National Conference of State Historic Preservation Officers requests $50,000,000 for fiscal year 2007 for the administration of the National Historic Preservation Program by the states. While this is an increase over the Administration's request of $35,700,000, $50,000,000 is only one-third of the annual deposits into the Historic Preservation Fund.

EMERGENCY SUPPLEMENTAL THANKS

On behalf of the hard-hit State Historic Preservation Officers in the Gulf States, the National Conference extends its deepest thanks to the Senate Appropriations

Committee for including in the Emergency Supplemental the $80,000,000 for restoration of damaged historic places and the $3,000,000 to expedite responses on federal agency impacts to historic places. The State Historic Preservation Offices will use that money wisely in hurricane recovery in the Gulf.

The Supplemental funding highlights the role that resources—dollars—play in preservation. All SHPOs have addressed declining budgets by paring down to the bare essentials. Once at the "bare bones" level, SHPOs have no where else to cut. The Emergency Supplemental funding is so important to the recovery of this historic region. Had HPF funding levels over the years matched inflation, SHPOs would have been better prepared to respond.

IMPACT OF FUNDING DECLINE

States continue to struggle to achieve bare minimum NHPA mandates as funding—in real dollar terms—declines. HPF withdrawals dropped by more than 25 percent from fiscal year 2001 to fiscal year 2003 and have been essentially flat since then. In real dollar terms, the current HPF appropriation is the same as the 1975 appropriation although the workload has increased.[1] Our request would return the national program to levels comparable to fiscal year 2001, adjusted for inflation.

Declining HPF withdrawals continue to force SHPOs to ignore the preservation needs of their States to respond to on-demand federal requirements. Economic Research Associates, an internationally economic consulting firm, analyzed SHPO's activity and concluded——[2]

"Based on average costs, staff allocations and 'time-spent' information provided . . ., SHPOs *have become very efficient at processing Section 106 Reviews.*

"[S]tates already overmatch Federal contributions, so Section 106 can be considered overly 'cost effective' from the standpoint of leveraged Federal expenditures.

"As government programs go, Section 106 appears to run quite efficiently and at a very low average cost. In fact, the opposition to the program is more a reflection of resistance to government regulation of any type, as opposed to specific inefficiencies within Section 106.

"Many SHPOs have streamlined the review processes through Programmatic Agreements, special review approaches . . ., and investment in technology such as web-based databases and Geographic Information Systems (GIS).

"*Other needed preservation programs are being starved to cover under-funded, but mandated Section 106 review costs* (National Register, historic site survey, planning, rehab tax credit assistance, education, etc.)." [emphasis added]

Historic preservation is and has been an effective domestic policy tool that both addresses key priorities for the conservation of our priceless heritage and generates significant economic benefits to the Nation. At $50,000,000, SHPOs could achieve much more in preserving and protecting heritage properties, reviewing Federal historic preservation tax credit applications, implementing the Preserve America and Save America's Treasures initiatives, and streamlining the historic preservation review process.

SUPPORT FOR $50,000,000

Historic preservation enjoys wide, bipartisan support in the Congress and around the country. Senators Mike DeWine and Richard Durbin and a fourth of the Senate went on record supporting the HPF. The Senators said, "SHPOs provide the foundation for the nation's historic preservation program. . . . Funding for SHPOs returns the federal investment by leveraging additional dollars through local jobs, fostering nonfederal contributions and securing long-term economic development."[3]

Mayor Mike Swoboda of Kirkwood, Missouri, said "The value of historic preservation in a local community is beyond price. It's about preserving something that can't be replicated today. It's about appreciating the planning and efforts of those who

[1] In 1975, SHPO responsibilities included survey, National Register, planning, Section 106 reviews, and restoration grants. In 2005 SHPO responsibilities include the 1975 programs plus rehab tax credits, Certified Local Governments with a 10 percent pass through, and Preserve America.

[2] Economic Research Associates, "Section 106 Cost Assessment," for NCSHPO, January 2006, ERA Project No. 15755. Copies available through NCSHPO."Section 106 is a paradox in that it is an un(der)funded Federally mandated program that states are required to complete, whether or not sufficient budgets are available; as such, reallocation of funding from other program areas to cover the costs of Section 106 funding have [sic] a negative effect on other historic preservation priorities.

[3] Dear Colleague letter by Senators DeWine and Durbin.

came before us. Historic preservation upholds what was important in the past, thereby maintaining a community's foundation: its past, present, and future."[4]

Governor Rick Perry of Texas concurs: "Historic preservation creates jobs, revitalizes downtown business districts, provides affordable quality housing and stimulates heritage tourism."[5]

ECONOMIC IMPACT

Aside from its incalculable cultural benefits, historic preservation also provides an opportunity to generate local, regional and national economic growth by revitalizing valuable historic neighborhoods and communities, enticing private capital investment and fostering heritage tourism. HPF programs such as the Rehabilitation Tax Credit have proven their worth by using the modest Federal operating funds to stimulate as much as $3 billion per year in economic benefits to the Nation each year.

HERITAGE TOURISM

Historic preservation is the foundation of heritage tourism, which is a multibillion dollar industry ($200 billion annually by 2005). Heritage tourists stay longer and spend more than other tourists do ($623 per historic/cultural trip as compared to $457 for an average U.S. trip), providing local jobs and creating local, state and federal tax revenues. SHPOs promote heritage tourism through historic site survey and National Register programs, and they further American history education by generating interest in urban and rural landmarks across America.

HPF ALLOCATIONS TO THE STATES = MONEY WELL SPENT

Under the Administration's Program Assessment Rating Tool, management of Historic Preservation Programs receive a score of 89 percent indicating exemplary performance of mandated activities.[6] The National Conference is disappointed that this success is not reflected in an increase in program funding in the Administration's budget request.

HPF INTENT UNDERMINED

Further, the National Conference of State Historic Preservation Officers is concerned that the Administration is using the Historic Preservation Fund in ways counter to the Act for Save America's Treasures grants and for federal salaries administering tribal grants. The National Historic Preservation Act is specific (Section 101(e)). The Secretary may make matching grants to the States, Indian tribes, and the National Trust. The law allows the Secretary to use only 10 percent of the annual HPF appropriation for direct project grants.

CONCLUSION

Forty years ago, the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (NHPA) established the nation's historic preservation program but directed that it be carried out through State Historic Preservation Offices (SHPOs). The success of SHPOs' promoting historic preservation is well demonstrated by the sound description of the program by the Honorable Francis Toscana, Mayor of Deadwood, South Dakota.

"Preservation is done in partnership. Communities, State Historic Preservation Offices, and Federal agencies work together to identify and preserve America's historic treasures. As mayor of one of those treasures, our relationship with the State Historic Preservation Office is important. The Historic Preservation Fund (HPF) makes it possible for the States, through their State Historic Preservation Offices, to foster this partnership into a successful preservation program."[7]

Thank you for your consideration of this request.

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[4] National Park Service, The Historic Preservation Fund Annual Report fiscal year 2003, [March 2004].

[5] Ibid.

[6] State LWCF grants, in contrast, received a review score of 43 percent.

[7] National Park Service, The Historic Preservation Fund Annual Report 2005, March 2005.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE CAMPAIGN FOR ENVIRONMENTAL LITERACY

INCLUDING EDUCATION AS AN AUTHORIZED USE OF STATE WILDLIFE GRANT FUNDS

Executive Summary

First funded by Congress in fiscal year 2001, the original Wildlife Conservation and Restoration Program (elements of which have since been incorporated into the State Wildlife Grants Program, or SWG) made these funds available to states for conservation education as well as for habitat protection and restoration. However, despite widespread support from state fish and wildlife agencies for using these funds for education purposes, education was removed in fiscal year 2002 as an allowable use of funds. With this loss of SWG as a source of education funding, the federal government in its entirety now provides literally no funding specifically identified for conservation education at the state level.

Yet our survey of the 50 Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategies recently produced by state fish and wildlife agencies discovered that the vast majority of these agencies see education as mission-critical, vital to their efforts to conserve wildlife. This survey also found that they almost unanimously feel that education plays a critical role in first raising awareness of conservation issues, and then motivating people to modify their behavior towards wildlife.

And most importantly, all 50 state Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategies cited the need to expand their conservation education and outreach programs on multiple levels and scales to achieve their conservation goals—despite the fact that the SWG Program will not fund education.

The broad support in every state for conservation education programs, both within the general public [1] as well as within state wildlife agencies, along with the crucial need to close the public's growing conservation literacy gap, calls for federal action.

We therefore urge Congress to restore education as an allowable use of SWG funds by state fish and wildlife agencies. Taking such action will require no new funds from the federal government or taxpayer, and in fact, will save future federal dollars.

BACKGROUND

Congress created the Wildlife Conservation and Restoration Program in 2001, and subsequently incorporated many of its elements into State Wildlife Grants program (SWG). This program provides funding to every state and territory to support cost-effective conservation aimed at keeping wildlife from becoming endangered. Funds are allocated according to a formula based on each state's size and population. SWG funding from Congress has ranged from $65 million to $85 million over the past five years.

This program is based on the recognition that lack of federal support for non-game species protection prior to 2001 led to the significant decline of these species, thus raising the potential for costly federal restoration efforts when such species become officially endangered. It is therefore in the interest of the federal government to support state efforts to prevent wildlife species from becoming endangered in the first place, in order to avoid bearing restoration costs.

It is important to understand that the direct causes of wildlife loss and endangerment primarily are habitat loss, introduction of competing exotic species, pollution, and overharvesting, challenges for which SWG funding is primarily intended. However, these problems often are a result of thousands of individual decisions made by thousands of individuals. As regulation has greatly reduced the corporate impact on these now diffuse and chronic problems, a new set of environmental actors has emerged on the scene: small businesses which exist below today's regulatory radar, and millions of households whose consumption decisions drive energy and material flows as well as the increasingly complex logistics systems which move goods and people across the face of the planet. Far more effective, when properly done, is to educate these decision-makers rather than regulate them.

Thus, education is an essential tool for achieving the purposes of the SWG program. Yet, fiscal year 2002 Appropriations report language excluded education as an allowable use of SWG funds.

STATE WILDLIFE ACTION PLANS AND EDUCATION

In order to make the best use of State Wildlife Grants, Congress charged each state and territory with developing a Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy

[1] Ninty-five percent of adult Americans believe environmental education should be taught in schools, according to a Roper Starch Worldwide survey in 2001.

(CWCS), which identifies species and habitats of greatest conservation need and outlines the steps needed to conserve these wildlife and vital natural areas. Every state and territory has now completed their CWCS.

We thoroughly reviewed each of these 50 state plans. Every state created their plans using the same framework but their priority strategies vary due to different state-specific issues and needs. Thus, it is particularly noteworthy that our survey found a number of common themes related to education in these plans:

—Every state CWCS acknowledges the inherent value of education and outreach programs in effectively managing those species and habitats in greatest need of conservation.

—Every state CWCS cites the need to expand its conservation education and outreach programs on multiple levels and scales.

—Every state that has used public education and/or outreach with positive measurable results identified it as a best practice adaptable for other priority species and habitats.

—The large majority of states include new and/or expanded education efforts as one of their statewide priorities, and reinforce this need in their conservation actions across multiple key species and habitats.

For example, North Carolina's plan noted the following conservation education challenges:

—Inadequate production and distribution of wildlife education materials.

—Current wildlife education programs not able to meet the public's growing needs.

—Inadequate funding sources for programs and materials aimed at conservation education.

—Insufficient number of nature centers devoted to the state's nongame wildlife.

North Carolina's CWCS therefore set the following Conservation Education Priorities:

Wildlife Nature Centers

Develop Commission-owned wildlife nature centers in each physiographic region and support projects at existing centers.

Develop materials and traveling displays for use across the state at schools, universities, science museums and aquariums to increase awareness of wildlife concerns.

Wildlife Education Programs

Improve the Commission's capabilities to provide instructor training in Project Wild & CATCH and coordinate support for other state environmental education programs.

Develop and improve guides for construction/development of outdoor classrooms.

Develop demonstration projects for wildlife education programs.

Wildlife Educational Materials

Develop and distribute wildlife educational materials to the public school systems.

Develop informational materials on wildlife species, management programs, and habitat conservation.

Wildlife Education Grants

Encourage development of educational materials and programs on fish and wildlife through an annual Wildlife Education Grants program.

EXAMPLES OF HOW SWG FUNDS MIGHT BE USED TO FURTHER ENVIRONMENTAL LITERACY

North Carolina lists the following as a few examples of the uses to which they might put such funds:

—Provide schools, community parks, retirement centers, etc. with technical expertise, grant information, planting and educational materials for developing school and community nature areas as outdoor classrooms which in turn would attract wildlife.

—Establish demonstration areas for backyard wildlife habitat improvements.

—Coordinate biologists and educators to develop effective education and outreach materials for endangered/rare species in North Carolina.

—Expand delivery of wildlife-related programs and field trips to key audiences (e.g., schools, civic groups, watershed associations, planning boards).

Other key states offered the following examples when they were recently queried as to how they might use SWG funds for education:

—Establish a statewide network of professional trainers and wildlife conservation practitioners working with at-risk species to offer in-service educator workshops.
—Establish a competitive small grant program for schools and nature centers to compete for funding to purchase simple equipment (binoculars, dip nets, field guides, etc.), the lack of which is often a primary barrier for teachers attempting to take students on field trips to learn about natural areas.
—Build partnerships with teacher training programs at state colleges and universities to better integrate conservation education in both content and methods courses for pre-service teachers.
—Create a partnership with the state Department of Education and local school districts to incorporate conservation education themes into state science standards.
—Work with electric utilities to educate homeowners, business owners and municipalities to reduce use of outdoor lighting during nesting, peak migration and other critical times.
—Educate citizens and community leaders about the economic and social benefits that are achieved through scientific management of key species and habitats.

SUGGESTED REPORT LANGUAGE

"Education projects funded with SWG dollars must contribute significantly to the education priorities identified in a state's Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy."

COST OF THIS INITIATIVE

The State Wildlife Grants program actually saves taxpayer dollars by taking preventative action to conserve wildlife before it becomes endangered. Further, a non-federal matching requirement assures local ownership, and leverages state and private funds to support conservation. In an era of tight budgets, the State Wildlife Grants program represents how limited federal funds can be invested to get the most results for taxpayers.

Specifically reopening these funds to education saves further money. Species are driven to extinction in large part due to ignorance and lack of understanding by the public of the value of maintaining wildlife and their habitats. Investing in sound education over time will significantly reduce the risk of needing expensive efforts to bring back endangered wildlife species. It treats the true cause—illiteracy—of the problem of species loss, not just the symptoms.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE NORTHERN COLORADO WATER CONSERVANCY DISTRICT

On behalf of the Northern Colorado Water Conservancy District, I am requesting your support for the following appropriations in fiscal year 2007 to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for the Upper Colorado River Endangered Fish Recovery Program and the San Juan River Basin Recovery Implementation Program, as recommended in the President's budget.

1. Appropriation of $697,000 in "recovery" funds (Ecological Services Activity; Endangered Species Subactivity; Recovery Element; $697,000 within the $5,631,000 item entitled "General Program Activities") to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) to allow FWS to continue its necessary participation in the Upper Colorado River Endangered Fish Recovery Program.

2. Appropriation of $437,000 in operation and maintenance funds (Resource Management Appropriation; Fisheries Activity; Hatchery Operations & Maintenance Subactivity, Hatchery Operations Project) to support the ongoing operation of the FWS' Ouray National Fish Hatchery in Utah.

3. Allocation of $211,000 in "recovery" funds for the San Juan River Basin Recovery Implementation Program to the FWS for fiscal year 2007 to meet FWS' Region 2 expenses in managing and implementing the San Juan Recovery Program.

I thank you for your past support and request the Subcommittee's assistance for fiscal year 2007 funding to ensure FWS' continuing financial participation in these vitally important programs.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE NORTH CAROLINA WILDLIFE RESOURCES COMMISSION

We are seeking your support for the President's fiscal year 2007 Budget Request of $3 million to support the National Fish Habitat Initiative (NFHI) and, furthermore, we ask you to support an additional $3 million to be appropriated to the U.S.

Fish and Wildlife Service's Southeast Fisheries Program for the Southeast Aquatic Resources Partnership (SARP). The NFHI, lead by the International Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies in partnership with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, is a nationwide fisheries habitat restoration plan modeled on the successful North American Waterfowl Management Plan. The SARP is developing a Southeast Aquatic Habitat Plan that will guide the implementation of the NFHI on a regional scale and serve as a model for other regions of the country. The Southeast Aquatic Habitat Plan will identify and establish Fish Habitat Partnerships that will deliver the objectives of the NFHI in the Southeast.

The SARP was initiated in 2001 to better address the conservation and management of aquatic resources in the Southeastern United States. This partnership developed because (1) the Southeast has the highest diversity of aquatic species and habitats of any region in the country, (2) these resources are facing serious threats to their future existence, and (3) no single State or Federal agency has the necessary resources and authority to address this impending aquatic crisis. It is only by working together through partnerships that we will make a difference. SARP includes the fish and wildlife agencies from 13 States (Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, Missouri, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, and Texas), the Gulf and Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commissions, the Gulf of Mexico and South Atlantic Fishery Management Councils, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and NOAA Fisheries.

This unique and focused effort is poised to deliver a new regional approach to aquatic conservation for future generations. Securing $3 million in additional funding for the SARP is critical for the successful implementation of the Southeast Aquatic Habitat Plan.

Thank you for your consideration of this request. If you should have any questions or need further information, please contact Robert L. Curry, Chief, Division of Inland Fisheries, by phone (919) 707–0221 or by email at robert.curry@ncwildlife.org.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES CENTER

We request $3 million in fiscal year 2007 to continue the programs of the National Small Flows Clearinghouse and the National Environmental Training Center for Small Communities. Both programs are administered by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) under the Environmental Programs and Management (EPM) account.

INTRODUCTION

My name is Richard Bajura and I serve as Executive Director of the National Environmental Services Center. The Environmental Protection Agency and the Department of Agriculture fund our programs to provide comprehensive environmental services to small and tribal communities and to rural areas. Our work is focused on drinking water, wastewater, and municipal solid waste. Two of our major programs, the National Small Flows Clearinghouse (Clearinghouse) and the National Environmental Training Center for Small Communities (Training Center) are the subjects of this testimony.

The Clearinghouse is in its 27th year of providing information and technical assistance to local governments/officials, to operators/managers of wastewater, drinking water, and solid waste facilities, and to circuit riders. We assist agencies, organizations, and industries that advance decentralized wastewater management as part of the nation's wastewater infrastructure. The Clearinghouse was mandated by Congress in the 1977 Clean Water Act and its subsequent reauthorizations. We use federal funds to provide contemporary, objective, and comprehensive technical information services and site-specific assistance about wastewater systems. We publish a suite of regular and special publications targeted to small, tribal, and rural community needs for wastewater management.

The Training Center was established by Congress in 1991 as an adjunct to the Clearinghouse for the purpose of developing and delivering training on wastewater, drinking water, and municipal solid waste disposal. Our trainers and the services we provide assist small, tribal, and rural communities in providing essential water and sanitation services.

The Clearinghouse and Training Center partner with a wide range of organizations and groups to help states and communities. In doing so, more people are served, dollars are leveraged, and cost savings are realized.

NEED

Our nation relies on water and wastewater infrastructure and services to protect public health, sustain economic activity, and enable our modern lifestyles. This infrastructure, which was generally installed decades ago and is often a small community's largest public investment, is aging and even failing. The 25 million people who live in small communities rely on local leaders and system personnel to manage this infrastructure and provide essential water and wastewater services. These dedicated citizens often lack the necessary time, expertise, information, strategies, and finances to meet these demands. EPA is charged with developing water and wastewater treatment strategies and services for these rural communities. However, EPA does not have the necessary resources in-house and relies on units like the Clearinghouse and Training Center to fulfill this part of its mission. EPA also relies on Congress to add funds for these services since the Administration routinely does not provide financial support for such programs. Congressional action is required each year to support the services we provide.

ABOUT THE NATIONAL SMALL FLOWS CLEARINGHOUSE

The Clearinghouse is the premier (and only) comprehensive national source of information about "small flows" systems, those with fewer than one million gallons of wastewater flowing through them per day. These systems range from individual septic systems to small sewage treatment plants, and require technologies different from large-volume wastewater treatment plants. Decentralized systems, such as onsite septic systems and small cluster systems, serve 25 percent of the U.S. population.

Small communities in the United States (populations less than 10,000) need significant assistance for basic water and wastewater services. Services provided by the Clearinghouse enable the communities to achieve and maintain regulatory compliance using technologies which are less costly than conventional sewers and treatment plants.

The Clearinghouse was created in legislation to provide information and assistance to small, tribal, and rural communities on proper technology selection and management of onsite and small wastewater systems. Under its congressionally mandated information collection and dissemination mission [1977 Clean Water Act section 104(q)(1)], the Clearinghouse serves as the national archive for onsite and decentralized wastewater management technologies and offers a comprehensive body of information and technical assistance services unique to the wastewater industry. Users of these services include individual homeowners, small town officials who do not have staff support to address regulatory requirements, developers, state regulators, and professionals who design, install and service alternative treatment systems.

Using Clearinghouse services, small communities across the nation learn how to leverage funding, obtain information about affordable small system technologies, and meet regulatory requirements. The Clearinghouse accomplishes its mandate by:

—Enabling small system operators and service providers to comply with federal regulations;
—Providing access to expert advice and training on wastewater;
—Guaranteeing the availability of current, comprehensive information in small wastewater system financing, technologies, and management;
—Delivering onsite public health and environmental awareness education, information, and technical assistance.

Congressional funding for the Clearinghouse supports and provides:

—Toll-free technical assistance via telephone from our staff of engineers and information experts to operators, engineers, scientists, regulators, manufacturers, and homeowners;
—Magazines and newsletters, including Small Flows Quarterly and Pipeline, that address wastewater issues for small communities, reaching 70,000 individuals or organizations nationwide;
—More than 800 products such as pamphlets, how-to guides and handbooks, design manuals, videos, checklists, equipment manufacturers catalogs and an outreach resource guide, directories of various water and wastewater experts nationwide, informational posters, case studies, and related information;
—Comprehensive web site, discussion forums, list serves, and searchable online databases (e.g., our one-of-a-kind Onsite Regulations Database) featuring water, wastewater, security, and emergency preparedness resources;
—Demonstration projects at more than 100 sites in 27 states showing the latest onsite sewage treatment technologies and management strategies at work; and

—The intensive annual State Onsite Regulators Alliance (SORA) Conference: a one-of-a-kind event for wastewater regulators and industry professionals.

ABOUT THE NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL TRAINING CENTER FOR SMALL COMMUNITIES (NETCSC)

In 1991, Congress funded the Training Center to meet the training needs of multiple constituent groups on a variety of environmental topics. In a unique approach, the Training Center develops, disseminates, and delivers training customized for small community environmental management. Environmental trainers and technical assistance providers who attend the classes then in turn train environmental professionals who serve small communities. The Training Center has developed more than 40 model training packages for drinking water and wastewater system design, operation, finance, management, emergency response, and system security. These training packages are delivered and available coast-to-coast to thousands of participants, often in co-sponsorship with other training and/or service providing organizations.

The Training Center has held more than 250 training events on environmental management, security, and emergency response. Hundreds of environmental trainers across the nation subsequently use our materials to train thousands of local officials, operators, installers, regulators, engineers, homeowners, and tribal audiences. More than 7,000 environmental trainers, technical assistance providers, and small community professionals receive the Training Center's environmental training newsletter.

Since September 2001, the Training Center assisted small communities in addressing water security concerns. At the request of the EPA, the lead agency for homeland security in the area of water, and the Department of Agriculture, we developed and delivered training courses designed to improve the security of small drinking water and wastewater systems through a cadre of more than 250 trainers. These trainers held over 50 training events and trained over 1,000 individuals. The Training Center has also developed and compiled an array of vulnerability assessment, emergency response, and security resources. These efforts include multiple training deliveries, substantial coverage of security issues in E-Train (our newsletter), and on our frequently accessed worldwide web sites. Additionally, we developed and disseminated a nationally distributed Wastewater Vulnerability Assessment Guide for small communities, and a "Top Ten" list of security and emergency preparedness actions for small wastewater systems. Our security-related efforts have been undertaken in consultation with a variety of national, regional, and state and local partners.

The Training Center also sponsors the weeklong National Environmental Training Institute drawing a wide-ranging audience of water, wastewater, and environmental professionals interested in small community infrastructure.

REQUEST

Congressional support to continue the work of the Clearinghouse and Training Center is imperative because the State agencies and communities these programs assist do not have funds to pay for these services. By virtue of the congressional appropriation, we are able to offer most of our services free of charge.

The Clearinghouse is a national resource for data and services that supports the work conducted by other major wastewater management programs funded under the EPA Environmental Programs and Management account. Without continued funding, this information repository will not be accessible by water groups, associations, and the user community which has relied on these services for many years.

Both programs were supported by Congress in previous years, but did not receive an appropriation for fiscal year 2006 for the first time since the early 1990s. We request reinstated funding for fiscal year 2007 and continued annual support at our previous levels of $2 million for the National Small Flows Clearinghouse and $1 million for the National Environmental Training Center for Small Communities.

We appreciate your continued support for these highly-regarded national programs. Thank you for considering our request.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE NORTHEAST WASTE MANAGEMENT OFFICIALS' ASSOCIATION

The undersigned Environmental Commissioners for the Northeast States are writing to respectfully request your assistance for reinstating a $300,000 line item in the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) fiscal year 2007 budget for the

Northeast Waste Management Officials' Association (NEWMOA). This funding will support multi-state work on waste management and cleanup problems that are critically important to the Northeast region and to our individual states, and will advance U.S. EPA's national priorities.

In our experience, interstate cooperation on common environmental problems such as brownfields redevelopment and control of mercury pollution multiplies the benefits of scarce state and federal resources. We hope that, despite the many compelling priorities that your Subcommittee must balance, you will act favorably on this request.

In 1986, NEWMOA, a non-profit, non-partisan association, was established by the Governors of the New England States as an official interstate regional organization, in accordance with Section 1005 of the U.S. Resource: Conservation and Recovery Act, and was formally recognized by EPA. New York and New Jersey joined subsequently. NEWMOA's members are the directors of the state hazardous waste, solid waste, waste site cleanup, and pollution prevention programs in Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Rhode Island, and Vermont. NEWMOA works with member states to develop and implement regional policies and strategies for mutual waste management issues, serves as a clearinghouse for multi-state information, and provides staff training and education.

Federal "line item" funds have made it possible in the recent past for NEWMOA to develop unique solutions in environmental improvement and protection. For fiscal year 2006, however, Congress did not appropriate funds for NEWMOA's activities. Reinstating these funds in fiscal year 2007 will enable NEWMOA to continue with projects such as:

—training environmental consultants and state staff to improve the quality and reduce the cost of characterizing contaminated Superfund and Brownfields sites;

—helping states and businesses implement laws that phase out mercury in products through the Interstate Mercury Education & Reduction Clearinghouse (IMERC), a service that provides a single point of contact for a growing membership beyond the Northeast states to the West Coast and Mid West for receiving required reports from the regulated community, managing mercury product data and sharing information so that states, businesses and the public can measure progress and set priorities;

—facilitating the development of innovative compliance programs that measurably improve environmental performance and reduce costs for businesses and state environmental agencies;

—measuring solid waste flows among the Northeast states and tackling "hard to dispose of" wastes, such as construction and demolition debris, electronics, and tires, on a multi-state basis.

These collaborative initiatives solve critical environmental challenges and expand successful strategies at a far lower cost than would occur if each state had to do this work on its own. NEWMOA is a very important resource for our state waste management programs and contributes significantly to advancing state and national environmental objectives. We urge your support for an appropriation of $300,000 to NEWMOA for fiscal year 2007.

If you have any questions or would like more information about our fiscal year 2007 request please contact NEWMOA's Executive Director, William Cass (telephone: 617–367–8558 x301), or the current Chair, Dave O'Toole, Division of Solid and Hazardous Materials, New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (518–402–8652). You may also wish to visit NEWMOA's website (www.newmoa.org) for more information about NEWMOA's activities.

Thank you for your continued assistance.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE NORTHERN FOREST ALLIANCE

On behalf of the Northern Forest Alliance, a coalition of fifty non-profit organizations across New York, Vermont, New Hampshire, and Maine, I would like to offer testimony in support of fiscal year 2007 funding for the U.S. Forest Service's Forest Legacy Program and the Department of Interior's Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF). Specifically, we request funding for specific Forest Legacy and LWCF projects from the Northern Forest totaling $23.709 million and $6.1 million, detailed in tables below. We also urge strong overall program allocations of $80 million for Forest Legacy and $320 million for LWCF, including $220 million for federal LWCF projects and $100 million for the state grants program, in light of the value of these programs not only to the Northern Forest but to the nation.

The Northern Forest is a rural region of 26 million acres stretching from the Tug Hill Plateau in New York through the Adirondacks, Vermont's Green Mountains,

New Hampshire's White Mountains, and into northern Maine. Much like the Southern Appalachians, the Northern Forest is an eastern forest region that has retained its rural character and resource-based economy in the face of overwhelming changes in the broader eastern landscape. However, this rural region is changing rapidly. The recently released U.S. Forest Service report, Forests on the Edge, projects that much of the private lands in the Northern Forest will see "medium" or "high" change from development through 2030. The study focused its assessment by watershed and identified seven watersheds in the Northern Forest states as among the top twenty-five in the nation for projected development through 2030, including the Connecticut River watershed between Vermont and New Hampshire and the Penobscot River watershed in Maine. Some of the conservation projects we are recommending for funding lie within these most threatened watersheds.

The kind of forest parcelization and development that the report projects are already affecting not only natural resources but also the Northern Forest way of life. Our region was the nation's original fiber basket and continues to be a place where many citizens earn a living from the woods as loggers and sugarmakers or in forest products manufacturing. Parcelized forestlands are less valuable for forestry and new owners often make them unavailable for timber harvest and neglect even basic forest stewardship. This is having economic and environmental impacts. Our region also prides itself on a long tradition of open travel across private lands, a tradition that is increasingly at risk thanks to rising forest parcelization. Posting of land is increasing across the Northern Forest, closing opportunities for hunters, hikers, and other recreationists.

SUSTAINING OUR NORTHERN FOREST LEGACY

Despite some recent mill closings in Berlin, New Hampshire and other Northern Forest communities, forest products remain the largest industrial sector in the Northern Forest. The forest products industry in Maine alone contributes $6.5 billion annually to the Northern Forest economy with wages and salaries of more than $1 billion. To maintain this important economic activity, many of the fiscal year 2007 Forest Legacy projects in our region have been designed to maintain working forests that might otherwise be converted for private development. One such example is the Orange County Headwaters project in Vermont, which will sustain timber harvest and sugaring over 3,043 acres of the most productive sugar maple stands in the state. The project is also notable as a shining example of cooperative conservation: the Forest Legacy project is one piece of a larger 30,000-acre conservation collaboration among private landowners in two neighboring towns that features coordinated donation of conservation easements to the Vermont Land Trust and Upper Valley Land Trust.

Like other rural regions across the country, the Northern Forest is also seeking to diversify its economy through tourism and other measures. Tourism has already grown to include ten percent of all Northern Forest jobs, with a payroll of $455 million. Many of the fiscal year 2007 Forest Legacy projects in the Northern Forest would have a significant impact on tourism. In particular, we are supporting two complementary fiscal year 2007 Forest Legacy projects along the Mahoosuc Range of Maine and New Hampshire—one of the Northern Forest's most famed recreation areas and a magnet for tourism. The Mahoosuc Range features the most rugged and challenging section of the entire Appalachian Trail (AT), the newly-developed Grafton Loop Trail that will enable hikers to swing almost fifty miles off the AT, and some of the richest hunting grounds in the entire Northern Forest in New Hampshire's Phillips Brook watershed that lies on the western edge of the range. Maine's Grafton Notch Forest Legacy project was top-ranked by the President for good reason, as it will add 3,688 acres to state holdings in the Mahoosucs, including lands that contain nine miles of the Grafton Loop Trail. The Phillips Brook project in New Hampshire did not make the President's list despite its potential to complement Grafton Notch. The project will conserve more than 23,000 acres of forest and wetlands under easement, allowing hunting in this wildlife-rich area and preserving timber harvest on the first parcel purchased by International Paper at its founding in 1898.

The Northern Forest is also notable for containing the headwaters of many major northeastern rivers, including the Hudson, Connecticut, Androscoggin, and Penobscot. Many of our projects clearly address the threats to these forested watersheds identified in Forests on the Edge. The Tahawus project in New York is one example, as it will conserve 10,056 acres in the High Peaks region of New York's Adirondack Park that are wrapped around the headwaters of the mighty Hudson River. Tahawus also addresses many other Forest Legacy Program values by providing public access for hunting, fishing, and other recreation, continued opportunities for

forestry, and new opportunities to develop heritage tourism—it was on this parcel that then-Vice President Teddy Roosevelt began his famous "Midnight Ride."

NORTHERN FOREST ALLIANCE FISCAL YEAR 2007 FOREST LEGACY REQUESTS

State	Project	Request
ME	Grafton Notch	$2,000,000
ME	Lower Penobscot Forest	5,500,000
ME	Machias River, phase III	2,000,000
NH	Phillips Brook	3,500,000
NH	Willard Pond/Robb Res.	3,000,000
NY	Tahawus	5,000,000
VT	Orange County Headwaters	1,542,000
VT	Adams Pond	1,167,000
	Total	23,709,000

FULFILLING OUR POTENTIAL: LWCF FOR THE NORTHERN FOREST

The fiscal year 2007 LWCF projects for the Silvio Conte National Wildlife Refuge, Lake Umbagog National Wildlife Refuge, and Green Mountain National Forest will help realize the potential conservation, economic, and community benefits of our region's few federal public land units. These federal lands are strategically situated to conserve some of our the Northern Forest's most important natural and recreational resources, but are being compromised as private inholdings within the units are developed, sometimes by private owners who would have preferred to sell to the relevant agency but were unable to for lack of federal LWCF funding for acquisition.

The Conte and Umbagog National Wildlife Refuges have already brought previously unimagined levels of tourism and related economic benefits to rural towns in the far northern reaches of our region like Island Pond, Vermont and Errol, New Hampshire. The Conte NWR is also unique for its strategic conservation value, as the proclamation area covers select lands of highest conservation value throughout the entire Connecticut River watershed. The Northern Forest Alliance has worked with other supporters of the Conte NWR across four states to create the new Friends of Conte Refuge group that is enthusiastically supporting a $4 million request for this unique refuge in fiscal year 2007. The funding request covers important acquisitions from willing sellers in all four states that the refuge crosses—Vermont, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, and Connecticut. The lands in Vermont lie adjacent to a new visitor center and are essential to maintaining that unit's tourism potential. The lands in New Hampshire include key watershed parcels in the Ashuelot River and Mohawk River basins—both major growth centers.

The fiscal year 2007 LWCF funding to complete the USFS acquisition of the Broad Brook property in Vermont is also of paramount importance. This area of over 3,900 acres serves as a critical water supply area for local communities and is valued by locals and visitors alike for its extended section of the Long Trail/Appalachian Trail corridor. The project is a particular priority for two Northern Forest Alliance member groups: Vermont's Green Mountain Club and the Appalachian Trail Conservancy. In a sign of how much towns across the Northern Forest are embracing land conservation as part of their economic future, the Town of Pownal where the Broad Brook parcel is situated voted to approve the project by a two to one margin. This system of local approval assures that U.S. Forest Service acquisitions in Vermont are consistent with community interests.

NORTHERN FOREST ALLIANCE FISCAL YEAR 2007 LAND AND WATER CONSERVATION FUND REQUESTS

State	Project	Request
NH	Lake Umbagog National Wildlife Refuge	$1,000,000
NH/VT/MA/CT	Silvio Conte National Wildlife Refuge	4,000,000
VT	Green Mountain National Forest (Broad Brook Phase II)	1,100,000
	Total	6,000,000

All of the Forest Legacy and LWCF projects included in our fiscal year 2007 request represent the best that our region has to offer, a highly select group drawn

from the total range of projects seeking funding across the Northern Forest. In appreciation of the severe constraints on federal resources for the upcoming fiscal year, we have gone through careful evaluation to develop this prioritized set of time-sensitive strategic investments that will leverage other funding sources and deliver critically important public benefits. We would be grateful for your consideration of this testimony as you go through the appropriations process.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE NATIONAL FEDERATION OF FEDERAL EMPLOYEES LOCAL 1957

As officers of the National Federation of Federal Employees (NFFE) Local 1957, we are writing on behalf of the bargaining unit for the Minerals Information Team (MIT), Geologic Division, U.S. Geological Survey (USGS), Reston, VA. We are concerned that the President's proposed fiscal year 2007 budget for the USGS includes a $4.5 million cut (30 percent) to MIT's current funding level of $15.4 million, and a total of $22 million (42 percent) from the entire Mineral Resource Program, of which we are a part.

The effect of the proposed fiscal year 2007 cut would be to eliminate 180 occupied scientific positions from across the country. MIT specifically would cease collection and dissemination of data on international production and consumption for 100 mineral commodities; publication of commodity reports on 20 minerals; and research on mineral and materials life cycles, material flows, and future demand and uses of minerals and metals.

All this would occur at a time of increasing globalization and materials competition from developing countries such as China and India that has led to global supply constraints and record-high metals prices. Currently, the U.S. import dependence for most strategic and critical nonfuel minerals exceeds 75 percent, which is greater than the country's dependence on foreign oil. In 2005, MIT found that U.S. companies relied more than 50 percent on imports to meet their needs for 42 of 81 nonfuel mineral commodities and were 100 percent import reliant for 16 mineral commodities essential to the domestic economy; this was up from 29 and 10, respectively, in 1995.

Assuring that the country has ample mineral resources to meet its needs cannot be done with disregard to the international factors that affect their supply and demand. Eliminating MIT's core International Information function (collecting, reporting, and analyzing data on the foreign supply of minerals needed by the United States), will inhibit the ability of the members of our bargaining unit to provide critical information on the nation's mineral supply. The increasing global demand for mineral resources will affect the U.S. economy's ability to have ample affordable mineral resources to meet its needs and will require international information regarding the production and consumption of minerals. Without data on international supply, there would be a critical information gap regarding the U.S. mineral supply

MIT was transferred to the USGS in 1996 under a Joint House-Senate Conference Amendment that provided for the minerals information activities, formerly conducted by the U.S. Bureau of Mines, to continue within the USGS. The Defense Production Act of 1950, as amended (1980 & 1992), delegates significant authority to the Secretary of the Interior relating to the assurance of an adequate supply of mineral materials necessary for the national defense, with the specific responsibility for analyses of domestic and foreign supplies.

Information and analyses produced by MIT are widely used and relied upon by our Government and private sector. The MIT produces more than 500 publications per year covering most nonfuel minerals, including Mineral Commodity Summaries for the Congressional Offices. Our web site provides approximately 1.4 million publication downloads per year and nearly the same number of hits. The U.S. Departments of Commerce, Defense, Treasury, and State, as well as the Central Intelligence Agency, the Federal Reserve Board, the Overseas Private Investment Corporation, the International Trade Commission, and the Office of the U.S. Trade Representative have increasingly relied on the USGS–MIT specialists for global minerals-related policy analysis, as have domestic agencies, including the U.S. Bureau of Land Management, the Minerals Management Service, the National Park Service, and the U.S. Forest Service. MIT data are cited in Securities and Exchange Commission filings by mining companies requiring an authoritative, impartial source for statements of world resources, capacities, production and consumption.

MIT is already operating under a severely constrained budget that has declined by about 25 percent in real dollars since 1996, the year the group was moved to the U.S. Geological Survey when the U.S. Bureau of Mines was eliminated. Compounding the problem, MIT has had to absorb mandated increases in salaries

and cost of living adjustments despite the decreasing annual budgets. MIT, therefore, requires a minimum of $23 million to restore its reporting capability and retain its expertise. Not included in this level of funding are upgrades to the outdated IT software and hardware systems that are necessary for MIT performance.

Last year, Congress rejected a similar reduction proposed by the Administration. In rejecting that proposed cut, Congressional joint committee managers wrote "[we] strongly disagree with the Administration's proposed reductions to the mineral assessment program and believe it irresponsible for the Administration to decrease or eliminate funding for what is inherently a Federal responsibility." NFFE urges Congress to do the same in fiscal year 2007.

We want to extend our appreciation for your consideration of these issues that affect both our Union's and the Nation's interest.

NFFE LOCAL 1957 BRIEFING ON THE USGS MINERALS INFORMATION TEAM & MINERAL RESOURCES PROGRAM

USGS MINERALS INFORMATION TEAM (MIT)

The Administration's proposed $4.5 million cut to MIT's current funding level would eliminate MIT's international data collection function and severely compromise the USGS' ability to meet its mission as mandated by Congress.

—MIT's international information function would be eliminated, greatly limiting the MIT bargaining unit's ability to meet its core mission—to collect, report, and analyze data on the supply of minerals critical to the Nation's economic and national defense needs.

—The USGS, therefore, could not fulfill its Congressional mandate to assure there is an adequate and dependable supply of mineral materials necessary for national defense, as established by The Defense Production Act of 1950, as amended (1980 & 1992).

Because of the global nature of the minerals industry, mineral commodity assessments require international information.

—The Administration's budget proposal comes at a time of increased globalization and demand for minerals.

The economies of China, India, and other developing countries continue to grow, which places an ever increasing global demand for mineral resources. This will affect the U.S. economy's ability to have ample affordable mineral resources to meet its needs and will require international information regarding the production and consumption of minerals.

—The U.S. import dependence for most strategic and critical nonfuel minerals and metals exceeds 75 percent, which is greater than the country's dependence for oil. In 2005, MIT found that U.S. companies relied more than 50 percent on imports to meet their needs for 42 of 81 minerals (USGS Mineral Commodity Summaries 2006). Of those, the import reliance was 100 percent for 16 minerals and at least 80 percent for another 13. (See The Importance of Manganese to National Security in highlight box.)

—Helping assure the country has ample mineral resources to meet its needs simply cannot be done with disregard to assessing data on the international factors that affect the supply and demand of those resources.

MIT's budget should be permanently set as a separate line item and the budget increased to $23 million.

—Repeated attempts by the Administration to reduce MIT funding over the last several years raise the question of the group's long-term viability under the current budget structure.

—In 2002, Congress rejected a similar proposed $2 million reduction in MIT's budget.

—Since then, Congress has continued to reject proposed similar cuts to MIT funding.

—Since 1998, MIT's budget of about $16 million has fallen about 5 percent, which represents more than a 25 percent decrease when accounting for salaries, cost of living adjustments, and other inflationary costs. Such a severely constrained budget challenges the group's ability to retain its expertise, attract new hires for succession planning, implement upgrades to the outdated IT systems software and hardware, and perform at the highest levels.

—NFFE urges Congress to increase MIT funding to at least $23 million, which is equivalent in today's dollars to MIT's funding within USGS in 1998. This represents only about 0.0045 percent of the non-defense discretionary budget of $445 billion as estimated by the Congressional Budget Office in January 2004, and would afford MIT the means to better meet its mission. As the nation's only

source of comprehensive and unbiased mineral commodity data, MIT should be retained and enhanced.

—At a minimum, MIT's international function should be retained and, accordingly, MIT's budget should be restored by $4.5 million so that the MIT bargaining unit can meet its core mission functions.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE NATIONAL FISH AND WILDLIFE FOUNDATION

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Subcommittee: I appreciate the opportunity to submit testimony regarding the fiscal year 2007 funding request for the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (Foundation). Included in this testimony is a summary of our history and fiscal year 2005 accomplishments, as well as the new and innovative programs we hope to accomplish with the funding provided by this Committee.

Congress established the Foundation 22 years ago, and since that time the Foundation's vision for more healthy and abundant populations of fish, wildlife and plants has flourished through the creation of numerous valuable partnerships. The breadth of our partnerships is highlighted through our active agreements with 14 federal agencies, as well as numerous corporations, foundations and individual grantees. Through these unique arrangements we are able to leverage federal funds, bring agencies and industry together and produce tangible, measurable results. Our history of collaboration has given way to programs and initiatives such as the North American Waterfowl Management Plan, the Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Program, the Chesapeake Bay Small Watershed Grants Program and the Pulling Together Initiative. With the support of the Committee in fiscal year 2007, we can continue to uphold our mission of enriching fish, wildlife and the habitat on which they depend.

The Foundation respectfully requests that this Committee fund these efforts at the following levels:

—$9 million through the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Resource Management General Administration appropriation;

—$5 million through the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Resource Management Endangered Species appropriation to conserve and restore Pacific salmon in Washington State;

—$4 million through the Bureau of Land Management's Management of Lands and Resources appropriation; and

—$4 million through the Forest Service's National Forest System appropriation.

This request lies well within the authorized levels and will allow the Foundation to better meet the demand for new or expanded strategic conservation programs. The appropriations provided by the Committee are also used by the Foundation to attract additional funding for conservation projects through mitigation, settlements and direct gifts.

Since our inception in 1984 through fiscal year 2005, the Foundation has supported over 8,190 grants and leveraged over $339 million in federal funds for more than $1 billion in on-the-ground conservation. This has resulted in more than 18 million acres of restored and managed wildlife habitat; new hope for countless species under stress; new models of private land stewardship; and stronger education programs in schools and local communities. We recognize that without the seed money this Committee provides many of these conservation benefits would not be realized. None of our federally appropriated funds are used for lobbying, litigation or the Foundation's administrative expenses. All of our federally appropriated funds go directly to on-the-ground conservation projects.

Our efforts encompass many boundaries and missions of our U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS), Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and USDA-Forest Service (FS) partners. Whether it involves habitat conservation, species management, conservation education or international conservation, the Foundation strategically invests the federal funds entrusted to us in sound projects. In fiscal year 2005, we received three times as many good project proposals as we could fund. We were able to fund 417 projects representing over $17.2 million in Foundation federal funds, leveraging it with $43.9 million in non-federal funds to commit $61.1 million to on-the-ground conservation. This will result in thousands of acres of vital habitat being enhanced, restored and protected as well as hundreds of stream miles improved. The remaining $500,000 in appropriated funds will be obligated in the next few months bringing our total on-the-ground conservation to more than $62 million.

As you have heard us say before, the term "partnerships" lies at the center of everything that the Foundation does. In fiscal year 2005, the FWS, BLM and FS partnerships we forged with our appropriated dollars helped the Foundation permanently protect 1,305 additional acres; restore over 22,000 acres; better manage

105,000 acres of public and private lands; and aided the restoration of 128 river and stream miles, as well as management of 282 miles of rivers and streams. As our grantees continue to report to us on their restoration and management efforts, we expect to see increases for all of these performance measurements by year's end.

Working Landscapes and Healthy Habitats.—The Foundation places one of our highest priorities on projects integrating conservation practices on ongoing agricultural, ranching and forestry operations with the goal of improving the ecological health of working lands. Utilizing our FWS, BLM and FS appropriations, the Foundation supports projects designed to improve the habitat of our Nation's federal and private lands. In fiscal year 2005, the Foundation was appropriated an additional $500,000 in BLM funds to support the conservation of sagebrush habitats on federal and adjacent private lands. With FWS and FS funds added to the BLM dollars, the Foundation funded 19 sagebrush conservation projects leveraging $1,047,525 into more than $2.5 million to benefit sage grouse.

An example healthy habitat grant program is the Foundation's Pulling Together Initiative (PTI), which is a private/public partnership to aid in the prevention, management and/or eradication of invasive and noxious plants. Through this collaborative program, FWS, BLM and FS are able to join invasive species experts from the Department of Defense, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service and the Natural Resources Conservation Service to review and jointly select the most innovative weed management projects. In fiscal year 2005, the Foundation awarded 68 projects in 28 states that leveraged over $1.7 million in federal funds to more than $5.8 million for on-the-ground invasive species control projects through the PTI program.

Conserving Fish, Wildlife, and Plants.—With our FWS, BLM and FS appropriations, the Foundation also leveraged resources to fund projects that directly benefit diverse fish and wildlife species including sage grouse in the intermountain west, cutthroat trout in the west and quail in the south. We also measure our success by preventing the listing of species under the Endangered Species Act and by stabilizing and hopefully moving others off the list. We invested in common sense and innovative cooperative approaches to endangered species, building bridges between the government and the private sector. Some species benefiting from Foundation grants in fiscal year 2005 include steelhead trout, red-cockaded woodpeckers, Black-capped vireos, Whooping cranes, Laysan ducks, Karner blue butterflies, Houston toads and black-footed ferrets.

An example wildlife focused grant program is the Foundation's Washington State Community Salmon Fund. In fiscal year 2005, the Foundation leveraged $2 million provided by the Committee into more than $6 million for salmon conservation projects. The Foundation established the program with the goal of awarding community-based salmon habitat restoration grants to assist rural communities, farmers and other private landowners with salmon habitat improvement projects. The program has expanded in recent years to include funding and participation by the Salmon Recovery Funding Board and the King County and Pierce County Community Salmon Fund programs. As a result of the Committee's support, salmon will now have increased access to more than 600 miles of spawning and rearing habitat; at least 4,500 acres of in-stream, riparian, estuarine and upland habitat will be restored; and over 3,000 acres will be protected through improved management.

Watershed Approach.—The Foundation has recently launched several collaborative grant programs designed to support conservation projects on a watershed level. These programs include the Chesapeake Bay Small Watershed Grants Program, the Delaware Estuary Grants Program, the Long Island Sound Futures Fund and the Columbia Basin Water Transaction Program. In fiscal year 2005, the Foundation launched a new strategically focused grant program targeting the Great Lakes Watershed. The partners in this program include the Environmental Protection Agency, FWS, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, FS and the Natural Resources Conservation Service.

The Foundation is currently developing two additional Special Grant Programs that will be launched later this year. The purpose of the first grant program is to implement the National Fish Habitat Initiative Action Plan. The National Fish Habitat Initiative is a multi-agency, multi-partner initiative to improve our Nation's aquatic resources. The Foundation's grant program will bring together federal and non-federal funds to strategically invest in priority fish habitat grants. The Foundation's second grant program will focus on the Upper Mississippi River Watershed. The program is being launched at the direction of FS, with the goal of restoring private land streambanks with native trees and grasses. The Foundation is hoping to expand this program into a multi-partnered effort in fiscal year 2007.

Evaluation.—The Foundation has become a leader in evaluation and adaptive management among its peers. The Foundation's goal is to build the capacity of both

itself and its partners to undertake more effective evaluation, to assist in both measuring performance and adapting methods and funding strategies for more effective conservation. To address these goals, the Foundation is implementing several evaluation strategies simultaneously. First, the Foundation has instituted new protocols within its application process to provide the measurable indicators needed to evaluate the impacts of our programs. Second, the Foundation has convened meetings among our agency partners to identify and coordinate potential opportunities for collaboration within evaluation. One of the initial results of these meetings has been an interest in piloting new evaluation indicators, to better articulate the federal investment for GPRA and PART.

Third, the Foundation has commissioned several third-party evaluations targeting standard methods like culvert removal to full program evaluations to learn where we have been successful and where past methods have not provided the desired impact. As an example, in fiscal year 2006, the Foundation's Chesapeake Bay Small Watershed Grants Program will be evaluated for the first five years of grant-making. The evaluation will include 355 projects associated with about $10.6 million in federal funds. The federal legislation accompanying this program included 10-year goals, and this evaluation presents an opportunity to assess the mid-way mark in helping the Foundation and its partners better focus their resources over the next five years. To capture the evaluations and lessons learned, the Foundation is taking a fourth key step by developing a new searchable project website where users will be able to query information and learn more about funded projects, including how to adapt projects for higher rates of success.

Accountability and Grantsmanship.—The Foundation constantly strives to improve the grant making process while maintaining a healthy level of oversight. To improve ease of use for potential applicants, Foundation applications are now completed and reviewed electronically. In early 2006, to further improve efficiency, the Foundation released a revised application, grant contract template and reporting form. Even with these efficiencies, the Foundation still requires strict financial reporting by grantees and has once again received an unqualified audit in fiscal year 2005.

In addition to the evaluation requirements described earlier, all potential grants are subject to a peer review process. This involves five external reviews representing state agencies, federal agencies, affected industry, environmental non-profits and academics. Before being recommended to the Foundation's Board of Directors, grants are also reviewed internally by staff, including our conservation scientists. The internal review process examines the project's conservation need, technical merit, the support of the local community, the variety of partners and the amount of proposed non-federal cost share. The Foundation also provides a 30-day notification to the Members of Congress for the congressional district and state in which a grant will be funded, prior to making a funding decision.

Basic Facts About the Foundation.—The Foundation is governed by a 25-member Board of Directors, appointed by the Secretary of the Interior and in consultation with the Secretary of Commerce. At the direction of Congress, the Board operates on a nonpartisan basis. Directors do not receive any financial compensation for service on the Board; in fact, all of our directors make financial contributions to the Foundation. It is a diverse Board, representing the corporate, philanthropic and conservation communities; all with a tenacious commitment to fish and wildlife conservation. I took over the chairmanship in January, after serving on the Board for ten years. It is an honor to lead such a prestigious board.

The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation continues to be one of, if not the most, cost-effective conservation program funded in part by the federal government. None of our federally appropriated funds are used for lobbying, litigation or the Foundation's administrative expenses. By implementing real-world solutions with the private sector while avoiding regulatory or advocacy activity, our approach is consistent with this Congress' philosophy. We are confident the money appropriated to the Foundation will continue to make a difference.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE AUDUBON SOCIETY

SITE DESCRIPTION & LOCATION

In 1991, the Silvio O. Conte National Fish and Wildlife Refuge (NFWR) Act directed USFWS to study the entire Connecticut River watershed, from Vermont and New Hampshire, through Massachusetts to Connecticut, and create a national fish and wildlife refuge. The Conte NFWR is no ordinary refuge. The Connecticut River watershed, 7.2 million acres in four states, is larger and more populous than areas

usually considered for a refuge. The purposes of the Conte Refuge are also much broader, it is one of the few fish and wildlife refuges, and protecting natural diversity is a new scientific and social challenge. There are several announced, identified and potential IBAs within the boundaries of the Refuge. The two current acquisition opportunities are located at the Salmon River Division in Connecticut and the Fort River Division in Massachusetts.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) land protection plan for the Refuge identifies the minimum interest necessary to accomplish habitat protection goals. The Service has the potential and ability to acquire easements within all of the 48 Special Focus Areas. The Refuge accomplishes its habitat protection goals by utilizing all available conservation tools and partnerships. The Refuge encourages and supports mutually beneficial work with agencies, conservation organizations, landowners, and citizens.

ECOLOGICAL VALUES

The northern third of the watershed located in Vermont and New Hampshire is part of the "Northern Forest" which is largely privately owned industrial forest stretching from the Adirondacks to the coast of Maine. Large blocks of this land have been sold in unprecedented quantities recently as the timber industry relocates some of its financial assets. Important bottomland forest, flood plain wetlands, and a variety of grassland areas are generally located along the middle third of the Connecticut River in western Massachusetts and northern Connecticut. The mouth of the river, located in southern Connecticut, contains internationally significant fresh, brackish and saltwater tidally influenced wetlands. The Refuge emphasizes protecting Federal trust species—migratory birds, migratory fish, federally endangered or threatened species, and rare and exemplary natural communities.

Forty-eight "Special Focus Areas" encompassing roughly 180,000 acres have been identified within the watershed. These areas contribute substantially or in unique ways to supporting natural diversity in the watershed. There are two recognized IBAs and 7 identified IBAs within the Refuge Special Focus areas in Connecticut and 14 in Massachusetts, 4 in VT and 1 in NH.

Special Focus Areas provide the following biological values:

—Habitat for federally-listed species;
—Habitat for a number of rare species and/or rare vegetative community types;
—Important fisheries habitat;
—Important wetlands; habitat for waterbirds;
—Substantial areas of contiguous habitat;
—Large blocks of unusual habitat, and;
—Landbird resting, feeding, and breeding habitat.

The Fort River Division represents several hundred acres of grassland and agricultural habitat that will offer substantial grassland restoration opportunities and ensure the establishment of a critical reservoir population of nesting grassland birds that can help strengthen the New England population of regionally endangered grassland birds.

The Salmon River Division represents critical wintering habitat for the federally threatened Bald Eagle, along with critical wetland, forest and shrubland habitat for many species of conservation concern.

PUBLIC USE AND BENEFIT TO THE COMMUNITY

The Conte National Fish and Wildlife Refuge is charged with providing environmental education and research opportunities. Recreational opportunities at Conte include wildlife observation and photography, hiking, and fishing. Acquisition within the Conte Special Focus areas would allow improved habitat management and create significant opportunities for environmental education, wildlife viewing, and research. The location of these special focus areas within the heavily populated Central Connecticut Valley of New England would allow the Refuge to serve urban areas more effectively, including Middletown and Hartford, CT, Springfield, MA, Brattleboro, VT and Manchester, NH.

THREATS

The Connecticut River watershed is facing tremendous pressures from development throughout its length. Areas on or near the river are in high demand as locations for high-end luxury housing, and there is increasing risk of fragmenting forest blocks throughout the watershed. Grassland and unfragmented forest habitats are particularly at risk.

ACQUISITION STATUS & ESTIMATED COST FOR THE ACQUISITION

The Refuge consists of 32,076 acres with a total acquisition goal of 93,395 acres. Acquisition priorities include additions that enhance environmental education and scientific research on the Refuge. $4 million is needed for fiscal year 2006 to purchase 280 acres in the Salmon River Division in Connecticut and 83 acres in the Fort River Division in Massachusetts to provide research, public access and environmental education opportunities in heavily populated central Connecticut Valley of New England. Additional land acquisition projects in Vermont and New Hampshire will also be funded through this year's appropriation in the Nulhegan Basin, Pondicherry and Mohawk River Divisions.

PUBLIC SUPPORT

Tremendous public support exists for protection of the Connecticut River and for acquisition of land by the Conte NFWR. Many environmental groups have an interest in the conservation of land within the watershed including: Audubon Connecticut; Audubon Vermont; the Massachusetts Audubon Society; the Audubon Society of New Hampshire; The Nature Conservancy; Mattabeseck Audubon Society; Potapaug

Audubon Society; Trust for Public Land; Connecticut Audubon Society; Hartford Audubon Society; The Friends of the Silvio O. Conte Refuge, and many other groups.

Connecticut

The Potapaug Audubon Society Chapter volunteers have participated in Conte NFWR Migratory Bird Habitat Stopover studies. Audubon chapters and affiliates would provide volunteers to lead trips and participate in Refuge wildlife monitoring activities when the Refuge does acquire land in Connecticut.

Vermont and New Hampshire

Audubon Vermont and the Audubon Society of New Hampshire are currently undertaking an effort to map the natural resources of the Connecticut River Watershed and conduct a spatial analysis of the watershed to assess habitat that may qualify for IBA status. Field assessments will be conducted this summer. And further nominations and recognitions are expected. In Vermont, chapters have advocated for state and federal funding to acquire land for the Refuge at Nulhegan Basin and the chapter has helped with a high school summer science program that has conducted large mammal surveys in the Conte Refuge holding in the Nulhegan over the last two summers. At Herricks Cove, each year our Audubon Chapter and the Vermont State Office sponsor a wildlife festival at Herricks Cove attended by as many as 1,000 people each year. In addition the state office has worked with the chapter to conduct a wildlife assessment of the property and are carrying our a native plant restoration project on site this past summer and the summer to come. Monthly monitoring is also taking place. Ascutney Mountain Audubon Society has developed artificial heron nesting platforms to maintain a heron rookery on a wetland in Weathersfield VT and the chapter maintains a nature trial and kiosk at the Army Corp of Engineers flood control project in Springfield and Weathersfield. Southeastern Vermont Audubon has put up Osprey nesting platforms along the banks of the Connecticut river in Brattleboro and the Northeast Kingdom Audubon participates in monitoring efforts at the Victory Bog IBA.

HABITAT

The Salmon River Division parcel consists of 280 acres of forested and freshwater tidal wetland habitat. The Fort River Division parcel consists of 83 acres of grassland and agricultural habitat.

SPECIES

Home to threatened & endangered species such as:

Federally threatened species: Piping Plover; Bald Eagle; puritan tiger beetle; shortnose sturgeon.

State-listed species.—Whip-poor-will; Yellow-breasted Chat; Bald Eagle; Red-shouldered Hawk; Saltmarsh Sharp-tailed Sparrow; Seaside Sparrow; Sedge Wren; Northern Saw-whet Owl; Short-eared Owl; Least Bittern; American Bittern; Snowy Egret; Great Egret; Willet; Piping Plover; Northern Harrier; Snowy Egret; Horned Lark; King Rail; Black Rail; Common Moorhen; Pied-billed Grebe; Blue-winged Teal; Peregrine Falcon; American Kestrel; American Oystercatcher; Upland Sandpiper, Yellow-crowned Night Heron; Brown Thrasher; Bobolink; Savannah Sparrow; Ips-

wich Sparrow; Grasshopper Sparrow, Vesper Sparrow, Least Tern; Common Tern; and several species of state-listed plants and insects.

Home to Audubon WatchList species.—American Black Duck; "Atlantic" Brant; Black Rail; Piping Plover; American Golden Plover; American Oystercatcher; American Woodcock; Red Knot; Short-billed Dowitcher; Whimbrel; Short-eared Owl; Blue-winged Warbler; Kentucky Warbler; Prairie Warbler; Rusty Blackbird; Wood Thrush; Cerulean Warbler, Worm-eating Warbler; Willow Flycatcher; Black-and-White Warbler; Hairy Woodpecker; Seaside Sparrow; Saltmarsh Sharp-tailed Sparrow and Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrow.

Partners in Flight High Conservation Priority Species.—Home for at least 37 species of birds considered of high conservation priority by Partners in Flight.

Other species.—Floodplain forest of the Connecticut River has been documented as being important stopover habitat for migrant landbirds. Large blocks of forest remaining in the upper reaches of the watershed are critical nesting areas for many species of forest-nesting birds, and habitat for large mammals such as black bear and moose. The freshwater tidal marshes of the lower river are important habitat for migrant shorebird stopover, rails and other marsh birds, and as a waterfowl migratory stopover and wintering area.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE NEW HAMPSHIRE AUDUBON

Mr. Chairman and Honorable Members of the Committee: I appreciate the opportunity to present this testimony in support of an appropriation of $3 million from the Forest Legacy Program for the Robb Reservoir/Willard Pond tract in New Hampshire.

The mission of New Hampshire Audubon is to protect New Hampshire's natural environment for wildlife and for people. The Robb Reservoir/Willard Pond tract has been a conservation priority of our organization for 35 years, with the first transfer of land to New Hampshire Audubon occurring in 1971. We are deeply invested in these properties due to their tremendous natural resources, wetlands, endangered species, and crucial wildlife corridor linkages.

New Hampshire's forests are the economic engine that drives tourism and the majority of manufacturing in the state. Private landowners and industries own eighty percent of the state's forestland. The New Hampshire Forest Legacy Program seeks to protect blocks of forestland of varying sizes and values that are threatened by conversion to nonforest uses, so that they may provide for the continuation of traditional forest uses. To date, more than 200,000 acres of forestland in New Hampshire have been protected through the Forest Legacy Program.

The Robb Reservoir/Willard Pond project is a 1,667-acre tract in Cheshire County, one of the few areas in southern New Hampshire where large unfragmented blocks of forestland can still be found. Protection of the property will link together the 1,466-acre Willard Pond New Hampshire Audubon Wildlife Sanctuary with two other private easements. Altogether these conservation efforts will link a block of over 40,000 acres of permanently protected forestland in a densely populated area of the state.

The Robb Reservoir/Willard Pond project area has also been identified as a critical target for protection due to its ecological value and central location in the Quabbin-to-Cardigan Conservation Initiative, an inter-organizational collaborative effort organized to establish a contiguous conservation corridor from the southern White Mountains in New Hampshire to the Quabbin Reservoir in Massachusetts. Approximately 75 percent of the property is productive forestland and will be managed to provide for sustainable timber production. This property is under considerable development pressure because of its commuting distance to Concord, Manchester and Keene.

Under the terms of a conservation easement, the project area would continue to provide public access for hunting, hiking, nature viewing, cross-country skiing, and snowshoeing, as well as fishing for warm and cold water species in the North Branch River and Robb Reservoir. A network of established recreation trails will connect this property to an adjacent trail network at the Audubon wildlife sanctuary. Mountainous portions of the property offer unobstructed views of the reservoir and surrounding mountains, and provide excellent vantage points for wildlife viewing. Documented archaeological sites, located along the north branch of the Contoocook River, reveal clues to the lifestyle of the Penacook people, who lived on this landscape for millennia. A historic Native American travel route, the Kon-wegti-ok Trail, once ran through the property along the river, connecting Native American villages.

The Robb Reservoir/Willard Pond property is home to diverse and interesting plant and animal species. Several state threatened and endangered species have been documented on the property including the bald eagle, pied-billed grebe, osprey, purple martin, and northern harrier. In addition, a state listed endangered plant species, the arethusa, is found growing on the property within the three state designated Exemplary Natural Communities: Atlantic white cedar swamp, southern New England level bog, and southern New England acidic seepage swamp. Of these three, the Atlantic white cedar swamp is designated as "critically imperiled" due to its extreme rarity. In 1991, the north branch of the Contoocook River, which runs through the property, was designated as protected by the New Hampshire Rivers Management Protection Program.

New Hampshire has recognized Robb Reservoir/Willard Pond as its number one priority for the Forest Legacy Program this year, and $3 million has been included for the project in the President's fiscal year 2007 Budget. This year, a total appropriation of $3 million of Forest Legacy funding is needed to acquire and protect the 1,667-acre Willard Pond/Robb Reservoir property.

Thank you Mr. Chairman, for the opportunity to present this testimony in support of this request.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE NATIONAL INSTITUTES FOR WATER RESOURCES

Mr. Chairman, on behalf of the National Institutes for Water Resources, I request the Subcommittee to provide $8,775,000 to the U.S. Geological Survey for the state Water Resources Research Act Program, as originally established under provisions of Public Law 88–379, the Water Resources Research Act of 1964.

First, I would like to thank you and the Subcommittee members for your longtime support of the program. You have recognized the importance of university cooperation with local, state and federal government agencies to produce new knowledge, and to ensure the education and training of the professionals who design and manage our water systems.

The 54 state water institutes, located at land grant universities in each of the states and territories, have been funded through the Department of the Interior each year since they were first authorized in 1964. They have a threefold mission: to oversee the conduct of useful water research, to foster the education and training of our Nation's future water professionals, and to transfer research results to those who manage or use the Nation's water resources.

REQUEST

The National Institutes for Water Resources respectfully request the addition of $8,775,000 to the 2007 budget of the USGS for the Water Resources Research Act Program. This recommendation is composed as follows:

—$7,000,000 in base grants for the water institutes, as authorized by Section 104(b) of the Act, for competitive research seed grants and outreach;

—$1,500,000 to support activities authorized by section 104(g) of the Act, the national competitive grants program; and

—$275,000 for program administration.

Two reauthorization bills for the program are currently pending before the House Resources Committee: S. 1017, which passed the Senate unanimously, and H.R. 4588, introduced by Representative Doolittle. Both bills authorize annual appropriations of $12,000,000. The appropriation in fiscal year 2006 was $6,500,000. The increase from the fiscal year 2006 appropriation that is recommended herein would partially offset the sharp increase in university costs of the last 3–5 years, in particular the cost of tuition.

JUSTIFICATION

"At the dawn of the 21st century the United States faces a panoply of water problems that are significantly more numerous, complex, and larger in scope than those of the past." So stated an expert committee of the National Research Council in 2004, in an assessment reported in Confronting the Nation's Water Problems: The Role of Research. These problems, paradoxically, stem from our Nation's progress and success. As the U.S. population grows and its economy drives forward, demands on water resources intensify. As the built environment expands, more value is jeopardized by each flood and drought. As we learn more about natural processes, we strive to bring our water management practices into alignment with our new understanding. As our general prosperity increases, we raise our expectations—for drinking water quality, the availability of irrigated farm produce and the abundance of

wild fish. Meeting these demands requires high levels of research, outreach to water managers and water users, and education of future specialists.

Federal agencies conduct a great deal of water research and training. But, as the NRC report points out, these are driven and constrained by agency missions, which means that important topics are neglected—most notably the institutional aspects of water management, where important economies and innovations may be realized. Private organizations and state natural-resource agencies need water research, education and training but seldom have the capacity to conduct these activities themselves. Clearly, universities must play a major role. The question is: by what characteristics should the Water Resources Research Act Program be judged worthy to fill this role, at a time of unprecedented demand on the federal budget? I propose four criteria: relevance, quality, efficiency and need.

Relevance.—Congress was quite deliberate in originally directing the establishment of water institutes at land grant universities. These are the schools that specialize in identifying problems within their states, developing solutions, and conducting technology transfer. The institutes' research and outreach are further tuned to state needs, because the institutes are required by the Water Resources Research Act to consult with panels of advisors representing the water interests in their states. Regional and national priorities are addressed when the institutes collaborate on larger projects. Examples of 2006 activities at different scales include:

—A regional workshop on turning the water produced during coalbed methane and oil extraction to beneficial uses

—A national conference titled Increasing Freshwater Supply

—A collaboration with the American Water Works Association to place undergraduate interns with municipal water utilities

—Research to define ground water flows in the Tar River Basin, a rapidly-growing area of North Carolina where increased water supplies are needed

—Research to locate the sources of infectious microbes in the watershed tributary to the Philadelphia municipal water system.

Institute-sponsored research is not limited to the natural sciences; for example, three of this year's eight national research projects concern the economics of water management.

Quality.—In both the state and national research programs, projects are selected for funding on a competitive basis, relying on the reviews of peer scientists, economists or engineers. The performance of each institute is evaluated every five years by an independent, USGS-appointed panel. The most recent evaluation report (2004) stated "The vast majority of institutes are strong and thriving and a significant subset is very strong and distinguished the institute program, with its federal-state matching requirement, is an important and significant part of the nation's water resources research infrastructure."

Efficiency.—The water institutes must match each federal dollar from their base grants with two non-federal dollars. This is the highest match requirement of any federal research program. The national competitive grants program requires a 1:1 match. The overall leveraging ratio for all of the institutes, counting funding from all sources, is more than 15:1. In 2005 the institutes supported more than 1,300 student researchers, at an average cost of less than $10,000 each. By comparison, student stipends funded by the National Science Foundation average more than $20,000 per year. The Water Resources Research Act Program does not allow for university administrative costs, and USGS administrative costs are less than 5 percent.

Need.—The President's budget recommends the water institute program for elimination in fiscal year 2007. The recommendation is justified thus: "These Institutes generally have been successful in obtaining other sources of funding and should be able to support themselves." In fact, the institutes cannot exert funding leverage if they have no fulcrum against which to lever. It is the ongoing federal support, the Congressional designation as a focal point of water investigation and outreach, that enables the institutes to augment their base grants from other funding sources. Furthermore, a significant number of the institutes receive no base funding from their states or universities at all. Some of these would cease to exist without the federal base grant. Others would greatly curtail their activities; in particular, they would no longer disburse research seed grants, formally consult with water-user groups, collaborate with other universities in their states, or conduct outreach to water managers. In my own state, the annual conference that brings together more than 200 water managers, students, and researchers is largely funded through the federal base grant. Without the appropriation, its continuation would be in jeopardy.

IN CLOSING

The water institutes have been on the job nationwide for more than 40 years, and they're well-prepared to play a key role in assuring our Nation's water security in the 21st century. But from one year to the next they are absolutely reliant on federal seed funding to mobilize the resources they need to tackle contemporary water problems. I thank you for your past support, and hope that the institutes have earned your continued confidence.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE NEW JERSEY AUDUBON SOCIETY

On behalf of the New Jersey Audubon Society and its over 21,000 members, I would like to thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony to the fiscal year 2007 Subcommittee on the Interior and Related Agencies.

New Jersey Audubon Society is a privately supported, not-for profit, statewide membership organization that fosters environmental awareness and a conservation ethic among New Jersey's citizens; protects New Jersey's birds, mammals, other animals, and plants, especially endangered and threatened species; and promotes preservation of New Jersey's valuable natural habitats.

I am writing to express our support for funding three national wildlife refuge acquisition projects in New Jersey through the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) Program. These projects meet the criteria of the LWCF program and benefit the citizens of New Jersey and visitors by:

—Providing opportunities for citizens recreation in the most densely populated state in the nation;
—Protecting open space and habitat for wildlife, including endangered and threatened species;
—Offering opportunities for scientific research through the enhancement of the NOAA Jacques Cousteau National Estuarine Reserve; and
—Resulting in considerable saving for the US Fish and Wildlife Service.

CAPE MAY NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE

LWCF funds in the amount of $1.3 million would acquire 450 acres, known as Braddock Realty, adjacent to Cape May National Wildlife Refuge in southern New Jersey.

The property is located along Bidwell Creek, a tidal creek flowing from the Delaware Bay. Cape May County identified the drainage basin of this creek as one of the most important aquifer recharge areas in the county.

This low, wet property is also the site of one of the largest stands of swamp pink (Helonias bullata), a member of the Lily Family and a federally threatened plant. In addition, this property is composed of forested uplands and an overgrown field, exceptional habitat for American woodcock. This piece of land also provides habitat for the tremendous number of migratory birds that pass through the Cape May peninsula each year. Other species that call this area home include state threatened species such as barred owls, red-shouldered hawks, and osprey.

FORSYTHE NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE

LWCF funds in the amount of $500,000 would acquire a 45.59-acre island, known as the Ocean County parcel, near the Edwin B. Forsythe National Wildlife Refuge in central New Jersey.

The Ocean County parcel is an upland tree island in the tidal marches to the north of Great Bay. The marshes surrounding the parcel are already part of refuge, however the island is not.

Acquisition of this parcel is critical to the protection of habitat within the area and would be the final step in acquiring a 128-acre area approved for development in 1999. The Ocean County Freeholders recently purchased the other portion of this 128-acre area for the refuge.

The land is located within the approved refuge acquisition boundary and once purchased would become part of the NOAA Jacques Cousteau National Estuarine Reserve.

GREAT SWAMP NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE

LWCF funds in the amount of $2 million would acquire 30 acres of land located on two abutting lots adjacent to Great Swamp National Wildlife Refuge in northern New Jersey.

The 27-acre larger lot currently contains a fireworks production facility and temporary storage area as well as deciduous forested wetlands. Purchasing this land would remove a potentially dangerous operation from the immediate area of the refuge. The production facility is now located approximately 2,000 feet from the Somerset County Environmental Education Center and a little over 5,000 feet from the Refuge headquarters.

Acquisition of this land also would provide an excellent restoration opportunity and likely protect critical habitat of the endangered blue-spotted salamander, found on adjacent refuge land, and the endangered red-shouldered hawk, reported to be nesting in the area.

The smaller 3-acre lot contains a 4,400-square-foot brick house. Acquiring this lot would provide an opportunity to relocate the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Division of Law Enforcement, currently occupying expensive leased space in Elizabeth, onto Service land. The house is in very good condition and could easily be converted and used as office space, resulting in considerable saving for the Service.

PROJECT SUPPORT

These projects are supported by the following organizations, which represents hundreds of thousands of New Jersey citizens:

—American Littoral Society
—Delaware Riverkeeper
—Great Swamp Watershed Association
—New Jersey Conservation Foundation
—New Jersey Environmental Federation
—NJ PIRG
—New Jersey State Federation of Sportsmen's Clubs
—New York-New Jersey Trail Conference
—Passaic River Coalition
—Pinelands Preservation Alliance
—Sierra Club, New Jersey Chapter

Finally, NJ Audubon Society is very concerned about the overall proposed cuts to the Land & Water Conservation Fund, which is slated to receive only $85 million in the President's budget. This would be the lowest level of funding in over three decades. Without adequate funding of this program, New Jersey's last remaining open spaces will be developed, resulting in a loss of recreational opportunities and quality of life for both urban and rural residents.

Thank you again for considering our comments on the fiscal year 2007 Interior and Related Agencies Appropriations bill.

Contact Information: Eric Stiles, NJ Audubon Society at 908–766–5787 x13 or eric.stiles@njaudubon.org.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE NEW JERSEY CONSERVATION FOUNDATION

The New Jersey Conservation Foundation thanks you for the opportunity to comment on the fiscal year 2007 Department of the Interior, Environment and Related Agencies Appropriations bill. The NJ Conservation Foundation is a member-supported, non-profit 501.c.3 statewide organization whose mission is to preserve New Jersey's land and natural resources for the benefit of all. Since 1960, NJCF has worked to protect the State's farmland, forests, urban parks, wetlands, water quality and special places.

NJCF's top priorities include:

—$80 million for the Forest Legacy Program, including $2.1 million for the protection of Sparta Mountain South (NJ)—Phase II ($1.8 million was provided in fiscal year 2006 for Phase I);
—$11 million for the Highlands Conservation Act, including $2.5 million for protection of the Wyanokie Highlands (NJ); and
—$2.0 million from the Land and Water Conservation Fund for the New Jersey Pinelands Forked River Mountain Preserve Expansion Project.

USDA/FOREST LEGACY PROGRAM

Sparta Mountain South (NJ) is located in Sussex County, where it forms the westernmost ridge of New Jersey's northern Highlands. Sparta Mountain/Lubber's Run was identified as important "Conservation Focal Area—I " in the USDA Forest Service NY–NJ Highlands Regional Study: 2002 Update.

There is currently the potential, in densely populated New Jersey, to preserve more than 5,000 acres in the Sparta Mountain Greenway. In fiscal year 2006, the

Forest Legacy Program provided funding for 1,200 easement acres. Now, we seek $2.1 million for 1,000 acres (fee and easement).

Sparta Mountain South is a key linkage between state park and wildlife management areas, extending some 15 miles between Hamburg Mountain State Wildlife Management Area and Allamuchy State Park. At Sparta Mountain's northern end, 1,200-acre Gerard Woods, 3,200-acre Sparta Mountain and 1,300-acre Weldon Brook State Wildlife Management Areas preserve over 5,700 acres. Sparta Mountain South forms a critical linkage between these WMA's and Allamuchy State Park to the south. New Jersey's Highlands Millennium Trail, initiated in 1994 with National Park Service Rivers and Trails Conservation Assistance, follows Sparta Mountain on its 150-mile route between the Hudson and Delaware Rivers.

Sparta Mountain South offers magnificant vistas overlooking pristine lakes and ponds, glacial erratics, and a diversity of natural communities, including grasslands and wetlands. Mature forests of oak, beech, hickory, maple, and tulip poplar clothe its steep ridges, and hemlock groves still stand despite the wooly adelgid blight that has devastated many hemlock forests in the State. Federally endangered bog turtle and State threatened red shouldered hawk, wood turtle, spotted salamander, timber rattlesnake and bobcat make their home here. The forests protect groundwater aquifers and water quality, while wetlands and ponds provide flood control and habitat for wading birds, neo-tropical migrant songbirds and amphibians.

Sparta Mountain South forms part of the watershed of the Musconetcong River. Legislation adding the Musconetcong River to the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System was approved in the Senate December 16, 2005, and successfully marked up on March 29, 2006 by the Parks Subcommittee of the House Committee on Natural Resources.

Recent development on adjacent parcels threatens the biological and resource integrity of Sparta Mountain South.

HIGHLANDS CONSERVATION ACT

In the fall of 2004, Congress enacted and President Bush signed the Highlands Conservation Act, recognizing the national significance of the more than three-million acre, four-state Highlands region as a source of drinking water, productive forests and farms, wildlife habitat and recreation within an hour of major metropolitan areas including Philadelphia, New York City and Hartford. The Act authorized $11 million annually to assist the Highlands states in conserving priority lands from willing landowners, and to continue USDA Forest Service research and assistance to private landowners in the Highlands.

The Administration's fiscal year 2007 budget included $2 million for the Highlands Conservation Act (HCA), through the Fish & Wildlife Service, to support land conservation partnership projects in the four Highland states of Pennsylvania, New Jersey, New York and Connecticut. The Governors of the four Highlands States have jointly submitted projects totaling $10 million in need to the Department of the Interior for funding in fiscal year 2007.

WYANOKIE HIGHLANDS (NJ)

New Jersey requests $2.5 million in funding to acquire four parcels in Passaic County totaling 1,288 acres. The total cost of this project is $7.7 million.

The Wyanokie Highlands encompass critical watersheds that protect New Jersey's most significant and most threatened water supply—the Wanaque Reservoir—on which nearly two million people rely. The Wyanokies contain the headwaters of Burnt Meadow and West Brooks, waterways of exceptional ecological significance, which flow directly into the Wanaque Reservoir. Acquisition will provide essential protection for this critical water supply, which the U.S. Forest Service identified as highly threatened by development.

In addtion, preservation will complete a missing greenway link between Norvin Green State Forest and Long Pond Ironworks State Park, and extend a direct connection to New York's Sterling Forest State Park along the route of the Highlands Millenium Trail. The Highlands Trail, nearly completed, runs 150 miles between the Hudson and the Delaware Rivers. The Wyanokie Highlands boast an extensive network of historic hiking trails and dramatic scenic overlooks, as well as significant ecological values.

LAND AND WATER CONSERVATION FUND

Forked River Mountain Preserve Expansion Project.—We are seeking $2.0 million from the Land and Water Conservation Fund (authorized by Section 502 of the National Parks and Recreation Act) to preserve 622 acres in the Forked River Mountain Project area, towards the project's total cost of $4.425 million. The 622 acres

are located wholly within the Pinelands National Reserve, in and near New Jersey Conservation Foundation's 3,000-acre Forked River Mountain Preserve.

The New Jersey Conservation Foundation is working to permanently preserve thousands of acres throughout the New Jersey Pinelands Commission's Preservation Target Areas in partnership with the Pinelands Commission, NJ Department of Environmental Protection and other governmental and non-governmental agencies. Over $40 million would be needed to protect all the unpreserved, targeted lands. The money sought will match existing funds to purchase the property from the current landowner.

The permanent preservation of critical natural resources in the Pinelands National Reserve (PNR) ensures that the specific goals and overall mission of the Pinelands Comprehensive Management Plan (CMP) are realized. The New Jersey Conservation Foundation has a long history of supporting the CMP and the Pinelands Commission land preservation initiatives throughout the PNR. If funded, our efforts will result in the preservation of thousands of acres leveraged by additional State, local and private funding that will protect natural areas, connect existing isolated preserved lands, and provide the public with areas for hunting, fishing, hiking and other outdoor pursuits. Management will include active and passive measures to ensure the survival and possible expansion of known populations of threatened and endangered species found on these properties.

The Forked River Mountain Preserve Expansion Project is within a Land Preservation Target Area approved by the Pinelands Commission. It consists of a mosaic of tracts that are entirely forested with no history of development or other significant disruption. Pine-oak forest dominates the property with some significant stands of Atlantic White Cedar in the lower areas along the North Branch of the Forked River. This area is known to be habitat for a number of rare and endangered Pine Barrens species such as Pine Barrens treefrog (Hyla andersonii), Knieskern's beaked-rush (Rynchospora knieskernii), northern pine snake (Pituophis melanoleucus) and curly grass fern (Schizaea pusilla). A portion of the property is located in the Oyster Creek Watershed, recently given additional protections by the Pinelands Commission through a zoning change to better protect species diversity and high water quality. Many adjacent properties are already protected as part of the 3,000-acre Forked River Mountain Preserve.

Thank you again for considering our comments on the fiscal year 2007 Interior, Environment and Related Agencies Appropriations bill.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE AMERICAN HIKING SOCIETY; AMERICAN RIVERS; ARIZONA WILDERNESS COALITION; AUDUBON SOCIETY OF GREATER DENVER; BAY AREA COALITION FOR HEADWATERS; CONTINENTAL DIVIDE TRAIL ALLIANCE; FRIENDS OF THE AGUA FRIA NATIONAL MONUMENT; FRIENDS OF THE MISSOURI BREAKS MONUMENT; FRIENDS OF SLOAN CANYON; GRAND CANYON TRUST; GRAND CANYON WILDLANDS COUNCIL; IDAHO CONSERVATION LEAGUE; IDAHO RIVERS UNITED; NATIONAL COAST TRAIL ASSOCIATION; NATIONAL TRUST FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION; NATIONAL WILDLIFE FEDERATION; NATURAL RESOURCES DEFENSE COUNCIL; NEW MEXICO WILDLIFE FEDERATION; OREGON NATURAL DESERT ASSOCIATION; REPUBLICANS FOR ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION; SAN JUAN CITIZENS ALLIANCE; SIERRA CLUB; SKY ISLAND ALLIANCE; TAMARISK COALITION; U.S. PUBLIC INTEREST; RESEARCH GROUP; THE WILDERNESS SOCIETY; AND THE WILDERNESS WATCH

On behalf of the 27 organizations listed above and our millions of members, we are writing to express our support for increased funding and improved budgeting and reporting accountability for the National Landscape Conservation System (NLCS).

The NLCS is comprised of 26 million acres of the most spectacular lands and waters under the stewardship of the Bureau of Land Management (BLM). Created in 2000, the System provides unparalleled opportunities for recreation, hunting, fishing, wildlife watching, grazing, solitude, adventure, scientific research, and economic benefits to neighboring communities across the West. National Monuments, National Conservation Areas, Wilderness Areas, Wilderness Study Areas, National Scenic and Historic Trails and Wild and Scenic Rivers are all part of the NLCS.

FISCAL YEAR 2007 OPERATIONS, MAINTENANCE, AND PLANNING BUDGET NEEDS FOR THE NLCS

The President's fiscal year 2007 budget slashes $4.8 million from NLCS operations funding—a cut of 12 percent. When inflation and normal uncontrollable operating increases are taken into account, the President's proposal cuts approximately $6 million. The total proposed budget of just $37.1 million will leave critical BLM

responsibilities and needs unmet, including law enforcement, management of illegal off road vehicle traffic, archaeological site protection, control of invasive species, and the implementation of new Resource Management Plans.

We respectfully request that the Committee provide $46 million for operations and planning funding for the NLCS, a $3 million increase over the fiscal year 2006 enacted budget. This funding level would enable the BLM to maintain services at the fiscal year 2006 enacted level, while providing additional capacity to address areas of acute need, including:

—Law enforcement and visitor management: A 2005 survey of 15 Monuments and Conservation Areas in the NLCS found that only one-third has more than one full-time law enforcement ranger. On average, one ranger patrols 200,000 acres. Enforcement staff capacity needs to keep pace with growth in use; in some areas, visitor numbers have quadrupled in the past 5 years.

—Science and natural resource monitoring: The BLM cannot meet its responsibility to obtain adequate information on the health of flora and fauna, riparian condition, water quality, and other resources—a problem recently highlighted by the Heinz Center and the Government Accountability Office.

—Cultural Resource Management: BLM does not have the personnel to meet its legal responsibility to identify, evaluate, and nominate historic properties to the National Register of Historic Places, and protect cultural sites. The NLCS contains hundreds of thousands of significant cultural and historic resources, yet the agency has comprehensively inventoried just 6–7 percent of the area encompassed by NLCS Monuments and Conservation Areas.

Additionally, we note that the President's budget has removed all of the Congressional requests that were included in the fiscal year 2006 budget. We urge the committee to restore these Congressional add-ons and we ask the committee to give serious consideration to any additional member requests for funding NLCS units in the fiscal year 2007 budget. These increases should be allocated in addition to, not in lieu of, funding already budgeted for each NLCS unit in the BLM's fiscal year 2007 budget.

These requested increases could be funded by limiting the appropriation for BLM's oil and gas program to $6 million, rather than the $26 million increase requested by the agency. In addition to BLM's oil and gas program request, the BLM is receiving an additional $20 million "off budget" from lease rentals to fund seven "pilot permitting programs" established by the Energy Policy Act. In effect, the BLM is asking for a $46 million increase in funding for its oil and gas program, while neglecting other high priority programs, such as the National Landscape Conservation System.

NLCS LAND AND WATER CONSERVATION FUND PRIORITIES

The President's fiscal year 2007 budget would provide just $6 million for BLM land acquisition via LWCF—the lowest level ever. We do support the projects proposed for funding from the Land and Water Conservation Fund in the President's request, but strongly recommend an additional $4.9 million for projects in Canyons of the Ancients National Monument (CO), McInnis Canyons National Conservation Area (CO), Carrizo Plain National Monument (CA), Cascade Siskiyou National Monument (OR), and along the Pacific Crest Trail (OR). These projects are BLM acquisition priorities and offer willing sellers, local support, and opportunities to resolve inholder/access issues and protect recreational opportunities.

SUPPORT FOR THE PRESIDENT'S CULTURAL RESOURCE FUNDING INCREASES IN FISCAL YEAR 2007

We support the President's proposed $3 million program increase for cultural resource enhancement on BLM lands in fiscal year 2007. We encourage the Appropriations Committee to direct the BLM to devote a portion of this increase to inventory and protect the NLCS' hundreds of thousands of significant archaeological and historic sites (both known and unknown), and the wild lands surrounding these sites. The Committee should also restrict the use of these funds to proactive management of cultural resources (surveys, necessary maintenance and stabilization of historic sites), rather than for compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act.

NLCS MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTABILITY AND TRANSPARENCY

BLM's budget structure for the NLCS discourages program integration and limits accountability. For example, the NLCS receives funding from multiple budget categories and subcategories, obscuring the total funding devoted to the NLCS and how

it is used within the System. The BLM cannot effectively track NLCS funding, so the President's budget does not provide a clear depiction of NLCS expenditures.

Members of Congress concerned about the efficient use of scarce conservation dollars should request that the Interior Department provide annual reports on NLCS revenues, expenditures, and accomplishments, starting with budget documents for fiscal year 2006 and fiscal year 2007. Directing the DOI and the BLM to provide budget information on the System at the unit level (for example, accomplishments and financial information for each Monument and Conservation Area)—akin to the level of detail DOI can provide on oil and gas leasing, and minerals management—would promote good government and accountability and help clarify the goals and needs of BLM's National Landscape Conservation System. We urge the committee to reinstate a cross-cut budget for the NLCS similar to that included in the fiscal year 2002 budget and we recommend that the Committee direct the BLM to establish separate subactivities for Wild and Scenic Rivers, National Scenic and Historic Trails, National Conservation Areas and National Monuments.

We look forward to working with you on improvements to the budget to ensure that the BLM can effectively and efficiently meet its mandate of conservation on the National Landscape Conservation System—some of our nation's most spectacular and beloved public lands.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE NORTHERN LIGHTS NORDIC SKI CLUB

I thank you for the opportunity today to present this testimony in support of an appropriation of $750,000 from the Forest Legacy Program (FLP) for the Sugar Hills property in Itasca County, Minnesota. As you may know, the President's Budget for this year included $750,000 for this project.

The Northern Lights Nordic Ski Club is a non-profit volunteer association of over 250 members who enjoy cross country skiing and other winter sports in the forests around Grand Rapids, Minnesota. Every year we sponsor a cross country race series called the Vinterloppet. Different events include classic and freestyle Nordic skiing as well as the Kinderloppet for children. We put on weekly free ski clinics for children and adults. Our mission is "to promote cross country skiing as a healthful family activity."

Our organization voluntarily cuts, grooms, and maintains over 25 kilometers of cross country ski trails on the Sugar Hills property for use by our members and other cross country enthusiasts. These trails include five separate loop trails ranging in length from nearly two kilometers to over five kilometers. The trails are some of the best in the state. As a result, the Sugar Hills trail system is a primary destination for Nordic Ski enthusiasts from not only the Itasca County area, but from throughout the State of Minnesota. In the summertime these trails are used for other recreational opportunities including hiking, bird watching, nature walks by school children, and biking, and provide public access to the forest for hunting and fishing. In the winter the skiing trails are open longer because of the dense cover from the forest canopy.

The forests of the Sugar Hills property and northern Minnesota are a tremendous resource for residents and recreational users, but also the natural environment. The old growth northern hardwood communities and riparian areas along Pokegama and Siseebakwet creeks, Long Lake, and at many small potholes, wetlands, and ponds, support habitat for numerous species including timberwolves, lynx, bear and other mammals, and many species of birds, including grouse and dozens of warbler species.

In recent years the Forest Legacy Program has made significant steps to prevent the fragmentation of forests in Minnesota. Conversion of forestlands to non-forest uses through development threaten recreation and habitat lands and the contributions of timber management to local economies. Itasca County has the greatest concentration of industrial forestlands in Minnesota and the Sugar Hills property is located in a larger block of 75,000 acres that is under consideration for future Forest Legacy efforts.

An appropriation of $750,000 from the Forest Legacy Program in fiscal year 2007 is needed to allow the purchase of the conservation easement on the Sugar Hills property to continue providing recreational access for the members of our organization and others, conserve fish and wildlife habitat, and ensure the integrity of the northern hardwood forests. The federal funds provided will be matched by state and private funds to complete this project.

I respectfully urge you to include this Forest Legacy project in the fiscal year 2007 Interior and Related Agencies Appropriations Act.

I thank you again for this opportunity to provide testimony for your consideration of this request.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF NATURAL LANDS TRUST, INC.

We would like to enlist your help to secure a $300,000 appropriation through the U.S. Forest Legacy Program for the "Birdsboro Waters" project. The money would leverage other public and private monies that will be used for the acquisition of a conservation easement on 1,836 acres of forest land owned by the Birdsboro Municipal Authority in Union and Robeson townships in Berks County, Pennsylvania.

The forested area of southern Berks and northern Chester County, know as the Hopewell Big Woods landscape, is by far the largest block of wild and unbroken forest left in southeastern Pennsylvania. Its importance is further enhanced by being at the critical juncture of the Pennsylvania Highlands and the Schuylkill River corridor.

According to the Hopewell Big Woods Landscape Conservation Plan, the Birdsboro Waters tract is the highest land protection priority for the Hopewell Big Woods Project. It is highly unusual to be able to come across a piece of property of this size in southeastern Pennsylvania, especially one with the natural significance and features of this one.

Through the Forest Legacy Program, the Federal government is now in a position, with a relatively small investment, to close the deal on Birdsboro Waters. We have already received or anticipate receiving $1,900,000 in funding of the $2,200,000 price tag on Birdsboro Waters, leaving us only $300,000 away from our goal and the completion of the purchase of a conservation easement.

As part of the Forest Legacy easement provisions, the land owner, the Birdsboro Municipal Authority, will still be able to realize timber revenues from the property, under the guidance of a sustainable forest management plan. The Hopewell Big Woods Partners are also organizing outdoor tourism opportunities for this forest area. It is hoped that this will provide the economic engine for the Borough of Birdsboro and renew it as a nature-based tourism center and regional service center.

This project has been included in the President's 2007 budget to Congress for Forest Legacy funding and is currently in the Interior Appropriations budget. It is essential that these monies remain intact in these budgets.

While the Birdsboro Water Authority has been very patient as we have worked to assemble the funding necessary for this project, we can anticipate that their patience has an end point, at which time the land will be considered for development. Also, it may be of interest for you to know that the project has support from the local forest products industry.

We greatly appreciate your support and efforts on behalf of this project.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE NATIONAL MINING ASSOCIATION (NMA)

NMA RECOMMENDATIONS

Department of the Interior

U.S. Geological Survey—Mineral Resources Program (MRP). Reject the proposed $22.9 million reduction in funding for the MRP, including the $4.5 million proposed cut for the Minerals Information Team.

Bureau of Land Management (BLM)—Mining Law Administration. Increase the Mining Law Administration's Program budget by $5 million (enacted level is $32.6 million). Restore the $2.3 million proposed cut to the BLM Alaska minerals program.

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

Center for the Study of Metals in the Environment at the University of Delaware. $825,000 is recommended for the research of metal sequestration into soils.

BACKGROUND

Mineral Resources Program.—The United States Geological Survey (USGS) is the only source for most of the United States' statistical data on mining and minerals commodities. The proposed reduction of $22.9 million in the MRP would result in the elimination of more than 180 full time employees (FTEs). The $4.5 million reduction proposed for the Minerals Information Team will result in the discontinuation of data collection and analysis for 100 mineral commodities in 180 countries

and approximately 200 reports. The reduction will also result in the loss of employees with invaluable expertise in global and domestic production and consumption of mineral commodities. As a result, information on U.S. and international minerals will no longer be available to the: (1) U.S. Department of Commerce's Bureau of Industry and Security, which uses the data and analyses to resolve trade disputes; (2) Federal Reserve Board, which uses global minerals information in preparation of economic forecasts; and (3) U.S. intelligence agencies that must understand the effect changes in natural resource markets have on economic and political stability of developing countries.

In addition, the USGS' role in mineral information, exploration, identification of geological hazards and mapping offers important support to the mining industry.

This information provided by USGS is the basis for informed policy decisions and is extensively used by government agencies, by Members of Congress and by state and local governments, as well as industry, academia and nongovernmental organizations. Mineral resource supply and demand issues are global in nature, and our nation is becoming more dependent upon foreign sources to meet our metals and minerals requirements. The MRP is the leading source of unbiased research on the nation's mineral resources. The guidance and research the program provides is important in maintaining the growing value of processed materials from mineral resources that accounted for $478 billion in the U.S. economy in 2005 as well as assessing the environmental impacts of mining. The proposed cuts in the Minerals program would also terminate multidisciplinary research on mercury, arsenic and other inorganic toxins.

Mining Law Administration.—The BLM's fiscal year 2007 request of $32,696,000 for the Mining Law Administration Program (MLAP) is inadequate to meet the agency's obligations to process notices and plans of operations necessary for domestic exploration and mining projects. Since 1999, the funding of the MLAP program has remained flat (around $32,000,000). The substantial increase in the number of mining claims over the past five years (300 percent) demonstrates additional staffing and other resources are necessary to process the notices and plans of operations required for expanding our domestic mineral supplies. Ironically, while BLM has increased the regulatory demands on our domestic industry, it has not kept pace with sufficient agency staff and resources to review and approve the requests for permits and other authorizations required under the increasingly more stringent regulatory requirements.

Delays in obtaining permits and other authorizations remain a substantial impediment to the financing and development of mining projects in the United States. A 1999 National Academy of Sciences study found the permitting of domestic mining projects entails an inordinate amount of time and resources. According to Behre Dolbear, the U.S. ranks among the lowest of the top 25 mining nations in terms of time and expense for obtaining required permits for mineral exploration and development. The consequence of this state of affairs is substantially longer lead times to get projects up and running so that they begin to generate a return on investment. As a result, permitting delays discourage companies from exploring in the United States and impair our ability to attract the capital investment required for mine development. In short, investment capital flows to where investors will experience a quicker return on their investment.

In its report to Congress last year, BLM identified insufficient staffing as one cause of permitting delays, noting that many BLM offices were not backfilling positions as they were vacated. BLM recommended that a portion of the increased location and maintenance fees could be used to maintain adequate staffing levels needed to review, analyze and approve plans of operations.

NMA agrees that insufficient staffing significantly delays the permitting process. Increasing funds for staffing appropriately balances the need to address the mining permit delays and capability of the agency with our nation's needs for secure supplies of minerals.

To address this regulatory bottleneck, which impairs our Nation's economic growth and security, NMA provides the following recommendations:

—An additional $5 million should be appropriated in fiscal year 2007 for the MLAP. This level would allow the hiring by BLM State Offices of approximately 30 full time equivalents (FTE) to allow either backfilling of currently vacated positions or new hires.

—Allocation of funds to the State Offices should be prioritized based on number of notices and plans filed in each office and current unfilled openings in MLAP.

—For any fiscal year where receipts from mining claims maintenance and location fees exceed the amount Congress appropriates for MLAP, excess funds should be retained by the agency and used only for MLAP to promote more timely permit processing.

Alaska Minerals Program.—By cutting its $2.3 million budget, BLM proposes to completely eliminate the Alaska Minerals Program. BLM's justification is that the money is needed to focus on higher priorities. However, that justification ignores the need for domestic sources of minerals. The Alaska minerals program helps identify mineralized areas that will supply the nation with new sources of minerals. In addition, the Alaska Minerals Program ensures that mineral potential and reserves are considered during the development or revision of land management plans. For example, the agency is currently developing a plan for the Southern National Petroleum Reserve in Alaska (NPRA) which holds tremendous mineral potential. The plan for this area will determine whether it is open to mineral development. The Alaska Minerals Program plays a critical role in promoting the efficient use of our nation's mineral resources and NMA, therefore, recommends it be fully funded at $2.3 million.

Environmental Protection Agency.—The Center for the Study of Metals in the Environment (CSME) is comprised of scientists and engineers from the University of Delaware and Pennsylvania State University. The purpose of the CSME is to analyze and research the effects of metals on aquatic and terrestrial ecosystems.

NMA recommends $825,000 in funding for the CSME. A sound understanding of the chemistry, toxicology and fate of metals in the environment is critical to the development of appropriate regulatory programs. The CSME will use the requested funding to develop quantitative tools for understanding and predicting the fate and effects of metals in soils and water. This work will include:

—understanding and modeling the fate of metals in streams, rivers and lakes; and
—conducting research into metal sequestration in soils, a natural process that can lower the risk of metals in soil and, thereby, decrease cleanup costs at mining, military and industrial sites.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE NATIONAL PARKS CONSERVATION ASSOCIATION

The National Parks Conservation Association (NPCA) works to protect, preserve, and enhance America's national parks for present and future generations. On behalf of NPCA's more than 300,000 members, we appreciate the opportunity to share our funding priorities and respectfully request the Committee consider these views as you develop the fiscal year 2007 Interior budget.

NPCA is deeply concerned with the President's fiscal year 2007 budget request that cuts funding for the National Park Service $100 million below enacted levels. Funding for our national parks should not be cut. At a minimum, we request overall funding for the National Park Service at current fiscal year 2006 level of $2.25 billion in appropriations. In addition, we request funding for priority programs and projects listed below.

OPERATIONS OF THE NATIONAL PARK SYSTEM

A top NPCA priority is to significantly increase funding for Park Service operations. NPCA is requesting an increase of $150 million above the current fiscal year 2006 levels, $127 million above the President's request, for a total of $1.86 billion for Operations of the National Park System.

If enacted, the President's requested increase of $23 million for Operations of the National Park System (ONPS), well below the rate of inflation, will result in a reduction in critical Park Service functions, including resource protection and visitor services. We note that the budget request for ONPS covers only 70 percent of the Park Service's fixed costs, forcing the parks to again absorb these costs at the park level. We urge the Committee to fully cover the anticipated fixed costs for the Park Service as it formulates its fiscal year 2007 budget. In recent years, the parks have been stretched thin by unbudgeted cost-of-living increases, un-reimbursed storm damage, and insufficient funding for homeland security needs, which have contributed to and compounded the burden of the annual operating deficit. NPCA greatly appreciates the effort of the Committee to work on a bipartisan basis to address the core operating needs of the parks, particularly the successful effort to significantly increase the base operating budget of the parks in fiscal year 2005.

Land Acquisition

NPCA urges the Committee to significantly increase funding for National Park Service land acquisition. The President's request of only $22 million for federal land acquisition for the National Park Service, a cut of more than 50 percent below fiscal year 2006 enacted levels, and more than $100 million below levels only five years ago, hinders the ability of the Park Service to acquire and protect sensitive natural and cultural lands across the nation from willing sellers.

California Desert Parks, CA (Death Valley NP, Joshua NP, Mojave NP)

Request.—$1,000,000

Description.—Funding is requested toward the purchase of desert park in-holdings from willing sellers. There are substantial numbers of private property parcels located within the boundaries of the Mojave National Preserve, Joshua Tree and Death Valley. These funds would match private dollars raised by the National Park Foundation, which has already worked to identify, map, and prioritize in-holdings for purchase from willing sellers.

Chickamauga and Chattanooga National Military Park, TN

Request.—$2,000,000

Description.—Funding is requested for acquisition of the Light property in Lookout Valley to protect and ensure the integrity of these historic battlefield lands. $1.8 million was appropriated in fiscal year 2006 for acquisition of adjacent lands.

Cumberland Gap National Historical Park, KY/TN

Request.—$2,500,000

Description.—Funding is requested to complete acquisition (4,000 acres) of the Fern Lake watershed, critical to protecting water supply, historic lands, and one of the most scenic vistas in the park. $1 million was appropriated in fiscal year 2005 towards this acquisition.

Gettysburg National Military Park, PA

Request.—$1,500,000

Description.—Funding is requested to purchase two priority acquisitions in the park totaling 145 acres. The first, a 34-acre tract, the second 11 acres, both with National Register significance within the Gettsyburg Battlefield Historic District, and at risk of development. Of the 5,989 acres inside Gettysburg's boundary, nearly 20 percent or 1,154 acres remains privately owned. The last funding provided to acquire threatened lands at Gettysburg was in fiscal year 2001.

Grand Teton National Park, WY

Request.—$2,100,000

Description.—Funding is requested to purchase from willing sellers the remaining 1.4 acre inholding parcel adjacent to the Moose-Wilson Road. Known as the "Hartgrave Property," the land is critical park wildlife habitat and in an important scenic viewshed. An adjacent 3 acre parcel was acquired in 2005 by the National Park Service.

Great Smoky Mountains National Park (Tapoco Addition), TN

Request.—$1,500,000

Description.—Funding is requested to acquire 627 acres of part of a larger 10,000-acre Tapoco Lands project, a watershed containing one of the few remaining undisturbed, high-elevation streams in the ecoregion. Alcoa Power Generating, Inc. has committed $100,000 per year for 40 years to the project.

Harpers Ferry National Historical Park, WV

Request.—$2,000,000

Description.—Funding is requested to acquire Schoolhouse Ridge properties inside the park boundary. Public Law 108–307 authorized the addition of 1,240 acres to be included within the national park boundary. Almost all of the $2.9 million approved in fiscal year 2005, and $2.0 million in fiscal year 2006 (total of $4.9 million) has been appropriated to acquire two tracts totaling 111 acres. This land outside Washington, D.C., faces significant development threats. Funding in fiscal year 2007 of $2 million will enable the Park Service to buy remaining smaller tracts from willing sellers.

Mount Rainier National Park, Carbon River Valley, WA

Request.—$5,000,000

Description.—Funding is requested to complete acquisition of 800 acres from willing sellers to address seasonal flooding and improve road access to the park. The Mount Rainier Boundary Adjustment Act (Public Law 108–312) was signed into law in 2004. The fiscal year 2005 Interior Appropriations bill including an initial $1 million for surveying and land acquisition.

New River Gorge National River, WV

Request.—$2,000,000

Description.—Funding is requested to purchase the Woods Ferry Property (179 acres) which contains a major access point to the Gauley River. The park has identified 2,900 acres of private land owned by willing sellers. Funding to purchase Woods

Ferry is an important step in showing continued progress on purchasing these properties. $500,00 was appropriated in fiscal year 2006.

Petrified Forest National Park, AZ

Request.—$5,000,000

Description.—Funding is requested to begin the purchase of private lands incorporated into the park through the Petrified Forest National Park Expansion Act signed into law by President Bush in 2004 (Public Law 108–430). The expansion will protect globally significant paleontological resources, as well as nationally significant archeological resources. There are currently approximately 79,500 privately owned acres within the expansion.

Valley Forge National Historic Park, PA

Request.—$3,000,000

Description.—Funding is requested to continue acquisition of lands owned by the Archdiocese of Philadelphia inside the park boundary. In fiscal year 2005, $1.5 million was appropriated towards the acquisition of these lands. Valley Forge National Historical Park is a premier classroom on the American Revolution. Approximately 20 percent of the park's acreage inside its designated boundary remains in the hands of other owners.

Emergency, Hardship, Deficiency, and Relocation Fund

Request.—$5,000,000

Description.—Funding is requested at $5 million, an increase of $2.6 million above the President's fiscal year 2007 request. This funding is critical to secure inholdings throughout the Park System. For example, through the Hardship Fund, the vast majority of the inholdings in Gates of the Arctic National Park have been secured.

CONSTRUCTION

Death Valley National Park, CA

Reconstruct Furnace Creek Water System

Request.—$8,754,000

Description.—NPCA supports the President's fiscal year 2007 request of $8.7 million to reconstruct this water system, critical to providing reliable water to the park and restoration of the historic wetland and riparian habitat in the area.

Hamilton Grange National Monument, NY

Relocation and Restoration of Alexander Hamilton's Home

Request.—$8,493,000

Description.—NPCA supports the President's fiscal year 2007 request of $8.5 million to relocate and restore the Hamilton Grange, the home of Alexander Hamilton. Funding is needed to avoid further deterioration of this historic landmark. Public Law 106–482, signed into law in 2000 authorized the Secretary of the Interior to acquire by donation suitable land to serve as the new location for the home of Alexander Hamilton and to authorize its relocation to the acquired land.

Olympic National Park, WA

Elwha River Ecosystem and Fisheries Restoration

Request.—$20,010,000

Description.—NPCA supports the President's fiscal year 2007 request of $20 million to fully restore the Elwha River ecosystem and fisheries, as directed in the Elwha River Ecosystem and Fisheries and Restoration Act (Public Law 102–495). $115 million has been appropriated to-date for this effort.

OTHER

Everglades National Park, FL

Modify Water Delivery System

Request.—$13,330,000

Description.—NPCA supports the President's fiscal year 2007 request of $13.3 million within the Department of Interior budget for a Modify Water Delivery System, as well as the $35 million from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. This funding is critical to ensure significant restoration benefits for Everglades National Park and the South Florida Ecosystem.

Restoration Science and Monitoring

Request.—$8,521,000

Description.—NPCA supports the President's fiscal year 2007 request of $8.5 million for science, research, and planning to ensure the Park Service is adequately participating in the Everglades restoration effort.

National Underground Railroad Network to Freedom

Request.—$2,000,000

Description.—NPCA requests $2 million for the Underground Railroad Network to Freedom program managed by the National Park Service. The President's fiscal year 2007 budget eliminates the $368,000 appropriated in fiscal year 2006 for the program. NPCA requests $1.5 million for operations and $500,000 for grants to this important program. The Underground Railroad Network to Freedom program was created to promote and preserve sites, partnerships, and programs that educate the public about the historical significance of the Underground Railroad. Many of the sites and structures of the Underground Railroad are in imminent danger of being lost to us forever. The Underground Railroad Network to Freedom program is the best existing opportunity to interpret and preserve this significant part of American history.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE NEW RIVER LAND TRUST

Mr. Chairman and Honorable Members of the Subcommittee: I appreciate the opportunity to present this testimony in support of an appropriation of $1.3 million from the Land and Water Conservation Fund for the Jefferson National Forest in Virginia.

Managed jointly, the Jefferson and George Washington National Forests in western Virginia contain some of the finest scenery, wildlife habitat, and recreational lands in Virginia, including over 4,000 acres of open water in lakes, ponds, and streams, and approximately 2,000 miles of hiking trails. The Jefferson boasts tumbling waterfalls, rare wildflowers, and Virginia's highest peak (Mount Rogers), along with 11 wilderness areas.

The New River Land Trust is a nonprofit conservation organization working throughout the New River watershed to protect farmland, forests, open spaces and historic places. In the past 3½ years, we have helped to conserve over 12,000 acres. Our region is under increasing pressure from development. This tract of land near Wytheville is an ideal inholding to add to our National Forest system to preserve both productive forest and recreational options for our region.

In fiscal year 2007, an opportunity exists to acquire the 1,477-acre Black Lick property for inclusion into the Jefferson NF. As an inholding within the Wythe Ranger District of the Jefferson, the property is strategically located in Wythe County, ten miles outside Wytheville and near many public access points within the forest, including the Dark Horse Hollow picnic area, Big Bend picnic area, and the Stony Fork campsites.

Acquisition of this large tract is therefore a priority for the Jefferson National Forest and would offer recreational and ecological benefits to visitors and local residents alike. Acquisition would provide additional public access to the Stony Fork Nature Trail and trails along Little Walker Mountain. Hikers along the Stony Fork Nature Trail can enjoy dramatic views of the 3,782-foot Griffith Knob, the upper Stony Fork Valley below, and the inside of the Big Bend of Walker Mountain. Furthermore, the headwaters of Hutson Branch and a fork of Grippy Branch, both perennial streams, are located on the tract. These streams flow into Reed Creek, which borders the town of Wytheville. Acquisition of the Black Lick tract, therefore, would protect the watershed for Wytheville and the surrounding area.

Char-Lo Timberlands, a timber company based in the Pacific Northwest, owns the Black Lick property and is willing to see the land conserved as part of the Jefferson NF if federal funds are made available. An appropriation of $1.3 million from the fiscal year 2007 Land and Water Conservation Fund will help conserve this property for generations to come.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for the opportunity to present this testimony is support of this acquisition in the Jefferson National Forest.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE NATIONAL RECREATION AND PARK ASSOCIATION

This statement reflects the views of the National Recreation and Park Association on fiscal year 2007 appropriations for selected programs within the subcommittee's jurisdiction. Referenced programs are administered principally by the National Park Service. The National Recreation and Park Association recommends that the following appropriations be made:

—$100,000,000 from the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) for state assistance to be invested by state and local governments on a 50/50 matching

basis. Funds should be appropriated to the states as authorized by the Land and Water Conservation Fund Act, Public Law 88–578, as amended.

—$25,000,000 for the Urban Park and Recreation Recovery Program (UPARR) to address the most distressed urban recreation resource conditions and deficiencies identified and aided through the Urban Park and Recreation Recovery Program. At a minimum, $250,000 in administrative funding for the Urban Park and Recreation Recovery Program (UPARR). These funds are critically needed to continue to ensure protections of federally aided urban park projects from conversion to other uses under Section 1010, protections which may be ended if no administrative supervision is provided.

—$10,100,000 for the Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance (RTCA) program to support field-based technical assistance actions that yield broad conservation and recreation benefits through partnerships between federal, state, and local interests.

—Sufficient funds to enable the National Park Service, through Federal Lands to Parks and related programs to collaborate with state and local recreation and park agencies and others on the conservation and use of surplus federal real property, and conservation of rivers and trails and other resources.

If substantially adopted, our recommendations will help address an increasing national imperative to improve physical and mental health, stimulate local economies, and to sustain the environment through the protection and enhancement of public recreation areas and parks.

We are pleased to note that our recommendations relative to LWCF assistance and urban park restoration are supported by advocates for health, public parks, and recreation, as well as a broad coalition of health and recreation related groups. The Smart Communities of Outdoor Recreation and Environment (SCORE), a coalition that includes major public official organizations, major U.S. sports organizations, community development organizations, and the sports and outdoor industry, also supports our testimony.

The parks and recreation resources of local and state park and recreation systems are critical to the American people. These parks and facilities are not only our communities' public sanctuaries for close to home recreation and physical activity, they are resources stimulating local economies, bringing visitor tax dollars into the local area, and providing stimulus for cultural and community exchange. These public areas address diverse public interests and our collective need for quality recreation and associated services for children of working parents. Local agencies in particular host programs that serve millions of nutritious meals to children in need, especially during summer months. Public recreation and park sites and services help reduce crime and delinquency, especially during non-school hours, days and seasons. Public parks and recreation agencies accommodate needs to enhance physical, mental, social, and cognitive development through programming and access to facilities. Public parks and recreation are often regarded as the second largest public support entity next to public schools for individuals with disabilities. In addition to providing public recreation experiences, state and local agencies contribute to sustaining plant and wildlife diversity, and protect against flood/storm water, provide ground water recharge, and filter pollutants.

LAND AND WATER CONSERVATION FUND STATE ASSISTANCE

We commend the Subcommittee for its decisions to create and sustain fiscal partnerships with state and local recreation agencies and local governments. Consequently, we believe the President's proposed termination of LWCF State Assistance and proposal to provide a mere $1.6 million in administrative funding for fiscal year 2007 is remarkably short-sighted. Further, we believe the stated rationale for these actions reflects limited awareness of program purpose, public and personal health imperatives, long-term value and results arising from investments, and fiscal conditions of state and local governments. The Administration is recommending termination of this program for the second time in two years, and we are astonished at the rationalizations used to justify the elimination of one the most successful conservation and public recreation partnerships in the history of the Department of Interior.

The LWCF state assistance program has leveraged millions of dollars on the local level, and countless times the federal assistance for the approved project ends up being much less than 50 percent, making the actual federal investment minimal. These grants seem to attract other funds at the local and state level because of the review process identifying quality projects with a high level of need. Many economically distressed areas have benefited from access to public recreation resources through the LWCF state assistance program.

The Department's claim that state and local governments should go it alone reflects a basic misunderstanding of one of the key elements of the act—reinvestment of a small portion of Outer Continental Shelf receipts for resource conservation and public recreation. These funds are the American People's funds to be reinvested, and thus a healthy portion of these funds, applied to programs that ensure public access, should be a priority of the subcommittee.

Though the eligibility, and required use by public agencies to access LWCF state assistance funds is very broad, ironically, the President's budget continues to incorporate non-LWCF authorized programs, thus creating the illusion that LWCF is "fully funded." If the Congress in its wisdom determines to fund these programs from LWCF, then jurisdictions and agencies presently eligible for LWCF state assistance should be directly eligible to participate in programs that are drawn from the LWCF treasury account.

According to the National Park Service, the 2005 funding requests from state local governments for grants through this program totaled $2.8 billion ($2,781,397,625).—This is a sharp increase in expressed need from past years. With only $30 million, provided for fiscal year 2006, the LWCF is inadequate in assisting communities in addressing their needs. We are likely to see even greater unmet need for the program.

Nationally, NRPA has a continuing interest in the status of all capital development and infrastructure needs of local park and recreation agencies. Our work on behalf of local general-purpose governments and special purpose park and recreation districts requires periodic assessments of both the short and longer-term fiscal conditions and capital investment needs. We are purposed with identifying both present and longer-term deficiencies to properly steer public policy on the federal, state, and local levels. The national survey conducted in the spring of 2005, reveals a total capital investment need of $72.697 billion for public parks and recreation facilities, land acquisition, and recreation resources for fiscal year 2005 to fiscal year 2009. Nationally, there is a nationwide demand to increase the recreation capacity of public systems, especially those relatively close to home and in communities exploding with growth.

We continue to press our concern that the administration's proposed budget again recommends access to the Land and Water Conservation Fund for a number of other non-LWCF activities. The LWCF act, while broad in its application and diversity of projects, is very specific in its policy objectives—provision of recreational opportunities to improve human health through conservation of lands and waters and developments to enable public use and access.

Non-federal recreation and park resources are essential to quality recreation experiences for all people. These systems provide the majority of public recreation destinations, services, and visitor experiences. Further, they are not incidental to sustaining the social and environmental integrity of federal land systems.

URBAN PARK AND RECREATION RECOVERY PROGRAM

The Urban Park and Recreation Recovery Program recognizes the recreation values associated with conservation of the built environment. Funds are restricted to restoration and, thus, renewed and expanded public use of local recreation facilities and sites that have essentially been worn out by use, age, or the elements. These facilities and sites are no less important than conservation of other recreation spaces and places of high ecological and aesthetic value. One alarming shortcoming of the 2007 budget proposal is that no funding is planned for administrative costs for the first time in the 30 year history of the program, seriously jeopardizing the ability of the National Park Service to continue to provide protections for federally aided projects under UPARR. NRPA strongly recommends that an appropriation of at least $250,000 be made for 2007 to continue administrative oversight of the 1,500 UPARR aided projects.

Demand for Urban Park and Recreation Recovery Program assistance remains high. This interest is reflected in both the number of requests for assistance and the quality and objectives of projects when the program has been funded. Based on demand for fiscal year 2001–2003 appropriations, for example, our recommendation would support from 50 to 90 projects.

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE INTERGOVERNMENTAL ACTIVITIES

Rivers and Trails Conservation Assistance Program

NRPA recommends $10,100,000 for the Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance Program. The program continues to illustrate the critical importance of federal contributions to public/public and public/private partnerships for conservation of natural and cultural resources, and public access for recreation. The program pro-

vides technical assistance to local governments, citizens, and community organizations, and state agencies to consider recreation and conservation strategies. The results include planning, restoration, and development of waterways and trails, and conservation of open space and greenways, among other types of projects. In most cases, local governments continue to invest non-federal funds in projects stimulated by local public interests and technical assistance.

Federal Lands to Parks Program

We recommend an appropriation of at least $1 million to support the Federal Lands to Parks program, also part of the NPS Recreation and Conservation Assistance area. The FLP program is an exemplary service. It guides state and local governments in the conversion of federal surplus properties to public recreation and park uses and conservation of historic or wildlife values. The number of surplus properties potentially available for state and local parks, and demands for assistance has increased beyond the present capacity of program staff. A large part of this demand was generated by the closure of a large number of military bases between 1988 and 1995. In recent years, program staff has assisted in the transfer of about 20–25 properties annually. There is a current backlog of some sixty pending transfers. Impending base closure and reuse decisions will substantially impact the capacity of program staff.

While there is today considerable attention and debate on the stewardship and priorities of the National Park System and National Park Service, we urge the Subcommittee to not let this situation divert attention away from other congressional authorities in the Interior department's domain.

We appreciate this opportunity to share the views of our members. NRPA public policy Director, Rich Dolesh (rdolesh@nrpa.org) or Policy and Advocacy Specialist, Michael Phillips (mphillips@nrpa.org) (202–887–0290) is available to provide additional perspectives and to respond to questions.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE NISQUALLY TRIBE OF INDIANS

Mr. Chairman, my name is Dorian Sanchez and I am the Chairman of the Nisqually Indian Tribe. On behalf of the Tribe, I would like to submit the following written testimony on the fiscal year 2007 budget for the Bureau of Indian Affairs.

LAW ENFORCEMENT

The Nisqually Reservation is located in Washington State. We currently employ nine land patrol law enforcement officers to patrol 5,000 acres of reservation and near reservation lands. In addition, the Nisqually Tribe Police has extensive marine water enforcement duties and employs two water patrol officers to patrol over 100 square miles of Puget Sound for both the treaty salmon fishery and treaty shellfish harvesting. Tribal law enforcement also provides hunting enforcement for over 50,000 acres of land in the tribe's usual and accustomed area within the Nisqually River watershed.

We also employ ten detention officers at our 45-bed detention facility, which was built with Department of Justice funding in 2002. Like many other tribes, we are struggling to cope with escalating methamphetamine use and associated increases in gang activity and property crime related to dealing and manufacturing.

We support the Administration's proposed increase of $8.2 million for BIA law enforcement activities. However, this increase still falls short of meeting the severe need in Indian country for additional law enforcement resources—a need that will be even greater this year in light of significant cuts to Indian programs proposed by the Department of Justice. We ask the Subcommittee to increase funding for law enforcement officers and equipment. We also ask that the Subcommittee restore the $5.3 million proposed cut to the Tribal Courts programs. Tribes depend on law enforcement and tribal justice funding and this year—at the height of the meth crisis—this funding should be increased, not cut.

A specific area of concern is the status of the Tribe's detention facility, the Nisqually Correction Center. The detention center was built as part of a DOJ–BIA initiative, under which the DOJ would provide funding for new facilities in Indian country and the BIA would provide funding for staffing, operations and maintenance of those facilities. The Tribe's facility has been praised by BIA official as a model facility. In addition to detention space, we work closely with community agencies to provide alcohol and drug assessment and treatment, continuing education and transitional services. We provide these services for members of our tribe and for inmates from surrounding communities. For the past two years, however, the Tribe did not receive the scheduled funding for operations and maintenance. We were forced to

cover these costs with tribal funds last year, and if this funding is not received in fiscal year 2007, we will likely be forced to close the facility.

The Tribe requests that the Subcommittee contact law enforcement officials at the BIA to inquire about the use and allocation of appropriated funds for law enforcement. The Nisqually Tribe's experience is not uncommon. A 2004 Report by the Office of the Inspector General harshly criticized the BIA for failing to account for million of dollars in law enforcement funding. The report, entitled "Neither Safe Nor Secure: An Assessment of Indian Detention Facilities," was issued seven years after the BIA and the Department of Justice entered into a joint initiative to construct and fund new detention facilities in Indian country. The report found that, on the whole, tribal detention facilities were still in poor condition and that millions of dollars in additional funding appropriated to the BIA for detention center staffing and operations was unaccounted for and that most never reached the tribes. For example, from fiscal year 2001-fiscal year 2004, Congress appropriated $10 million to hire additional detention officer. Only $3 million of this ever reached the tribes and the BIA was unable to determine how the remaining $7 million was spent.

CONTRACT SUPPORT COSTS

The Tribe supports the Administration's proposal to provide $19 million to fully fund indirect contract support costs. This funding supports critical administrative functions that allow tribes to successfully operate programs contracted under the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act. We ask that the Subcommittee support this increase and consider adding report language to that effect. In addition, we ask that the Subcommittee support the proposed deletion of the word "indirect" in the text of the Interior Appropriations bill. This change would permit tribes to allocate unused Tribal Priority Allocation (TPA) funds to cover unmet direct contract support costs, which is important because the Administration proposes full funding for only indirect costs, leaving a significant unmet need.

If we can provide any additional information, please do not hesitate to contact our counsel, Mary J. Pavel or Addie C. Rolnick at Sonosky, Chambers, Sachse, Endreson & Perry, LLP, 1425 K Street NW, Ste. 600, Washington D.C. 20005; 202–682–0240 (tel); 202–682–0249 (fax); mpavel@sonosky.com; arolnick@sonosky.com.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE MICKEY LELAND NATIONAL URBAN AIR TOXICS RESEARCH CENTER

The Mickey Leland National Urban Air Toxics Research Center (NUATRC) is requesting a $2.6 million appropriation for fiscal year 2007 to continue the air quality public health research and data collection on air toxics in urban areas as directed by the U.S. Congress. NUATRC is a 501(c)(3) institution authorized by Congress in the Clean Air Act Amendments of 1990 (Title III, Section 301(p)).

The NUATRC is a unique public/private research partnership. Significant funding for the NUATRC is from EPA Assistance Awards based upon annual Congressional appropriations. We leverage these federal funds with non-federal funds contributed from a variety of sources. NUATRC's contributors to specific research also include major U.S. companies such as ConocoPhillips, ExxonMobil, Georgia Pacific, Rohm & Haas, and Shell. Additional funding is received from the Houston Endowment and local and state government. To further leverage our funding, NUATRC utilizes an administrative services agreement with The University of Texas-Houston Health Science Center (UTHSC) in the Texas Medical Center (TMC), complex. This arrangement lowers NUATRC's overall costs and allows us to take advantage of the world-renowned scientific community at The University of Texas (UT) and TMC as directed by Congress, while still remaining an independent entity. However, even with multiple sources and efficient leveraging of the NUATRC's funding, this important public health research would not be possible without the annual congressional appropriation. The research performed by the NUATRC is not performed within EPA or other research organizations. Since budgets supporting internal EPA research have been declining in recent budgets, this research would not likely be performed at all without the NUATRC.

NUATRC's mission is to sponsor and direct sound, peer-reviewed scientific research on the human health effects of air toxics in urban populations. NUATRC's research is driven by scientific questions requiring answers by policy and decision makers in government, industry, and academia, in order to improve the scientific basis of regulatory decisions. It is an integral part of the strategy established by Congress to assess the risks posed by air toxics to individuals living in areas where air quality concerns have been expressed by medical and scientific experts, and community leaders.

NUATRC is governed by a nine-member Board of Directors, appointed pro rata by the Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives, the Majority Leader of the U.S. Senate, and the President of the United States. Amongst its duties, the NUATRC Board appoints a 13-member Scientific Advisory Panel, selected from national research institutions, academic centers, government agencies, and the private sector.

The NUATRC's unique structure, organization, and intellectual resources are its source of strength. The NUATRC is an organization dedicated to implementing its mission as a public/private research center. Inclusion of academic, business, government, and citizen perspectives in the implementation of the NUATRC's research mission not only fulfills the NUATRC's mandate from the U.S. Congress; serving this public/private mindset is at the core of how the NUATRC operates. By embracing these disparate perspectives and working together to achieve consensus on the design of an effective research program, the NUATRC's leadership greatly reduces or eliminates the all too often occurrence of confusion and stalemate resulting from similar research studies funded by research organizations with a single type of funding source and intellectual resources. Depending on the perspective of the audience affected by the research results, an organization with a single funding and intellectual resource perspective could be seen as biased. In the NUATRC's case, academic, business, government, and citizen representatives strive for consensus on the research design and objectives prior to beginning the research. With this approach, less duplication of research occurs as well as less debate over the accuracy or bias of the results produced. This process enhances the focus on the policy or regulatory debate, not the design of the air quality research study.

ACHIEVEMENTS

NUATRC has accomplished the following major scientific achievements over the last several years consistent with our Congressional charge in the Clean Air Act Amendments of 1990:

1. Establishment of the importance of personal exposure (e.g. what people breathe) to the evaluation of possible public health effects. These findings are stimulating a reevaluation of the national emphasis on outdoor levels and sources.

2. Development of new technology for inexpensive and accurate personal monitoring devices to allow measurements of individual exposures to air toxics. This provides a new and, for the first time, direct view of the possible public health risks of personal exposure to air toxics. To our knowledge, this is a unique contribution by the NUATRC.

3. Initiation of community-based studies that involve participation by those citizens directly exposed to urban levels of air toxics.

We owe these advances in large part to the work of our Scientific Advisory Panel, made up of world class scientists from the public, private, and academic sectors, who have spent considerable time and effort to develop and refine these studies in a collegial and efficient manner.

We continue to work closely with the EPA, through which we access the Congressionally-appropriated funds. We have an excellent working relationship with the scientists that serve on our research panels, and we continue to interact with their administrative counterparts to establish a firmer base for our financial support.

CURRENT ACTIVITIES

NUATRC has been very active on its air toxics research initiatives. One of these initiatives addresses the national concerns about health effects. Scientific studies conducted to date suggest that living near busy roads leads to adverse health effects. In these studies the association between proximity to traffic and health effects has been shown without any direct measurement of exposures. The NUATRC plans research to clarify the potential impact of air toxics in such observed associations. The NUATRC will fund research that is hypothesis driven and designed to test the relationship between exposures to air toxics and proximity to vehicular traffic and potential adverse non-cancer health effects resulting from these exposures. The health effects of interest are those affecting the respiratory, cardiovascular, and immune systems. The air toxics of interest are one or more of the 33 chemicals listed as priority air toxics in the EPA's Integrated Urban Air Toxics Strategy (FRL–6157–2; Docket No. A–97–44) and the National Scale Air Toxics Assessment (http://www.epa.gov/ttn/atw/nata/34poll.html) and those that are uniquely mobile source related.

In all NUATRC funded research, the NUATRC's priority is to support research leading to peer-reviewed publications. The NUATRC has funded research that has

contributed to over 35 peer reviewed publications to date and significantly advanced the scientific understanding of air toxics.

RESEARCH FINDINGS TO DATE

In 2007, NUATRC will continue research efforts to better understand the personal exposures of people living in urban areas to a number of the 188 air toxics defined in the Clean Air Act. From our earlier exposure studies we have achieved pioneering accomplishments in measuring levels of personal exposures to toxic air pollutants. These data point conclusively to the importance of personal exposures in terms of assessing the actual public health risk from air toxics.

The information we are obtaining suggests that the nation's environmental resources need to be focused on personal situations, as opposed to a continuing emphasis on fixed site urban air monitors. These fixed site monitors, which play a key role in determining overall urban air quality and air quality standard attainment, are not numerous enough or precise enough to address public health risks. The support we have received from Congress has been instrumental in creating a new scientific emphasis on personal exposure measurement. The EPA has now accepted the importance of such approaches.

In 2007 the NUATRC will be in the second year of funding for the Houston Exposure to Air Toxics Study (HEATS). HEATS is a two-year project that will study the relationship between the levels of air toxics compounds that are measured at traditional fixed site monitors and the levels that individuals are actually exposed to as they move throughout their daily activities. It will be conducted in two neighborhoods near the Houston Ship Channel. The study will also explore reported health effects from the study participants, and examine the relationship between reported health effects and personal exposure and ambient monitors.

The study is funded by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality, the Mickey Leland National Urban Air Toxics Research Center, the Texas Environmental Research Consortium, Harris County, and The East Harris County Manufacturer's Association. The City of Houston is also participating in the study in an advisory role. Although HEATS is collecting data in Houston, Texas, it is of national importance as it relates fixed site monitoring, personal exposure monitoring, and health data.

Further, the NUATRC will expand its involvement in community-based environmental health research, an important element of our mission, as air toxics health effects may disproportionately impact the economically and medically underserved people in our urban populations.

ADMINISTRATION

NUATRC operates with an efficient administrative staff of four full-time and one part-time equivalent staff, consultants, and important administrative support from UTHSC. Our staff is employed by UTHSC, which eliminates the need for considerable personnel support services and allows us the benefit of residence in a world class health science center, while remaining an independent institution. This provides important scientific, administrative, and cost benefits, including access to the UT Medical School and School of Public Health faculty. We are extremely conscious of and pleased to call attention to our ratio of funding spent directly on research compared to administrative costs. Historically, the NUATRC's success in leveraging federal research funds with organizations such as the HEI, NCHS, and SKC, Inc., have extended the value and accomplishments of the NUATRC's research program and optimized the value added by its small, efficient administrative staff. The NUATRC will continue to effectively leverage its research funds.

2007 BUDGET RATIONALIZATION

For 2007 NUATRC will support several categories for individual research studies. The research category budgets are shown in the budget table below. The Exposure Assessment category includes research to characterize, collect, and assess the impact of air toxics exposure data. Research will be designed and funded acquire data to show the relative importance of point, area, mobile, and other sources for exposure to air toxics. The Health Effects research category includes NUATRC's plan to continue its involvement, research funding, and focus on health effects research on susceptible subpopulations. The Technology Development and Validation research category resulted in the commercially successful Sioutas personal cascade impactor and Leland Legacy Pump, which were completed with funding from this category. Fiscal year 2007 funding in this category will support development of new personal monitors for use with susceptible populations. It will also include investigation of new technology and methods for the measurement of VOCs, aldehydes, PAHs and

metals. In prior years the Small Grants program has been a successful, cost effective program for NUATRC in terms of identification of emerging research areas and producing important publications in the peer-reviewed literature. We will continue this program in 2007. The emphasis we place on having Workshops and/or Symposia every year has proven cost-effective in advancing the understanding of air toxics health effects. With 2007 funding we will support an annual Workshop or Symposium on air toxics with TCEQ and EPA. As in previous years NUATRC will leverage Workshop and Symposia costs and topics with other related organizations to be as cost efficient as possible with the limited funding available. The Research Support category is essential to provide funds for scientific peer-review, publications, reports, additional scientific research, quality assurance and other activities recommended by the SAP and approved by the Board. This budget also serves an important strategic research function for the entire NUATRC program. The budget presented below advances the legacy investment in research already made by providing resources to fully analyze and capture the knowledge inherent in the study results in time for answers to regulatory and scientific questions. We will continue, as previously noted, to seek supplemental funding sources for our research program. In past years NUATRC has received project specific funding commitments from many private contributors. We anticipate continuing these relationships.

FISCAL YEAR 2007 BUDGET

	Amount
Exposure Assessment	$400,000
Health Effects	450,000
Technology Development and Validation	400,000
Small Grants	300,000
Conferences, Workshops, Symposia	50,000
Research Support	100,000
Indirect Research	398,049
Administration	501,951
Total	2,600,000

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE ASSOCIATION

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Subcommittee: My name is Evan Hirsche, president of the National Wildlife Refuge Association (NWRA). On behalf of the NWRA and its membership comprised of current and former refuge professionals, more than 110 refuge Friends organization affiliates and thousands of concerned citizens throughout the United States, thank you for the opportunity to offer comments on the fiscal year 2007 Interior Appropriations bill. Specifically, we respectfully request that the Subcommittee support:

—a funding level of $415 million—an increase of $33 million over the President's request—for the operations and maintenance (O&M) budget of the National Wildlife Refuge System, managed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS), in the fiscal year 2007 budget;
—an allocation of $1 million to continue to support volunteer projects on and in connection with refuges, like the Cooperative Volunteer Invasives Monitoring Program (VIMP) and competitive grants, which utilize Friends and volunteers to identify and eradicate invasive species;
—an increase in the FWS construction budget to prevent further degradation of Refuge System infrastructure;
—an allocation of $100 million in the FWS land acquisition budget to accommodate the numerous willing sellers across the country;
—an increase in funding for the FWS' Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program;
—an allocation of $85 million for the State and Tribal Wildlife Grants Program;
—an allocation of $9 million for the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) in the FWS' Resource Management General Administration appropriation; and
—an increase in the FWS' Contaminants Program budget.

As you know, the National Wildlife Refuge System continues to be crippled by a $3.1 billion funding backlog that harms every refuge in the System. Specifically, funding shortfalls limit the ability of refuges to successfully conduct important science-based, biological programs and hire critical staff, while also hindering opportunities for the public to engage in compatible wildlife-dependent recreation.

The Cooperative Alliance for Refuge Enhancement (CARE), 21 diverse conservation and sporting organizations, chaired by the NWRA, has determined it will be necessary to increase the annual Refuge System budget to $700 million simply to meet the System's top tier needs. Our groups, representing a national constituency numbering more than 5 million Americans, recognize the value of a healthy Refuge System to both the wildlife and habitats refuges were established to protect and the 40 million visitors that frequent these special places each year.

The National Wildlife Refuge System budget needs an annual $16 million increase over the previous year's funding to achieve a "no-net-loss" funding level. Without this increase, the FWS cannot account for cost-of-living increases for FWS personnel, rising rent and utilities and other cost increases, while sustaining current levels of visitor services and wildlife management. The Refuge System needs at least $16 million to avoid employee layoffs and reductions in services, maintain protections for wildlife and habitat and help contain growth of the Refuge System backlog. It is crucial that, at a minimum, the cost-of-living and "uncontrollables" are covered in the fiscal year 2007 budget. To prevent the additional loss of programs, maintain protections for wildlife and habitats, make some modest and needed advances, and provide for addressing the backlog in coming years, the NWRA recommends a refuge O&M budget of $415 million for fiscal year 2007.

For fiscal year 2007, we encourage the Subcommittee to continue its support for volunteer-based invasive species detection and eradication activities by again appropriating $1 million for volunteer-oriented invasives programs. The NWRA thanks the Subcommittee for its work in the fiscal year 2003, fiscal year 2005 and fiscal year 2006 budgets to promote the use of volunteers to address the growing threat of invasive species on and adjacent to our national wildlife refuges. More than 300 separate refuges have taken actions to control invasives, and the Refuge System has identified approximately $260 million of invasive species projected needs. By utilizing the strong volunteer support available to the Refuge System, we can significantly expand our ability to identify and record data on invasives in refuges and implement control measures.

The Cooperative Volunteer Invasives Monitoring Program is showing tremendous results at the 14 geographically diverse refuges currently participating in the program. For example, at Lee Metcalf NWR in Montana, funding provided through the volunteer-oriented invasives appropriation resulted in the eradication of invasive spotted knapweed, houndstongue and tansy from 16 acres of the refuge for approximately 50 percent less than the cost of using contractors. The Program is a partnership among the NWRA, FWS, United States Geological Survey (USGS) and The Nature Conservancy that seeks to train refuge volunteers to identify invasives and collect extensive data using inexpensive but sophisticated global positioning system (GPS)/geographic information system (GIS) data-collection equipment. The data is entered into a centralized database and will augment incomplete information previously compiled by refuge staff.

As a result of funding provided by this Subcommittee in fiscal year 2006, current refuges in the VIMP will conduct invasive species control efforts, while seven new sites will be added to the program. Since its inception, 316 volunteers have participated in mapping, treating and restoring over 3,000 refuge acres through the Program.

Collection of this data aids the FWS in detecting early infestations of invasives on refuges, and helps to prioritize rapid response eradication activities. The technology is proving successful and should continue to be expanded to more refuges in the coming years. The Program provides a more complete picture of the scope and impact of invasives on fragile refuge habitats and helps the FWS develop stronger invasives management protocols. In addition, broader community awareness and involvement generated through this program serves to strengthen federal, state and private lands initiatives aimed at addressing this rapidly growing threat.

A competitive grants program for cooperative invasive species projects with refuge Friends and volunteers constitutes the majority of the $1 million allocated "for cooperative projects with [F]riends groups on invasive species control." In 2006, 60 volunteer projects were selected through the competitive grants program, 25 of which directly involved Friends groups. Through the competitive grants, 876 volunteers participated in the treatment, inventory and restoration of 72,931 refuge acres.

We encourage the Subcommittee to resist cuts proposed in the president's fiscal year 2007 budget request to the construction budget. The Administration has asked for $19.7 million, a reduction of $25.5 million or 57 percent compared to fiscal year 2006. According to the FWS, the Agency has identified projects for approximately 1,500 new facility assets with a cost of about $1 billion. Roughly half this dollar amount is for 270 visitor centers and headquarter offices identified by field managers, some of which would take the place of quickly deteriorating structures that

are becoming more expensive to maintain than to replace. With an aging infrastructure and visitation to national wildlife refuges at an all-time high, the construction budget for the Service should reflect the growing needs of the National Wildlife Refuge System.

The NWRA encourages the Subcommittee to allocate sufficient funding to purchase high-priority lands and conservation easements. The Refuge System land acquisition backlog is estimated at $4 billion. According to the FWS' Land Acquisition Priority System (LAPS), as of 2004 approximately 15.4 million acres remain to be acquired within approved refuge boundaries. Across the country, willing sellers are standing by to work with the Service. Unfortunately, the FWS has neither the funding nor resources to handle these land acquisition opportunities.

Our primary concern is that vital refuge buffer areas and corridors may be lost, jeopardizing the very integrity of refuges. While a full suite of conservation strategies should be employed in working with private landowners, in cases where fee title acquisition is preferred by the landowner and the refuge has identified it as a top priority, the FWS should acquire the land. At a minimum, the NWRA believes that $100 million should be allocated toward Refuge System land acquisition. Even at that rate, it would take at least 40 years to acquire priority lands, which is time we don't have given that wildlife habitat is being lost at a rate 300 percent that of population growth in the United States.

Within this $100 million request, the NWRA encourages the Subcommittee to provide funding for the following land acquisition projects in the Refuge System through the Land and Water Conservation Fund:

—$3.2 million for Arapaho NWR (CO);
—$922,503 for Back Bay NWR (VA);
—$1.4 million for Balcones Canyonlands NWR (TX);
—$726,000 for Bear River Migratory Bird Refuge (UT);
—$150,000 for Lower Rio Grande Valley NWR (TX);
—$887,000 for Neal Smith NWR (IA);
—$650,000 for Rachel Carson NWR (ME);
—$2 million for Silvio O. Conte NFWR (MA);
—$1 million for Stewart B. McKinney NFWR (CT);
—$1.75 million for Tensas River NWR (LA); and
—$3 million for Waccamaw NWR (SC).

There are a number of federal programs that reward landowners for practicing conservation. One of the leading programs in this area is the FWS' Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program, which provides technical and financial assistance to private landowners to voluntarily restore wetlands and other habitat on their land. Since this program began, hundreds of thousands of habitat acres have been restored, many of the projects located near national wildlife refuges. The Service has trouble keeping pace with landowner demand for this program, reporting that many states have waiting lists to participate. The NWRA encourages the Subcommittee to provide the "Partners" program with the resources it needs to assist landowners with habitat conservation, oftentimes complementing activities on refuge lands, or contributing to the resolution of problems on refuges that originate beyond refuge boundaries.

The NWRA urges the Subcommittee to appropriate at least $85 million for the State and Tribal Wildlife Grants Program in fiscal year 2007 to implement statewide conservation plans. Program grants support projects to restore degraded habitat, reintroduce native species, develop partnerships with private landowners, and collect useful data. These state-based plans can dovetail with the Comprehensive Conservation Plans (CCPs) that all refuges are required to produce, complementing the mission of the Refuge System. Further, adequate and consistent funding for State Wildlife Grants is essential to fulfilling the shared federal/state responsibility for keeping our nation's wildlife from becoming endangered.

We encourage the Subcommittee to allocate $9 million for the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation through the FWS' Resource Management General Administration appropriation. NFWF works to achieve healthy and abundant fish, wildlife and plant populations through valuable partnerships. Each year, NFWF receives more project proposals than they are capable of funding. Adequate funding will ensure NFWF has the ability to leverage resources to fund projects that directly benefit diverse fish and wildlife species in, around and outside of national wildlife refuges across the country.

Contaminants were a major part of the tremendous damage inflicted on national wildlife refuges during the 2005 hurricane season. Unfortunately, funding for the FWS' Contaminants Program has remained flat for almost two decades. In light of recent natural and man-made disasters, this vital program is more important than ever, as the need to address contaminant issues on national wildlife refuges con-

tinues to grow. The NWRA urges the Subcommittee to provide increased funding for the Contaminants Program in fiscal year 2007.

We extend our appreciation to the Subcommittee for its ongoing commitment to our National Wildlife Refuge System.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE OHIO DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

I am writing to express my support for the President's request in the U.S. Geological Survey's fiscal year 2007 budget of $1 million for NatureServe to ensure the quality and consistency of a key national data resource that supports federal agencies and the States in the management of the nation's natural resources.

Responsible management and use of our nation's natural resources depends on a sound scientific understanding of these resources. The States have an important role to play in managing these resources, and in assisting the federal government in carrying out their responsibilities. State natural heritage programs are among the most important sources for objective and reliable scientific information on the nation's wildlife species and habitats. The States rely on NatureServe, a private non-profit organization, for the scientific and technical support to meet quality assurance standards that enable this national network to meet in-state needs as well as support a wide array of federal-activities.

Through coordinating the development of consistent biological data across all 50 states, NatureServe has created and manages a unique national data resource, which fosters strong State and Federal cooperation on wildlife conservation and environmental management. Numerous state agencies, corporations and private individuals in Ohio rely on information from NatureServe and the Ohio Natural Heritage Program to better manage natural resources and avoid or reduce conflicts with endangered species and other sensitive ecological resources. Federal agencies, ranging from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and National Park Service to the Departments of Transportation and Defense, also rely on this objective and credible scientific resource.

The federal government has a clear and compeiling interest in and need for the scientific information managed by NatureServe and its State partners. Without these funds, this national network, and the high quality and nationally consistent data it generates, would deteriorate, compromising the work of the State and Federal agencies that depend upon them.

The President's proposed funding is also very cost effective. This $1 million will leverage a more than $40 million investment in this resource nationwide, most of which comes from state and private sources. This modest investment will also save taxpayer money by helping Federal and State agencies better manage our natural resources and by avoiding unnecessary endangered species conflicts.

We recognize that this is a difficult budget climate and the Committee is operating with constrained resources. We support the President's inclusion of this $1 million allocation in the fiscal 2007 budget, and respectfully request that the Committee include this in its appropriation.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE OUTDOOR INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION

Outdoor Industry Association urges the subcommittee to fund the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) State Assistance Program at $100 million for fiscal year 2007, the Federal Land and Water Conservation Fund at $220 million and the Urban Park and Recreation Recovery Program (UPARR) at $50 million for fiscal year 2007.

We also support the following funding levels for recreation management and trails funding in the Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management budgets.

Fiscal year 2007 Forest Service Budget:

—Recreation Management, Heritage and Wilderness, $275 million

—Capital Improvement and Maintenance/Trails, $90 million

Fiscal year 2007 Bureau of Land Management Budget:

—Recreation Management, Recreation Resources, $50 million

—Transportation and Facilities, Annual and Deferred Maintenance, $75 million

—An increase of $5 million for activities on the 12 National and Scenic and Historic Trails that BLM administers or manages.

Outdoor Industry Association (OIA) is a national trade association whose mission is to ensure the growth and success of the outdoor industry. A wide spectrum of leading manufacturers, distributors, suppliers and retailers of outdoor recreation equipment and services, as well as other related business entities, make up OIA's membership. The outdoor industry is made up of over 4,000 businesses with 500,000

employees in all 50 states, generating $33 billion in sales every year. Last year, 159 million Americans participated in outdoor recreation, with the greatest numbers in the gateway sports of hiking, biking, camping and paddlesports.

OIA's member companies include Yakima, Mountain Hardwear, The North Face, Cascade Designs, Vibram USA, Johnson Outdoors, REI, Eastern Mountain Sports, JanSport, Smartwool, Timberland, Columbia Sportswear, Black Diamond Equipment, GoLite, Vasque/Redwing and more.

LAND AND WATER CONSERVATION FUND STATE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

The LWCF State Assistance Program and the Urban Park and Recreation Recovery programs are vital for providing recreation experiences and healthy lifestyle options to all Americans. These programs are good for the physical and economic health of the country. The stateside program has 41 years of strong success as one of America's most effective federal/state recreation and conservation partnership programs.

Since its inception, stateside LWCF has underwritten the development of more than 40,000 state and local park and recreation projects, touching 98 percent of the counties in the United States.

In 2005, stateside LWCF grants made a direct impact in 535 local communities spread across every state and U.S. territory.

Eight parks and recreation facilities in Montana were enhanced with stateside LWCF dollars in 2005 including Lone Pine State Park, the school district #1 playground in Philipsburg and Big Sandy Municipal Park in Chouteau county.

The citizens of North Dakota will enjoy improvements at 16 state parks and recreation sites as a result of stateside LWCF funding. Projects are underway at Lake Metigoshe, Beaver Lake, Ft. Stevenson, Lake Sakakawea, Icelandic and Fort Ransom state parks. Many local parks also received stateside grants.

Alaska's Kenai Peninsula received stateside LWCF monies to make improvements to the Kasilof River State Recreation Area and Kenai Soccer Park.

New Mexico received stateside LWCF funding for improvements at Eagle Nest State Park, Manzano State Park, Living Desert State Park and four other local parks.

Ten projects in Idaho were funded by LWCF stateside grants in 2005, including monies to continue the development of Idaho's newest state park, Castle Rocks State Park and improvements at Ponderosa State Park.

In every case, local citizens demonstrated the need and desire for parks in their communities by matching stateside LWCF grant monies by at least equal dollars and in many cases many times beyond a dollar-to-dollar match. Because of this, LWCF stateside grants have a high return on investment per government dollar.

The impact of LWCF State Assistance Program is also felt in other ways as recreation lands are developed and parks are built and enhanced. Studies by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) indicate that physical activity has proven absolutely invaluable in helping people lose weight. Yet more than 50 percent of U.S. adults don't get enough physical activity to recognize health benefits and 26 percent are not active at all. More than a third of young people in grades nine through 12 do not regularly engage in vigorous physical activity.

When people are active it not only makes them healthier; it also reduces the amount of money they, and the Federal Government, spend on health insurance, doctors, and medicine. Study after study suggests that the best way to get people active is to make recreation accessible. When there are parks, greenways, trail systems and playgrounds within reach of their homes, people exercise more.

In a study published by the CDC, creation of or enhanced access to places for physical activity led to a 25 percent increase in the percentage of people exercising on three or more days per week. A group of studies reviewed in the American Journal of Preventive Medicine showed that "creation of or enhanced access to places for physical activity combined with informational outreach" produced a 48 percent increase in frequency of physical activity.

Between 2001 and 2005, Congress recognized the many benefits of close to home recreation and appropriated more than $100 million per year for stateside LWCF grants.

The President's fiscal year 2006 and fiscal year 2007 budget requests for LWCF stateside grants and UPARR zeroed out both programs. We thank you for rejecting that recommendation and through a bipartisan effort ensuring $30 million in funding for stateside LWCF grants last year. We urge you to restore funding to $100 million for fiscal year 2007.

Outdoor Industry Association believes LWCF stateside grants are an integral part of bringing quality parks and trails within 15 minutes of every child in the United

States. Developing recreation infrastructure is a goal many states share and for which many need LWCF funds to accomplish.

FUNDING FOR RECREATION MANAGEMENT AT THE FOREST SERVICE AND BLM

Over the past fifty years, recreation has clearly emerged as the greatest use of Forest Service lands and the primary driver of the National Forest economy. Unfortunately for Americans, government funding for access and maintenance of public lands doesn't begin to appropriately address the recreation opportunities and other benefits we derive from them.

Recently, the Administration released numbers estimating that recreation accounts for 60 percent of the Forest Service's contribution to the Gross Domestic Product.

Unfortunately, staffing and funding for recreation in land management agencies doesn't match up to this reality. Historically, direct recreation management and trails spending is only about 10 percent of the Forest Service budget—woefully inadequate when compared to the economic value of recreation in the forest economy.

The Forest Service needs increased funding for recreation management and planning as well as funding to begin to reduce the $300 million in deferred maintenance of recreation facilities and trails.

Similarly, the Bureau of Land Management is tasked with managing 261 million acres of land upon which a broad spectrum of recreation takes place. BLM is responsible for the management of 600,000 miles of roads and trails and like the Forest Service faces an increasing maintenance backlog. Increased funding is needed to develop resource and travel management plans as well as protect recreation destinations for future generations.

Properly managed public lands provide limitless recreation opportunities. By adequately funding these recreation destinations, you improve the health of local economies that depend on recreation, the health of outdoor businesses that contribute significantly to the U.S. economy and the health and fitness of the American people.

In order to achieve this outcome, OIA urges the subcommittee to provide $100 million for the LWCF Stateside Assistance program and to adequately fund UPARR, federal LWCF and the recreation management budgets at the Forest Service and BLM.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE ARKANSAS RIVER BASIN INTERSTATE COMMITTEE

It is my privilege to present this statement on behalf of the Oklahoma members of our committee in support of adequate funding for water resource development projects in our area of the Arkansas River Basin. Other members of the Committee are: Mr. Ted Coombes, Tulsa; Mr. A. Earnest Gilder, Muskogee; Mr. Terry McDonald, Tulsa; and Mr. Lew Meibergen, Enid, who also serves as Chairman of the combined Arkansas River Basin Interstate Committee.

The Committee is encouraged about water resource developmental opportunities in the Arkansas River Basin for not only navigation, but also hydropower, flood control, recreation, water supply, and environmental stewardship. However, we are concerned that existing and proposed funding levels will not support the needs.

Mr. Chairman, Public Law 108–137 authorized a 12-foot channel on the McClellan-Kerr Arkansas River Navigation System. The Corps is now obligated to operate and maintain the system as a 12-foot channel. Over 90 percent of the system currently is adequate for a 12-foot channel. Deepening the remainder of the channel to 12 feet will allow carriers to place 43 percent more cargo on barges, which will reduce the amount of fuel consumed and emissions released. Funds in the amount of $7.0 million were allocated in fiscal year 2005 with $1.5 million used to complete the Feasibility Study and Environmental Impact Statement with the other $5.5 million used on engineering, design, and construction activities. In conjunction with the deepening project the Corps is preparing a Basin Wide Master Plan that will include an integrated major maintenance construction and operational maintenance prioritized list for investment opportunities. Other environmental benefits include the creation of new aquatic habitat through new dike construction and the construction of Least Tern islands through beneficial use of dredged material.

Therefore, we request $40 million to maintain the authorized depth by constructing dike structures to minimize dredging and dredging only necessary areas. This investment will increase the cost competitiveness of this low cost, environment-friendly transportation method and help us combat the loss of industry and jobs to overseas.

Tow Haulage Equipment—Oklahoma.—We request funding of $5.0 million to initiate the installation of tow haulage equipment on the locks located along the Arkansas River portion of the McClellan-Kerr Arkansas River Navigation System.

The Power Plant at Webbers Falls Lock and Dam on the Arkansas River has suffered from greatly reduced reliability due to turbine design problems. One of the three turbines at the project has suffered major damage and will remain unavailable for generation until it can be rebuilt. Because this is a run-of-the-river facility with no storage, energy spilled due to off-line units is energy that is lost forever. A feasibility study recommending major rehabilitation of this unit has been approved by the office of the Chief of Engineers.

Similar problems have been experienced at Ozark—Jeta Taylor Lock and Dam on the Arkansas River in Arkansas. Congress approved a new start and funding to begin the major rehabilitation of the Ozark powerhouse in fiscal year 2003. Congress approved the Administration's fiscal year 2005 budget request of $5 million in Construction General funding to continue this major rehabilitation. By combining the turbine replacements into a single contract, the Little Rock District awarded a contract in May 2005 to replace the turbines with a more reliable design. This contract also includes three options to provide newly designed turbines for the Webbers Falls project as well, if additional funding is forthcoming as recommended by the Corps' Hydropower Design Center. The Corps has saved $5 million over the life of the project. Unfortunately, no funding for these projects was included in the Administration's fiscal year 2006 and 2007 budget requests, and the conference report on the fiscal year 2006 Energy and Water Development Appropriations bill also excluded funding for them.

The wholesale power customers are providing essential funding for the turbine replacement contract in fiscal year 2006 under terms of a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) between the Corps, the customers and Southwestern Power Administration. However, the MOA is not a viable vehicle for long-term funding of the contract.

The Committee recommends that Congress appropriate $19.5 million to start the Webbers Falls major rehab in early in fiscal year 2007.

Arkansas-White Rivers Cutoff Study is to determine a solution to prevent the developing cutoff from joining the Arkansas and White Rivers near the confluence of the McClellan-Kerr Arkansas River Navigation System and the Mississippi Rivers. If not corrected, this occurrence could have a dramatic adverse effect on the navigation system. Unless corrected, this will effectively drain the water from the navigation system and halt the movement of commerce on the system.

Therefore we request an appropriation of $300,000 to protect the navigation system from closure.

There has been over $5.5 billion invested in the construction and development of the McClellan-Kerr Arkansas River Navigation System by the federal government ($1.3 billion) and the public and private sector ($4.2 billion+), resulting in the creation of over 50,000 jobs in this partnered project.

Maintenance of the Navigation System.—In preparation for the deepening of the navigation system from 9 to 12 feet, there is a backlog of maintenance items that has been deferred due to insufficient budgets to allow proper maintenance. These maintenance items are required even to support navigation at the 9 foot depth in order to not jeopardize the reliability of the system. Therefore, we request additional funding in the amount of $1,549,000—plus the amount from Little Rock, over and above normal funding, for deferred channel maintenance. These funds would be used for such things as repair of bank stabilization work, needed advance maintenance dredging, and other repairs needed on the system's components that have deteriorated over the past three decades.

In addition to the system-wide needed maintenance items mentioned above, the budget for the Corps of Engineers for the past several years has been insufficient to allow proper maintenance of the McClellan-Kerr Arkansas River Navigation System—Oklahoma portion. As a result, the backlog of maintenance items has continued to increase. If these important maintenance issues are not addressed soon, the reliability of the system will be jeopardized. The portion of the system in Oklahoma alone is responsible for returning $2.6 billion in annual benefits to the regional economy. The fiscal year 2006 O&M President's budget for Tulsa District was $8.2 million less (over 11 percent) than the fiscal year 2005 appropriation, which will result in no funding being available for critical infrastructure maintenance in fiscal year 2006. The fiscal year 2007 O&M President's budget is currently proposed at $72.4 million which is presently $10 million more than the fiscal year 2006 budget. This $10 million increase is offset by higher energy, labor, and construction costs. We therefore request that $2.1 million be added to the budget to accomplish critical infrastructure maintenance items on the Oklahoma portion of the system as follows:

McClellan-Kerr—$600,000 to repair plate seals for the weirs; and Robert S. Kerr—$1,500,000 to repair erosion and construct emergency mooring wood dolphins.

Additional O&M funds are also requested for other high priority, non-navigation, water resource needs including $600,000 for tainter gate repair at Kaw Lake; $1,200,000 to repair sluice gates and liners at Keystone Lake; $1,500,000 for tainter gate repair at Fort Gibson Lake; and $400,000 for tainter gate hoist equipment replacement at Tenkiller Ferry Lake.

Miami, Oklahoma and Vicinity Feasibility Study.—We request funding of $350,000 to move into the feasibility stage for the vicinity in Ottawa County including and surrounding Miami, Oklahoma in the Grand (Neosho) Basin. Water resource planning-related concerns include chronic flooding, ecosystem impairment, poor water quality, subsidence, chat piles, mine shafts, health effects, and Native American issues. The State of Oklahoma's desire is to address the watershed issues in a holistic fashion and restore the watershed to acceptable levels. Study alternatives could include structural and non-structural flood damage measures, creation of riverine corridors for habitat and flood storage, development of wetlands to improve aquatic habitat and other measures to enhance the quality and availability of habitat and reduce flood damages.

Oologah Lake Watershed Feasibility Study.—We request funding of $500,000, which is $500,000 more than the President's budget request, for ongoing feasibility studies at Oologah Lake and in the upstream watershed. The lake is an important water supply source for the city of Tulsa and protection of the lake and maintaining and enhancing the quality of the water is important for the economic development of the city. Recent concerns have been expressed by the City of Tulsa and others regarding potential water quality issues that impact water users, as well as important aquatic and terrestrial habitat. Concerns are related to sediment loading and turbidity, oilfield-related contaminants and nutrient loading.

Grand (Neosho) Basin Reconnaissance Study.—We request funding in the amount of $450,000 to conduct a feasibility study of the water resource problems in the Grand (Neosho) Basin in Oklahoma and Kansas. There is a need for a basin-wide water resource planning effort in the Grand-Neosho River basin, apart from the issues associated with Grand Lake, Oklahoma. The reconnaissance report has been approved and indicated that there is a federal interest in this project and the feasibility will focus on the evaluation of institutional measures which could assist communities, landowners, and other interests in northeastern Oklahoma and southeastern Kansas in the development of non-structural measures to reduce flood damages in the basin. Feasibility Cost Share Agreements will be executed in 2006 but the fiscal year 2007 President's budget did not provide funding to continue into the feasibility stage.

Spavinaw Creek Watershed Study.—Spavinaw Creek and its downstream impoundments, Eucha and Spavinaw Lakes, are severely impacted by nutrient loading and excessive algae growth as a result of agricultural practices located in Arkansas and Oklahoma. Degradation of water quality has led to taste and odor problems, increased treatment costs, and a decreased recreational and aesthetic value of the lakes. Together, Spavinaw and Eucha Lakes provide 47 percent of the water supply for the Tulsa metropolitan area. The Metropolitan Utility Authority entered into the feasibility cost-share agreement in June 2004. We request funds in the amount of $210,000 to continue this study.

Grand Lake Feasibility Study.—A need exists to evaluate solutions to upstream flooding problems associated with the adequacy of existing real estate easements necessary for flood control operations of Grand Lake, Oklahoma. A feasibility study is necessary to determine the most cost-effective comprehensive solution to the real estate inadequacies. We urge you to provide $500,000 to fund feasibility studies for this important project in fiscal year 2007 and to direct the Corps of Engineers to execute the study at full federal expense. This project has been a Congressional add for the past four years, but there are no funds in the fiscal year 2007 President's budget request to continue this project.

Section 205.—Although the Small Flood Control Projects Program addresses flood problems which generally impact smaller communities and rural areas and would appear to benefit only those communities, the impact of those projects on economic development crosses county, regional and sometimes state boundaries. There is limited funding available for these projects and we urge this program be increased to an annual limit of $65 million.

We also request your support of the Planning Assistance to States Program (Section 22 of the 1974 Water Resources Development Act) which authorizes the Corps of Engineers to use its technical expertise in water and related land resource management to help states and Indian tribes solve their water resource problems. The Water Resources Development Act of 1996 increased the annual program limit from

$6 million to $10 million and we urge this program be fully funded to the programmatic limit of $10 million. We urge that you support the State of Oklahoma in requesting their full allocation of $500,000 for the Planning Assistance to States program for several important projects awaiting execution including the cities of Tulsa, Bristow, and Bartlesville and for State Water Planning efforts.

In addition, we request your support of the Section 107 Navigation Program and ask that you provide $100,000 for the initiation of studies for a port in Wagoner County, Oklahoma. A Wagoner County Port could greatly benefit the region and utilize the authorized deepening of the McClellan-Kerr Arkansas River Navigation system to benefit the nation.

We strongly urge the Appropriations Committee to raise the Corps of Engineers' budget to $6.7 billion to help get delayed construction projects back on schedule and to reduce the deferred maintenance backlog which is out of control. This will help the Corps of Engineers meet the obligations of the federal government to people of this great country.

Mr. Chairman, we appreciate this opportunity to present our view on these subjects.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE OREGON WATER RESOURCES CONGRESS

REQUEST

The Oregon Water Resources Congress is requesting $25 million for the full funding in fiscal year 2007 for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Fish Restoration Irrigation Mitigation program as authorized in the Fish Restoration Irrigation Mitigation Act (FRIMA) in November 2000 as Public Law 106–502 (H.R. 1444). The Administration has not request any funding in the fiscal year 2007 Budget submission for this program.

FRIMA created a new federal partnership fish screening and passage program in the Pacific Ocean drainage areas of Idaho, Oregon, Washington and western Montana, administered by the Fish and Wildlife Service and partnered through state fishery agencies.

The original legislation was supported and requested by the Pacific Northwest Partnership, a coalition of local governmental entities in the four Northwest states. As one of the members of that coalition, we appreciate your consideration of this request.

NEED

Our association has represented irrigation districts in Oregon since 1912. About half of those districts are affiliated with the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation. The remainder of the districts were not developed under the Reclamation program. There are over 200 irrigation districts in Oregon that provide water supplies to over one million acres of cropland in Oregon. Almost all of these districts are affected by either state or federal Endangered Species Act listings of Salmon and Steelhead, Bull Trout or other sensitive, threatened or endangered species.

Fish passage and fishscreen needs have become critical to fishery protection:

—to keep protected fish species out of water canals and delivery systems;

—to allow fish to be safely bypassed around reservoirs and facility structures;

—and to eliminate water quality risks to fish species.

Oregon irrigation districts anticipate no less than $500 million in funding will be required to develop fish passage and fishcscreening needs. Limited cost-share funds are available from the Oregon Watershed Enhanced Board (OWEB) program in Oregon, but primarily the cost share for passage and screening needs has been provided by the districts and their water users. Many districts already have screening facilities in place, but requirements for screening have been changed to meet federal agency requirements of the NOAA Fisheries Service and the Fish and Wildlife Life Service, driven by implementation of the federal Endangered Species Act (ESA) so that existing facilities must be upgraded at significant cost.

BACKGROUND OF PUBLIC LAW 106–502

FRIMA was enacted November 2000, creating a voluntary cost-share fish screen construction program for water withdrawal projects in Idaho, Oregon, Washington and western Montana. The Fish and Wildlife Service is to implement this program through the fishery agencies in the four states. The funding is to go to local governments for construction of facilities. Irrigation districts (local governments), can access the funding; individual irrigators can access funding through their local Soil

and Water Conservation District. (SWCD districts are local governments affiliated with the Natural Resources Conservation Service).

FUNDING

The legislation calls for $25 million annually, to be divided among the four stated, from 2001 forward. The Service has never included funding in its budget requests since passage of the legislation. Congress provided the first funding in 2001 through a write-in of $4 million to be shared among the four states. The agency did not get the program up and running until late 2002, so the first moneys were distributed then. A 2003 budget write-in resulted in a $470,000 allocation to Oregon ($1.8 million total for the 4 states)

Funding History

2000: Congressional authorization for $25 million per year
2001: Congressional write-in of $4 million as no agency budget line
2002: No budget; agency did not disperse 2001 money until late 2002
2003: Congressional write-in of $1.2 million as no agency budget line
2004: No agency budget line
2005: No agency budget line

For the 4 years, 2001–2004:
Congress—Authorized— $100 million
CBO—Anticipated—$70 million
Service—Budgeted—0
Congress—Wrote-in—$8.8 million (2002–2004 total combined)

In 2000, in the report accompanying the legislation, the Congressional Budget Office (CBO) estimated outlays of $8 million for fiscal year 2001; $15 million in fiscal year 2002; $22 million in fiscal year 2003 and $25 million in fiscal year 2004 and years forward. While the CBO estimate would have provided $70 million between 2001 and 2004, the actual appropriation was only $8.8 million during that time period and all of the money was a write-in.

For fiscal year 2005, Congress provided $2 million for the program in the Consolidated Appropriations Act and $2 million in fiscal year 2006. As you can see from the total amount of money that Congress has written in for the program, such amounts are woefully inadequate for what was anticipated for the program, yet appreciated. Funding continues to not be requested by the Administration for the program for fiscal year 2007 despite widespread benefits from the money that Congress has provided. A recently produced report by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service covering the program years fiscal year 2002–2004 provides state-by-state coverage of how the Congressional provided funding has been used in the program. The program has been extremely beneficial in the State of Oregon.

Funding funneled through the Service to state fishery agencies is distributed on the basis of an application and approval process that is based on a ranking system implemented uniformly among the states, including the following factors:

—fish restoration benefits
—cost effectiveness
—feasibility of planned structure

Each state is allocated 25 percent of the annual program funding. Agency administrative costs cannot exceed 6 percent of the funding.

PROJECT BENEFITS

The project must provide improved fish passage or fish protection at water diversion structures and must benefit fish species native to and present in the area, including those listed on state or federal endangered species or conservation lists.

The project must applicable state and federal requirements for project construction and operation. Projects will increase the survival of many native fish species in a relatively short period of time. Compared to other recovery strategies, the risks posed by these activities are low and the assurance of success in increasing numbers of fish is high. Dislocation of existing social and economic activities is minor. Screening and passage can make a very substantial contribution utilizing existing implementation mechanisms and methods well accepted by landowners and rural communities.

COST SHARE

The federal cost-share is 65 percent. The applicant's cost-share is 35 percent plus the on-going maintenance and support of the structure for passage or screening purposes.

Applicants operate the projects and the state agencies monitor and review the projects. For more information, see the Services' Fisher Resources website for the Pacific Region at http://pacific.fws.gov/Fisheries/Fish%20Passage-Screening%20Program.htm. This program is headquartered in the Portland, Oregon regional office of the Service.

OREGON'S PROJECT BENEFITS

The following are examples of how Oregon has used some of its FRIMA money:

Santiam Water Control District Project.—Fishscreen project on a large 1050 cfs multi-purpose water diversion project on the Santiam River (Williamette Basin) near Stayton, Oregon. Partners are the Santiam Water Control District, Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, Marion Soil and Water Conservation District, and the City of Stayton Approved FRIMA funding of $400,000 leverages a $1,200,000 project. Species benefited include winter steelhead, spring Chinook, rainbow trout, and cutthroat trout.

South Fork Little Butte Creek.—Fishscreen and fish passage project on a 65 cfs irrigation water diversion in the Rogue River Basin near Medford, Oregon. Partners are the Medford Irrigation District and Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife. Approved FRIMA funding is $372,000 and leverages a $580,000 total project cost. Species benefited include listed summer and winter steelhead, coho salmon, and cutthroat trout.

Running Y (Geary Diversion) Project.—Fishscreen project on a 60 cfs irrigation water diversion in the upper Klamath Basin near Klamath Falls, Oregon. Partners are the Wocus Drainage District, Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, and Jeld-Wen Ranches. Approved FRIMA funding of $44,727 leveraged a total project cost of $149,000. Species benefited included listed red-band trout and short-nosed sucker.

Lakeshore Gardens Project.—Fishscreen project on a 2 cfs irrigation water diversion in the upper Klamath Basin near Klamath Falls, Oregon. Partners are the Lakeshore Gardens Drainage District and Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife. Approved FRIMA funding is $5,691, leveraging a total project cost of $18,970. Species benefited include red-band trout, short-nosed sucker and Lost River sucker.

Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife Inventory Project.—An inventory to be conducted by Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife to identify FRIMA-eligible passage and screening projects within the Rogue and Klamath basins of southwestern Oregon. Approved FRIMA funding is $76,000. Estimated total project cost is $125,000.

WHY FUND NOW

Dollar-for-dollar, providing screening and fish passage at diversions is one of the most cost-effective uses of restoration dollars, creating fishery protection at low cost, with low risk and significant benefits. That is why it is important that this program be funded now. We urge the full authorization funding for fiscal year 2007 and urge Congress' oversight in encouraging the Service to budget for this successful program in the future.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this statement for the hearing record.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE POTAPAUG AUDUBON

Mr. Chairman and Honorable Members of the Committee: On behalf of the Potapaug Audubon, I appreciate the opportunity to present this testimony in support of a $1 million appropriation from the Land and Water Conservation Fund for land acquisition within the Stewart B. McKinney National Wildlife Refuge.

Potapaug Audubon has been a "Friend" of Salt Meadow, one of the ten units in the Stewart B. McKinney National Wildlife Refuge, for the last five years. Potapaug, a chapter of National Audubon, never had a physical address to call home. Since nurturing this relationship with the refuge and its staff Potapaug now feels right at home there. We hold special programs, meetings and field trips there throughout the year in addition to what we do elsewhere, and hope to continue to do so for years to come. We, and all the people who attend our programs at Salt Meadow, have learned an awful lot about the natural world through walking the trails and hands-on demonstrations. Adding this parcel of land to the refuge will enhance what is already there and will prevent the inevitable disruption of migration if this land is developed.

Named to honor the late U.S. congressman who was instrumental in its creation, the Stewart B. McKinney National Wildlife Refuge was established to protect migratory bird habitat considered important to wading and shorebird species including

heron, egrets, terns, plovers and oystercatchers among others. Stewart B. McKinney NWR is currently comprised of eight units stretching along 60 miles of Connecticut's coastline. In addition to the increase in habitat protection over the years, the refuge now provides opportunities for scientific research, environmental education, and fish and wildlife oriented recreation. Located in the Atlantic Flyway, the refuge provides important resting, feeding, and nesting habitat for many species of wading birds, shorebirds, songbirds and terns, including the endangered roseate tern. Adjacent waters serve as wintering habitat for brant, scoters, American black duck and other waterfowl. Overall, the refuge encompasses over 800 acres of barrier beach, tidal wetland and fragile island habitats.

Available for refuge acquisition in fiscal year 2007 is the 22-acre Menunketesuck Salt Meadow Marsh in Westbrook, Connecticut. The property is comprised of pristine coastal tidal marsh, a forested upland, scrubland, and a rock outcropping that towers above 1,000 feet of frontage along the gentle Menunketesuck River as it winds its way to Long Island Sound. As a migratory stopover for neotropical migrant land birds, this riparian area is the top priority for acquisition for the refuge. The marsh property will enhance the resources of the current Salt Meadow Unit of the refuge, as it contains part of the least developed upland borders of any remaining tidal marsh in all of Connecticut. As much of the state's coastline has been built upon, it is rare to find an such a large undeveloped marsh area in Connecticut. Under imminent threat of development into condominiums, this parcel must be acquired by the refuge if it is to continue to serve as an island of forested habitat land on an otherwise highly developed coastline. In order to acquire the Menunketesuck Salt Meadow Marsh property, an appropriation of $1 million is needed from the Land and Water Conservation Fund in fiscal year 2007. This priority acquisition will increase wildlife habitat protection at the Stewart B. McKinney NWR and ensure the public continued opportunities for recreation and environmental education along Connecticut's coastline.

I respectfully request that you include an appropriation of $1 million for the Stewart B. McKinney NWR in the fiscal year 2007 Interior and Related Agencies Appropriations bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to present this request.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE PECHANGA INDIAN RESERVATION

The Pechanga Band of Luiseno Indians writes to express our support for continued fiscal year 2007 funding of the Urban Indian Health Programs (UIHPs) and to request that funding be restored to the fiscal year 2006 enacted level of $32.7 million. The President's budget eliminates funding for 34 urban Indian non-profit organizations providing health care services at 41 sites throughout the United States for 430,000 eligible Indian users.

In 1976, Congress passed the Indian Health Care Improvement Act, Public Law 94–437, to address poor health conditions in Indian Country. Title V of this law specifically targeted funding for the development of programs for American Indians and Alaska Natives living in urban areas. Title V has since been amended to strengthen UIHPs to expand the quantity and quality of services provided to the urban Indian population.

In 1950's and 1960's the federal government encouraged Indians to move off their reservations and into various cities across the country. The 2000 census indicated that as many as 66 percent of all American Indians and Alaska Natives live in urban areas. Urban Indian populations are integral members of communities like Los Angeles, Seattle, Portland, Detroit, Chicago, Denver, Baltimore, Boston, Phoenix, Omaha, Fort Lauderdale, Anchorage, Oklahoma City, Wichita, Reno, Sioux Falls, Albuquerque, Minneapolis, Milwaukee, and Billings, among many others.

UIHPs provide affordable health care for an underserved population that is much more likely to die from certain diseases than the rest of the country. Indians suffer from diabetes, alcoholism, tuberculosis, influenza, and pneumonia at significantly higher rates than the general population. Urban primary care clinics and outreach programs provide culturally accessible, affordable, and accountable health services to our nation's large off-reservation Indian population. UIHPs participate in a wide range of activities, including outreach and referral services, ambulatory health care, health assessment, health promotion, disease prevention, child abuse prevention, and immunization services.

The Indian Health Service (IHS) estimates that average funding in previous budget years has been 22 percent of the projected need for this program, and that eighteen additional cities have! an urban Indian population large enough to support a

UIHP. UIHPs are all operating at maximum capacity, servicing over 2 million visits per year.

The Administration contends that urban Indians live near hospitals and have access to Federal, State, and local health care programs. To accommodate the expected increase in visits to federal health clinics as a result of cutting UIHPs, the Administration will slightly increase funding for the Health Centers program.

In a Senate Indian Affairs Committee hearing on the fiscal year 2007 IHS budget, Director Charles W. Grimm admitted that the Administration did not consult with tribes when coming to the decision to eliminate funding for UIHPs. The Administration also did not engage the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) in how HRSA will facilitate the addition of the urban Indian population into the Health Centers system.

However, even with a small increase to Health Centers funding, it is unreasonable to expect that there will be no interruption of services or decrease in the level of health care provided to the urban Indian population. Open access health centers already serve 8.8 million users.

Dealing with past budget cuts and an increased user population has stressed the limits of the service capabilities at these centers. Increasing the potential user population by 1.5 million will place a much larger burden on a system already operating at capacity to the detriment of both non-Indian and Indian users.

We are committed to fiscal responsibility and understand that restraints on funding are a reality of the current budgetary climate—eliminating an already under funded program that hundreds of thousands of Americans have depended on since 1976 is not a choice we can support. Without access to affordable and accountable health care centers, we fear that many urban Indian families will go without the services the federal government has been tasked with providing them. It is irresponsible to deny health care access to such a large and underserved population.

We urge you to restore funding for UIHPs to the fiscal year 2006 budget level of $32.7 million, and thank you for your consideration of this request.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE PUEBLO OF LAGUNA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

The President's proposed fiscal year 2007 budget does not include direct funding for Tribal Education Departments (TEDs) through the U.S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Indian Affairs. Such funding is authorized by the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act of 2001. See Section 1140 of NCLB Title X, codified at 25 U.S.C. § 2020(a).

The Pueblo of Laguna Department of Education urges you to correct this omission and make appropriations for TEDs so that they can help states, school districts, and tribal students meet the challenges of implementing NCLB.,

Although only one President's proposed budget (fiscal year 1996) ever has requested appropriations for TEDs through the Department of the Interior, historically, the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI), has asked Congress for such appropriations. We join in NCAI's recent request for TED appropriations at the level of $5 million so that our tribal students will achieve at their potentials and not be left behind.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE PARTNERSHIP FOR THE NATIONAL TRAILS SYSTEM

Mr. Chairman and members of the subcommittee: The Partnership for the National Trails System appreciates your support over the past several years, through operations funding and earmarked Challenge Cost Share funds, for the national scenic and historic trails administered by the National Park Service. We also appreciate your increased allocation of funds to support the trails administered and managed by the Forest Service and your support for the trails in the Bureau of Land Management's National Landscape Conservation System. To continue the progress that you have fostered, the Partnership requests that you provide annual operations funding for each of the 24 national scenic and historic trails for fiscal year 2007 through these appropriations:

—*National Park Service*.—$10.683 million for the administration of 19 trails and for coordination of the long-distance trails program by the Washington Park Service office.

—*USDA Forest Service*.—$3.04 million to administer 4 trails and $933,000 to manage parts of 16 trails administered by the NPS or BLM; Construction: $4.822 million for the Continental Divide Trail, $1.35 million for the Florida Trail, and $1 million for the Pacific Crest Trail.

—*Bureau of Land Management*.—To administer the Iditarod National Historic Trail: $272,000, the Camino Real de Tierra Adentro National Historic Trail: $230,000, the Old Spanish National Historic Trail: $331,000 and $3.15 million to manage portions of 9 trails administered by the Park Service or the Forest Service; $1,386,000 for operating four National Historic Trail interpretive centers.

—We ask that you appropriate $7 million for the National Park Service Challenge Cost Share Program and continue to earmark $2.5 million for Lewis & Clark Bicentennial projects and one-third of the remaining $4.5 million ($1,500,000) for the other national scenic and historic trails or create a separate $1.5 million National Trails System Challenge Cost Share Program.

—We ask that you add $500,000 to the Bureau of Land Management's Challenge Cost Share Program and earmark the money for the 12 national scenic and historic trails it administers or manages.

—We ask that you appropriate $1.253 million to the National Park Service National Center for Recreation and Conservation to support the second year of a five-year interagency pilot project to develop a consistent system-wide Geographic Information System (GIS) for the National Trails System.

We ask that you appropriate from the Land and Water Conservation Fund for land acquisition:

—to the Forest Service: $5 million for the Pacific Crest Trail, $250,000 for management of the Pacific Crest Trail land acquisition program; $5 million for the Florida Trail; $5.6 million for the Appalachian Trial; $195,000 for the Overmountain Victory Trail in North Carolina;

—to the Bureau of Land Management: $1.5 million for the Pacific Crest Trail; $1 million for the Oregon Trail in Oregon; $1.4 million for the Continental Divide Trail in New Mexico;

—to the Park Service: $4 million to grant to the State of Wisconsin to match state funds to acquire land for the Ice Age Trail.

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

We request $1.253 million to fund the second year of a 5-year interagency effort to develop a consistent GIS for all 24 national scenic and historic trails. This initiative is described in the August 2001 report (requested by Congress in the fiscal year 2001 appropriation) "GIS For The National Trails System" and is built upon work already underway on the Ice Age, Appalachian, Florida, Oregon, California, Mormon Pioneer and Pony Express Trails to develop consistent information and procedures that can be applied across the National Trails System. The requested funding will be shared with the Bureau of Land Management and the Forest Service.

The $10.683 million we request for Park Service operations includes increases for many of the trails to continue the progress and new initiatives made possible by the $975,000 funding increase provided for nine of the trails in fiscal year 2001 and the $500,000 increases provided in fiscal year 2004, fiscal year 2005, and fiscal year 2006. The $717,000 we request will enable the Park Service to continue managing three new national historic trails—Ala Kahakai, El Camino Real de Tierra Adentro, and Old Spanish—the latter two co-administered with the Bureau of Land Management. These funds will provide full-time management, support projects for these trails and development of Comprehensive Management Plans for the Ala Kahakai and Old Spanish Trails. We also request $200,000 for maintenance of the Pacific Crest Trail in Kings Canyon/Sequoia, Lassen, and North Cascades National Parks.

We request an increase of $776,000 to continue and expand Park Service efforts to protect cultural landscapes at more than 200 significant sites along the Santa Fe Trail, to develop GIS mapping, and to fund public outreach and educational programs of the Santa Fe Trail Association. An increase of $87,000 for the Trail of Tears will enable the Park Service to work cooperatively with the Trail of Tears Association to develop a GIS to map the Trail's critical historical and cultural heritage sites so they can be protected and interpreted for visitors.

The $100,000 increase we request for the interagency Salt Lake City Trails office will enable the Park Service to continue developing comprehensive interpretation and auto tour guides for the Oregon, California, Mormon Pioneer and Pony Express Trails with a library of trail images linked with the GIS map database of the trails.

We request $1,837,000 for the Lewis & Clark Trail to complete resource protection and interpretation projects and to work with the public/private and inter-agency partnerships forged through the successful Lewis & Clark Bicentennial commemoration to develop a strategy for long-term cooperative stewardship of the Trail.

All of these trails are complicated undertakings; none more so than the 4,200 mile North Country Trail. With more than 650 miles of Trail across 7 national forests

in 5 states there is good reason for close collaboration between the Park Service and Forest Service to ensure consistent management that provides high quality experiences for hikers. The $836,000 we request will enable these agencies to collaborate more effectively while also providing greater support for the regional and local resource inventory and GIS mapping, trail building, trail management, and training of volunteers led by the North Country Trail Association, hastening the day when our nation's longest national scenic trail will be fully opened for use.

The $936,000 we request will enable the Park Service to help WDNR and other partners to accelerate acquisition of land for the Ice Age Trail and further development of the Trail GIS to more efficiently plan resource protection, trail construction and maintenance to correct unsafe conditions and better mark the Trail for users. The funds will also provide assistance to the Ice Age Park & Trail Foundation to better equip, train and support the volunteers who build and maintain the Ice Age Trail and manage its resources.

Challenge Cost Share programs are one of the most effective and efficient ways for Federal agencies to accomplish a wide array of projects for public benefit while also sustaining partnerships involving countless private citizens in doing public service work. The Partnership requests that you appropriate $7 million in Challenge Cost Share funding to the Park Service for fiscal year 2007 as a wise investment of public money that will generate public benefits many times greater than its sum. We ask you to continue to direct $2.5 million for Lewis & Clark Bicentennial projects and one-third of the other $4.5 million for the national scenic and historic trails to continue the steady progress toward making these trails fully available for public enjoyment. We suggest, as an alternative to the annual earmarking of funds from the Regular Challenge Cost Share program, that you establish a separate National Trails System Challenge Cost Share program with $1.5 million funding.

USDA—FOREST SERVICE

As you have done for several years, we ask that you provide additional operations funding to the Forest Service for administering three national scenic trails and one national historic trail, and managing parts of 16 other trails. We ask you to appropriate $3.04 million as a separate budgetary item specifically for the Continental Divide, Florida and Pacific Crest National Scenic Trails and the Nez Perce National Historic Trail. Full-time managers have been assigned for each of these trails by the Forest Service. Recognizing the on-the-ground management responsibility the Forest Service has for 838 miles of the Appalachian Trail, more than 650 miles of the North Country Trail, and sections of the Ice Age, Anza, Caminos Real de Tierra Adentro and de Tejas, Lewis & Clark, California, Iditarod, Mormon Pioneer, Old Spanish, Oregon, Overmountain Victory, Pony Express, Trail of Tears and Santa Fe Trails, we ask you to appropriate $933,000 specifically for these trails.

Work is underway, supported by funds you provided for the past five years, to close several major gaps in the Florida National Scenic Trail. The Florida Trail Association has built 100 miles of new Trail across Eglin Air Force Base, in the Ocala National Forest, Big Cypress National Preserve and along Lake Kissimmee and the Choctawahatchee River. FTA volunteers helped clear trees and other debris scattered across 850 miles of trail by four hurricanes in 2004. The Partnership requests an additional $1.35 million for trail construction in fiscal year 2007 to enable the Forest Service and FTA to build 90 more miles and manage 3,410 acres of new Florida Trail land.

The Continental Divide Trail Alliance, with Forest Service assistance and funding from the outdoor recreation industry, surveyed the entire 3,200 mile route of the Continental Divide Trail documenting $10.3 million of construction projects needed to complete the Trail. To continue new trail construction, begun with fiscal year 1998 funding, we ask that you appropriate $4.822 million to plan 490 miles and to build or reconstruct 242 miles of the CDT.

A Forest Service lands team is working with the Pacific Crest Trail Association (PCTA) and the Park Service National Trail Land Resources Program Center to map and acquire better routes for the 300 miles of the Pacific Crest Trail located on 227 narrow easements across private land or on the edge of dangerous highways. We request $200,000 to continue the work of the fulltime Trail Manager and the lands team and $100,000 for Optimal Location route planning. We also request $1,000,000 for new trail construction and reconstruction of fire and flood damaged bridges along the PCT in California and Washington by the Forest Service and the PCTA.

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

While the Bureau of Land Management has administrative authority only for the Iditarod, El Camino Real de Tierra Adentro, and the Old Spanish National Historic Trails, it has on-the-ground management responsibility for 641 miles of two scenic trails and 3,115 miles of seven historic trails administered by the National Park Service and U.S. Forest Service. The significance of these trails was recognized by their inclusion in the National Landscape Conservation System and, for the first time, in fiscal year 2002, by provision of specific funding for each of them. The Partnership applauds the decision of the Bureau of Land Management to include the national scenic and historic trails in the NLCS and to budget specific funding for each of them. We also applaud the recently released 10 Year "National Scenic & Historic Trails Strategy and Work Plan."

We ask that you continue to support funding for the National Landscape Conservation System and that you appropriate for fiscal year 2007 as new permanent base funding $272,000 for the Iditarod National Historic Trail, $230,000 for El Camino Real de Tierra Adentro National Historic Trail, $331,000 to continue development of the Comprehensive Management Plan for the Old Spanish National Historic Trail, and $3,150,000 for management of the portions of the nine other trails under the care of the Bureau of Land Management. We request $166,000 for construction of new sections of the Continental Divide National Scenic Trail, $100,000 for maintenance of the Pacific Crest Trail, and $1,386,000 to operate four historic trails interpretive centers. We request that you add $500,000 to the Challenge Cost Share program and allocate the money for the National Trails System as you have done for many years with the Park Service's Challenge Cost Share program. Since the Bureau has no account specifically for "trails" in its budget we ask that you either direct that such an account be established or direct all of the requested money except the CCS to the "Recreation Management" account.

LAND AND WATER CONSERVATION FUND

The Partnership requests that you fully appropriate the $900 million annual authorized appropriation from the Land and Water Conservation Fund and that you make the specific appropriations for national scenic and historic trails detailed at the beginning of this statement and in Attachment #2. The $5.250 million we request for the Pacific Crest National Scenic Trail will continue acquisition underway by the Forest Service and Park Service. The $5 million requested for the Florida National Scenic Trail will continue another successful collaboration between these two agencies to protect another 13 miles of Trail and the $5.6 million requested will protect sections of the Appalachian National Scenic Trail in three national forests in three states. The $195,000 requested for the Overmountain Victory National Historic Trail will protect a key link and access to a 7-mile section of the trail in the Pisgah National Forest in North Carolina.

The $3.9 million requested for the Bureau of Land Management will close a gap in the Continental Divide Trail in New Mexico and protect a key section of the Pacific Crest National Scenic Trail and an important historical site along the Oregon National Historic Trail in Oregon.

The National Trails System Act encourages states to assist in the conservation of the resources and development of the national scenic and historic trails. Wisconsin has matched $7.92 million of fiscal year 2000–2006 LWCF funding with $15.7 million to help conserve the resources of the Ice Age National Scenic Trail. With this 2:1 match of State to Federal funds, Wisconsin has purchased 34 parcels totaling 5,694 acres and now has another 15 parcels under negotiation, appraisal or option to purchase. All of the LWCF funds appropriated by Congress for the Ice Age NST have been spent. The requested $4 Million Land and Water Conservation Fund grant to Wisconsin will continue this very successful Federal/State/local partnership for protecting land for the Ice Age Trail.

The essential funding requests to support the trails are detailed in Attachment 2.

PRIVATE SECTOR SUPPORT FOR THE NATIONAL TRAILS SYSTEM

Public-spirited partnerships between private citizens and public agencies have been a hallmark of the National Trails System since its inception. These partnerships create the enduring strength of the Trails System and the trail communities that sustain it by combining the local, grass-roots energy and responsiveness of volunteers with the responsible continuity of public agencies. They also provide a way to enlist private financial support for public projects, usually resulting in a greater than equal match of funds.

The private trail organizations commitment to the success of these trail-sustaining partnerships grows even as Congress' support for the trails has grown. In 2005 the trail organizations channeled 723,191 hours of documented volunteer labor valued at $12,691,997 to help sustain the national scenic and historic trails. The organizations also applied private sector contributions of $7,275,556 to benefit the trails. These contributions are documented in Attachment 1.

ATTACHMENT 1.—CONTRIBUTIONS MADE IN 2005 TO SUPPORT THE NATIONAL TRAILS SYSTEM BY NATIONAL SCENIC AND HISTORIC TRAIL ORGANIZATIONS

Organization	Volunteer hours	Estimated value of volunteer labor	Financial contributions
Appalachian Trail Conference	195,733	$3,435,114	[1] $3,099,000
Camino Real Trail Association	790	13,865	5,236
Continental Divide Trail Society	[1] 1,500	26,325	.....
Continental Divide Trail Alliance	17,640	309,582	999,553
Florida Trail Association	[1] 58,266	1,022,568	165,000
Ice Age Park & Trail Foundation	90,524	1,588,696	564,289
Iditarod National Historic Trail, Inc.	[1] 896	15,725	[1] 80,000
Heritage Trails/Amigos De Anza & others	[1] 2000	35,100	.....
Anza Trail Coalition of Arizona	2,650	46,507	.....
Lewis & Clark Trail Heritage Foundation	87,119	1,528,938	495,796
Mormon Trails Association	1,140	20,007	4,577
Iowa Mormon Trails Association	[1] 750	13,163	1,730
Nebraska Mormon Trails Association	[1] 125	2,194	2,445
National Pony Express Association	23,515	412,688	111,147
Pony Express Trail Association	5,703	100,088	44,840
Nez Perce Trail Foundation	6,780	118,989	8,256
North Country Trail Association	35,423	621,670	217,397
Old Spanish Trail Association	10,126	177,711	55,531
Oregon-California Trails Association	59,053	1,036,380	602,178
Overmountain Victory Trail Association	7,985	140,137	36,800
Pacific Crest Trail Association	41,100	721,305	577,748
Potomac Heritage Trail Association	[1] 2,535	44,489	.....
Santa Fe Trail Association	39,639	695,664	138,808
Trail of Tears Association	32,199	565,092	65,225
TOTALS	723,191	12,691,997	7,275,556

[1] Estimate.

ATTACHMENT 2.—PARTNERSHIP FOR THE NATIONAL TRAILS SYSTEM REQUESTED FISCAL YEAR 2007 APPROPRIATIONS FOR THE NATIONAL TRAILS SYSTEM

Agency/Trail	Fiscal year			Project/Programs possible with increased funding
	2006 cong. approp.	2007 admin. request	2007 partners request	
PARK SERVICE				
Ala Kahakai	$259,000	$261,000	$261,000	Continue preparation of Comprehensive Management Plan (CMP) for new trail;
Appalachian	1,205,000	1,217,000	1,755,000	$350,000 of the total supports volunteer-based trail and land management guided by ATC; Park ranger to deal with trail encroachments; support GIS work;
Natchez Trace	27,000	27,000	27,000	Planning & building new trail & bridges; backlog maintenance with SCA;
El Camino Real Tejas	49,000	49,000	50,000	Begin to administer new national historic trail;
El Camino Real Tierra	140,000	140,000	220,000	Full-time administrator; implement CMP with Bureau of Land Management;
California	278,000	278,000	303,000	Begin to develop Four Trails Images Library/Database to complement GIS Database;
Ice Age	631,000	641,000	936,000	Accelerate Trail corridor planning and land acquisition by agency partners; Increase Trail development, maintenance and resource management by IAP&TF volunteers;
Juan Bautista de Anza	305,000	313,000	313,000	Coordination of Trail site protection, interpretation & development projects with local agencies & organizations; Outreach to schools and Latino communities;
Lewis & Clark	1,798,000	1,837,000	1,837,000	Planning, coordination & support for local L&CNHT projects after the Bicentennial;
Mormon Pioneer	128,000	128,000	153,000	Begin to develop Four Trails Images Library/Database to complement GIS Database;
North Country	684,000	684,000	836,000	Advance Trail construction, route planning, protection and public awareness by providing regional services, GIS, and technical assistance for volunteers and partners;
Old Spanish	101,000	101,000	236,000	Full-time administrator; continue preparing CMP with Bureau of Land Management;
Oregon	286,000	293,000	311,000	Begin to develop Four Trails Images Library/Database to complement GIS Database;
Overmountain Victory	170,000	174,000	286,000	New route signs & interpretive exhibits; mapping Trail sites for protection inventory, feasibility study for location of Trail headquarters and visitor contact site;
Pony Express	182,000	182,000	207,000	Begin to develop Four Trails Images Library/Database to complement GIS Database;
Potomac Heritage	276,000	279,000	279,000	Assistance to local agencies & organizations for planning & educational projects;
Santa Fe	[1] 722,000	740,000	1,516,000	Preserve cultural resources; GIS mapping; produce interpretive media with SFTA;
Selma to Montgomery	328,000	334,000	334,000	Comprehensive management plan developed and trail interpretation begun in collaboration with citizen support organizations & local agencies;
Trail of Tears	361,000	361,000	448,000	Develop GIS, interpret critical Trail sites & provide new visitor facilities with TOTA;
NTS-Washington Office	336,000	340,000	375,000	Program coordination and funding for special projects and training for staff & partners
National Trails System	8,266,000	8,379,000	10,683,000	Total National Trails System operations funding.
Challenge Cost Share	[2] 4,843,000	[3] 2,380,000	7,000,000	$2.5 million for Lewis & Clark; one-third of remaining $4.5 million for rest of National Trails System.
Interagency GIS Project	.....	.....	[4] 1,253,000	Development of GIS for National Trails System;

BLM				
Iditarod Trail	248,000	248,000	272,000	Coordination and support for collaborative management with other Federal agencies, Iditarod Trail organizations and State of Alaska; bridges and cabins; Interpretive Plan;
El Camino Real de Tierra Adentro	15,000	230,000	230,000	Collaborative administration and management with National Park Service; Full-time Trail Administrator; Site certification and protection;
Old Spanish	235,000	331,000	331,000	Full-time Trail Administrator; Collaborative administration and management with National Park Service; Continue preparation of Comprehensive Management Plan; Site protection and interpretation;
Continental Divide	194,000	219,000	410,000	Planning 101 miles of CDNST in Idaho, Montana and New Mexico; Interagency management collaboration; Full-time CDNST Liaison;
Pacific Crest	70,000	75,000	90,000	PCNST maintenance in California and Oregon; Interagency management collaboration;
Juan Bautista de Anza	90,000	58,000	58,000	Interpretive exhibits for Anza Trail in Arizona and California;
California	135,000	150,000	179,000	California NHT resource inventories in Utah, Nevada and California;
Lewis & Clark	2,058,000	1,680,000	1,680,000	Completion of Lewis & Clark Bicentennial projects in Idaho and Montana;
Mormon Pioneer	227,000	193,000	227,000	Mormon Pioneer NHT resource inventories in Utah and Wyoming;
Nez Perce	142,000	27,000	149,000	Completion of Lewis & Clark Bicentennial projects in Idaho and Montana;
Oregon	22,000	133,000	210,000	Interagency management collaboration and Oregon NHT resource inventories;
Pony Express	100,000	100,000	147,000	Marking Pony Express Trail in Utah and Nevada;
National Trails System	3,164,000	3,524,000	3,983,000	Total National Trails System operations funding.
Challenge Cost Share	.....	.....	500,000	Projects along the various national scenic and historic trails;
Casper NHT Center	377,000	377,000	425,000	Operating ONHT, CNHT, MPNHT, and PXNHT interpretive center in Casper, WY;
Oregon, Pompey's Pillar & Camino Real Centers	921,000	961,000	961,000	Operating ONHT, L&CNHT, and CRTANHT interpretive centers;
Construction of:				
Pacific Crest Trail	.....	.....	100,000	Funding for maintenance and re-construction of Pacific Crest NST in California;
Continental Divide Trail	.....	.....	166,000	Funding for construction and re-construction of 102 miles of Continental Divide NST in Idaho, Montana, and New Mexico;
FOREST SERVICE				
Continental Divide	+760,000		1,250,000	Continued support for full administrative responsibility and for consistent interagency collaboration for each trail; support for consistent management with trail organization and local agency partners; trail brochures, signs, project planning etc.; Also $572,500 to plan 490 new miles of CDT; $200,000 for work of full-time Trail administrator and $100,000 for Optimal Location Planning for PCT and $100,000 to increase Trail maintenance by volunteers coordinated by PCTA; $650,000 to continue collaboration with Florida Trail Association to inventory 430 miles and certify 150 miles of the Florida Trail and further develop Trail GIS; $49,000 for Nez Perce Trail Foundation education and public outreach work;
Florida	+650,000		650,000	
Pacific Crest	+850,000		500,000	
Nez Perce Trails	+640,000		640,000	

ATTACHMENT 2.—PARTNERSHIP FOR THE NATIONAL TRAILS SYSTEM REQUESTED FISCAL YEAR 2007 APPROPRIATIONS FOR THE NATIONAL TRAILS SYSTEM—Continued

Agency/Trail	Fiscal year			Project/Programs possible with increased funding
	2006 cong. approp.	2007 admin. request	2007 partners request	
Total	[5] 2,900,000	1,000,000	3,040,000	
Appalachian, North Country, Ice Age, Iditarod, California, Juan Bautista de Anza, Caminos Real Tierra Adentro & Tejas, Lewis & Clark, Oregon, Old Spanish, Mormon Pioneer, Overmountain Victory, Pony Express, Santa Fe, Trail of Tears.	925,000	350,000	933,000	Improved trail maintenance, marking, interpretation, archaeological studies, historic site protection and trailhead facilities for trail segments in National Forests; $200,000 to address deferred maintenance, remove blowdown trees on 30 miles of trail, make improvements and provide liaison for collaborative management of the North Country Trail with National Park Service; Re-location and reconstruction of sections of the Appalachian Trail, replacement of major bridges and installation of toilets at shelters;
Continental Divide Trail	995,000	.....	4,822,500	Trail construction projects along the Continental Divide Trail: reconstructing or building 242 miles of trail in Montana, Idaho, Wyoming, Colorado and New Mexico;
Florida Trail	498,000	.....	1,350,000	Trail construction projects totaling 150 miles of new trail and management of 3,410 acres acquired by the Forest Service for the FNST;
Pacific Crest Trail	995,000	.....	1,000,000	Trail construction projects along the Pacific Crest Trail, including reconstruction of fire and storm damaged bridges and structures in California and Washington; Fabrication and installation of roadside interpretive signs at Trail highway crossings;
National Trails System	6,333,000	1,350,000	11,145,500	Total: National Trails System funding
Nat. Forest System Trail Maintenance	42,000,000	.....	.....	Trail maintenance throughout the National Forest System.
Nat. Forest System Trail Construction	30,500,000	.....	.....	New trail construction and re-construction throughout the National Forest System.
Nat. Forest System Capital Improvement & Maintenance—Trails.	76,000,000	60,341,000	90,000,000	Trail maintenance and new trail construction throughout the National Forest System.
LWCF FOR TRAILS				
LWCF grant—FS Pacific Crest	500,000	1,600,000	5,000,000	USDA-Forest Service acquisition of lands in southern California (Tejon Ranch), Oregon and southern Washington to preserve the scenic integrity of the Pacific Crest Trail.
LWCF grant—BLM Pacific Crest	.....	.....	1,500,000	BLM acquisition of Sky King Cole Ranch in the Cascade Siskiyou National Monument, including land along Pacific Crest Trail.
LWCF grant—FS Pacific Crest	.....	.....	250,000	Land acquisition program management.
LWCF grant—FS Florida	.....	.....	5,000,000	USDA-Forest Service acquisition of lands in the Northwest Florida Greenway near Eglin Air Force Base and adjacent to St. Marks National Wildlife Refuge.

LWCF grant—FS Appalachian	.....	.....	5,600,000	USDA-Forest Service acquisition of 1,200 acres in the Cherokee NF in Tennessee, 820 acres in the George Washington-Jefferson NF in Virginia (last unprotected segment of the Appalachian NST), and 970 acres in the Green Mountain NF in Vermont.
LWCF grant Ice Age—Wisconsin [6]	1,000,000	.....	4,000,000	Assistance provided to State of Wisconsin to protect threatened Ice Age Trail corridor and connect trail segments across private land in Dane, Chippewa, Kewaunee, Langlade, Lincoln, Manitowoc, Marathon, Portage, Sheboygan, Taylor, Washington, Waupaca and Waushara Counties.
LWCF grant—BLM Oregon	1,600,000	750,000	1,000,000	BLM acquisition of land along the Sandy River in Oregon.
LWCF grant—FS Overmountain Victory	.....	.....	195,000	USDA-Forest Service acquisition of land to protect key link in the Overmountain Victory Trail near North Cove in North Carolina.
LWCF grant—BLM Continental Divide	.....	.....	1,400,000	BLM acquisition of land between El Malpais National Conservation Area and the Gila National Forest.
LWCF grant—NPS Lewis & Clark	1,600,000	.....	.....	
Total	4,700,000	2,350,000	23,695,000	

[1] Includes $261,000 for operations of Santa Fe Park Service office, not related to the Santa Fe Trail.

[2] Includes $2.463 million earmarked for Lewis & Clark Bicentennial projects. One-third of the remaining funds (about $813,000 of $2.44 million) are earmarked for National Trails System projects.

[3] Administration request does not allocate any funds for the National Trails System. The Congressional earmark is needed to accomplish this.

[4] Funding request reflects budget detailed in Park Service GIS report delivered to Congress in January 2002.

[5] Appropriation includes: $2.9 million for administration of the Continental Divide, Florida, and Pacific Crest National Scenic Trails and the Nez Perce National Historic Trail, funding for full-time administrators for each trail and land acquisition teams for the Florida and Pacific Crest Trails.

[6] This would be a grant to the State of Wisconsin to be matched at least 1:1.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE PUEBLO OF TESUQUE

The Presidents' proposed fiscal year 2007 budget does not include direct funding for Tribal Education Departments (TED's) through the U.S. Department of Education. Such funding is authorized by the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act of 2001. See Section 7135 of NCLB Title VII, codified at 20 U.S.C. § 7455.

The Pueblo of Tesuque, urges you to correct this omission and make appropriations for TED's so that they can join in helping states, school districts, and tribal students meet the challenges of implementing NCLB.

Although no President's proposed budget ever has requested appropriations for TED's through the Department of Education, historically the National Education Association (NIEA) has asked Congress for $3 million in appropriations for TED's. We join in NIEA's request so that our tribal students will achieve at their potential and not be left behind as evidenced in today's State of New Mexico statistics.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF AMERICAN RIVERS

American Rivers, on behalf of more than 500 national, regional and local organizations representing more than 5 million constituents concerned with river conservation,[1] urges the Committee to provide $7,776,233,000 for the following programs in the Interior and Related Agencies Appropriations bill for fiscal year 2007. I request that this testimony be included in the official record.

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

Clean Water and Safe Drinking Water State Revolving Loan Funds.—The Clean Water State Revolving Fund (SRF) provides capitalization grants to states, which in turn provide low-cost loans to communities for a variety of programs to clean up impaired water bodies and protect pristine waters. This program has been extremely effective in helping communities to improve water quality and provide safe drinking water. However, the needs to improve, repair and replace the nation's aging water infrastructure are tremendous. Postponing necessary water infrastructure investments will only defer and increase costs that must eventually be met. The annual need for clean water funding is close to $20 billion. Historically, the federal government has provided between 10 and 20 percent of those funds or what should be $2 to $4 billion. The SRF programs have also been used to fund nonstructural projects that reduce non-point source pollution, protect estuaries, prevent contamination of drinking source waters, and reduce polluted runoff by protecting natural areas and other "green infrastructure," such as stream buffers. These approaches are often more cost-effective then traditional pipe and cement options and provide a wide array of environmental and social benefits, including open space, wildlife habitat, recreation, and improved water supply. American Rivers urges the Committee to appropriate $3.2 billion for the Clean Water SRF and $2.0 billion for the Drinking Water SRF in fiscal year 2007. Additionally, within the funds appropriated for the Clean Water SRF $250 million should be used for nonstructural projects.

Enforcement of Discharge Permits under the Clean Water Act.—The Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) ability to enforce environmental laws is critical to our nation's efforts to fulfill the Clean Water Act's stated objective of restoring waters to fishable and swimmable conditions. It is essential that EPA maintain a strong enforcement presence working with the states to undertake civil and criminal enforcement activities at facilities that can result in real improvements in environmental quality. American Rivers urges the Committee to appropriate $492 million for EPA's Enforcement programs in fiscal year 2007.

Water Efficiency.—EPA established a water efficiency market enhancement program in the fiscal year 2005 budget similar to the Energy Star program that promotes energy efficient appliances and practices. Promoting water efficient products and practices would represent a significant step forward in moving the nation towards more efficient water use. American Rivers urges the Committee to appropriate $2 million for the Water efficiency program in fiscal year 2007.

Total Maximum Daily Loads.—The establishment of Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs) allow states and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to identify all sources of water quality impairment to rivers, streams and lakes that do not meet water quality standards, develop specific goals for improvement, and design

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[1] These groups and individuals have endorsed the Citizen's Agenda for Rivers which includes the "River Budget" for fiscal year 2007, a report of national funding priorities for local river conservation. For more information on the Citizen's Agenda for Rivers go to www.healthyrivers.org.

plans to reduce pollutant loads into receiving water bodies. The development of strong TMDLs by the states done through funding under Section 106 of the CWA requires a commitment of adequate resources. American Rivers urges the Committee to appropriate $250 million for State Program Management Grants in fiscal year 2007.

Non-point Source Management Program, Clean Water Act Section 319.—The Section 319 Non-point Source Management Program provides grant money that states, territories, and Indian tribes can use for a wide variety of non-point source pollution reduction activities including technical and financial assistance, education, training, technology transfer, demonstration projects, and monitoring. American Rivers urges the Committee to appropriate $250 million for Section 319, the Non-point Source Management Program in fiscal year 2007.

Chesapeake Bay Program.—The Chesapeake Bay Program focuses on restoring tributaries, underwater bay grasses and fish passage, and also reducing agricultural runoff pollution and toxics. American Rivers urges the Committee to appropriate $30 million for the Chesapeake Bay Program, including $3 million Chesapeake Bay Small Watershed Grants Program in fiscal year 2007.

Targeted Watersheds Grants.—The Targeted Watersheds Grants program provides direct grants to a limited number of watershed groups, tribes and communities working to improve water quality. Portions of these funds are designated for technical assistance programs and to train community groups engaged in watershed-level protection and restoration projects. This training is essential to protect and restore the nation's rivers and watersheds. American Rivers urges the Committee to appropriate $35 million, including $3.5 million dedicated to technical assistance for Targeted Watersheds Grants in fiscal year 2007.

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance Program (RTCA).—This program has helped produce some of the best examples of conservation based local-federal partnerships by providing communities with assistance to help revitalize riverfronts, protect open space, and build trails and greenways. If funded at $15 million, RTCA could expand to assist approximately 250 additional projects in some 25 new and currently underserved locations. American Rivers urges the Committee to fund the RTCA program at $15 million in fiscal year 2004 in fiscal year 2007.

Elwha River Restoration.—Removal of Glines Canyon and Elwha dams will restore salmon access to the Elwha river's wilderness heart in the Olympic National Park for the first time in 100 years. This dam removal will produce a landmark in river restoration for our national parks and an unprecedented opportunity to study a large dam removal and its impact on the river and wild salmon populations. American Rivers urges the Committee to provide $35 million to complete the restoration of the Elwha River ecosystem and its fisheries.

Dam Safety Program.—Dams that have outlived their average life expectancy now threaten the health of rivers inside the National Park System. Of the 482 dams in the Park System, some 330 are in poor or fair condition. Since its formation, the Dam Safety program has repaired 198 dams and removed 159 hazardous dams. American Rivers urges the Committee to fund the Dam Safety Program at $3.6 million in fiscal year 2007.

U.S FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

National Fish Passage Program.—Working with local, state, tribal, and federal partners, the Fish Passage Program has used $2.3 million, with partners matching $6.2 million (73 percent) of total costs to initiate projects, opening more than 3,000 miles of river and 60,000 acres of wetlands for fish spawning and rearing habitat. This program is key to the success of the Administration's new small dam removal initiative coordinating with NOAA and NRCS. American Rivers urges the Committee to appropriate the National Fish Passage Program with $5 million in fiscal year 2007.

Fisheries Restoration and Irrigation Mitigation Act Program (FRIMA) is a unique voluntary program that helps improve anadromous and resident fish passage through installing better fish screens for irrigation and water diversions in Oregon, Washington, Idaho and western Montana without impairing existing water withdrawals. American Rivers urges the Committee to fund Fisheries Restoration and Irrigation Mitigation Act Program at $5 million in fiscal year 2007.

Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program.—This program has worked with more than 27,000 landowners to restore 574,800 acres of wetlands; 884,800 acres of native prairie, grassland, and other upland habitats; and 4,190 miles of riparian and in-

stream aquatic habitat. American Rivers urges the Committee to appropriate $52.2 million for the Partners for Fish and Wildlife program in fiscal year 2007.

Coastal Program.—The Coastal Program has worked through partnerships to reopened 3,300 miles of coastal streams for anadromous fish passage; restored 54,160 acres of coastal wetlands, 19,670 acres of coastal upland habitat, 645 miles of riparian habitat; and protected 230,000 acres of habitat through conservation easements since 1994. American Rivers urges the Committee to fund the FWS's Coastal Program at $15 million in fiscal year 2007.

National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF).—Every Congressionally appropriated dollar given to the Foundation translates into an average of three dollars in on-the-ground conservation. NFWF has made more than 5,000 grants and committed more than $226 million in federal funds. Matched with non-federal dollars, NFWF funds have delivered more than $617 million for conservation. American Rivers urges the Committee to fully fund the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation at $28 million in fiscal year 2007.

U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY

These water resource investigation programs provide vital information on water quality conditions and trends on the health of our nation's rivers and water supply. American Rivers urges the Committee to provide the following amounts in fiscal year 2007:

—National Water Quality Assessment Program: $70 million
—Toxic Substances Hydrology Program: $17.4 million
—National Streamflow Information Program: $28.4 million

OFFICE OF SURFACE MINING

Abandoned Mine Land Program—Clean Streams Initiative.—The Clean Streams Initiative coordinates and funds community, citizen, and government abandoned mine reclamation efforts. American Rivers urges the Committee to appropriate $285 million to the Abandoned Mine Land Program and should earmark $20 million for the Clean Streams Initiative in fiscal year 2007.

WILD AND SCENIC RIVERS

Bureau of Land Management: Land Use Planning—National Landscape Conservation System.—The Bureau of Land Management is responsible for managing 36 wild and scenic rivers, as part of the National Landscape Conservation System. American Rivers urges the Committee to appropriate $7 million for WSR Management and $5 million for completion of WSR studies in fiscal year 2007.

U.S. Forest Service: National Forest System—Recreation, Heritage, and Wilderness.—The U.S. Forest Service has responsibility for the largest number of wild and scenic rivers and has a mandate to complete studies of potential wild and scenic rivers through its forest planning process. American Rivers urges the Committee to appropriate $9 million for Forest Service wild and scenic river management, $3 million for the creation of river management plans, and $3 million for completion of wild and scenic river studies in fiscal year 2007.

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service: National Wildlife Refuge System.—The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service manages nine wild and scenic rivers and must study rivers located on national refuge lands for potential designation. American Rivers urges the Committee to appropriate $1,787,000 for FWS wild and scenic river management, restoration and studies in fiscal year 2007.

National Park Service.—The National Park Service manages 36 wild and scenic rivers and is responsible for studying rivers both in National Park areas and outside of federal lands.

—*Rivers and Trails Studies*.—American Rivers urges the Committee to appropriate $1 million for wild and scenic rivers studies and $16 million for wild and scenic river management in fiscal year 2007.
—*Partnership Wild and Scenic Rivers*.—American Rivers urges the Committee to appropriate $1.846 million for Partnership Wild and Scenic rivers in fiscal year 2007

None of these agencies currently receives sufficient funding to adequately protect our nation's Wild and Scenic Rivers System and to ensure that a broad diversity of rivers are represented.

PENOBSCOT RIVER RESTORATION PROJECT

An unprecedented approach to river restoration that will reconfigure hydropower facilities and maintain energy production while opening up more than 500 miles of

habitat to 10 native species of anadromous fish, improve water quality, boost wildlife and create new opportunities in communities along New England's second largest river. American Rivers urges the Committee to appropriate $10 million for the Penobscot River Restoration Project for in fiscal year 2007.

LAND AND WATER CONSERVATION FUND

The Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) provides much-needed dollars for purchasing ecologically important lands. LWCF has proven highly successful, projects have helped states and localities purchase some 2.3 million acres of land and advanced river restoration through acquisition of riverside lands to serve as buffer zones. In particular, there are three river protection projects that deserve funding this fiscal year: the USFS Goose Creek, Phase 3 (CA) needs $2.7 million in fiscal year 2007; the USFS Beaver Creek and Marsh (WA) needs $1.5 million; and the BLM Sandy River (OR) needs $1 million. American Rivers urges the Committee to appropriate $900 million for the Land and Water Conservation Fund in fiscal year 2007.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE PUBLIC SERVICE COMPANY OF NEW MEXICO

We are requesting your support for the following appropriations in fiscal year 2007 to the Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) for the Upper Colorado River Endangered Fish Recovery Program and the San Juan River Basin Recovery Implementation Program, as recommended in the President's budget.

1. Appropriation of $697,000 in "recovery" funds (Ecological Services Activity; Endangered Species Sub activity; Recovery Element; $697,000 within the $5,631,000 item entitled "General Program Activities") to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) to allow FWS to continue its necessary participation in the Upper Colorado River Endangered Fish Recovery Program.
2. Appropriation of $437,000 in operation and maintenance funds (Resource Management Appropriation; Fisheries Activity; Hatchery Operations & Maintenance Sub activity, Hatchery Operations Project) to support the ongoing operation of the FWS' Ouray National Fish Hatchery in Utah.
3. Allocation of $211,000 in "recovery" funds for the San Juan River Basin Recovery Implementation Program to the FWS for fiscal year 2007 to meet FWS' Region 2 expenses managing and implementing the San Juan Recovery Program.

We thank you for your past support and request the Subcommittee's assistance for fiscal year 2007 funding to ensure FWS' continuing financial participation in these vitally important programs.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE PUYALLUP TRIBE OF INDIANS

Mr. Chairman, my name is Herman Dillon, Sr., Puyallup Tribal Chairman. We thank the Committee for past support of many tribal issues and in your interest today. We share our concerns and request assistance in reaching objectives of significance to the Congress, the Tribe, and to 32,000+ Indians (constituents) in our Urban Service Area.

U.S. Department of Interior—Bureau of Indian Affairs.—The Puyallup Tribe has analyzed the President's fiscal year 2007 budget and submit the following detailed written testimony to the Senate Interior Subcommittee on the proposed funding bill for the Dept. of Interior and Related Agencies. In the fiscal year 2006 budget process, the Puyallup Tribe supported actions of Congress to restore the base level funding for various programs. We look forward to working with the 109th Congress to insure that funding levels for programs necessary for the Puyallup Tribe to carry-out our sovereign responsibility of self-determination and self-governance for the benefit of Puyallup tribal members and the members from approximately 435 federally recognized Tribes who utilize our services are included in the fiscal year 2007 budget. The following provides a brief review of the Puyallup Tribe's priorities and special appropriation requests for fiscal year 2007;

Puyallup Nation Law Enforcement.—The Puyallup Reservation is located in the urbanized Seattle-Tacoma area of the State of Washington. The 18,061 acre reservation and related urban service area contains 17,000+ Native Americans from over 435 Tribes and Alaskan Villages. The Puyallup Nation Law Enforcement Division currently has twenty-six (26) commissioned officers to cover 40 square miles of reservation in addition to the usual and accustomed areas. The officers are charged with the service and protection of the Puyallup Reservation seven days a week, twenty-four hours a day. We currently operate with limited equipment, patrol vehi-

cles requiring constant repair and insufficient staff levels. With the continuing increase in population, increase in gang related activities on the Puyallup Reservation and the impact of the increase in manufacturing of meth amphetamines in the region, the services of the Puyallup Nation Law Enforcement Division are exceeding maximum levels.

A major area of concern is the status of the Tribe's Regional Detention Facility. Due to damages from the February 2001 Nisqually earthquake, we have had to relocate to modular/temporary facilities. As a regional detention facility, the relocation to the modular facility not only impacts the Tribe's ability to house detainee's but also the approximately 173 native inmates that were incarcerated at the Puyallup Incarceration facility during the period of 2001–2002. Relocation to the modular facility has also impacted the Tribes ability to house juvenile detainees. With no juvenile facilities, Native American youth are sent to non-native facilities. These and other issues regarding the deplorable conditions existing in Indian Detention facilities is documented in the September 2004 report issued by the U.S. Department of Interior Inspector General's Office.

—Request Subcommittee support to fund the BIA Public Safety and Justice Law Enforcement activities at the $201 million level proposed in the fiscal year 2007 budget to operated law enforcement services.

—Support from the Subcommittee on the Tribes request for funding to design and construct an Adult & Juvenile Detention Facility on the Puyallup Reservation, in the amount of $6.5 million.

—Support from the Subcommittee to restore proposed funding cuts to the Tribal Courts budget in the amount of $5.3 million and request that the Subcommittee issue directive language to the BIA to include this amount as line item funding for the Tribal Courts in the fiscal year 2008 budget.

Fisheries & Natural Resources Management.—The Puyallup Tribe as steward for land and marine waters in the Usual and Accustomed fish and shellfish areas has treaty and Governmental obligations and responsibilities to manage natural resources for uses beneficial to the regional community. Despite our diligent program efforts, the fisheries resource is degrading and economic losses are incurred by Indian and Non-Indian fisherman, and surrounding communities. Our Resource Management responsibilities cover thousands of square miles in the Puget Sound region of the State of Washington with an obligation to manage production of anadromous, non-anadromous fish and shellfish resources. Existing levels of support are inadequate to reverse the trend of resource/habitat degradation. Resource management is constrained due to funding shortfalls. We seek support and endorsement in the following areas:

—Tribal Fisheries Resource Management, Hatchery Operation and Maintenance funding via Public Law 93–638 contracts have not increased substantially since establishment of base budgets in 1984. The demand on Puyallup Tribal Fisheries Program has grown exponential since the eighties and is currently faced by Endangered Species Act listings on Bull Trout and Chinook Salmon which is in an highly urbanized setting more so than any other Pacific Northwest Tribe. We request Committee support to increase base contract funding in the amount of $350,000.00 for additional fisheries staff. We further support the Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission's request for the existing BIA hatchery maintenance budget be increased to $1.5 million per year for the next decade to meet basic infrastructure maintenance costs for tribal hatcheries.

—Western Washington Timber-Fish-Wildlife Program/Forest and Fish Report (TFW–FFR) The TFW–FFR Program has allowed for the expansion of tribal participation in the state forest practice rules and regulations that have an affect on listed salmon populations. Tribes bring a high level of skills and technical capabilities that if appropriately funded, would greatly facilitate and enhance a successful outcome in state forest practice, rules, regulations and greater fish protection. However, base funding for this program is being proposed to be discontinued in the President's fiscal year 2007 budget. Continued funding in this area is essential to facilitate tribal participation in monitoring, research, data analysis and adaptive management processes that are a cornerstone to the TFW–FFR process. We request Committee support for base funding level of $3 million in base funding for the TFW fiscal year 2007 budget. We further support the Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission's request that the Subcommittee issue directive language to the Bureau of Indian Affairs to include this amount in their fiscal year 2008 budget.

—*Unresolved Hunting and Fishing Rights Program*.—The Medicine Creek Treaty secured the Puyallup Tribe and other tribes the right to hunt on open and unclaimed lands. This treaty right is reserved in the same paragraph that also reserved the right to fish and gather shellfish. Unfortunately, the BIA program

that is designed to support this treaty activity has not received adequate, if any, appropriations in the last several years. Funds that were made available to tribes have been on a competitive basis with a maximum amount per program due to limited funding. The Puyallup Tribe has established a Hunting-Wildlife Management program that works cooperatively with signatory Tribes to the Medicine Creek Treaty, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, U.S. Forest Service and the National Park Service. For further development and participation in unresolved hunting issues, the Puyallup Tribe is requesting Committee support for establishment of base funding of $95,000.00 for the Hunting-Wildlife Management Program. We further support the Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission's request to restore $320,000 to the Unresolved Hunting and Fishing Rights line item and request that these funds be appropriated to the base budget.

Operation of Indian Programs & Contract Support Costs.—The President's fiscal year 2007 budget calls for $1.966 billion to be allocated to the Bureau of Indian Affairs Operation of Indian Programs, which is an increase of $4.4 million from the fiscal year 2006 enacted level. For the fiscal year 2007 budget, the Department of Interior reformulated its presentation of the Operation of Indian Programs funding. Previous formulations were based on Tribal Priority Allocations (TPA). The Interior's new format groups program funding according to functions which are; Tribal Government; Human Services; Trust-Natural Resources Management; Trust-Real Estate Services; Education; Public Safety and Justice; Community and Economic Development; and Executive Direction and Administrative Services. These budget functions include the majority of funding used to support on-going services at the "local tribal" level, including; law enforcement, natural resources management (fisheries), child welfare, housing, tribal courts and other tribal governmental services. These functions, as detailed in previous "TPA" allocations have not received adequate funding to allow tribes the resources to fully exercise self-determination and self-governance. Further, the small increases "TPA" has received over the past few years has not been adequate to keep pace with inflation. At a minimum, we request your support and endorsement in the following:

—Support by Congress to fund the Operation of Indian Programs fiscal year 2007 request, at a minimum, at the requested amount of $1,966,000,000, an increase of $4.4 million.

—Support by Congress to restore funding for the Johnson O'Malley Program in the amount of $16,300,000.

Another concern the Puyallup Tribe has with the fiscal year 2007 budget request is the on-going issue of contract support costs. The President's fiscal year 2007 budget request includes an increase of $19 million over the fiscal year 2006 enacted level for BIA Contract Support Costs. At a minimum, we request your support and endorsement in the following;

—Support by Congress to fund, at a minimum, BIA Contract Support Costs for fiscal year 2007 as proposed in the President's budget request. Full funding of Contract Support is a mandate towards the full realization of Self-determination and Self-governance.

DHHS Indian Health Service.—Funding for the Indian Health Service fails to meet the needs of health services for Native Americans. The Puyallup Tribe has been operating their health care programs since 1976 through the Indian Self-determination Act, Public Law 93–638. The Puyallup Tribal Health Authority (PTHA) operates a comprehensive ambulatory care program to an expanding population in Tacoma and Pierce County, Washington. There are no IHS hospitals in the Portland Area so all specialties and hospital care have been paid for out of our contract care allocation. In recent years our Health Authority has had the highest patient visits in both medical and dental services in the Portland Area of Washington, Oregon and Idaho. It is operating at twice the capacity it was designed and staffed for. In fiscal year 2005 our contract health budget went $2.8 million over what is provided by the IHS. The Puyallup Tribe is now faced with having to subsidize the Puyallup Tribal Heath Authority when its own tribal members constitute only 14 percent of the patient population. Because of the excessive demand for service we have had to add staff without the IHS funding in order to match the workload. An additional $6 million is needed to operate at this rate.

Adequate funding for the continued operations and delivery of quality care is essential. PTHA, like most IHS and tribal facilities, are annually asked to do more with less whether the federal budget is in a surplus or a deficit. This is no longer possible. This continued philosophy has put our clinic system into a funding crisis. IHS has lost $1.9 Billion in purchasing power since 1992. Preserving purchasing power and ensuring that medical needs are met must be paramount to Tribes, IHS and HHS.

The IHS Budget request is for an increase of $130 million over the fiscal year 2006 level for pay costs, population growth, inflation and staffing requirement at new facilities. It is, however, estimated that it will take an increase of $482 million to maintain current facilities and services in fiscal year 2007. We request congressional support for the fiscal year 2007 IHS budget in the following areas:

—Fund IHS Contract Support Costs at 100 percent. While the President's budget includes an increase of $2 million for Contract Support Costs funding, this will not fund tribe's actual contract support costs. It is estimated that the IHS Contract Support Cost shortfall is currently over $70 million. Funding for IHS Contract Support Costs at 100 percent is requested and essential;

—We oppose the proposed elimination of the Urban Indian Health Program, which was funded at $32.7 million in fiscal year 2006. The budget request states that this program duplicates other community health center services, with no evaluation or evidence to support this contention or the impacts of eliminating funding for this program will have on the American Indian and Alaska Native populations. We urge the Subcommittee to restore funding for the Urban Indian Health Program, at a minimum $32.7 million, and issue directive language to the Indian Health Service to include this amount in their fiscal year 2008 budget.

—Fund the Puyallup Tribal Health Authority contract health care fund an additional $4.8 million to match expenditures.

—Fund the Puyallup Tribal Health Authority's direct care services the additional $6 million it needs to match its doubled workload since it was staffed in 1993.

—Index Contract Care to population growth and the medical inflation rate. Contract care is most vulnerable to inflation since services are provided by vendors constrained by IHS guidelines. There are no IHS hospitals in the Pacific Northwest which makes our clinic dependent on Contract Care for necessary specialty referrals and hospital care. Contract Health Services should be increased by $62.3 million for fiscal year 2007;

—The Indian Health Care Improvement Act (Public Law 94–437) provides funding for the Indian Health Services. Re-authorization of this Act was due in 2000 and subsequently has been extended by Congress. IHCIA re-authorization was introduced in the 107th and 108th Congress. While the Health and Human Services Secretary has pledged support for re-authorization of the IHCIA, the bill has failed to satisfy the Administration for re-authorization. The Puyallup Tribe of Indians supports all efforts by Congress and the Administration to pass the Indian Health Care Improvement Act during this session of Congress.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE QUABBIN TO CARDIGAN CONSERVATION COLLABORATIVE

Mr. Chairman and Honorable Members of the Committee: I appreciate the opportunity to present this testimony in support of an appropriation of $3,000,000 from the Forest Legacy Program for the Robb Reservoir/Willard Pond tract in New Hampshire, a $2,500,000 appropriation from the Forest Legacy Program to the Southern Monadnock Plateau project in Massachusetts, and a $1,000,000 appropriation from Federal Land and Water Conservation Fund to the Temple Mountain project in New Hampshire.

The Quabbin to Cardigan Collaborative (Q2C) is a public/private partnership of more than twenty private conservation organizations and public agencies seeking to protect a broad corridor of interconnected public and private conservation lands along the Monadnock Highlands, which stretch more than one hundred miles from the Quabbin Reservoir in central Massachusetts north to New Hampshire's Mt. Cardigan, and beyond to the White Mountains. Thanks to a long history of farsighted private and public land protection and stewardship, the region contains one of the largest remaining areas of intact contiguous forest in central New England. But today an unprecedented combination of factors—the globalization of the forest products industry, growing development pressure, and sharply rising land values—threaten the future of the region's unique landscape and way of life.

Harnessing the full resources and expertise of the region's public and private conservation organizations in a coordinated effort, the Collaborative seeks to conserve large forest blocks while they are still in relatively unfragmented ownerships, and secure links between new and existing conservation lands to form a continuous corridor of conservation and protected working forest land. In keeping with the region's traditions, the Collaborative supports conservation on a strictly willing-seller basis through a combination of conservation easements and fee acquisitions, managed by private owners, conservation organizations and public agencies. The three projects

that are the subject of this testimony are all high priorities for the Quabbin to Cardigan Collaborative.

ROBB RESERVOIR/WILLARD POND, 1,667 ACRES, NEW HAMPSHIRE

The Quabbin to Cardigan Collaborative supports a $3,000,000 appropriation from the Forest Legacy Program to the Robb Reservoir/Willard Pond project in New Hampshire. The project would protect a 1,667-acre tract in Cheshire County, one of the few areas in southern New Hampshire where large unfragmented blocks of forestland can still be found. Protection of the property will link together the 1,466-acre Willard Pond New Hampshire Audubon Wildlife Sanctuary with two other private easements. Altogether these conservation efforts will link a block of over 40,000 acres of permanently protected forestland in a densely populated area of the state.

Under the terms of a conservation easement, the project area would continue to provide public access for hunting, hiking, nature viewing, cross-country skiing, and snowshoeing, as well as fishing for warm and cold water species in the North Branch River and Robb Reservoir. A network of established recreation trails will connect this property to an adjacent trail network at the Audubon wildlife sanctuary. Mountainous portions of the property offer unobstructed views of the reservoir and surrounding mountains, and provide excellent vantage points for wildlife viewing. The Robb Reservoir/Willard Pond property is home to diverse and interesting plant and animal species. Several state threatened and endangered species have been documented on the property including the bald eagle, pied-billed grebe, osprey, purple martin, and northern harrier.

New Hampshire has recognized Robb Reservoir/Willard Pond as its number one priority for the Forest Legacy Program this year, and $3 million has been included for the project in the President's fiscal year 2007 Budget. This year, a total appropriation of $3 million of Forest Legacy funding is needed to acquire and protect the 1,667-acre Willard Pond/Robb Reservoir property.

SOUTHERN MONADNOCK PLATEAU PROJECT, 2,270 ACRES, MASSACHUSETTS

The Quabbin to Cardigan Collaborative also supports a $2,500,000 appropriation from the Forest Legacy Program to the Southern Monadnock Plateau project in Massachusetts. The project would permanently protect approximately 2,270 acres of forested land in the towns of Ashburnham and Westminster. The Southern Monadnock Plateau Project seeks to weave a viable network of permanently protected forested landscapes linking more than 15,000 acres of currently protected land held by the state, local governments and land trusts in both Massachusetts and New Hampshire. The MA Natural Heritage and Endangered Species program has identified 1,595 acres of the project as containing significant wildlife habitat and the project includes lands containing three state-listed rare species: the Sand Violet, Ebony Boghaunter and Subarctic Darner dragonfly.

The entire Southern Monadnock Plateau project falls within the designated region of the Quabbin to Cardigan Collaborative. In addition, the Q2C Collaborative has identified the Midstate/Wapack Trail corridor as a special focus area for conservation efforts with over 800 acres of the land proposed for protection in this project are within this focus area. Complementary strategic efforts underway in NH to protect large contiguous blocks of forest land along the Wapack Trail. Currently only approximately 50 percent of the overall Midstate Trail corridor is protected (only 30 percent in Westminster), and like the forestland is threatened by fragmentation due to increasing development pressures. This project protects over three miles of Midstate Trail, ensuring continued public access along this popular 92-mile, historic trail. Safeguards the public's right to use the trail by securing formal easements across project lands.

TEMPLE MOUNTAIN, 352 ACRES, NEW HAMPSHIRE

The Quabbin to Cardigan Collaborative supports a $1,000,000 appropriation from the Federal Land and Water Conservation Fund to the Temple Mountain project in New Hampshire. Monadnock Conservancy, in partnership with the New Hampshire Department of Resources and Economic Development, is seeking the appropriation for the protection of a 352-acre property on Temple Mountain in the towns of Temple, Sharon, and Peterborough.

Temple Mountain is one of the most visible and beloved landmarks in southern New Hampshire. The subject property includes a prominent ridgeline, seven distinct natural communities, a spectacular section of the 21-mile Wapack Trail, a cross-country ski trail network, and remote wildlife-rich wetlands. The land abuts existing conservation areas, including Miller State Park on Pack Monadnock. The Conservancy and the state are working to establish a new state park at the site of the

former Temple Mountain Ski Area. The state park proposal enjoys the public support of local, state, and federal officials. If successful, the Temple Mountain acquisition would be the first new state park in southern New Hampshire in more than 25 years, and is the NH Department of Resources and Economic Development's highest priority for acquisition anywhere in the state.

The mountain's owners are currently offering the property to the state for $1,000,000, which is below appraised value. They are very supportive of conservation, but cannot afford to hold the land for much longer. It is important that the acquisition be completed no later than June 2007.

Thank you Mr. Chairman, for the opportunity to present this testimony in support of this request.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE ARKANSAS RIVER BASIN INTERSTATE COMMITTEE

Mr. Chairman and members of this distinguished Committee, my name is Lew Meibergen. I am Chairman of the Board of Johnston Enterprises headquartered in Enid, Oklahoma. It is my honor to serve as Chairman of the Arkansas River Basin Interstate Committee, members of which are appointed by the governors of the great states of Arkansas, Colorado, Kansas, Missouri, and Oklahoma.

In these times of war on terrorism, homeland defense and needed economic recovery, our thanks go to each of you, your staff members and the Congress. Your efforts to protect our nation's infrastructure and stimulate economic growth in a time of budget constraints are both needed and appreciated.

Our nation's growing dependence on others for energy, and the need to protect and improve our environment, make your efforts especially important. Greater use and development of one of our nation's most important transportation modes—our navigable inland waterways—will help remedy these problems. At the same time, these fuel-efficient and cost-effective waterways keep us competitive in international markets. In this regard, we must maintain our inland waterway transportation system. We ask that the Congress restore adequate funding to the Corps of Engineers budget—$6.7 billion in fiscal year 2007—to keep the nations navigation system from further deterioration. If this catastrophic problem is not addressed immediately, we are in real danger of losing the use of this most important transportation mode.

As Chairman of the Interstate Committee, I present this summary testimony as a compilation of the most important projects from each of the member states. Each of the states unanimously supports these projects without reservation. I request that the copies of each state's individual statement be made a part of the record, along with this testimony.

EQUUS BEDS AQUIFER—KANSAS

Equus Beds Aquifer Storage and Recovery Project.—Continuation of a City of Wichita, Groundwater Management District No. 2 and State of Kansas project to construct storage and recovery facilities for a major groundwater resource supplying water to more than 20 percent of Kansas municipal, industrial and irrigation users. The project will capture and recharge in excess of 100 million gallons per day and will also reduce on-going degradation of the existing groundwater by minimizing migration of saline water. Federal authorization of the project through House Bill 1327 introduce last year or through similar legislation this year. Construction Phase One is scheduled for completion in 2007. Continued federal funding is requested for fiscal year 2007 consistent with this legislation which will authorize funding for 25 percent of the project cost up to a maximum of $30 million during the construction phases.

ARKANSAS RIVER NAVIGATION IMPROVEMENTS

Mr. Chairman, Public Law 108–137 authorized a 12-foot channel on the McClellan-Kerr Arkansas River Navigation System.—The Corps is now obligated to operate and maintain the system as a 12-foot channel. Over 90 percent of the system currently is adequate for a 12-foot channel. Deepening the remainder of the channel to 12 feet will allow carriers to place 43 percent more cargo on each barge, which will reduce the amount of fuel consumed and emissions released. Other environmental benefits include the creation of new aquatic habitat through new dike construction and the construction of least tern islands through beneficial use of dredged material.

Therefore, we request $40 million to construct dike structures to scour out the channel, and dredge necessary areas for improving the depth of the channel. This investment will increase the cost competitiveness of this low cost, environment-

friendly transportation mode and help us combat the loss of industry and jobs to overseas.

TOW HAULAGE EQUIPMENT—OKLAHOMA

We request funding of $5.0 million to initiate the installation of tow haulage equipment on the locks located along the Arkansas River portion of the McClellan-Kerr Arkansas River Navigation System. Total cost for these three locks is $5 million. This project will involve installation of tow haulage equipment on W.D. Mayo Lock and Dam #14, Robert S. Kerr Lock and Dam #15, and Webbers Falls Lock and Dam #16, on the Oklahoma portion of the waterway. The tow haulage equipment is needed to make transportation of barges more efficient and economical by allowing less time for tows to pass through the various locks.

The testimony we present reveals our firm belief that our inland waterways and the Corps of Engineers' efforts are especially important to our nation in this time of trial. Transportation infrastructure like the inland waterways need to be operated and maintained for the benefit of the populace. Without adequate annual budgets, this is impossible.

Mr. Chairman, Members of this Committee, we respectfully request that you and members of your staff review and respond in a positive way to the attached individual statements from each of our states which set forth specific requests pertaining to those states.

We sincerely appreciate your consideration and assistance.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE ROCKY MOUNTAIN ELK FOUNDATION

Mr. Chairman and Honorable Members of the Subcommittee: Thank you for the opportunity to present testimony in support of an appropriation of $2.5 million from the Land and Water Conservation Fund for acquisition projects in the Chequamegon National Forest in Wisconsin.

The northern hardwood forests of Wisconsin are a considerable natural treasure in our state. The "Northwoods" is a place where the forests are interspersed with an abundance of lakes, rivers, and streams providing residents and visitors outstanding recreational opportunities. The beauty of the area has historically lured many of our national leaders here include President Eisenhower who loved to fish muskies in the pristine waters of Wisconsin, and President Kennedy found the area so rich in beauty and natural resources that he protected a portion of it as the Apostle Islands National Lakeshore. The Northwoods provides tens of thousands of acres of prime habitat for a variety of fish and wildlife, include a growing wild elk herd that was reintroduce to this area in 1995.

The Forest Service has recognized the unique attributes of the northern forests in Wisconsin and has undertaken a land protection program focused on undeveloped properties along lakes and rivers and the consolidation of publicly owned lands for the benefit of recreation and natural resources. The Wild Wisconsin Waterways program has been supported by annual congressional funding from the Land and Water Conservation Fund. This year two properties are available for acquisition.

The 1,150-acre Venison Creek property in Sawyer County is located along a tributary of the West Fork of the Chippewa River. Critical to the consolidation of the national forest and the expansion of recreational opportunities, this inholding is surrounded on three sides by the Chequamegon. The forests and riparian areas of the property support habitat for bald eagles and a known pack of gray wolves, in addition to the reintroduced elk herd that lives in the area.

The 240-acre Indian Farms property in Taylor County is located on the North Fork of the Yellow River. This inholding is completely surrounded by the national forest and holds many cultural and historic resources. Two Native American settlements and a related cemetery are located on the property.

The Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation supports these two acquisitions. The Venison Creek tract is particularly important as it falls within the dispersal area of the wild elk herd. I am very proud to say that the Elk Foundation is involved with the purchase of this property and is working with other organizations to permanently conserve and secure Venison Creek for future generations.

Due to increased development and conversion of land from forest uses in northern Wisconsin, these two properties and their important natural, cultural, and recreational resources are highly threatened. An appropriation of $2.5 million will protect these properties in the Chequamegon National Forest and ensure the continued success of the Wild Wisconsin Waterways program.

I thank you, Mr. Chairman, for your consideration of this testimony in support of Venison Creek and Indian Farms projects.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE RAMAH NAVAJO CHAPTER, RAMAH BAND OF NAVAJOS

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee: As the Vice-President of the Ramah Navajo Chapter, Ramah Band of Navajos, I am pleased to present this testimony on the Department of the Interior-Bureau of Indian Affairs Budget and the Indian Reservation Roads (IRR) budget for fiscal year 2007. My testimony today focuses on providing additional funding for the following:

1. To improve and meet jail standards for our Law Enforcement Detention facility for the amount of $500,000.00 (BIA)
2. Funding request under the Indian Reservation Roads Program and Public Lands Discretionary Fund (IRRHPP) for road construction/improvements for BIA Routes RN 122 and RN 125 for $12 million (IRR Funding).
3. Windmill Repair & Maintenance funding request for $90,000.00 to abate urgent water safety and supply issues for our people and our livestock (BIA)
4. Civic Center Building for the amount of $1,808,000.00 (BIA)

LAW ENFORCEMENT DETENTION FACILITIES

The current detention facility was constructed in 1972 as a temporary, 48—hour holding facility. Long-term inmates were to be transported to Navajo Nation jails in Window Rock, AZ and Crownpoint, NM. However, due to court decree issued against the Navajo Nation jail system, inmates from our facility are no longer accepted. This is a serious problem for the Ramah Navajo Police Department, which is forced to use a short term holding facility for long-term inmates, which has created severe overcrowding conditions.

According to the BIA Standards for Adult Detention Facilities, our detention was designed to hold six male inmates and four female inmates. However, the average daily population increased from 7.5 in 1997 to 9.2 in 2005. With these conditions, there are no secure cells for segregation or detoxification, nor are there separate rooms for visitations and recreation. Furthermore, supervision of inmates is a constant problem. The other problem with our current facility is structural deterioration. During recent inspections by the Indian Health Service's, Environmental Health Department, several structural deficiencies were noted. This includes cracks in the walls indicating that the foundation is settling and that the facility does not meet handicapped accessibility standards. With these overcrowding and security issues, and the fact that the facility does not meet modern jail standards, the Ramah Navajo Police Department, the Ramah Navajo Chapter and the Navajo Nation are extremely vulnerable to liability and litigation.

To compound the problem, the Director of BIA Law Enforcement Services recently issued a directive to tribal jails limiting the number of inmates to its current capacity. Should a tribal facility continue to hold inmates above the established capacity, the facility's funding from the BIA would be withdrawn. Since our detention facility receives funds from the BIA for operations, we had to adhere to this directive thus, further limiting the number of inmates we can hold. By our compliance, it is also placed a limitation on our District Court Judge on sentencing. This creates a concern when a person facing a mandatory jail sentence cannot serve a jail term such as a multiple DUI offender.

In an attempt to address the need for a new jail facility, the Ramah Navajo Community has committed ten acres of land for the construction of a new facility. Since then, the Chapter officials have presented proposals for construction of new facility to the State of New Mexico, Cibola County, Department of Justice and Congress. Funding for a new facility was estimated at $5 million. To this date, none of these proposals have received funding.

Without the realization of funds to construct a new facility, the Chapter has initiated plans to add on and renovate the existing structure. Included in this effort is to purchase a separate office facility. By moving office space out, the current office space would be used to add additional holding cells.

The Chapter has estimated the total cost of additions and renovations at $500,000.00. The following is a budget of this amount:

	Amount
Modular Office Building	$100,000
Modular Cell Unit	300,000
Renovations to existing facility	100,000
Total Amount Requested	500,000

INDIAN RESERVATION ROADS FUNDING

The Ramah Navajo Chapter receives approximately $1.1 million per year for road construction, and to complete the two roads BIA RN–125 and RN–122, it will require approximately twenty years to complete under the current Indian Reservation Roads (IRR) program. The previous transportation authorization has authorized million of dollars for Public Land Discretionary Projects. The two roads mentioned are projects vital to the Ramah Navajo Chapter because they will dramatically improve school bus routes that are in grave disrepair on the reservation. They will also serve New Mexico's overall transportation infrastructure by providing improved access to Interstate Route 40, which is important, both for the traveling public and for the Chapter's homeland security needs. RN 125 is a north-south paved road traversing the entire length of the community. In addition it serves as a major connector for two New Mexico state roads, State Road 53 and 602. If RN 125 is completed, it will provide additional access for the traveling public and address the need for additional access to I–40 in case of emergency.

RN 122 is a school bus route that loops off of RN 125 on the north and reconnects on the south to RN 125. Because RN 122 is unimproved, the cost of transporting students to and from school each day on this road is ever-increasing due to mounting fuel cost and vehicle maintenance. The school must either reduce the amount of transportation—-which isn't a realistic option—-vehicle maintenance and repair or divert money from other school programs to pay for the increase. This funding will enable us to both transport our students to school, and to keep education funds where they belong: in the classroom.

The Chapter has estimated the total cost for RN 122 & RN 125 in the following budget:

	Amount
RN 122	$5,000,000
RN 125	7,000,000
Total Amount Requested	12,000,000

WINDMILL REPAIR AND MAINTENANCE

The Ramah Navajo community has a traditional pastoral economy. It has been the mainstay of the people and at present, one third of all community producer income is still derived from livestock production and a few dry—land farms. This winter and previous winters have been particularly dry, and there is no evidence that the summer will be much different. We know we are facing yet another drought situation, which will severely affect the community livestock and subsequently, livestock producer income.

Approximately 60 percent of the Ramah Navajo community members who have no running water and live far from domestic water systems. The members are using water from windmills for domestic use, including drinking water. These sources of water are not potable and do not meet any health standards, thus endangering the well—-being of community members. The second is supplying water to livestock through use of well and windmills. The community cannot depend on water collection in a series of earth stock tanks and diversions in a drought situation. The third is providing feed for livestock. The community cannot depend on rangeland, which is adversely affected by the drought.

We are experiencing severe water shortages in the outlying areas of our reservation due to the ill state of repair of our windmill-driven water wells. The BIA originally installed these wells as far back as twenty and thirty years ago and have failed to maintain them, thus leading to current water shortage. There are no funds available from the BIA, the Chapter or the Navajo Nation to initiate the repairs needed to keep our outlying wells in proper operation or to repair and/or upgrade wells that are no longer producing efficiently or at all. Repairs and upgrades includes structural repairs, replacement of pumps as needed, upgrading or out-changing power source and pump systems, repairs and segregation to stock troughs and spigots to prevent wastage and cross-contamination of potable water, and installation of special isolation conditions adapted filtered tanks for potable water.

The Chapter has estimated the following total cost of windmill operations and maintenance:

	Amount
Windmill Repair & replacement	$50,000

	Amount
Domestic Water Development	30,000
Livestock Feed Assistance	20,000
Total Amount Requested	100,000

CIVIC CENTER BUILDING

The Ramah Navajo Chapter House was constructed in the 1950's of low-grade materials that are beginning to show their age. The cement slab floor is cracking and settling; the cinderblock walls have no insulation; the windows (though more recently replaced) are drafty allowing dust, snow, and cold wind to enter the building; weathering and staining are apparent; the restrooms' plumbing is nearly shot and need of constant repair; and there is little sunlight or structural aesthetics. Though a central government building should be a pride for any community, our Chapter House building is in dire state of repair, even though we conduct regular maintenance and upkeep.

The Chapter government administration is scattered about the Chapter complex in portable dilapidated and condemned trailers and mobile homes that has been cited by the Environmental Health Service with the IHS. One of these is a fairly new metal building but the rest are older converted mobile homes. The one housing the offices of the Chapter President and other elected officials is in deplorable condition.

The proposed facility would include a Civic Center Building for the Community Government and Administration Facility with a Wellness Center in the basement. The Administrative Facility will provide accommodation for public community meetings. The Wellness Center will accommodate community members to have better health through regular aerobic and other therapeutic exercise programs, especially for a community with very high diabetes rates that threatens the lives of our members.

The Chapter estimated the total cost of the Civic Center Building in the following budget:

	Amount
Architectural and engineering fees	$108,000
Construction	1,700,000
Total Amount Requested	1,808,000

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE RAMAH NAVAJO SCHOOL BOARD, INC.

Mr. Chairperson and Members of the Subcommittee: My name is Nancy Martine-Alonzo, and I am the President of the Board of Trustees of the Ramah Navajo School Board, Inc. (RNSB), which governs the BIA-funded Pine Hill School on the Ramah Navajo Reservation in Pine Hill, New Mexico. RNSB administers its federal programs under the auspices of the Navajo Nation through contracts under the "Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act" of 1975, as amended (Public Law 93–638). My testimony is on the need for Congress to adequately fund BIA schools so they will have a fair opportunity to meet the mandates of the "No Child Left Behind Act."

BIA EDUCATION REORGANIZATION PLAN

The Ramah Navajo School Board (RNSB) requests that Congress direct the BIA, through language in the fiscal year 2007 BIA/OIEP budget, to transfer the RNSB/Pine Hill School to the Ramah Navajo Agency, or, in the alternative, to transfer the RNSB/Pine Hill School to "SPA/ELO New Mexico South," under the "BIA/OIEP Reorganization Plan,"

In 2005, the BIA proposed a Reorganization Plan for the Office of Indian Education Programs whereby OIEP offices and their assigned schools would be reorganized on a national level; held consultation hearings with tribal leaders; finalized its Plan; and is now proposing to implement this Plan. Under the proposed Plan, the RNSB/Pine Hill School is scheduled to be moved to "Navajo Nation South (Grants NM)," along with Alamo Navajo and Tohajiilee Navajo schools. We object to this transfer of the Pine Hill School to "Navajo Nation South" for several reasons.

First, the proposed move is being done despite objections raised by the RNSB School Board President during the BIA's consultation hearings. Second, there is no apparent reason for this move other than that Pine Hill is a Navajo community school. Third, this move is contrary to local control in Indian education in that the expressed wishes of the community are being ignored, once again, by the BIA. Fourth, since its founding in 1970, the Ramah Navajo School Board, Inc., has established a successful relationship with the BIA's Southern Pueblo Agency (SPA), as witnessed by: (a) The growth of the Pine Hill School to a K–12 school with nearly 500 students; (b) the addition of the four preschool programs of Head Start, FACE, Early Intervention and the Child Care Center; (c) the building of the School Farm and its Fair & Rodeo Grounds; (d) the establishment of the KTDB Radio Station, greatly needed in this rural community; and many other programs for the support of the school and community, such as the health clinic, social services, behavioral health, college scholarships, adult education, and other services. Therefore, the Ramah Navajo School Board respectfully requests that Congress direct the BIA to transfer the RNSB/Pine Hill School to the Ramah Navajo Agency or, in the alternative, to the "SPA/ELO New Mexico South" under its Reorganization Plan.

RAMAH NAVAJO RESERVATION SCHOOL BUILDING

The Ramah Navajo School Board requests that Congress authorize $5 million for the construction of an "Education Multipurpose Building" for the Pine Hill School on the Ramah Navajo Reservation at Pine Hill, New Mexico.

The K–12 Pine Hill School is a BIA-funded Grant School that opened in 1975 and serves nearly 500 Ramah Navajo students in its K–12 programs. Since the completion of all the school's buildings in 1980, there has been no new construction, meaning that all six major school buildings are at least 25 years old and are now in constant need of repair and renovation.

A new multipurpose school building is needed for the following reasons: First, over the past 25 years, school enrollment has greatly increased, which requires us to add more classroom space to meet federal and state classroom size requirements. Second, new programs and services are continuously being added to the school's services, especially services that we were required or recommended to add in order to help us meet standards set under the "No Child Left Behind Act." Third, the new "Pine Hill School Dormitory" that will open for the 2006–07 School Year will further impact school facilities since the new dorm will bring 100 students residing within two blocks from the school, instead of 25 miles away in the village of Ramah. These students will be using the school buildings during evenings and weekends as well. Therefore, a new educational multipurpose building will provide the additional space and functional rooms needed by the school's students, staff and parents. The proposed building will include a gymnasium and athletic training room; a computer tech room to enable us to link all students, teachers, staff, parents and programs electronically, and to keep up with advances in computer technology; administration offices; meeting and conference rooms with audio visual conferencing; classrooms for distance learning access; a school nurse's office; a dining area; and the usual support rooms. Our preliminary estimate is for a building of 24,000 square feet for $5 million.

BIA SCHOOL OPERATIONS SUPPORT

The Ramah Navajo School Board, Inc., requests that Congress increase SEP funding by $7 million in the fiscal year 2007 budget for a total of $360 million, which would be at the fiscal year 2006 ISEP funding level. This will raise the WSU level to $4,131, $80 more than the fiscal year 2006 level.

The Indian School Equalization Program (ISEP) has not received any meaningful increases since fiscal year 2002, when Congress increased ISEP by $14 million, which resulted in a WSU of $3,916 per student. In fiscal year 2004, ISEP received $349 million for a WSU of $3,966; in fiscal year 2005, ISEP was $348 million for a WSU of $3.985; in fiscal year 2006, ISEP was $353.5 million for a WSU of $3,974. The proposed budget for all School Operations is cut $9 million, from $529.6 million to $518.1 million. It is unlikely that the fiscal year 2007 WSU will be increased, but will most likely remain at the fiscal year 2006 level of around $4,000. While we support the intent of the "No Child Left Behind Act," the cost of meeting the law's mandates has made it difficult financially to reach the standards for BIA schools. Needs that have built over the past 40 years continue to plague BIA schools, such as transportation, facilities, technology, teacher recruitment and retention, curricula, standards, assessments, parent involvement, fuel cost, and so on. Yet, these are all necessary components of education vitally important for American

Indian students in BIA schools, who now may be even more "left behind" before the Act because of inadequate funding.

It is becoming ever more difficult for BIA schools to recruit and retain qualified teachers since we cannot compete with New Mexico's public school districts, which are paying teachers an entry level salary of $31,000, plus sign-on bonuses as high as $14,000. And it will become even harder when New Mexico's proposed three-tiered licensure classification system is fully implemented, for then a teacher's salary schedule will start around $32,000 for Tier I, $45,000 for Tier II, and $50,000 for Tier III. BIA schools near public school districts will encounter drastic teacher shortages when their teachers start to migrate to public schools with these higher salaries. BIA schools have to budget, on the average, about 80 percent of their total school operation cost for personnel. What is left has to cover the rest of school operations: staff development, school supplies, curricula development, text books, technology, consultants, and extracurricular activities.

ADMINISTRATIVE COST GRANTS

The Ramah Navajo School Board requests that Congress fund administrative cost grants at 100 percent, or $63.5 million for the fiscal year 2007 budget, and provide separate start-up funding for BIA-operated schools converting to new "grant" and "contract" school status.

Administrative Cost Grants (ACG) should enable tribes to exercise their self-determination rights guaranteed by Congress under the "Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act of 1975." (An Act which, by the way, was largely based on the initiative and successful grassroots movement in the Ramah Navajo community in the late 1960s and early 1970s to establish its own local community-controlled school.) Yet, Congress has only once approved Administrative Cost Grants at 100 percent for Grant and Contract schools. Consequently, the Self-Determination Act can never be fully realized until Congress funds the program at the 100 percent level. Until this happens, tribes will have to continue to administer their school programs with less support for their schools due to fiscal constraints.

Administrative Cost Grants funding has gone from 74 percent to 71 percent this year. The amount for fiscal year 2004 was $44.6 million; for fiscal year 2005, $44.7 million; for fiscal year 2006, $44.5 million: and proposed for fiscal year 2007, $44.06 million. Thus, Administrative Cost Grant funding has decreased $596,000 in four years. During that time, four schools became Grant-operated schools and a special congressional set-a-side was authorized for their start up costs. However, additional set-a-sides were not reauthorized. Administrative Cost Grants are funded at only a 71 percent, thus creating less ACG grant amounts for schools that have been in the system. If more schools become Grant Schools (Public Law 100–297) without any increase in Administrative Cost Grants, the negative impacts becomes greater for existing Contract and Grant schools in the BIA system.

The negative impact created by the shortfalls is not myth, but reality. Many BIA-funded school boards had to make tough decisions in reductions-in-force, terminating well-trained staff members and consolidating required programs. Some BIA schools have even switched to ten-month operations, which imposes more problems since there is no time for year-end administrative close-out work and preparation for the up-coming school year, not to mention the work required for the annual audit. Therefore, the Ramah Navajo School Board requests that Congress honor Public Law 93–638 and Public Law 100–297, which provide that American Indian and Alaskan Native entities have the right to operate their own education programs with adequate funding through Administrative Cost Grants, and that Congress must realize that without adequate funding, BIA schools cannot be expected to succeed or meet the mandates under the "No Child Left Behind Act."

STUDENT TRANSPORTATION

The Ramah Navajo School Board requests that Congress fund the BIA Student Transportation Program to match the national level of $3.67 per mile.

For the last 25 years, Indian tribes have requested an increase for student transportation funding. The failure of Congress to do so can only be attributed to a failure to fully understand the rural settings and road conditions on most Indian reservations. Every day, many BIA schools run their buses as many as 140 miles criss-crossing between paved and unpaved roads, good and terrible roads, dry and then knee deep in mud roads for 180 days a year. Bus transmission and drive line repairs are constant problems and the cost associated with school transportation repairs and the high cost of gasoline and diesel fuel absorbs most of the student transportation funds before the year is over. Consequently, schools have no choice but to dip into their limited ISEP funds to pay for transportation cost since students must be

transported to the school before any education can begin. This then increases the financial burden on the total school operation costs. Some school buses have approached or exceeded 120,000 miles. It used to be that GSA would provide new buses after 60,000 miles, but that has not happened for the past 10 years.

Since the 2002–03 School Year, BIA-funded schools have received less than $2.20 per mile: $2.17 per mile in 2002–03; $2.13 per mile in 2003–04; and $2.15 per mile in 2004–05. Even with the increased funding in fiscal year 2006, the mileage support will not increase since the total miles increases every year, and it is likely that the per mile rate will stay under $2.20 per mile. We do not foresee Congress providing an increase that would enable BIA-funded schools to receive transportation support on par with public schools. A level of about $2.20 per mile is anticipated for fiscal year 2006, but even this falls far below the nationwide average of $3.21 that was reported for public schools in 2002. In addition to that amount, public schools also receive separate additional funding for fuel and maintenance, whereas the funds for BIA-funded schools for transportation covers all expenses associated with school transportation.

On behalf of the Board of Trustees for the Ramah Navajo School Board, Inc., I would like to express our appreciation for your support for Indian education programs. I hope that our testimony will help you better understand the situation of American Indian schools at the grassroots level throughout the country.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE RIVERS & TRAILS COALITION

Mr. Chairman and members of the Subcommittee, the Rivers & Trails Coalition, composed of local, regional, statewide, and national organizations representing hundreds of thousands of Americans nationwide committed to conservation and recreation, respectfully asks that you fund the National Park Service Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance (RTCA) program at $10.1 million in fiscal year 2007.

Through its Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance program, the National Park Service (NPS) implements its natural resource conservation and outdoor recreation mission in communities across America. The Rivers & Trails Coalition formed many years ago to support this valuable field-based technical assistance program that yields enormous conservation and recreation benefits to communities by fostering partnerships between federal, state, and local interests. The resulting cooperation of local, state, and federal partners restores rivers and wildlife habitat, develops trails and greenway networks, preserves open space, and revitalizes communities—all contributing to improved quality of life and close-to-home recreation.

RTCA is a very successful and popular program, coordinating nearly 300 projects annually. On average, the program partners protect nearly 700 miles of rivers, create more than 1,300 miles of trails, and conserve more than 61,000 acres of open space each year. RTCA staff provide on-the-ground assistance solely at the request and invitation of communities in coordinating projects, facilitating public meetings, serving as a liaison and convener of government and non-profit groups, assessing and mapping resources, developing promotional materials and events, and identifying sources of funding. Current demand for RTCA services greatly exceeds the program's capacity.

In addition to regional trail systems and greenway development, and open space and river corridor protection, projects include transportation alternatives, brownfield redevelopment, youth conservation projects, and floodplain planning, among numerous other conservation and recreation initiatives. RTCA plays a critical role in creating a nationwide, seamless network of parks and open spaces, supporting conservation partnerships, promoting volunteerism, and encouraging physical activity. The Administration's HealthierUS Initiative explicitly highlights RTCA for its efforts in promoting physical activity through the development of local trails, greenways, and parks.

Despite RTCA's demonstrable successes each year, RTCA funding has remained relatively stagnant during the last decade and has lagged well behind the rate of inflation. The program's funding was decreased by $200,000 in fiscal year 2006, resulting in significant cuts to staff and reduced staff participation in on-the-ground projects, diminishing essential services of this field-based program. RTCA currently has approximately 75 program staff, compared to about 90 staff in 2002.

RTCA receives .003 of the NPS budget, less than a third of 1 percent of the total funding for the National Park Service, yet succeeds in leveraging the federal investment many times over by building partnerships, and securing local and state funding for projects. The RTCA program multiplies the original federal investment in both direct funding and in-kind matches from local and state sources. Each year, the modest amount of National Park Service funding spent for staff time has helped

leverage millions of dollars from other sources for its projects. Highly effective and cost efficient, the RTCA program is an excellent value for the American taxpayer and merits increased funding to accomplish its mission as a community-based NPS technical assistance and outreach program.

The President's budget proposal for fiscal year 2007 calls for a reduction of $500,000 to the RTCA program. The Rivers & Trails Coalition strongly opposes the President's proposed program budget cut of $500,000 and respectfully requests that Congress restore funding to this program and increase the program budget by $2 million to meet the real needs that this program serves.

The President's proposed budget cut of $500,000 would reduce overall funding for the program to $7.7 million. If the Administration-proposed fiscal year 2007 funding level were to be enacted, it would result in severe cuts to this valuable program and put many of the projects presently underway at risk. It would result in a further loss of staff and likely closure of field offices. RTCA is not a program that should be cut by any amount and it actually requires a $2 million increase to redress its declining real budget and enable the program to continue and expand upon its successes throughout the country. In 2004, the Senate approved a funding increase of $1.5 million, but the entire amount was never approved by the Congress.

We see evidence in communities across America of the tremendous value of RTCA-assisted projects and partnerships, and we can report the unparalleled success of RTCA in bringing greenways, blueways, and creative conservation partnerships to fruition. The requested funding level by the Coalition would allow this extremely beneficial program to continue current projects without interruption, restore recent cuts, put staff closer to the people they serve, and meet the outstanding requests from communities around the nation. We strongly believe the National Park Service and Congress should strengthen programs such as RTCA that support communities through partnerships and capacity-building, enabling local stakeholders to better manage and conserve their recreational and natural resources from the bottom-up.

We urge you to fund the Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance program at $10.1 million in the fiscal year 2007 Interior Appropriations bill to remedy the program's continued erosion, compensate for losses due to inflation, and enable the program to respond to growing needs and opportunities in communities throughout the country. Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully submitted by the Rivers & Trails Coalition, comprised of the following organizations: The Accokeek Foundation; American Canoe Association; American Hiking Society; American Outdoors; American Rivers; American Society of Landscape Architects; American Trails; American Volkssport Association; American Whitewater; Appalachian Mountain Club; Association of State Floodplain Managers; Bicycle Federation of America; Bikes Belong Coalition; Conservation District of Southern Nevada; East Coast Greenway Alliance; International Mountain Bicycling Association; Jacksonville Woodlands Association; Land Legacy; Land Trust Alliance; League of American Bicyclists; National Association of Service & Conservation Corps; National Audubon Society; National Parks Conservation Association; National Recreation and Park Association; New York-New Jersey Trail Conference; New York Parks and Conservation Association; North American Water Trails; Northern Forest Canoe Trail; Ohio & Erie Canal Corridor Coalition; Outdoor Industry Association; Outside Las Vegas Foundation; Parks & Trails New York; Partnership for the National Trails System; Pennsylvania Organization for Watersheds and Rivers; Rails to Trails Conservancy; River Network; Scenic America; South Carolina Dept. of Parks, Recreation, and Tourism; Sporting Goods Manufacturers Association; Student Conservation Association; Trout Unlimited; Walk Boston; Washington Area Bicyclist Association; Washington Trails Association; and Washington Water Trails Association.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE SOCIETY OF AMERICAN FORESTERS, THE NATURE CONSERVANCY, AND THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF STATE DEPARTMENTS OF AGRICULTURE

The Society of American Foresters, The Nature Conservancy and the National Association of State Departments of Agriculture urge the Subcommittee on Interior and Related Agencies to appropriate $130 million for the USDA Forest Service Forest Health Management Program. We also applaud your leadership in past years in securing funding for this vital program at levels significantly above the Administration's request.

Our proposed figure would provide a slight increase over the program's current funding level. As a result, the Forest Service could continue programs vital to pro-

tecting America's forests from highly damaging introduced insects and diseases, including such threats as the Asian long-horned beetle, emerald ash borer, sudden oak death, the hemlock woolly adelgid, and gypsy moth. The Forest Health Management program also counters other introduced insects that have attracted less attention, but that still damage America's forests. These include a pathogen killing redbay and sassafras trees in coastal Georgia and South Carolina; and several insects and pathogens on the islands of Hawai'i and Guam.

Such a funding level will also enable the USFS to continue vital support for the pest eradication and containment programs carried out by the USDA Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service. Forest Service expertise in the pests' biology and detection and management methodology is crucial to the success of these programs. Failure to complete eradication of the Asian long-horned beetle will expose to destruction hardwood forests reaching from New England into Minnesota and smaller areas of the West. Particularly threatened are the hardwood timber, maple syrup, and autumn foliage tourism industries of the Northeast, and street trees across the Nation valued at $600 billion.

The threat posed by the emerald ash borer is particularly critical. If it spreads from Michigan, Ohio, and Indiana to the rest of the country, it could cause undiscounted losses of city trees worth $20 to $60 billion. Losses to the timber industry would be $25 billion in Eastern states. It is vitally important that the Forest Service effort targeting this insect not be reduced.

The Forest Service has the lead responsibility for detecting and combating any outbreaks of sudden oak death in the hardwood forests of the East. While these detection efforts can be scaled back to some extent after several years of intense surveys, they must not be halted completely as the risk of this pathogen being spread by infected nursery plants has not been eliminated. Furthermore, greater vigilance is needed to prevent introductions from Europe or elsewhere of other pathogens threatening to cause similar levels of damage.

Finally, the Forest Service needs adequate funding to expand its Early Detection project. This program has been responsible for detecting more than a dozen introduced insects, including two which threaten the economically important pine forests of the Southeast: the Mediterranean pine beetle and Sirex wood wasp. Steady or increasing funding is necessary to expand this program to cover all states and to develop and deploy methodologies to detect the highly damaging wood-boring beetles.

The agency bearing the principal responsibility for eradicating newly introduced forest pests is not the USDA Forest Service, but rather the USDA Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS). USDA APHIS falls outside your jurisdiction. However, the Subcommittee cannot achieve its goal of protecting the Nation's forests' health as long as funding shortfalls undermine USDA APHIS eradication programs. The Society of American Foresters, The Nature Conservancy and the National Association of State Departments of Agriculture encourage the Subcommittee to work with the Agriculture appropriations subcommittee to find ways to increase funding for forest pest line items in the USDA APHIS Emerging Plant Pest account.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF FISH AND WILDLIFE AGENCIES

On behalf of our America's fish and wildlife agencies, I urge the Subcommittee on Interior and Related Agencies to support funding in the amount of $85 million for the State Wildlife Grants Program in the fiscal year 2007 Interior and Related Agencies Appropriations Act.

The State Wildlife Grants Program is our nation's core program for keeping wildlife from becoming endangered. State fish and wildlife agencies enjoy a strong partnership with the federal government in managing our nation's wildlife resources. Working together, we are able to ensure robust fish and wildlife populations and keep species from declining to the point of becoming endangered. State Wildlife Grants is an integral element of this partnership, providing the federal government's share of support for proactive on-the-ground conservation projects aimed at declining fish and wildlife species and their habitats. State Wildlife Grants is not just a grants program. It truly is a core program of the Department of Interior for advancing a pressing national need.

The President's budget includes $74.7 million, an increase of $5 million above the fiscal year 2006 enacted level of $68.5 million. We appreciate the Administration's continued support for this program as a core component of their collaborative conservation agenda.

Although the budget is tight, America's fish and wildlife agencies are recommending that Congress provide a funding level of at least $85 million in order to

restore this program back up to the highest level of funding it has ever received, in fiscal year 2002. Consistent funding is essential to the long-term success of this program, and the completion of wildlife action plans in every state and territory only underscores the need for adequate and reliable resources. A funding level of $85 million would send an important message about the Congress's commitment to following through on providing the support needed to implement the wildlife action plans. We are pleased that 170 Representatives have already formally signed on to this commitment in the form of a "dear colleague" and we hope you will match that strong demonstration of support.

We also urge your consideration of additional language to provide an incentive for states to cooperate on projects with other states as well as federal agencies when implementing the actions in their plans. Allowing implementation projects that include several states working together to implement actions identified in their comprehensive state wildlife strategies at a 75:25 match (vs. 50:50) will provide greater benefits to the nation. In addition, allowing federal funds to be used as a match for a particular State Wildlife Grants project will encourage greater cooperation between a federal entity within that state and the state wildlife agency in implementing the strategies/plans together. The strategies/plans have the potential to encourage everyone to work together resulting in a greater cumulative impact as well as avoiding costly duplication and unnecessary overlap.

The President's budget includes a proposal to set aside $5 million of the new funds recommended for State Wildlife Grants for a new program of competitive grants. While we appreciate the intent to reward effective conservation proposals, we believe that the time is not yet right for a new competitive program to be created within State Wildlife Grants. The creation of such a program should be predicated on the attainment of higher levels of funding. State Wildlife Grants has provided a tremendous enhancement to the capacity of every state to address wildlife conservation. While we cannot currently support the creation of a competitive funding program, we are committed to making any programs that are enacted by Congress a success. If Congress deems that this is an appropriate course of action, we will work together with the Fish and Wildlife Service to make it a success.

In closing, I again extend the appreciation of America's wildlife agencies for your continued support for the state-federal wildlife conservation partnership. We sincerely urge you to provide our requested level of $85 million for State Wildlife Grants.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE STODDARD CONSERVATION COMMISSION

Mr. Chairman and Honorable Members of the Committee: I appreciate the opportunity to present this testimony in support of an appropriation of $3 million from the Forest Legacy Program for the Robb Reservoir/Willard Pond tract in New Hampshire.

Stoddard is a small hilltop town perched on the high, rocky divide between the Connecticut and Merrimack River valleys. While its population is relatively small, Stoddard is the second largest town in Cheshire County, geographically. Stoddard has a long history of sustainable timber management due in large part to the vision and forward thinking of the Stoddard Lumber Company's founder Christopher Robb, who is also Robb Reservoir's namesake. Today the town of Stoddard's newly prepared Master Plan clearly underscores the importance of maintaining the quality of life and protecting the natural resource beauty of the town by protecting important blocks of unfragmented forestland, wildlife corridors, and wetlands, including the Robb Reservoir/Willard Pond tract. Because of this, the Stoddard Conservation Commission whole-heartedly supports this request for $3 million from the Forest Legacy Program to purchase and protect this "keystone" parcel of land.

New Hampshire's forests are the economic engine that drives tourism and the majority of manufacturing in the state. Private landowners and industries own eighty percent of the state's forestland. The New Hampshire Forest Legacy Program seeks to protect blocks of forestland of varying sizes and values that are threatened by conversion to nonforest uses, so that they may provide for the continuation of traditional forest uses. To date, more than 200,000 acres of forestland in New Hampshire have been protected through the Forest Legacy Program.

The Robb Reservoir/Willard Pond project is a 1,667-acre tract in Cheshire County, one of the few areas in southern New Hampshire where large unfragmented blocks of forestland can still be found. Protection of the property will link together the 1,466-acre Willard Pond New Hampshire Audubon Wildlife Sanctuary with two other private easements. Altogether these conservation efforts will link a block of

over 40,000 acres of permanently protected forestland in a densely populated area of the state.

The Robb Reservoir/Willard Pond project area has also been identified as a critical target for protection due to its ecological value and central location in the Quabbin-to-Cardigan Conservation Initiative, an inter-organizational collaborative effort organized to establish a contiguous conservation corridor from the southern White Mountains in New Hampshire to the Quabbin Reservoir in Massachusetts. Approximately 75 percent of the property is productive forestland and will be managed to provide for sustainable timber production. This property is under considerable development pressure because of its commuting distance to Concord, Manchester and Keene.

Under the terms of a conservation easement, the project area would continue to provide public access for hunting, hiking, nature viewing, cross-country skiing, and snowshoeing, as well as fishing for warm and cold water species in the North Branch River and Robb Reservoir. A network of established recreation trails will connect this property to an adjacent trail network at the Audubon wildlife sanctuary. Mountainous portions of the property offer unobstructed views of the reservoir and surrounding mountains, and provide excellent vantage points for wildlife viewing. Documented archaeological sites, located along the north branch of the Contoocook River, reveal clues to the lifestyle of the Penacook people, who lived on this landscape for millennia. A historic Native American travel route, the Kon-wegti-ok Trail, once ran through the property along the river, connecting Native American villages.

The Robb Reservoir/Willard Pond property is home to diverse and interesting plant and animal species. Several state threatened and endangered species have been documented on the property including the bald eagle, pied-billed grebe, osprey, purple martin, and northern harrier. In addition, a state listed endangered plant species, the arethusa, is found growing on the property within the three state designated Exemplary Natural Communities: Atlantic white cedar swamp, southern New England level bog, and southern New England acidic seepage swamp. Of these three, the Atlantic white cedar swamp is designated as "critically imperiled" due to its extreme rarity. In 1991, the north branch of the Contoocook River, which runs through the property, was designated as protected by the New Hampshire Rivers Management Protection Program.

New Hampshire has recognized Robb Reservoir/Willard Pond as its number one priority for the Forest Legacy Program this year, and $3 million has been included for the project in the President's fiscal year 2007 Budget. This year, a total appropriation of $3 million of Forest Legacy funding is needed to acquire and protect the 1,667-acre Willard Pond/Robb Reservoir property.

Thank you Mr. Chairman, for the opportunity to present this testimony in support of this request.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE STATE OF COLORADO OIL & GAS CONSERVATION COMMISSION

I am writing to urge you to prioritize funding for a project that will streamline oil and gas permitting, enhance oil and gas production, and protect the environment on federal lands. The U.S. Bureau of Land Management (BLM) would like to take advantage of the Risk Based Data Management System (RBDMS) and associated electronic commerce applications developed by the Ground Water Protection Council (GWPC). This innovative project will allow western oil and gas producing state agencies and the BLM to exchange permitting and other environmental data seamlessly. Opening this avenue for data sharing will help the BLM comply with the Energy Policy Act of 2005, Section 365, Pilot Project to Improve Federal Permit Coordination. The BLM, state agencies, and industry all are supportive of this project. Please consider appropriating $400,000 for the GWPC to manage the project.

State oil and gas agencies and industry have relied on RBDMS applications to store and analyze data to make decisions that result in the best possible balance of exploration and environmental considerations. Smaller producers are often in the most need of access to the data in such a system because the costs associated with regulatory compliance affects them the most. The RBDMS electronic commerce approach is one of the best examples of how government, working with industry, can improve both production and environmental protection at the same time. Using this system to manage permitting and related data on federal lands will reduce the time, cost, and burden for oil and gas producers seeking federal environmental permits before drilling or exploration.

I will be glad to answer any questions you may have. Thank you for your support.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE SAN DIEGO COUNTY WATER AUTHORITY

Your support is needed in securing adequate fiscal year 2007 funding for the Bureau of Land Management's participation in the federal/state Colorado River Basin Salinity Control Program. This important program is vital to the Colorado River water, users in San Diego County, as well as to the water users throughout the seven-state Colorado River Basin.

The Colorado River is the primary source of drinking water for more than 3 million people in San Diego County. Excess salinity causes economic damages in the San Diego region worth millions of dollars annually. It also hinders local water agency efforts to stretch limited supplies by recycling and reusing water. The local impacts of excess salinity include:

—reduced crop yields for farmers, who produce more than $1 billion of agricultural products in the San Diego region;
—the reduced useful life of commercial and residential water pipe systems, water heaters, faucets, garbage disposals, clothes washers, and dishwashers;
—the increased household use of expensive bottled water and water softeners;
—increased water treatment facility costs;
—difficulty meeting federal and, Califomia wastewater discharge requirements; and
—fewer opportunities for recycling due to excess salt in the product water, which limits usefulness for commercial and agricultural irrigation.

The Salinity Control program has proven to be a very cost-effective approach to mitigate the impacts of increased salinity in the Colorado River. Continued federal funding of the Bureau of Land Management's portion of this important program is essential.

Maintenance of the Colorado River's water quality through an effective salinity control program is an investment that avoids millions of dollars in economic damages caused by excess salinity.

The Colorado River Basin Salinity Control Forum (Forum), on behalf of the seven Colorado River Basin states, submitted testimony to your Subcommittee requesting that Congress appropriate $5,200,000 to BLM in fiscal year 2007 for activities that help control salt contributions from BLM-managed lands in the Colorado River Basin. The Water Authority agrees with this request, and urges your support for these needed funds.

The Water Authority appreciates your support of the Colorado River Basin Salinity Control Program and asks for your assistance in securing adequate funding for fiscal year 2007.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE SWAN ECOSYSTEM CENTER

Mr. Chairman and Honorable Members of the Committee: Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of continued federal investment in the Swan Valley, Montana and to specifically urge a fiscal year 2007 $16.2 million appropriation to the U.S. Forest Service from the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) and a $6.2 million appropriation to the State of Montana from the Forest Legacy Program (FLP) for the Swan Valley conservation effort. The Swan Valley is unique in Montana because land is exceptionally good at growing trees, the rich and diverse habitat provides for a diversity of species, and the scenic and recreation amenities are superb. The people in the Swan Valley care deeply about this place and need help protecting it.

Swan Ecosystem Center formed in 1996 as an inclusive 501(c)(3) nonprofit community group in the Swan Valley of northwest Montana. Anyone who lives in the Swan Valley and participates is a member. Swan Ecosystem Center has an office and visitor center in the U.S. Forest Service Condon Work Center through a partnership with the Forest Service. Three full-time staff and 4–7 part-time staff develop programs to meet SEC's mission, goals and objectives. Volunteers with diverse backgrounds and opinions annually contribute over 4,000 hours each year, a substantial commitment from a community of about 900 people. According to surveys, most people in the Swan Valley want to protect forests, wildlife and public access. This request is an important component of our multi-stakeholder strategy as indicated in the Swan Ecosystem Center Mission: We, citizens of the Upper Swan Valley, Montana, have a self-imposed sense of responsibility to maintain a strong, vital community, one involved in setting its own destiny through partnerships that encourage sustainable use and care of public and private land.

The Swan Valley conservation effort is a cooperative venture among private landowners, public land management agencies, public resource management agencies, the community, and non-governmental organizations. These groups are working to develop a multi-faceted, long-term conservation strategy that effectively protects the significant ecological and recreational resources of the Swan Valley, while promoting the sustainable management of the valley's forest resources. This process has included a science-based assessment of wildlife and fisheries resources, timber productivity, and recreational activities as well as considerable input from a broad base of Swan Valley residents. Conservation strategies include:

—Land and Water Conservation Fund program to protect critical habitat and public recreation opportunities through Forest Service acquisitions.
—Forest Legacy Program to protect working timberlands with multiple resource values through conservation easements and limited acquisitions by the State of Montana.
—Residential land conservation easement program through local land trusts.
—Habitat Conservation Plan program and other mitigation programs to protect core habitat for threatened or endangered species.
—Special conservation areas to be managed by a nonprofit community group with a broad representation of interests and backgrounds.
—Private foundation funding and investment capital to further conservation objectives.

This year, five properties totaling 2,680 acres are available for acquisition through the Land and Water Conservation Fund to continue the conservation efforts in the Swan Valley. The parcels are located within grizzly bear habitat and are important for species recovery. Some parcels also contain stream reaches important for bull trout habitat and other native species, important habitat for elk and other big game, and/or recreation resources important to Montana residents and visitors alike. These acquisitions will prevent further fragmentation of forestland ownership and land uses, and improve coordinated land management through blocking up of public ownership in areas of checkerboard ownership.

The Swan Forest Legacy Program conservation easements and acquisitions will promote a sustainable working forest in the Swan Valley in order to maintain the forest-based economy of the Valley by protecting the most productive forestlands from conversion to non-forest uses. This year's proposal helps to protect access to public lands, maintain traditional outdoor recreation activities and conserve important wildlife and fisheries habitats. The proposal includes acquisition of 1,655 acres of Plum Creek lands within the Swan River State Forest checkerboard area, which would be conveyed to the State of Montana for on-going forest management.

It should be noted that private investment and commitment to conservation in the Swan Valley plays a significant role alongside the public conservation efforts. There is growing recognition that the conservation resources of the area blanket much of the Swan Valley, regardless of land ownership boundaries and that effective resource protection requires a multi-faceted approach. The efforts of private landowners, the Swan Ecosystem Center, other organizations, and private foundations are all contributing toward successful implementation of the conservation strategy.

The funding this committee has most generously provided for fee and easement acquisitions in the Swan Valley in previous fiscal years has reduced the checkerboard ownership pattern in the area, protected sensitive habitat and recreation lands from development, and protected forestlands from conversion to non-forest uses. We are extremely grateful for those past appropriations, and we ask you for your continued support as the committee considers the fiscal year 2007 Interior and Related Agencies Appropriation bill. Please support the Swan Valley Conservation Effort. Thank you for the opportunity to present this request.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE STERLING FOREST PARTNERSHIP

On behalf of over 2,000 supporters of Sterling Forest Partnership which advocates for the protection of Sterling Forest State Park and its surrounds in both New York and New Jersey, we would like to thank you for the opportunity to comment on the fiscal year 2007 Subcommittee on Interior and Related Agencies Appropriations bill.

In particular, we urge you to provide:

—Full $10 million funding for the Highlands Conservation Act conservation partnership projects,
—$1 million for USDA Forest Service technical assistance and research programs in the Highlands, and
—$85 million for the Forest Legacy program.

Sterling Forest Partnership is an all-volunteer grass roots organization which has worked successfully over the past ten years to rally strong support to conserve Sterling Forest State Park lands and the environment of the region. We are a member of the Highlands Coalition and together with them strive to conserve priority lands in the Highlands region of NY and NJ.

In the fall of 2004, Congress enacted and President Bush signed the Highlands Conservation Act, recognizing the national significance of the more than three-million acre Highlands region as a source of drinking water, productive forests and farms, wildlife habitat and recreation within an hour of major metropolitan areas including Philadelphia, New York City, Newark and Hartford. The Act authorized $10 million annually to assist the Highlands states in conserving priority lands from willing landowners, and to continue USDA Forest Service research and assistance to private landowners in the Highlands. Under the Act, the states are required to match federal funds for land conservation partnership projects on an equal basis to greater leverage these funds.

However, in the President's budget for 2007, only $2 million has been included as funding for the Highlands Conservation Act which is to support several projects in all 4 qualifying states. We urge you to restore full funding of this appropriation as authorized in the original act.

The Governors of the four Highlands States have jointly submitted projects totaling $10 million in need to the Department of the Interior for funding in fiscal year 2007. Our particular concern is for critical funding for:

GREAT SWAMP AND STERLING FOREST AREAS (NY)

Cost—$10,600,000
HCA Request—$2,500,000
Size—1,300 Acres

Description

Arrow Park.—New York requests funds to assist in the acquisition of an addition to Sterling Forest State Park. The Arrow Park property is situated adjacent to the northeastern corner of Sterling Forest State Park and in close proximity to the Appalachian National Scenic Trail. The property contains a highly scenic lake, woodlands and wetlands, as well as significant frontage on Orange Turnpike, a well maintained access road. The Arrow Park lake drains into Little Dam Lake, a wetland within Sterling Forest State Park which supports a healthy population of the NY State endangered Northern Cricket Frog. Portions of the property were acquired in 2002 as additions to the State Park, while the disposition of the remaining 350 acres was being considered by the owners who are now willing sellers.

Great Swamp.—New York State requests funds to assist in the acquisition of properties that will further protect the Great Swamp, one of New York's most important wetland complexes and the largest and highest quality red maple hardwood swamp in the State. It also contains breeding habitat for more than 80 bird species and migratory habitat for more than 150 species of waterfowl and other birds. The Great Swamp also contains a south flowing section based on the East Branch Croton River, a critical part of New York City's water supply system; and a north flow section based on the Swamp River which flows into the Housatonic and, ultimately, to Long Island Sound.

We are also very concerned about the proposed cuts to the Land & Water Conservation Fund, which is slated to receive only $85 million in the President's budget, the lowest level of funding in over three decades. Without adequate funding to the Highlands Conservation Act, Forest Legacy Program and Land & Water Conservation Fund, precious natural treasures of the Highlands may be developed in this rapidly growing area and lost to conservation forever.

Thank you again for considering our comments on the fiscal year 2007 Interior, and Related Agencies Appropriations bill.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF STRONGER, INC.

The State Review Process is a joint project of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and State-Review of Oil and Natural Gas Environmental Regulations, Inc. (STRONGER) It implements requirements under the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA), and its prime objective is to improve the environment by helping state oil and gas regulatory programs improve their performance. Since the first review in 1992, thirty have been conducted of nineteen state regulatory programs representing over 95-percent of U.S. onshore oil and gas production. Recent initial reviews have been undertaken in Indiana, Michigan and Virginia. Recent fol-

low-up reviews undertaken include California, Louisiana, New Mexico, Ohio, Oklahoma, Texas and West Virginia. A second follow-up review was undertaken in Pennsylvania, with a review currently underway in Kentucky. Additional follow-up reviews are planned for New York in 2006 and Colorado in 2007. These reviews have resulted in documented improvement of state programs which identify strengths and weaknesses and urge environmental improvements to address those weaknesses.

The State Review Process is highly valuable. Congress told the industry and the states to do exactly what STRONGER does. The Process was developed to implement the conclusions of EPA's 1987 Regulatory Determination. The Regulatory Determination concluded that direct federal regulation of certain oil and gas exploration and production wastes was inappropriate and unnecessary under the RCRA Subtitle C because states were effectively regulating these wastes and the Subtitle C structure was not suited to regulation of them. The Determination also concluded that reviews of the state programs would assure that they remained effective. The Process is unique in that it brings the environmental community, state agencies and the industry to work together assisting the states to identify strengths and weaknesses in the programs and urge ongoing environmental improvements.

Several key aspects of the Process were innovations in regulatory program quality improvement in 1990, and remain unique today. They include:

—That state environmental regulatory programs are reviewed and benchmarked against published national Guidelines to evaluate the effectiveness of the programs in protecting public health and the environment;

—That the guidelines standards are stakeholder consensus of the necessary elements of a successful regulatory program, and are developed by the process participants;

—That the reviews are performed by multiple-stakeholder teams composed of representatives of the regulated industry, other state and federal agencies, and the environmental/public interest communities, and are open for public observation;

—That the reviews address environmental performance, and evaluate state program measurements for their effectiveness in tracking environmental results;

—That the review reports document program strengths and program areas needing improvement; and make specific recommendations to improve program performance; and,

—That follow-up reviews are conducted to examine state responses to earlier recommendations and review additional program areas.

In this spring of 2006, the State Review Process is threatened and unnecessarily so. During the Process' lifetime, funding has been provided by USEPA and the U.S. Department of Energy through a USEPA grant and by the American Petroleum Institute (API). In fiscal year 2005, Congress appropriated $300,000 from the EPA budget to expand and carry the process forward. STRONGER has demonstrated the benefits and substantial cost savings of the State Review Process and received a new three-year grant. No fiscal year 2006 funds were provided, and that last grant will soon expire.

For fiscal year 2007 and beyond, STRONGER is requesting programmatic funding. Programmatic funding for STRONGER is entirely appropriate because it recognizes that the State Review Process is an ongoing function of USEPA and is not a state or local specific project or activity. Stated within the contexts of this year's appropriations deliberations, its funding should not be included in contemplated constraints on earmarked funds, for funds for the Process should never have been regarded as earmarks. USEPA funding for this Process should have been among its fiscal year 2007 Budget Message requests for customary USEPA programs. For whatever reasons, it was not. This is unfortunately the case despite this USEPA sponsored program providing a needed and well thought through stakeholder-driven process to improve state regulatory program oversight of oil and natural gas exploration and production activity. The exploration and production industry fully supports this program and provides 25 percent of the funding. Ultimately, the best and most credible way to fund Congress and EPA's mandate, which serves the national public good, is through public dollars. If the industry's contribution percentage were any higher, the environmental community may well retreat for fear of industry dominance; the credibility of the Process would be at stake. Participating environmental organizations are reimbursed for their participation during reviews.

Therefore, STRONGER requests $300,000 in programmatic funding in fiscal year 2007 appropriations, this actual amount being needed to sustain the Process' commitment level and the balanced federal, state, industry and environmental relationships. To "cut the baby in two" here would threaten the entire Process for that reason.

We are supported in this request by: The Independent Petroleum Association of America (IPAA), US Oil & Gas Association, New Mexico Oil and Gas Association, Independent Oil and Gas Association of West Virginia, Independent Oil and Gas Association of Pennsylvania, Pennsylvania Oil and Gas Association, Michigan Oil and Gas Association, Texas Alliance of Energy Producers, California Independent Petroleum Association, Independent Petroleum Association of Mountain States, Texas Independent Producers and Royalty Owners Association, Colorado Oil and Gas Association, Kansas Independent Oil and Gas Association, Kentucky Oil and Gas Association, Illinois Oil and Gas Association, and Association of Energy Service Companies.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE SAN JUAN WATER COMMISSION

The San Juan Water Commission is requesting your support for the following appropriations in fiscal year 2007 to the Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) for the Upper Colorado River Endangered Fish Recovery Program and the San Juan River Basin Recovery Implementation Program, as recommended in the President's budget.

1. Appropriation of $697,000 in "recovery" funds (Ecological Services Activity; Endangered Species Subactivity; Recovery Element; $697,000 within the $5,631,000 item entitled "General Program Activities") to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) to allow FWS to continue its necessary participation in the Upper Colorado River Endangered Fish Recovery Program.
2. Appropriation of $437,000 in operation and maintenance funds (Resource Management Appropriation; Fisheries Activity; Hatchery Operations & Maintenance Subactivity; Hatchery Operations Project) to support the ongoing operation of the FWS' Ouray National Fish Hatchery in Utah.
3. Allocation of $211,000 in "recovery" funds for the San Juan River Basin Recovery Implementation Program to the FWS for fiscal year 2007 to meet FWS' Region 2 expenses managing and implementing the San Juan Recovery Program.

The San Juan Water Commission is requesting the Subcommittee's assistance for fiscal year 2007 funding to ensure FWS' continuing financial participation in these vitally important programs. Thank you for your past support and please call me at 505–564–8969 if you have any questions regarding this important issue.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE SALT LAKE CITY CORPORATION

On behalf of Salt Lake City and those cities with urban Indian healthcare facilities, I write to express strong support for full funding of Urban Indian Health Program. There are currently 34 urban Indian healthcare facilities in operation throughout the country, and eliminating funding for this program would mean devastating cuts in the provision of services or outright closure of many facilities.

The Urban Indian Health Program provides critical funding for our local urban Indian health facility. Recent data indicates that over 66 percent of all Native Americans live in urban areas. Federal funding for this program is critical to ensuring the federal government maintains its commitment to providing quality health care services to this important population. The fiscal year 2006 enacted level of $32.7 million for this program is estimated to be only 22 percent of the total need of this population. Further reductions in funding will only serve to further deteriorate healthcare services to our urban Indian populations.

Given the dramatic impact the President's proposed funding reduction would mean to the Urban Indian Health Program, I strongly support its full funding in fiscal year 2007. Each year, appropriators must make priority decisions regarding the distribution of limited resources against expanding needs. The Urban Indian program has provided needed, high-quality, and effective services to our urban Indian populations for many years.

Thank you for your time and attention to this request.

LETTER FROM GOVERNOR BILL RICHARSON

STATE OF NEW MEXICO,
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR,
February 27, 2006.

Hon. CONRAD BURNS, *Chairman,*
Hon. BYRON DORGAN, *Ranking Member,*
Subcommittee on Interior and Related Agencies, Committee on Appropriations, U.S. Senate.

DEAR CHAIRMAN BURNS AND RANKING MEMBER DORGAN: I am writing this letter to request your support and assistance in insuring continued funding for the Upper Colorado River Endangered Fish Recovery Program and the San Juan River Basin Recovery Implementation Program. These ongoing cooperative partnership programs involve the States of New Mexico, Colorado, Utah and Wyoming, Indian tribes, federal agencies and water, power and environmental interests; and have as their dual objectives recovery of the four Colorado River endangered fish species while water use continues and water development proceeds in compliance with the Endangered Species Act, state law, and interstate compacts. I respectfully request your support and action by the Subcommittee to provide for the following:

1. Allocation of $211,000 in "recovery" funds (Ecological Services Activity; Endangered Species Subactivity; Recovery Element; $211,000 within the $5,631,000 item entitled "General Program Activities") for the San Juan River Basin Recovery Implementation Program to the FWS for fiscal year 2007 to meet U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) Region 2 expenses for managing and implementing the San Juan Program's diverse recovery activities.

2. Appropriation of $697,000 in "recovery" funds (Ecological Services Activity; Endangered Species Subactivity; Recovery Element; $697,000 within the $5,631,000 item entitled "General Program Activities") to the FWS for fiscal year 2007 to allow FWS Region 6 to continue its necessary participation in the Upper Colorado River Endangered Fish Recovery Program. This is the same level of funding appropriated to the FWS in fiscal years 2004, 2005 and 2006.

3. Appropriation of $437,000 in operation and maintenance funds (Resource Management Appropriation; Fisheries Activity; Hatchery Operations & Maintenance Subactivity, Hatchery Operations Project) to support the ongoing operation of the FWS Ouray National Fish Hatchery in Utah during fiscal year 2007.

These two programs rely upon substantial state and other non-federal cost-sharing reflecting strong commitment to these effective partnership efforts and have the support of the Department of the Interior, who has pointed to them as national models of effective conservation partnerships. The requested FWS appropriations will be used in conjunction with other funding to continue vitally important recovery program activities. We in New Mexico thank the Subcommittee for your past assistance and again seek the Subcommittee's assistance again this year to ensure adequate FWS funding for the upcoming federal fiscal year.

Sincerely,

BILL RICHARDSON,
Governor.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE STATE OF COLORADO

The State of Colorado is an active partner in the Upper Colorado River Endangered Fish Recovery Program and the San Juan River Basin Endangered Fish Recovery Program, both of which have been very successful in working toward recovery of four endangered and threatened fish species in the Upper Colorado River Basin while allowing water development to continue.

Today I request your consideration and support for two items funding these Programs which appear in the President's Budget for the upcoming fiscal year:

(1) Appropriation of $697,000 in recovery funds to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) for fiscal year 2007. This appropriation allows the Service to continue its participation in the Upper Colorado River Endangered Fish Recovery Program. The specific designation of this appropriation is under "Ecological Services Activity; Endangered Species Subactivity; Recovery Element" and this would appropriate $697,000 within the $5,631,000 entitled "General Program Activities".

(2) Appropriation of $437,000 in operation and maintenance funds to the Service's Ouray National Fish Hatchery in Utah for fiscal year 2007. These specific dollars would be appropriated under the Service's budget designated "Resource Management Appropriation; Fisheries Activity; Hatchery Operations & Maintenance Subactivity, Hatchery Operations Project".

Furthermore, I request that your Committee strongly urge the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to allocate $211,000 in recovery funds to the San Juan River Basin Recovery Implementation Program. Such an allocation will allow the Service's Region 2 offices to pursue ongoing recovery work and undertake new recovery processes as they continue doing the good work of species conservation in the San Juan Basin.

As you know, these programs accomplish the recovery of the four endangered fish species while allowing the ongoing water development in the basins. To date, over 1,000 separate water depletion projects representing over 2.9 million acre feet of water per year carry on with these Programs serving as the means of Endangered Species Act compliance. Thank you for your help with these important projects.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE STATE OF UTAH

I am writing to urge you to prioritize funding for a project that will streamline oil and gas permitting, enhance oil and gas production, and protect the environment on federal lands. The U.S. Bureau of Land Management (BLM) would like to take advantage of the Risk Based Data Management System (RBDMS) and associated electronic commerce applications developed by the Ground Water Protection Council (GWPC). This innovative project will allow western oil and gas producing state agencies and the BLM to exchange permitting and other environmental data seamlessly. Opening this avenue for data sharing will help the BLM comply with the Energy Policy Act of 2005, Section 365, Pilot Project to Improve Federal Permit Coordination. The BLM, state agencies, and industry all urge support of this project and ask that $400,000 be appropriated for the GWPC to manage the project.

State oil and gas agencies and industry have relied on RBDMS applications to store and analyze data to make decisions that result in the best possible balance of exploration and environmental considerations. Smaller producers are often in the most need for access to the data in such a system because the high cost associated with regulatory compliance hits them the hardest. RBDMS is the only comprehensive, fully relational, PC-based, oil and gas regulatory system now in use in many state agencies in the country. RBDMS is one of the best examples of how government, working with industry, can improve both production and environmental protection at the same time. Using the highly successful RBDMS program to manage permitting and related data on federal lands will reduce the time, cost, and burden for oil and gas producers seeking federal environmental permits before drilling or exploration.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE STATE OF UTAH, OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

I am writing to request your support and assistance to ensure continued funding for the Upper Colorado River Endangered Fish Recovery Program and the San Juan River Basin Recovery Implementation Program. These ongoing cooperative partnership programs involve the states of Colorado, New Mexico, Utah and Wyoming, Indian tribes, federal agencies and water, power and environmental interests; and have as their dual objectives recovery of the four Colorado River endangered fish species while water use continues and water development proceeds in compliance with the Endangered Species Act, state law and interstate compacts. Utah respectfully requests support and action by the subcommittee that will provide the following:

1. Appropriation of $697,000 in "recovery" funds (Ecological Services Activity; Endangered Species Subactivity; Recovery Element; $697,000 within the $5,631,000 item entitled "General Program Activities") to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) for fiscal year 2007 to allow FWS to continue its necessary participation in the Upper Colorado River Endangered Fish Recovery Program. This is the same level of funding appropriated to the FWS in fiscal years 2004, 2005 and 2006.

2. Appropriation of $437,000 in operation and maintenance funds (Resource Management Appropriation; Fisheries Activity; Hatchery Operations & Maintenance Subactivity, Hatchery Operations Project) to support the ongoing operation of the FWS' Ouray National Fish Hatchery in Utah during fiscal year 2007.

3. Allocation of $211,000 in "recovery" funds for the San Juan River Basin Recovery Implementation Program to the FWS for fiscal year 2007 to meet FWS's Region 2 expenses managing and implementing the San Juan Program's diverse recovery actions.

As the subcommittee members know, these two programs rely upon substantial state and other non-federal cost-sharing (reflecting strong commitment to these effective partnership efforts) and have the support of the Department of the Interior

who has pointed to them as national models of effective conservation partnerships. The requested FWS appropriations will be used in concert with other funding to continue vitally important recovery program activities. I thank the subcommittee for their past assistance, and we seek that assistance again this year to ensure adequate FWS funding for the upcoming federal fiscal year. Thank you.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE STATE OF WYOMING, OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

I am writing to request your support and assistance in ensuring continued funding for the Upper Colorado River Endangered Fish Recovery Program and the San Juan River Basin Recovery Implementation Program. These ongoing cooperative partnership programs involve the States of Colorado, New Mexico, Utah, and Wyoming, Indian tribes and federal agencies, as well as water, power, and environmental interests. The dual objectives of these programs are the recovery of the four Colorado River endangered fish species while continuing water use and development in compliance with the Endangered Species Act, state law, and interstate compacts. Wyoming respectfully requests support and action by the Subcommittee that will provide the flowing:

1. Appropriation of $697,000 in "recovery" funds (Ecological Services Activity; Endangered Species Subactivity; Recovery Element; $697,000 within the $5,631,000 item entitled "General Program Activities") to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) for fiscal year 2007 to allow FWS to continue its necessary participation in the Upper Colorado River Endangered Fish Recovery Program. This is the same level of funding appropriated to the FWS in fiscal years 2004, 2005, and 2006.
2. Appropriation of $437,000 in operation and maintenance funds (Resource Management Appropriation; Fisheries Activity; Hatchery Operation & Maintenance Subactivity, Hatchery Operations Project) to support the ongoing operation of the FWS's Ouray National Fish Hatchery in Utah during fiscal year 2007.
3. Allocation of $211,000 in "recovery" funds for the San Juan River Basin Recovery Implementation Program to the FWS for fiscal year 2007 to meet FWS's Region 2 expense managing and implementing the San Juan Program's diverse recovery actions.

As the Subcommittee members know, these two programs rely upon substantial state and other non-federal cost-sharing (which reflects strong commitment to these effective partnership efforts) and have the support of the Department of the Interior. DOI points to these programs as nation models of effective conservation partnering. The requested FWS appropriations will be used in concert with other funding to continue vitally important recovery program activities. Wyoming thanks the Subcommittee for its past assistance. We seek that assistance again this year to ensure adequate FWS funding for the upcoming federal fiscal year. Thank you.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE SHOSHONE-PAIUTE TRIBES

I write to support the Bureau of Indian Affairs' request for full funding of indirect contract support costs in fiscal year 2007 (and for a technical correction to the appropriations language); to ask that the Committee closely scrutinize and correct the failure of the Indian Health Service to make a comparable request for added contract support; and to request that the Committee press Secretary Leavitt to finally settle the outstanding five year old Zuni contract support litigation before Tribes witness a repeat of the Cobell litigation.

While we share many criticisms across Indian country over the BIA's Budget, one bright spot is the Bureau's recognition after last year's Supreme Court Cherokee decision that contract support costs are a contract obligation that must be paid. As the Supreme Court said, all government contracts, including contracts with Tribes, are legal obligations that cannot simply be ignored. The BIA has gone out of its way in a very difficult budget climate to correctly prioritize payments under those contracts, payments that will benefit every Tribe in the Nation.

By contrast, IHS has utterly failed to meet its legal obligations to Tribal contractors. This is particularly shocking given that the Secretary and IHS lost the Cherokee decision and have had more than a year to make necessary adjustments. NIHB, NCAI and Tribal leaders have repeatedly urged IHS to prioritize full funding of contract support costs, and the failure to do so risks further litigation in the years ahead.

Finally, the time has come for the Secretary and IHS to settle all outstanding contract support cost claims. The Supreme Court has spoken. The liability is clear. The shortfall amounts are known. And yet, HIS is now fighting CSC claims more vigorously than ever, as if protecting the Treasury were more important than honoring

legal obligations owed the Tribes. Before the ongoing litigation becomes another Cobell for Indian country, I ask that the Committee bring its influence to bear so that these historic claims might at long last be resolved.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE BOARD OF SELECTMEN, NEWRY OWNER, SUNDAY RIVER INN, BETHEL, MAINE

Mr. Chairman and Honorable Members of the Subcommittee: I appreciate the opportunity to present this testimony in support of an appropriation of $2 million from the Forest Legacy Program for the Grafton Notch, Maine's #1 Forest Legacy Project this year. The President's budget for fiscal year 2007 includes a recommendation of $2 million for Grafton Notch.

Programs that fulfill "essential priorities" is what President Bush called the areas that would get funding in his federal budget for 2007. My neighbors and I were pleased and proud to see that Maine's top conservation priority, Grafton Notch, was also the Bush administration's top Forest Legacy priority in the country. The Forest Legacy Program helps states conserve private forests and maintain traditional forest uses, such as timber production and recreation.

Recently, 112 Bethel area residents turned out to attend the first public meeting dealing with the fate of Grafton Notch and the Mahoosuc Range, the spine of the Appalachian Mountains running out of eastern New Hampshire into western Maine. They represented a cross-section of Maine, a multi-generational group from every walk of life. All in attendance shared feelings of enthusiasm and pride in the fact that the Grafton Forest project led the list of Forest Legacy projects and expressed a desire to protect the Mahoosucs and our rural way of life. We are a community that continually comes together to develop and support our vision for conserving forests and our forest-based local economy, and the Grafton Notch project represents a successful outcome of our collaboration.

Residents of communities in western Maine realize that the 3,688 acres of the Grafton Forest are essential to keeping the new 42-mile Grafton Loop Trail intact, and preserving the east slope of Old Speck Mountain and a renowned section of the Appalachian Trail. Mainers have long recognized the importance of this parcel as an outlot in a mosaic of otherwise conserved lands in the heart of the rapidly developing western Maine mountains. The parcel is virtually surrounded by over 27,000 acres of other conservation lands, including the Grafton Notch State Park.

The effort to protect this wild link between New Hampshire's North Country and Maine's North Woods has brought conservation groups, community and business groups and individual citizens together in an innovative collaboration focused on reinforcing connections between economic vitality, quality of life, and land protection. This portion of the North Woods is dotted with small towns where a relatively large proportion of jobs are directly related to timber harvesting and processing. Under the long-term ownership of wood products companies, the North Woods have long supported local jobs and small businesses through harvesting, wood products manufacture and outdoor recreation. Living close to the land has also shaped a way of life as generation after generation grew up hunting, fishing, camping, hiking and canoeing in the industrial forests where owners gave the public the gift of access to their lands. Now, with large-scale economic changes underway in the forests, these rural communities are facing a more uncertain future, both in terms of job creation and impacts to quality of life.

As owner of an inn focused on serving outdoor enthusiasts from hard core backcountry skiers and whitewater canoeists to wildflower seekers and bird watchers. The forests, rivers, streams and mountains of Western Maine are the essential resources that attract our guests and enable us to educate and entertain them as we guide them through the area. The fact that 75 percent of our guests return, many for years and years, is testament to their enjoyment of our surroundings and our ability to interpret the value of those surroundings to them. In fact, the entire economy of this area is dependent upon the continued existence of large blocks of undeveloped land where the pursuits of forestry, recreation, education and relaxation can coexist. The Grafton Forest is an integral part of the conservation mosaic that will insure that these activities and business opportunities are available to our neighbors and guests and to future generations.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for the opportunity to present this testimony to your Subcommittee on behalf of the Grafton Notch Forest Legacy project.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE SKYLINE SPORTSMEN'S ASSOCIATION

Mr. Chairman and Honorable Members of the Committee: On behalf of the Skyline Sportsmen's Association of Butte, Montana, I appreciate the opportunity to present this testimony in support of a $2.6 million appropriation from the Land and Water Conservation Fund for the second phase of the Selway Creek conservation project in the Beaverhead-Deerlodge National Forest.

Skyline Sportsman's Association has been at the forefront of conservation in Southwest Montana for many years. Skyline's early activity included reintroducing elk to western mountain ranges and continues today in efforts to maintain habitat for wildlife and hunting opportunities.

Organized into nine separate units, the Beaverhead-Deerlodge National Forest in southwest Montana covers over 3.3 million acres and is the largest national forest in the state. Lying in eight southwest Montana counties, the forest blends stunning 11,000-foot mountain peaks with renowned blue-ribbon fly-fishing streams that have cut deep valleys into the lush landscape. The result is an enormous public playground that begins in the semi-arid grassland foothills, climbs up to the coniferous forests of lodegpole pine and Douglas fir, and culminates in the peaks of the Bitterroot and Centennial ranges. An extensive system of roads and trails makes it easy for visitors to make their own discoveries and adventures within the forest, such as it's wilderness trekking in the Lee Metcalf Wilderness, driving the Pioneer Mountains Scenic Byway, or camping in one of the fifty campgrounds in the forest. Campers, anglers, hikers, skiers, equestrians, snowmobilers, and many others enjoy 1,500 miles of trails, 155 high mountain lakes, 1,050 miles of great fishing streams, two wilderness areas, numerous picnic and boating sites, two downhill ski areas, and 250 miles of groomed snowmobile trails.

Located approximately 35 air miles west of Dillon within the Beaverhead-Deerlodge National Forest is the 1,240-acre Selway Creek Property. In the second phase of this project, approximately 873 acres are now available for acquisition. The property is part of the Dragging Y Ranch—one of the largest cow-calf operations in the northern Rockies. It has extraordinary scenic, recreation, wildlife and fisheries values and is the number one land acquisition priority for the forest. It also includes a large wetland system and approximately three and a half miles of Selway Creek, an extremely productive fishery with large populations of brook and rainbow trout. The creek and its many tributaries are regarded by local fishermen as some of the best fly-fishing waters in the local area. It also provides an important food source for bald eagles, which can often be seen flying up and down the valley patrolling for fish. Occupying a long, lush valley bottom, the Selway property also provides exceptional habitat for deer and elk, particularly in the calving season, which generally lasts from May to July. During this period, more than 200 head of elk can often be seen on the property at the same time. Other animals routinely occupying or migrating through the Selway property include pronghorn antelope, black bear, moose, and an occasional gray wolf.

It should be noted that this project includes two separate conservation easements, which the owners will make available for purchase once the second phase of the Selway Creek purchase is complete. One of these easements would be placed on a nearby 1,381-acre property known as the Hilger Ranch, which includes a two-mile stretch of Horse Prairie Creek and some of the best riparian bottomland in the local area. The other easement would be placed on a 7,249-acre property known as the Knox Ranch, which is located approximately 20 miles south of Dillon. Both easements would conserve incredible wildlife habitat and allow public hunting access every fall. No additional federal funding will be required for either of these easement purchases, but the impact on the broader landscape will be enormous. However, without the federal funding needed to complete the Selway purchase, this broader resource protection opportunity will be lost.

An appropriation of $2.6 million from the Land and Water Conservation Fund in fiscal year 2007 is needed to complete the second and final phase of this property's acquisition and to ensure that 1,240 acres of prime wildlife habitat and recreation lands within the Beaverhead-Deerlodge NF are forever preserved. It would also serve as a catalyst in conserving 8,630 additional acres of private ranchland in nearby area.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for the opportunity to present this testimony in support of a $2.6 million appropriation from the Land and Water Conservation Fund for the second phase of the Selway Creek conservation project in Montana.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE STATE AND TERRITORIAL AIR POLLUTION PROGRAM ADMINISTRATORS AND THE ASSOCIATION OF LOCAL AIR POLLUTION CONTROL OFFICIALS

The State and Territorial Air Pollution Program Administrators (STAPPA) and the Association of Local Air Pollution Control Officials (ALAPCO) appreciate this opportunity to provide testimony regarding the fiscal year 2007 proposed budget for the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), particularly federal grants to state and local air quality agencies under Sections 103 and 105 of the Clean Air Act. STAPPA and ALAPCO are extremely concerned that EPA's proposed $35.1 million cut—16 percent—in grants to state and local agencies will be devastating and will impair our ability to provide clean, healthful air throughout the country. Accordingly, our associations recommend that Congress restore this funding and increase the budget request by at least $35.1 million, for a total of $220.3 million. Additionally, grants for the PM monitoring program should not be shifted from Section 103 authority to Section 105.

STAPPA and ALAPCO are the national associations of air quality officials in 53 states and territories and over 165 metropolitan areas across the country. The Clean Air Act gives state and local air quality officials the primary responsibility for implementing our country's clean air program. These agencies, on the frontlines of implementation, must work to limit or prevent emissions of many pollutants, such as particulate matter (PM), ground-level ozone and toxic air pollution. They must implement activities designed to reduce those pollutants and protect public health and welfare, including, among many others, monitoring air quality, developing emissions inventories, preparing State Implementation Plans, permitting sources, inspecting facilities, enforcing regulations, educating the public and responding to citizens' complaints.

Our concern about the effects of the proposed funding cuts is shared by many members of the United States Senate. In fact, a bipartisan group of 33 Senators sent a letter on April 7, 2006 to Senators Conrad Burns and Byron Dorgan of this Subcommittee urging that funding for state and local air grants be restored to $220.3 million in fiscal year 2007 and that funds for PM monitoring not be shifted from Section 103 authority to Section 105.

AIR POLLUTION IN AMERICA

While great strides have been made in reducing levels of air pollution, millions of Americans continue to breathe unhealthful air. Over 160 million tons of pollution are emitted annually in this country and more than 150 million people live in areas that violate at least one of the six health-based National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS). Fine PM alone is responsible for up to 30,000 premature deaths each year and causes other health problems, such as aggravation of existing respiratory and cardiovascular disease, damage to lung tissue, impaired breathing, irregular heart beat, heart attacks and lung cancer.

There are many other pollutants that threaten the health of the public. New information just released as part of EPA's National-Scale Air Toxics Assessment presents a very troubling picture about the prevalence of toxic air pollutants. For example, when the cancer risks from all air toxics compounds listed as known, probable or possible carcinogens based on human data are combined, EPA estimates that more than 270 million people live in census tracts where the combined upper-bound lifetime cancer risk exceeded 10 in one million risk (one in one million risk is generally considered acceptable). Additionally, more than 92 percent of the population in this country lives in areas with "hazard index" values for respiratory toxicity greater than 1.0 (with 1.0 being the level above which adverse effects to the respiratory system occur).

FUNDING FOR STATE AND LOCAL AIR GRANTS

State and local air pollution control programs are funded through state and local appropriations, the federal permit fee program under Title V of the Clean Air Act, state and local permit and emissions fees, and federal grants under Sections 103 and 105 of the Clean Air Act. Section 103 has usually funded specific monitoring efforts, while Section 105 supports the foundation of state and local air quality programs, including, but not limited to, personnel.

The Clean Air Act authorizes the federal government to provide grants up to 60 percent of the cost of state and local air quality programs, while state and local agencies must provide a 40-percent match (as per Section 105). In reality, however, the federal government provides approximately 25 percent of the total state/local air budget, while state and local governments supply 75 percent (not including income

from Title V permit fees, which state and local agencies collect from major sources and can fund only permit-related activities). In a time of limited state and local resources, where state and local governments are straining to maintain existing programs, additional federal funding is needed to meet the challenges of air quality programs.

The total amount needed for state and local efforts to implement the Clean Air Act is estimated to be in excess of $1 billion each year. If EPA were to supply 60 percent of that amount, as the Clean Air Act envisioned, federal grants would amount to close to $600 million annually. However, the fiscal year 2006 budget for state and local air quality grants under Sections 103 and 105 of the Clean Air Act was $220.3 million, which is far short of the amount needed. Furthermore, over the past decade, federal grants for state and local air agencies to operate their programs (not including the Section 103 monitoring program) have decreased by 25 percent in terms of purchasing power (based upon U.S. Department of Labor inflation statistics).

FISCAL YEAR 2007 PROPOSED BUDGET

The President's fiscal year 2007 budget request not only fails to provide necessary additional funds, but would decrease state and local grants by $35.1 million (16 percent), from $220.3 million to $185.2 million in the following manner: (1) $15.6 million from the Section 105 grant program; (2) $17 million from the Section 103 fine particulate monitoring program (also, under the fiscal year 2007 budget request, the funds remaining in the fine particulate monitoring program—$25 million—would be funded under the Section 105 authority, rather than the Section 103 authority, so state and local agencies would have to provide additional matching funds, pursuant to Section 105 requirements); and (3) $2.5 million from the regional planning organizations.

BUDGET CUTS WOULD SEVERELY UNDERMINE STATE AND LOCAL AIR QUALITY EFFORTS

Cuts of this magnitude would severely hamper state and local efforts to provide important public health protections. The reductions would be detrimental to critical efforts to reduce ozone, small particle and toxic air pollution, enforcement and compliance activities, monitoring and a host of other programs that are key to improving and preserving healthful air quality. The impacts of the cuts would be further exacerbated by the budget's proposal to shift grants in the PM monitoring program from Section 103 authority (which does not require a 40-percent match) to Section 105 authority. Under the budget proposal, state and local agencies would need to supply additional funds in order to accept the federal grants.

State and local air quality agencies face several very important new requirements that will be costly to implement. For example, EPA has designated over 475 counties across the nation as nonattainment for the PM and ozone air quality standards. States must develop and submit State Implementation Plans (SIPs) by 2007 and 2008, identifying specifically how those areas will meet the health based standard by the deadlines.

Very recently, STAPPA and ALAPCO asked state and local air agencies to estimate the real-world ramifications of a 16-percent budget cut to their programs. The associations compiled those estimates into a report entitled, Impact of Proposed fiscal year 2007 Budget Cuts on State and Local Air Quality Agencies (March 14, 2006), which paints a vivid picture of the difficulties state and local air agencies would have accommodating such deep cuts. This report has been provided to each member of the Appropriations Committee and additional copies are available from STAPPA/ALAPCO (www.4cleanair.org).

The report contains alarming information about what the proposed budget could mean for air agencies. If the proposed reductions occur, on average, each state will lose $700,000 (i.e., an average reduction of approximately $340,000 in fine particulate monitoring and $360,000 from the other elements of the air quality program). While some agencies will experience greater or lesser reductions than the average, all agencies will likely be affected by these decreases.

Most state and local agencies reported that they would be forced to lay off staff or leave current vacancies unfilled. This loss of staff and expertise is very significant because, even if there are budget increases in future years, the trained personnel that leave the agency would likely be unavailable to the agency in the future and training new staff would be very costly.

Many agencies reported that they would have to shut down existing monitors or otherwise curtail their monitoring programs. Many also reported that the reductions would impair their ability to conduct inspections and carry out enforcement activities, thus rendering the clean air requirements less effective. Additionally, permits

for non-Title V sources (e.g., minor sources) will take longer to process and customer service will diminish.

The funding cuts could seriously impair the ability of state and local agencies to prepare new plans for implementing ozone and PM standards. The development of effective State Implementation Plans (SIPs) is essential to ensure that measures will be adopted that reduce air pollution and protect public health. Without funds to develop and carry out the SIPs, several areas currently meeting the standards may no longer attain them. Not only would air quality worsen, but nonattainment areas are subject to more onerous requirements.

Several agencies noted that they could be forced to return portions of their programs to EPA due to a lack of funds to carry them out. Not only will this place excessive burdens on EPA, but there would be an additional loss of resources for the air program as state and local funds that are currently leveraged as part of the matching requirements would no longer be spent on those Clean Air Act activities.

The budget cuts would be further exacerbated by the proposal to shift the fine particulate monitoring program from Section 103 to Section 105 authority, requiring a 40-percent match. Some agencies do not currently have additional funds for the match. Because of two-year legislative cycles or the timing of budget development, some agencies can not supply additional matching funds without a reasonable transition period in which to make adjustments. They could be forced to turn away grant funds.

Perhaps most troubling of all, if the proposed reductions occur, several local air quality agencies face the very real possibility of having to close their operations entirely. This would be a terrible loss for those local areas.

CONCLUSION

The proposed budget for fiscal year 2007 calls for a significant reduction in Section 103 and 105 grants at the same time that the workload of state and local air agencies is dramatically increasing. Such cuts will have a devastating effect on many state and local air agencies' programs. We understand that the federal budget is finite and Congress must make very difficult choices. However, air pollution poses a very serious threat to public health and the environment. In fact, we are not aware of any other environmental problem that presents a greater risk. The benefits of air quality programs have been estimated to exceed their costs many times over. Therefore, when establishing priorities for federal funding, it is prudent to identify the improvement and protection of air quality as one of the government's highest priorities.

STAPPA and ALAPCO recommend that the fiscal year 2007 budget for federal grants to state and local air quality agencies under Sections 103 and 105 of the Clean Air Act be increased above the President's request by at least $35.1 million (from $185.2 million to $220.3 million), restoring it to the final fiscal year 2006 level. Additionally, grants for the particulate monitoring program should not be shifted from Section 103 authority to Section 105.

Thank you very much for your consideration of our recommendations.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE SKOKOMISH TRIBE

My name is Gordon James, I am Chairman of the Skokomish Tribe of Washington State. The Skokomish Indian Reservation is a rural community located at the base of the Olympic Peninsula with a population of over 1,000 people. The Skokomish Tribe appreciates the work of the Subcommittee and ask that you provide funding in areas that are key to the continuing development of tribal communities: Law Enforcement and Education.

LAW ENFORCEMENT

The Skokomish Tribe requests increased funding for law enforcement programs within the Bureau of Indian Affairs.

In the last ten years, the Skokomish Tribal Police Department has grown from one (1) untrained officer, to a force of thirteen (13) Washington State/BIA certified law enforcement officers. In addition, the Skokomish Tribe's Public Safety Department provides the only marine law enforcement and rescue services in a thirty-five mile radius of the southern Hood Canal. The Police Department works very closely with non-Tribal law enforcement agencies to combat the scourge of drug trafficking in this isolated rural area. These Tribal officers play a key role in the detection and bust of methamphetamine labs on the Reservation.

The Tribe experienced a significant growth in the Reservation's population during the 1980s and early 1990s. Along with the increased population, the Skokomish Indian Tribe experienced an alarming increase in the extent and severity of drug abuse among the residents of the Reservation. According to data from the Tribe's Alcohol Service Program, more than 53 percent of young adults ages 18–24 are presently impacted by drug abuse dependency. Unfortunately, along with increased drug use, the community has had to endure a significant escalation in associated crimes, including drug manufacturing and selling, armed assaults, domestic violence, and burglary. In the last six months, the Tribe's officers have responded to 1,800 calls, which resulted in 300 arrests—many involving non-Indian people. More than one-third of these arrests involved substance abuse. It is clear to the community and the partnership of law enforcement personnel and agencies involved that if the Tribe is forced to close its department, this rural community will become a haven for drug manufacturing and selling, and associated crimes.

Despite the growth in law enforcement need, there has not been a corresponding growth in law enforcement funding. The Skokomish Tribe is not receiving an appropriate share of funding from the BIA, as compared to other Tribes in the state. To address this we ask that Congress increase this funding overall.

EDUCATION

The BIA is proposing the elimination of Johnson O'Malley funding. The Johnson O'Malley program provides funding to local public schools to provide outreach and academic assistance to Indian children attending these schools. At Skokomish we have a number of children who attend two public schools. Hood Canal Elementary and Jr. High and Shelton High School. Both are public schools, and without the JOM program, we could not track or assist our children to succeed academically. We believe the JOM funding is money well spent and we would urge Congress to maintain funding for this Program.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE SOUTHWESTERN WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

The Southwestern Water Conservation District was established by the Colorado General Assembly in 1941 to conserve and protect the water of the San Juan and Dolores Rivers and their tributaries in nine counties in Southwest Colorado. Therefore, we are requesting your support for the following appropriations in fiscal year 2007 to the Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) for the San Juan River Basin Recovery Implementation Program and the Upper Colorado River Endangered Fish Recovery Program, as recommended in the President's budget.

1. Allocation of $211,000 in "recovery" funds for the San Juan River Basin Recovery Implementation Program to the FWS for fiscal year 2007 to meet FWS' Region 2 expenses managing and implementing the San Juan Recovery Program.
2. Appropriation of $437,000 in operation and maintenance funds (Resource Management Appropriation; Fisheries Activity; Hatchery Operations & Maintenance Subactivity, Hatchery Operations Project) to support the ongoing operation of the FWS' Ouray National Fish Hatchery in Utah.
3. Appropriation of $697,000 in "recovery" funds (Ecological Services Activity; Endangered Species Subactivity; Recovery Element; $697,000 within the $5,631,000 item entitled "General Program Activities") to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to allow FWS to continue its necessary participation in the Upper Colorado River Endangered Fish Recovery Program.

We thank you for your past support and request the Subcommittee's assistance for fiscal year 2007 funding to ensure FWS' continuing financial participation in these vitally important programs.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE SOUTH YUBA RIVIR CITIZENS LEAGUE

The South Yuba River Citizens League (SYRCL) appreciates the opportunity to present this testimony in support of a $2.5 million appropriation from the Land and Water Conservation Fund for the Tahoe NF Middle Yuba projects.

SYRCL was established in 1983 as a river education and advocacy group and was legally incorporated as a 501(c)3 organization shortly thereafter. SYRCL has an annual operating budget of over $800,000 and is regarded as a highly-effective and multi-faceted watershed organization regionally, state-wide and nationally. In 2003 Governor Arnold Schwartzenegger awarded SYRCL the "Governor's Environmental and Economic Leadership Award" in the area of "watershed and ecosystem restoration." With a membership base of 5,000 people and mission of protecting the 1,300

square mile Yuba Watershed, SYRCL serves scores of small rural communities as well as rapidly expanding towns and cities in the Sierra Nevada mountains.

In fiscal year 2007, lands important to SYRCL are available for acquisition in the Tahoe National Forest:

Middle Yuba (Phase I).—Twenty-one parcels of land, covering over 4,000 acres, are available for acquisition over the next two years in the vicinity of the Middle Yuba River in Sierra and Nevada Counties. The first phase of this project calls for the acquisition of eleven parcels, consisting of approximately 2,550 acres in fiscal year 2007. According to Forest Service biologists, there have been bald eagle sightings nearby, and the area has historically served as spotted owl territory. The Pacific Crest Trail (PCT) crosses one of the parcels and this higher-elevation mixed conifer forest is especially popular with PCT hikers. In addition to its recreational values, these parcels provide riparian corridor habitat for numerous species, not only along the Middle Yuba, but also along key tributaries of the North Yuba River, such as Milton Creek. Acquisition of these important lands can go forward with a $2.5 million appropriation from the Land Water Conservation Fund.

The first phase of this project can be acquired with an appropriation of $2.5 million in fiscal year 2007. Once protected, they will help ensure public access, critical habitat protection, and water protection in the High Sierra. I urge you to include this project in the fiscal year 2007 Interior and Related Agencies Appropriations bill.

Thank you for considering this request.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE PENOBSCOT NATION OF THE STATE OF MAINE

Chairman Burns, Ranking Member Dorgan and Honorable Subcommittee Members, thank you very much for accepting and reviewing the testimony of the Penobscot Nation of the State of the Maine. The Penobscot Nation's specific requests for the fiscal year 2007 Department of Interior Bureau of Indian Affairs budget includes $250,000 for the Tribe's Wildlife Management Program, to fund four full-time game wardens, $150,000 for Community Fire Protection, and $100,000 for Economic Development.

The Penobscot Nation has a number of serious concerns with the Administration's proposed fiscal year 2007 Bureau of Indian Affairs budget. While the President proposed a nominal increase of $4.4 million to overall Tribal Priority Allocations (TPA), a number of programs that are of vital importance to the Penobscot Nation would be decreased or even completely eliminated, including the Community Fire Protection Program. The Penobscot Nation, as do most tribal communities, relies heavily upon BIA funding to support their essential community needs, such as fire protection, law enforcement, education, and housing, among other things. Further, the Penobscot Nation is working on several economic development projects with the anticipation that they will come to fruition and the economic gains will assist us in attaining our ultimate goal of self-sufficiency. However, if Congress enacts the proposed budget reductions, all of our already strained resources will once again be expended on maintaining limited basic human needs with no community hope of achieving the "American Dream" or more importantly, our "Self-Sufficiency Dream".

What is more, Congress must consider the impact of inflationary costs. We direct your attention to the "Quiet Crisis—Federal Funding and Unmet Needs In Indian Country" a report prepared by the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights in 2003. After a detailed analysis, the Commission concluded that funding for programs for Indian tribes simply has not kept up with spending for non-native programs, or with the increase in population growth in Indian country. Specifically, for BIA the Commission noted that, when adjusting for inflation, the impact of TPA funding shortfalls becomes more evident as the TPA budget has diminished the real spending power of tribal governments dramatically. Over the period of the report, 1998–2003, TPA spending power has lost $36.5 million or 4.4 percent.

These inflationary costs coupled with flat spending or reductions make it impossible for tribal governments to continue to operate programs that the Federal government has a legal obligation through treaties, settlement acts, and statues to provide. Tribal self-determination will be endangered if these reductions are enacted. Tribes, like the Penobscot Nation, who have no other funding sources to pay for the program operational shortfalls may be left with no alternative but to consider retrocession of these programs. Under the Indian Self-Determination Act we can retrocede a program we are operating back to the United States and the agency involved (BIA or IHS for instance) would be required to send personnel to Maine, establish offices and take over the management and operation of that program. We can assure you there is no way they could operate these programs at the funding levels they are providing to us.

Specific concerns regarding the proposed fiscal year 2007 Bureau of Indian Affairs budget are as follows:

Wildlife Management Program.—Under the Maine Indian Land Claims Settlement Act of 1980, the Penobscot Nation has exclusive jurisdiction over lands held in trust for the Tribe by the United States. With a recent acquisition of 26,000 acres in trust, the Penobscot Nation now has approximately 100,000 acres of land in trust. However, the Tribe only has funding sufficient to employ two full-time game wardens to enforce tribal fish and wildlife regulations on our lands. The Penobscot Nation has a severe need for additional funding, in the amount of $250,000, to employ four additional full-time game wardens to help protect our fish and wildlife resources. As anecdotal evidence of the acute need for increased regulation on our lands, the first day tribal game wardens patrolled our recently-acquired lands they issued five citations for violations of tribal fish and wildlife regulations. There are also homeland security concerns, as three years ago a tribal game warden incarcerated five individuals crossing the border from Quebec at Alderstream, one of whom was on the U.S. terrorist's list.

Fire Protection.—One major concern that the Penobscot Nation has regarding the fiscal year 2007 BIA budget pertains to the proposed total elimination of the Community Fire Protection program. Proposed elimination of this program directly contradicts the Department of Interior's Strategic Plan (2003–2005) which clearly identifies it as one of its four missions to provide for the "Protection of Lives, Resources, & Property". Certainly, the BIA's Community Fire Protection contributes to fulfilling this mission.

Currently, the Penobscot Nation's BIA funding for Community Fire Protection is only $70,000. This inadequate funding level provides only enough funds to pay for 1 part-time firefighter and minimal operational costs, such as insurance, fuel, equipment/vehicle maintenance, and fire pagers. Over the last few years, it has become increasingly evident that the Penobscot Nation's population and infrastructure has grown to the extent that it warrants a full-time fire department. The Penobscot Nation has approximately 300 single-family homes which house approximately 545 people, 16 elderly apartments, a school with 100+ students in attendance, a six bed assisted living complex, and six tribal buildings housing approximately 125 employees. Additionally, we are currently in the planning stages of building 15 new single family homes.

In addition to our infrastructure growth, it has become progressively more difficult to operate the fire department on a volunteer basis. Many of the volunteers have outside employment obligations and are not available to attend fire calls throughout the day. Additionally, many of these volunteer firefighters have lost their required firefighter certifications because of their inability to attend the required training sessions. In realizing that the Penobscot Nation was unable to provide adequate fire protection to our community because of inadequate funding, we met with our neighboring town's (Old Town, Maine), Fire Department officials to discuss the possibility of contracting with them for our fire protection needs. Unfortunately, the town reported to us that they could not enter into a contractual agreement. Further, at this meeting the mutual-aid agreement between Old Town and the Penobscot Nation was reviewed and we were reminded that this agreement contained a provision that affirmed we would be responsible for providing 4 full-time firefighters for fire calls. Currently, we are unable to comply with this provision and are potentially jeopardizing this mutual-aid agreement. The Penobscot Nation's requests that funding for the Community Fire Protection Program be restored and an additional $150,000 be added to our TPA Base to provide for the protection of the lives, resources, and property or our people and our government. These funds will be utilized to employ full-time firefighters.

Economic Development.—Presently, economic development within our community is non-existent and it's an on-going challenge each day in determining how to pay for basic essential community services. Furthermore, with the escalating decline in federal funding it is becoming increasingly more evident that our community's welfare relies upon our own self-sufficiency. The Penobscot Nation is currently working on several economic development projects, including a Mail-Order Pharmacy Service and a Native American Manufacturing Initiative. The Penobscot Nation is confident that these projects have the potential to change our devastating economic conditions. In fact, the State of Maine in recognizing the tribe's economic plight and potential of these projects, is being supportive and is working with us. They have assisted us in obtaining State grant funds for both the Mail-Order Pharmacy Service and the Native-American Manufacturing Initiative. In the latter instance, the Maine Technology Center is helping us to try and obtain government contracts in the manufacturing industry. Unfortunately, the State of Maine is dealing with its own budget crisis and can only provide very limited financial resources.

However, in developing both of these projects it has become apparent that the Penobscot Nation needs an Economic Development Specialist. Regrettably, we have not been able to secure the financial resources to employ such a person and are presently forced into relying upon existing staff to perform this function. However, these staff persons do not have the expertise or required time to devote to these economic development initiatives. Therefore it is imperative for the successful development of these projects and other economic ventures that we secure funding to employ a full-time Economic Development Specialist. Once these two economic development ventures are realized the Penobscot Nation will be financially capable of retaining the Economic Development Specialist.

The Penobscot Nation requests that one-time funding in the amount of $80,000 be added to their BIA TPA to obtain a full-time Economic Development Director. We feel confident that this funding will assist us in achieving our "self-sufficiency" goal, including our ability to retain this position.

Direct Contract Support.—The Penobscot Nation applauds the Bureau of Indian Affairs for taking positive steps toward proposing a policy that recognizes contract support costs associated with tribal Self-Determination programs and for taking similar approaches taken by the Indian Health Service, particularly with regards to direct contract support costs. However, the Penobscot Nation supports the recommendation of the National Contract Support Cost Policy Work Group (composed of tribal and Bureau representatives) to utilize existing Awarding Officials in the negotiation of "direct contract support cost" instead of BIA proposal to utilize the National Business Center (NBC). This concern relates to staffing and the cost of implementing the policy.

With the number of tribes operating Bureau programs under the Indian Self-Determination Act, it would be extremely difficult for the NBC to negotiate the agreements in a timely manner. Not only are there a sufficient number of Awarding Officials, but they are more knowledgeable of the true costs associated with operating Self-Determination programs than are officials at NBC. We are also opposed to the Bureau's use of contract support funds to pay the NBC for performing this function.

Our second recommendation concerns a "transition period" strategy. We propose the Bureau adopt an approach similar to that used by the Indian Health Service in adopting a formula that essentially represents 15 percent of direct salaries in the initial year then allowing tribes to renegotiate their "direct contract support costs" amounts in subsequent years. This approach will: (1) ease the burden of negotiating "direct contract support cost" amounts in the initial year and in subsequent years; (2) reduce the amount of funding required to implement the new policy; (3) allow the Bureau, Department and tribes to seek increased appropriations for "direct contract support costs", and (4) allow the Bureau and tribes to become familiar with the new policy. Again, we commend BIA commitment to establish an annual Contract Support Cost Work Group and its commitment to collect data and prepare an annual contract support cost shortfall report. However, we are requesting your assistance in directing the Bureau of Indians to move forward in adopting a Contract Support Policy with meaningful consultation with the Tribes.

Finally, the Penobscot Nation would like to see the integration of employee fringe benefits into the calculation of direct contract support costs. This is another area where parity between tribal and non-tribal funding for similar programs and functions is necessary.

The Penobscot Nation appreciates the opportunity to express their concerns pertaining to the proposed fiscal year 2007 Department of Interior, Bureau of Indian Affairs budget and your attention to these crucial matters. Thank you.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE TRI-COUNTY WATER CONSERVANCY DISTRICT

We are requesting your support for the following appropriations in fiscal year 2007 to the Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) for the Upper Colorado River Endangered Fish Recovery Program and the San Juan River Basin Recovery Implementation Program, as recommended in the President's budget.

1. Appropriation of $697,000 in "recovery" funds (Ecological Services Activity; Endangered Species Subactivity; Recovery Element; $697,000 within the $5,631,000 item entitled "General Program Activities") to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) to allow FWS to continue its necessary participation in the Upper Colorado River Endangered Fish Recovery Program.

2. Appropriation of $437,000 in operation and maintenance funds (Resource Management Appropriation; Fisheries Activity; Hatchery Operations & Maintenance Subactivity, Hatchery Operations Project) to support the ongoing operation of the FWS' Ouray National Fish Hatchery in Utah.

3. Allocation of $211,000 in "recovery" funds for the San Juan River Basin Recovery Implementation Program to the FWS for fiscal year 2007 to meet FWS' Region 2 expenses managing and implementing the San Juan Recovery Program.

We thank you for your past support and request the Subcommittee's assistance for fiscal year 2007 funding to ensure FWS' continuing financial participation in these vitally important programs.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE HIGHLANDS COALITION, THE LITCHFIELD COUNTY LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS, AND THE GARDEN CLUB OF LITCHFIELD

Thank you for the opportunity to submit comments about the fiscal year 2007 appropriations for the Highlands Conservation Act.

—I urge you to provide full funding of the Highlands Conservation Act.

—I also call your attention to the Litchfield Farms project.

The four-state Highlands region includes the northwestern portion of the state of Connecticut, including the towns of Litchfield, Kent, Salisbury, Cornwall and New Milford, to name only a few of the historic and scenic places nestled into the Litchfield Hills.

Tourism is a major industry and source of employment in the Litchfield Highlands. Our fall foliage and pristine rolling hills attract visitors not only from other states but from the entire world. But we are facing a serious threat.

Our treasured natural resources may be "sprawled" out of existence in the next decade or two. We are in a desperate "save it or pave it" race to preserve our most important environmental assets before they are bulldozed for strip malls and housing developments.

Thus we put an extremely high priority on full funding under the new Highlands Conservation Act. We urge you to provide the entire $10 million authorized, plus the $1 million authorized for USDA Forest Service technical assistance and research in the Highlands area.

This is a new program enacted, with bipartisan support, too late in 2004 to be included in last year's fiscal year 2006 appropriations cycle. Therefore, fiscal year 2007 is the first opportunity to fund this very important and urgently needed program.

The Connecticut Highlands region is facing an inundation of people pushing outward from the major metropolitan areas to our south. For us, protection of our open spaces with their incredible environmental values—drinking water source lands, forests and farms, wildlife and endangered plant and animal habitats, and passive recreation—is a top priority.

Connecticut is putting its own public and private money where its mouth is on this issue.

—Last summer, the state enacted legislation to impose a $30 real estate document recording fee which will generate nearly $15 million annually for matching grants for preserving open space and farmland.

—State bonding authority for open space and farmland preservation also was increased.

—This year, a major push is being made in the state legislature to enact even more bonding authority for land preservation.

—Locally, the town of Litchfield established an "Open Space and Land Acquisition Fund."

—Private citizens are participating through half a dozen area land trusts in raising private funds locally for acquisition of high priority parcels.

—Local corporate, nonprofit and individual donors sponsored the Litchfield Hills Greenprint, a GIS mapping project to identify places that have significant environmental values.

—More than 130 people turned out in the tiny borough of Bantam on a cold February week night to attend a Garden Club public forum on how we could work together to preserve high priority open spaces.

The Litchfield Farms in our town is one of those high value places with especially strong environmental values. This is a 753-acre property spanning two watersheds (Bantam and Naugatuck). It has large areas of wetlands, prime agricultural soils, diverse forests, state-listed endangered species, and extraordinary scenic vistas. In fact, elevations of up to 1,300 feet make it one of the highest points in the Litchfield Township and the adjoining city of Torrington.

This exceptional property is under imminent threat of development. It is difficult to know whether or for how long the window can be kept open for groups to amass the very substantial funds needed to acquire this special land and prevent it from

becoming rolling hills of condos, town houses, starter mansions and shopping centers.

Connecticut's Governor Jodi Rell has designated the Litchfield Farms in the request to the Interior Department jointly submitted by the four Highlands states (Connecticut, New York, New Jersey and Pennsylvania). She asked for $2.5 million for the Litchfield Farms.

Federal support for acquisition of the Litchfield Farms at this $2.5 million level would be possible only if the Highlands Conservation program receives full funding at the $10 million level for land conservation partnership. The Administration's request of $2 million for all four states combined would not be sufficient to assure that the Litchfield Farms could be saved.

A $10 million full-funding appropriation, which would allow $2.5 million for the Litchfield Farms lands, not only would indicate that the federal government places a high value on the Litchfield Farms lands, it also would encourage national, state and local groups to redouble their efforts to raise the additional funds required to acquire these exceptional lands for conservation purposes.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE MOUNTAINEERS

Mr. Chairman and Honorable Members of the Subcommittee: I appreciate the opportunity to present this testimony in support of an appropriation of $1.7 million for the Cascade Checkerboard Program in the Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest in Washington.

The Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest extends more than 140 miles along the western slopes of the Cascade Mountains from the Canadian border to Mt. Rainier National Park. The forest covers portions of Whatcom, Skagit, Snohomish, King, and Pierce Counties. Over 3.5 million people, or 62 percent of the state's population, live within a 70-mile drive of the forest. Another 1.5 million residents of the Vancouver, British Columbia, metro area are also within easy reach of the northern part of the forest. This large population base, coupled with easy road access, makes the Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest one of the most visited national forests in the country.

The central Cascades are bisected east and west by the Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railroad and by Interstate 90. The original railroad through the Snoqualmie Pass was constructed by the Northern Pacific Railway, which received land grants from the federal government in alternating square miles along the route. The legacy of this 19th century land grant system is the large checkerboard ownership pattern that threatens this critical area of wildlife connectivity and migratory movement north and south. Because of the checkerboard pattern in the Central Cascades and the relatively limited amount of protected land, this region has acted as a bottleneck for migratory wildlife. Private timber companies continue to log their land grant parcels and have started to sell off cut over lands for real estate development.

Available for acquisition in fiscal year 2007 are two parcels located in the vicinity of Stampede Pass and Dandy Pass along the crest of the Cascade Mountains. Located less than 50 miles from Seattle, these proposed acquisitions are primarily within the boundaries of the Mt Baker-Snoqualmie NF, with a corner of the Stampede Pass parcel lying in the adjacent Wenatchee NF. In addition to their key role in providing wildlife connectivity, they are very important for recreational purposes.

The 618-acre Stampede Pass parcel, which is available for $975,000, contains two miles of the Pacific Crest National Scenic Trail (PCT). It is a priority of the Pacific Crest Trail Association and its acquisition will provide permanent protection for this segment of the trail.

The 640-acre Dandy Pass parcel lies just south of the PCT and is available for $725,000. Its acquisition will provide additional protection for the landscape visible from the trail. In addition to hiking, visitors can enjoy camping and cross-country skiing. Public ownership will also ensure public access to adjacent Forest Service lands.

Acquisition of these parcels is part of an ongoing, multi-year program of consolidating lands in the central Cascades, which has long been a Forest Service priority. This program seeks to consolidate federal land management priorities and prevent future fragmentation due to subdivision and other development. Fragmented forestlands present difficult and expensive challenges to forest managers with respect to fire suppression, containment and eradication of invasive species, maintaining wildlife habitat, limits on public access, and protection of watersheds. Although several parcels were acquired by the Forest Service through its I–90 Option Lands

project, many more critical parcels, including Stampede Pass and Dandy Pass, also need to be protected.

The acquisitions of the Stampede Pass and Dandy Pass parcels will improve forest management on a landscape level that will enhance recreational activities and secure vital wildlife migration corridors. An fiscal year 2007 appropriation of $1.7 million from the Land and Water Conservation Fund for the Forest Service Cascade Checkerboard program is necessary to bring these lands into protected public ownership.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, the opportunity to present this testimony and for your consideration of this request.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE NATURE CONSERVANCY

Mr. Chairman and members of the Subcommittee, I appreciate this opportunity to present The Nature Conservancy's recommendations for fiscal year 2007 appropriations. My name is Jimmie Powell and I am the Director of Government Relations at the Conservancy.

The Nature Conservancy is an international, non-profit organization dedicated to the conservation of biological diversity. Our mission is to preserve the plants, animals and natural communities that represent the diversity of life on Earth by protecting the lands and waters they need to survive. Our on-the-ground conservation work is carried out in all 50 states and in 27 foreign countries and is supported by approximately one million individual members. We have helped conserve nearly 15 million acres of land in the United States and Canada and more than 102 million acres with local partner organizations globally.

Wildland Fire Management.—The Conservancy commends the President for maintaining stable levels of Hazardous Fuels Reduction funding. We have five priorities to promote the restoration of fire-dependent forests. First, we recommend that the Committee establish funding for emergency fire suppression to avoid the problem of "fire borrowing" that diverts program dollars away from their primary purpose in years when fire suppression needs exceed the annual appropriation. The Conservancy also supports the President's budget direction to allow Forest Service regions to retain unobligated fire suppression funds for use in hazardous fuel reduction in subsequent years as a critical incentive to control suppression costs. Second, we recommend that the Committee direct the agencies to spend Hazardous Fuels Reduction funding on projects that are collaboratively developed (through a Community Wildfire Protection Plan or other collaborative developed forest or watershed plans). Third, restoration of altered fire regimes will, in the long run, result in diminished costs for wildfire suppression. Therefore, we request that the Committee encourage Wildland Fire Use by directing the agencies to report acres burned through Wildland Fire Use as fuels treatments. Fourth, we recommend that the Committee direct the agencies to use hazardous fuel reduction performance measures that include Fire Regime Condition Class as the metric to gauge treatment effectiveness. Fifth, the Conservancy believes that forest health cannot be addressed without developing commercial markets for the wood by-products of restoration. Thus, we support an appropriation of $50 million in the Hazardous Fuels budget line item for implementation of Section 210 of the Energy Policy Act of 2005 (commercial biomass use).

Forest Health Management.—America's forests are under siege by numerous exotic insects and diseases, and the pace of introductions appears to be increasing. We recommend that the Forest Health Management (FHM) program receive $130 million. This is the principal Forest Service program that protects the Nation's forests from economically and ecologically damaging non-native pests and pathogens, including the Asian Longhorned Beetle, Emerald Ash Borer, Hemlock Woolly Adelgid, Sudden Oak Death, Sirex woodwasp, and redbay wilt. Additional funds to this program, for example, are important to help contain the Emerald Ash Borer. This introduced pest threatens ash forests across North America. Its quarantine area now covers nearly 20,000 square miles in Michigan's Lower Peninsula and nearby areas in Ohio and Indiana and Ontario. Expanded USFS engagement would help detect additional infestations, assist in outreach programs designed to curtail movement of firewood and other vectors, and advise states and private landowners on management practices. A particularly important FHM program element is the Early Detection project which provides flexibility to address immediate needs when new pests are discovered. In 2005 and 2006, for example, FHM provided crucial immediate funding to assess the impacts of the redbay wilt in Georgia and South Carolina and two introduced insects in Guam. Sustained investments in this program are essential to containing the growing threat to the ecological and economic values of the

Nation's forest resources caused by an ongoing invasion of introduced insects and pathogens.

Invasive Species.—Next to habitat loss, invasion by non-native species is the most pervasive threat to native biodiversity. The Conservancy supports funding at the President's request, or greater, for the Interdepartmental National Invasive Species Crosscut Budget. It is important to coordinate Federal agency actions to achieve prevention, early detection, rapid response, control and management and restoration of invasive species problems. We also support enhanced funding for three areas identified by DOI as fiscal year 2007 priorities: leafy spurge on the Great Plains, tamarisk in the Southwest and invasive plant control in Florida. We also support continuation of the highly successful program of spartina eradication in Willapa Bay and request $600,000 in refuge operations for Willapa National Wildlife Refuge and $600,000 in targeted Partners for Fish and Wildlife funds for this purpose.

Land and Water Conservation Fund.—We are very concerned with the declining levels of support for the nation's principal source of federal land acquisition funding. The nation is richer because of our historic commitment to protecting biologically significant lands. Yet, development pressures are unrelenting, threatening to degrade nationally significant resources in once remote areas as diverse as the Eastern Shore of Virginia NWR, Georgia's Chattahoochee NF and Montana's Blackfoot Valley. We recommend a funding level of $220 million, the average of funding over the past 5 years and about the same as the President's fiscal year 2005 request. The Conservancy specifically proposes funding of 25 biologically rich land acquisition projects totaling $57.8 million. Priorities include multi-year projects to protect Ivory-billed woodpecker habitat in the Cache River NWR and a key inholding at St. Marks NWR. Several projects, including the Rocky Mountain Front Conservation Area and Northern Tallgrass Prairie NWR, utilize conservation easements to achieve important conservation objectives while maintaining the integrity of working landscapes. We also urge the Subcommittee to restore funding for the state-side of LWCF.

Forest Legacy.—This program is an increasingly popular and successful model of a non-regulatory conservation approach based on partnerships between federal and state governments and private landowners. The huge potential of this program to achieve conservation goals while maintaining sustainable use of private lands requires a significant funding increase. We strongly support an $80 million appropriation for this program, including such priority projects as the Upper Great Lakes Forest in Michigan, North-South Corridor in Rhode Island, Moro Big Pine in Arkansas, and the Pee Dee and Savannah Rivers projects in South Carolina.

Payments in Lieu of Taxes and Refuge Revenue Sharing programs provide payments to counties where land has been taken off the local property tax roles and put into federal ownership. In some counties, protection of significant natural resources impacts the tax base that funds local government services, including schools and public safety. We urge the Committee to provide full funding for these programs and honor the federal government's commitment to impacted communities.

USGS.—We support the President's increases for the new LANDSAT 8, a critically important investment for ecological monitoring in this country and globally. Within the USGS Water Resources programs, we support the $2.325 million increase for streamgages in the National Streamflow Information program.

Following the 2005 hurricanes, biological assessments are needed to map the overall extent of natural resource loss, identify priorities for remedial action and inform decisions regarding rebuilding and recovery of the Gulf coast. The USGS Biological Resources Division through the National Wetlands Research Center in Lafayette, LA is taking the lead for federal agencies in collecting and centralizing information on Gulf coast-wide impacts of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita and has developed a three-year plan for assessment of hurricane impacts. To begin the initial phase of this effort, we request report language that designates $12 million to the National Wetland Research Center for collection and synthesis of data on hurricane impacts to natural resources.

Endangered Species.—The Conservancy supports $90 million for the FWS's Cooperative Endangered Species Fund, an effective and flexible tool for building cooperative, voluntary partnerships. The Conservancy and its partners have used the Habitat Conservation Plan and Recovery Land Acquisition programs to secure key habitat for numerous endangered species in Southern California, as well as Atlantic salmon in Maine, Karner Blue Butterflies in New York and endangered freshwater mussels in Tennessee. We have also worked with states to develop HCP Plans funded by this program, including the bi-state Tennessee and Kentucky Northern Cumberland's plan. The requested increase reflects the importance and unmet public funding needs of collaborative conservation strategies to protect critically rare species on non-federal land, and state and local acquisition of habitat necessary for the

survival of listed and candidate species. We have also worked with states to implement HCP plans.

State Wildlife Grants.—The Conservancy strongly supports this program and concurs in the Teaming with Wildlife Coalition in recommending funding of $85 million. State wildlife agencies and their many partners are working to protect wildlife habitat by implementing the comprehensive wildlife conservation plans that were completed last fall.

Cooperative Conservation.—Cooperative conservation partnerships are a cornerstone of the Conservancy's work around the world. By finding common ground with communities and developers, ranchers and farmers, government agencies and corporations, we develop creative and practical solutions that balance human needs with conservation goals. The Administration's Cooperative Conservation Initiative supports innovative partnerships between private landowners, local communities, states and the federal government. We endorse the President's request of $24.4 million for the Landowner Incentive Program and $9.4 million for Private Stewardship Grants. We support the $15 million for the FWS Coastal Program. We also support the President's request of $20.296 million for the BLM, FWS and NPS Challenge Cost Share programs. These programs leverage appropriated dollars through 1:1 matches with State and private partners to implement important restoration and protection projects. We support $50 million for the Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program. The Conservancy supports the Administration's request of $3 million for the National Fish Habitat Initiative.

Migratory Bird Programs.—The Conservancy supports funding equal to or greater than the President's request of $45,000,000 for the North American Wetlands Conservation Fund. More than $1.6 billion in partner contributions has been raised to match $573 million in federal funds in order to save 20.6 million acres of wetlands. The Conservancy supports an increase of funding to $15.1 million for Joint Ventures.

Coral Reefs.—The Conservancy supports the President's request for an additional $1.2 million to implement Local Action Strategies to address threats to coral reefs. These strategies are the product of collaborative efforts between federal agencies, states and territories, and local NGOs. We also support an increase in funding to $1 million for the Coral Reef Initiative.

International Programs.—The Conservancy, as part of an alliance of major international conservation groups, supports the International Conservation Budget, which calls for $10.5 million to the FWS' Multinational Species Conservation Funds. This reflects $2 million each for the African and Asian Elephants and the Great Ape fund, the same for the new Marine Turtle fund, and $2.5 million for the Rhinoceros/Tiger fund. We support $5 million for the Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Fund. We support $8 million for the Forest Service's International Programs.

Environmental Protection Agency.—The EPA Gulf of Mexico Program works to protect the health and productivity of the Gulf of Mexico and is the only federal program solely focused on the five Gulf coast states. The Program's successes have led to an ever increasing demand to extend their technical services to reach more coastal communities across the region. The Program was well on its way toward helping build more resilient coastal communities before the historic storm season of 2005, and the demand for the Program's assistance has continued to rise as the Gulf coast rebuilds. In an effort to achieve long-term protection of the Gulf of Mexico and ensure environmental and economic recovery from the 2005 hurricanes, we support $10 million for the EPA Gulf of Mexico program. We also support $22.7 million for the Great Lakes National Program Office. This program funds and conducts projects to protect, maintain and restore the chemical, biological and physical integrity of the Great Lakes—the largest freshwater ecosystem on Earth.

Thank you for the opportunity to present The Nature Conservancy's recommendations for the Interior and Related Agencies appropriations bill.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE TOWN OF OPHIR, COLORADO

Mr. Chairman and Honorable Members of the Committee: As Mayor of the Town of Ophir located in southwest Colorado, I am writing to respectfully request that $2.5 million be allocated to the U.S. Forest Service's fiscal year 2007 budget from the Land and Water Conservation Fund. These funds will be used for the first phase of a public purchase of 1,200 acres of privately owned patented mining claims in the Ophir Valley. During the first phase, the Forest Service would acquire 600 acres of this incomparable Colorado landscape. An additional $2.5 million LWCF appropriation will be needed in fiscal year 2008 to complete this outstanding land conservation project.

This project enjoys broad and deep community support in San Miguel County, and throughout southwest Colorado, for the following reasons:

(1) The Ophir Valley is one of Colorado's most outstanding places, and is a cherished corner of San Miguel County. Against a backdrop of unsurpassed alpine scenery, the Valley offers an abundance of recreational opportunities for residents and visitors. Hiking, camping, mountain biking, cross-country skiing, four-wheeling, and fishing are all popular pastimes. In addition, the Valley supports habitat for the Canadian lynx, a federally listed threatened species, and provides important habitat for the endangered Uncompahgre fritillary butterfly and other sensitive species. It also contains the headwaters of the Howards Fork, a key tributary to the San Miguel River, which sustains globally rare streamside habitats.

(2) Federal acquisition of this property will facilitate improved public lands management in eastern San Miguel County and will protect access to surrounding public lands. The property to be acquired consists of patented mining claims that occur as inholdings within surrounding national forest system lands. Purchasing these inholdings will ensure that they can be managed for their natural and recreational values in a manner that is consistent with management of adjacent lands already in public ownership. Importantly, acquisition of the property will guarantee access to surrounding public lands, and will help avoid conflicts between traditional public access expectations and private property rights.

(3) The current property owner, Mr. Glenn Pauls, is a willing seller. Mr. Pauls has purchased the mining claims that comprise his property from many different sellers over the last several years. He has offered them for sale to the public through the Trust for Public Land (TPL), a national non-profit land conservation organization with a successful track record of acquiring thousands of acres of mining claims in the area under the Red Mountain Project. The opportunity that Mr. Pauls has afforded the public to acquire such a large number of mining claims from a single seller is a rare one that should not be missed.

The Town of Ophir is located in San Miguel County, approximately 10 miles south of Telluride, in an alpine mountain valley at an elevation of 9,600 feet, surrounded by mountain peaks and ridges rising to 13,000 feet. Incorporated in 1881, Ophir has a long and colorful history, beginning as a mining town, then becoming a ghost town, and now is a thriving residential mountain community. The mountainsides surrounding the town, are as of yet undeveloped, but these hillsides are checkerboarded with fee simple patented lode claims, which are developable, privately owned inholdings within the national forest.

Recognizing the development potential of the patented claims, the Ophir community has actively sought to protect this stunning area from sprawl development for more than 12 years through a town-funded and staffed Open Space Protection Program. With limited financial resources, the town has shown its commitment to conservation over the past 15 plus years. By working cooperatively with landowners, Ophir has acquired and conserved over 160 acres of remote lands, which are protected through conservation easements and are open to the public for recreational purposes.

This is an exciting regional project. The scenic value of the high country in the San Juan mountains has long been recognized by San Miguel, Ouray, and San Juan counties. All three counties have portions of dramatic mountain jeep passes within their jurisdictions. The Ophir project is part of a larger San Juan Skyway initiative to protect key landscapes and to develop and protect outdoor recreation opportunities. Protection of the high country open space will protect scenic vistas that are an important asset to the regional economic engine.

We want to thank you for your support and leadership in conserving Colorado's land and water resources. Protection of the Ophir Valley with LWCF funding will contribute greatly to ensuring that Colorado remains the special place that it is.

Thank you for your consideration of this request.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE WILDERNESS SOCIETY

Mr. Chairman, The Wilderness Society (TWS) would like to thank you for the opportunity to provide recommendations and comments on the fiscal year 2007 Department of the Interior and Related Agencies Appropriations bill. On behalf of the more than 250,000 members and supporters of TWS, a 70-year-old organization dedicated to preserving America's last remaining wild places, I provide below our fiscal year 2007 funding recommendations for a number of important conservation programs.

Adequate funding for the programs discussed below is vital to protect America's wild areas and environmental values, essential components of our American identity

and our heritage. The land and our relationship with it infuse our history, our heroes, and our hearts. We hope to work with you to find the resolve and funding to protect those values that are a national birthright.

Land and Water Conservation Fund.—The Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) is our nation's premiere tool to create and preserve parks, forests, wildlife refuges and open space. And while the administration says its budget funds the program at $533 million, in reality the fiscal year 2007 budget provides only $85 million for LWCF's core programs—funding federal land acquisition at $84 million and eliminating stateside assistance. As it did last year, the budget then attempts to cloak this glaring shortfall by declaring more than a dozen other ongoing programs to be part of the LWCF. National treasures from the Everglades to our neighborhood parks will suffer from the resulting net loss in funds for expanding and consolidating parks, refuges and forests.

We urge the Subcommittee to provide $450 million for Federal Land Acquisition and reinstate state-side LWCF to $100 million. For decades, LWCF has been a premier tool to fund two things: federal land acquisition and the state assistance program. Again this year, in an attempt to make LWCF look full, the Administration shoehorns in numerous additional unrelated programs. This was done to mask real cuts in funding for land acquisition. Funding in the President's Budget for National Park Service, Fish and Wildlife Service, Bureau of Land Management and U.S. Forest Service land acquisition is cut from a proposed $130 million in fiscal year 2006 to $84 million proposed for fiscal year 2007. Americans have long relied on federal land acquisition to protect and complete its parks, forests and refuges, and the Administration's cuts would result in smaller, more degraded lands and fewer recreation experiences—and the words "Land and Water Conservation Fund" would lose the meaning they have had since 1965.

We support the administration's requested project list for LWCF and Forest Legacy. In addition to the administration's projects, we recommend LWCF federal land acquisition funding for 43 priority projects for fiscal year 2007, listed in Appendix A. Federal acquisition of these lands is necessary to address immediate environmental threats with the potential for permanent damage, and to help protect and restore wildlands of significance (e.g. those with rare ecosystems, endangered species, and/or other special qualities).

Forest Legacy.—We support $80 million for the Forest Legacy program. Since its inception, the Forest Legacy program has proven an extremely popular means to combat the conversion of privately-owned timberlands to development. According to the recent USDA Forest Service report, "Forests on the edge," over 40 million acres of private forestlands are likely to be developed in the next three decades, threatening critical water and other ecological resources. In fiscal year 2007, 43 states submitted 91 projects totaling $204 million in need from Forest Legacy. Fourteen states that submitted projects were excluded completely from the President's budget. Funding to the Forest Legacy program must rise to respond to these increasing development pressures and better meet demand from participating states.

ADDITIONAL AGENCY APPROPRIATIONS RECOMMENDATIONS

Fish and Wildlife Service.—The National Wildlife Refuge System is suffering under a $2.5 billion backlog in operations and maintenance. Consequently, we strongly recommend that funding to the Refuge System be increased over the fiscal year 2006 levels, in an effort to begin to counteract the massive backlogs. We urge the subcommittee to appropriate $800 million for the Operations and Maintenance Program to carry out necessary repairs, fund staff positions, and support development of Comprehensive Conservation Plans.

Forest Service: Wildfire Management.—Recognizing that borrowing funds for wildfire suppression caused disruptions in management, Congress established a suppression account in 2004. We support maintaining this account and recommend it remain intact, even during funding emergencies, so critical programs are not compromised by borrowing. We also urge the Committee to replace any funds used. Up to 85 percent of the land around communities at highest risk for wildfires is state or private. State and Local Assistance programs aid these states and localities, including State Fire Assistance and the Economic Action Program (EAP). We recommend that no less than 20 percent of the five-year average National Fire Plan (NFP) appropriations, $570 million, be allocated to State and Local Assistance Programs, with 50 percent of those funds, $285 million, targeted specifically to State Fire Assistance. We suggest $39.5 million for EAP in fiscal year 2007. We recommend that, in fiscal year 2007 and until an alternative program is developed, base EAP receive at least the program's five-year average, $27 million. We also rec-

ommend that the NFP sub-program be restored to $12.5 million and that NFP funding be retained in any alternative program.

BLM's Oil and Gas Program.—We urge you to reduce the Bureau of Land Management's (BLM) proposed budget of $115 million for its oil and gas program by $20 million. Though the BLM has requested an unprecedented $26 million increase in appropriations for its oil and gas program for fiscal year 2007, the subcommittee should be aware that the BLM is receiving an additional $20 million "off budget" from lease rentals to fund seven "pilot permitting programs" established by the Energy Policy. In effect, the BLM is asking for a $46 million increase in funding for its oil and gas program, while the BLM's request neglects other high priority programs, such as: the National Landscape Conservation System; Wildlife and Fisheries; Soil, Water, and Air; Riparian Management; and Recreation.

We recommend that the subcommittee take the following actions with respect to the BLM's oil and gas program request:

(1) Limit the increase in appropriation for the BLM's oil and gas program to $6 million, given the fact that the BLM is receiving an additional $20 million "off budget" for its seven "pilot programs." Also, of the $6 million increase, $2.9 million should be allocated for Inspection and Enforcement activities, with report language directing that such funds and personnel may not be diverted for other oil and gas program responsibilities;

(2) Adopt the Administration's proposal to amend Sec. 365 of the Energy Policy Act by striking Sec. 365(i) which prohibits the BLM from requiring fees from permit applicants to cover the administrative costs of APD processing;

(3) Direct the BLM to stop diverting BLM appropriations from other programs to the oil and gas program; and

(4) Prohibit the BLM from initiating a commercial oil shale leasing program until the subcommittee has received and reviewed a report after the completion of the existing oil shale research and development leasing program.

We recommend that the $20 million in savings be used to rebalance funding for other BLM programs, with increases in funding for the National Landscape Conservation System; Wildlife and Fisheries; Soil, Water, and Air; Riparian Management; Wilderness and Recreation Resources Management; and a sufficient allocation to the National Academy of Sciences to complete the coalbed methane study authorized in Sec. 1811 of the Energy Policy Act.

National Landscape Conservation System.—We urge the committee to increase the Administration's fiscal year 2007 budget for the BLM's National Landscape Conservation System (NLCS) by $11.3 million, for operations and maintenance, to provide a total of $46 million to conserve the unique National Monuments, Conservation Areas, Trails, Rivers, and Wilderness, and Wilderness Study Areas that comprise the 26 million acre System. This would restore funding levels to those proposed by the President in fiscal year 2006. Priority unmet needs include law enforcement, resource monitoring, and cultural resource protection. We also ask the committee to support any member requests for additional funding for NLCS units in their districts. These requested increases could be funded in part with some of the $20 million in savings from the oil and gas program that we propose. To promote greater management transparency and accountability for the NLCS, we urge the committee to request expenditure and accomplishment reports for each of the System's Monuments and Conservation Areas for fiscal year 2006, and a projected cross cut budget for 2007 that includes expenditures by area and subactivity.

Land Sales.—We urge the subcommittee to exclude from its bill and report any language that would amend existing law to provide for such asset sales.

Artic North Slope Oil and Gas.—The budget should not assume that in 2006 Congress will pass legislation to authorize energy development in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. To date, all attempts to authorize leasing have failed. If any reference to a leasing program in Arctic National Wildlife Refuge remains, adopt report language prohibiting BLM from conducting the baseline studies and environmental impacts analysis that the National Wildlife Refuge System Administration Act mandates the Fish and Wildlife Service has the authority to complete.

TABLE A: RECOMMENDED FEDERAL LWCF PROJECTS FOR FISCAL YEAR 2007—TWS LWCF PRIORITY LIST FISCAL YEAR 2007

State	Project	Request
AL	Alabama National Forests	$1,500,000
AZ	Coconino NF (Packard Ranch)	5,500,000
CA	Big Sur Ecosystem (Rancho Calera Phase I)	2,000,000
CA	Carrizo Plain National Monument	500,000

TABLE A: RECOMMENDED FEDERAL LWCF PROJECTS FOR FISCAL YEAR 2007—TWS LWCF PRIORITY LIST FISCAL YEAR 2007—Continued

State	Project	Request
CO	McInnis Canyons National Conservation Area	1,100,000
CO	Arapaho NWR (Burr Ranch Phase I)	3,200,000
CO	Uncompahgre NF (Ophir Valley Phase I)	2,500,000
CO	Canyons of the Ancients National Monument	1,100,000
CT	Stewart McKinney NWR (Menunketsuc Saltmarsh Meadow)	1,000,000
FL	St. Marks NWR	1,700,000
FL	Suwannee Wildlife Corridor/Pinhook Swamp	2,000,000
FL	Florida National Scenic Trail	2,000,000
GA	Georgia Mountains	2,700,000
KY	Daniel Boone NF	4,615,000
KY	Cumberland Gap NHP (Fern Lake Watershed Phase II)	2,500,000
LA	Tensas River NWR (Chicago Mill Phase IV)	1,750,000
MA	Cape Cod NS (North of Highland Campground)	6,100,000
ME	Rachel Carson NWR	650,000
MN	Superior NF (Long Island)	2,000,000
MS	Lower Yazoo Basin, Delta NF	2,500,000
NC	Croatan NF (Onslow Bight)	5,000,000
NC	Uwharrie National Recreational Trail	1,600,000
NH	Lake Umbagog National Wildlife Refuge	1,000,000
NH/VT/MA/CT	Silvio O. Conte NFWR	4,000,000
OR	Pacific Crest Trail, Sky King Cole Ranch	1,500,000
OR	Pacific Crest Trail, Cascade-Siskiyou National Monument, Oregon	1,500,000
SC	Francis Marion Sumter NF	4,685,000
TN	Tenessee Mountains	3,000,000
UT	Colorado River SRMA (Westwater Ranch Phase II)	1,300,000
UT	Bear River Migratroy Bird Refuge (Rolfe Phase II, Christensen)	726,000
UT	Bonneville Shoreline Trail (Draper Phase II, North Ogden)	3,000,000
VA	Jefferson NF (Black Lick Char-Lo Timberlands & Appalachian Trail)	2,850,000
VT	Green Mountain NF (Broad Brook Watershed Phase II)	1,100,000
WA	Cascade Checkerboard (Stampede Pass, Dandy Pass)	1,700,000
WI	Chequamegon-Nicolet NF-Wisconsin Wild Waterways (Venison Creek and Indian Farms)	2,500,000
AL	Cumberland Mountains Preserve	1,185,000
AL	Mobile Delta	1,000,000
AZ	Cedar Springs	2,200,000
ME	Grafton Notch	2,000,000
ME	Lower Penobscot Forest	5,500,000
MN	Sugar Hills	750,000
NC	Whitehurst State Forest	4,500,000
NC	Clarendon Plantation	2,500,000
NH	Willard Pond/Robb Reservoir	3,000,000
NH	Phillips Brook	3,500,000
NJ	Sparta Mountain South, phase II	2,100,000
NY	Tahawus	5,000,000
PA	Birdsboro Waters	300,000
SC	Pee Dee River	2,500,000
SC	Savannah River	2,500,000
VT	Orange County Headwaters	1,542,000
VT	Adams Pond	1,167,000

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE THE WILDERNESS SOCIETY

INTRODUCTION

The Wilderness Society (TWS) appreciates this opportunity to provide recommendations and comments on fiscal year 2007 budget appropriations for wildfire management in the Department of the Interior and Related Agencies Appropriations bill. There are three areas in which we would like to provide recommendations or convey concerns: (1) maintaining wildfire suppression funding, (2) insufficient funding for State and Local Assistance programs, particularly State Fire Assistance, and (3) the elimination the Forest Service's Economic Action Program (EAP).

WILDFIRE SUPPRESSION FUNDING

Over the last five years over $14.24 billion has been appropriated to the National Fire Plan,[1] in categories including preparedness, suppression, hazardous fuels reduction, and state and local assistance. Suppression funds are used to suppress wildland fires that occur or threaten public lands administered by the Department of the Interior and Forest Service or other lands covered by federal fire protection agreements. The cost of suppression has grown significantly in recent years because of prolonged drought, the build-up of hazardous fuels, and expansion of communities into wildlands. Suppression funds generally account for about 40 percent of the National Fire Plan budget request each year and are usually based on the average costs for the previous 10 years, adjusted for inflation. However, in the past appropriated dollars for suppression have fallen far short, and even with emergency appropriations, have failed on many occasions to meet the need. As a result, the agencies have had to borrow money from other programs to fund their suppression activities. Recognizing that past borrowing of funds from other agency programs for wildland fire suppression caused project cancellations, strained relationships with partners, and disruptions in management, Congress provided emergency funding intended to preclude this practice in August 2004 through a supplemental appropriation of $500 million ($100 million to the Department of the Interior and $400 million to the Forest Service). Congress also included a $500 million supplemental to provide additional wildland fire suppression funds in its fiscal year 2005 appropriations for the Forest Service and the Department of the Interior.

The 2005 fire season was relatively less active than normal and, as a result, funds remained in this supplemental suppression account at the beginning of fiscal year 2006. It was during this time that the Administration proposed to rescind a portion of this account, $500 million, to help make up for the cost of Hurricane Katrina. Firefighters, members of Congress, and environmental groups, including TWS, criticized this proposal. This rescission was not included in the final legislation passed to help off-set the costs of Hurricane Katrina.

The Wilderness Society supports the maintenance of this supplemental suppression account and recommends that it remain intact, even when the nation is faced with future emergency funding needs. If funds from this supplemental suppression account are obligated elsewhere the agencies are forced to borrow funds from other programs, often those very programs—hazardous fuels reduction and community assistance—that represent the best hope of decreasing the damage and bringing down the costs associated with wildland fire. These potential benefits are lost when the funding these programs require is traded off for suppression efforts. In addition, this supplemental suppression account will aid the agencies in planning for more long-term needs, like restoration, because they will no longer face the annual cycle of program disruptions and emergency funding requirements precipitated by suppression underfunding. Severe drought conditions in many parts of the West, the expansion of the wildland urban interface, and build ups of hazardous fuels are likely to make for a severe wildfire season this year. If the agencies are forced to use these funds from this supplemental suppression account because costs exceed their original suppression appropriations, we encourage Congress to provide additional funding to make up for any funds used so the agencies are not forced to again borrow from other programs to fund future suppression needs.

While this supplemental suppression account will help to reduce the negative impacts associated with transferring funds from other accounts, it is a short-term solution. Longer-term solutions for containing suppression costs are also needed. Congress recognized this when it required the Department of Agriculture to establish a cost-control review panel to examine and report on fire suppression costs for wildfires that exceed $10,000,000 and required that the Departments of Interior and Agriculture submit a joint report on cost-containment measures. The Wilderness Society supports these efforts to examine wildfire suppression costs and further recommends that other cost-containment measures be considered, including changing incentive structures to encourage Wildland Fire Use, when appropriate.

STATE AND LOCAL ASSISTANCE—STATE FIRE ASSISTANCE

Comprehensive fire management inherently transcends land ownership boundaries. In 2001, federal planners identified 11,376 "communities at risk" (66 FR 751–777) as an indication of the extent of the land ownership problem facing fire managers. TWS research has shown that up to 85 percent of the land around communities that is at the highest risk for wildfires is state or private. These private lands

[1] Data source: National Fire Plan website www.fireplan.gov

must be integrated into landscape-scale problem definition and fire management planning. As such, State and Local Assistance programs have been designed to help states and localities promote fire-adapted communities in fire-resilient landscapes, one of the most important of which is State Fire Assistance because it provides the most crucial benefit in balancing risk reduction efforts between federal and non-federal lands. The State Fire Assistance Program provides technical and financial assistance to states for grants and agreements with communities to implement fire risk reduction activities, including the removal of hazardous fuels, fire prevention campaigns, personnel training, equipment availability, Community Wildfire Protection Planning, and FIREWISE—a public education program to assist communities located near fire-prone lands.

Unfortunately, the President's Budget for fiscal year 2007 plans to reduce the State Fire Assistance program, sending the message that the goal of safer communities is not a top priority. Already woefully underfunded, State Fire Assistance is proposed for a 30 percent cut in the fiscal year 2007 budget, from $78.7 million to $56.1 million. Of the $14.24 billion appropriated to the National Fire Plan in the last five years, less than 11 percent, or approximately $1.56 billion, has been directed to fire management activities by non-federal partners.[2] To improve the effectiveness and efficiency of national fire management, better parity simply must exist between appropriations allocated to federal and non-federal land and fire managers. Accordingly, The Wilderness Society recommends that no less than 20 percent of the five-year average National Fire Plan appropriations be allocated to the State and Local Assistance Program generally, and that 50 percent of those additional resources be targeted specifically to the State Fire Assistance line-item. Total federal appropriations to the National Fire Plan over the last five years equal approximately $14.24 billion, and $2.85 billion represents an approximate yearly average expenditure in those five years. As such, no less than $570 million, or 20 percent of that averaged total, should target State and Local Assistance programs. Because of the importance of State Fire Assistance, no less than 50 percent of additional resources afforded State and Local Assistance, or approximately $285 million, should target specifically the State Fire Assistance program. $285 million amounts to only 10 percent of the average total NFP appropriations.

To reach this goal, The Wilderness Society recommends a steady increase over three years (see Figure 1). The first year, should reflect a 75 percent increase of the $82 million historical average for State Fire Assistance, resulting in a $144 million appropriation. In the second year, a 50 percent increase to $216 million. In the last year, an approximately 30 percent increase would realize the $285 million target appropriation.

STATE AND LOCAL ASSISTANCE—ECONOMIC ACTION PROGRAM

The Forest Service's Economic Action Program (EAP) was designed with the intent to strengthen and diversify the economic health of communities that are dependent on natural resources over the long-term. While we realize that this program is in transition and its structure is likely to change, one of the key functions of EAP is to provide one of, if not the only, source of funding that communities can use to add wildfire risk assessments and defensible space planning to their community action plans. Since 2002, EAP has experienced consistent funding reductions, from almost $50 million to approximately $10 million and is proposed for elimination in the fiscal year 2007 budget. In order for the Forest Service to achieve the goals they have set for the Economic Action Program, more funding is required. We suggest a total of $39.5 million for EAP in fiscal year 2007. We recommend that, in fiscal year 2007 and until such time as an alternative program that retains EAP's critical elements is developed, the base EAP program receive at least the average funding level for the program over the past 5 years, $27 million. We also recommend that the National Fire Plan sub-program of EAP, which provided dedicated funding for communities to add wildfire risk assessments and defensible space planning to their action plans until 2003, be restored at a level of $12.5 million and that this dedicated funding for community fire planning be retained in any alternative program developed.

[2] Specifically those line items under The National Fire Plan associated with state and local assistance budget heading, including Forest Health Management (Coop Lands), State Fire Assistance and Volunteer Fire Assistance under Wildland Fire Management and Forest Health Management (Coop Lands), State Fire Assistance, Volunteer Fire Assistance, Forests Stewardship, Forest Legacy Program, Urban & Community Forestry, Economic Action Program, and Forest Research & Information Analysis under State and Private Forestry Appropriations. Data source: USFA Budget Justifications 2004, 2005, 2006.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE WILDERNESS SOCIETY

Mr. Chairman and Honorable Members of the Committee: I appreciate the opportunity to present this testimony in support of a $2 million appropriation from the Land and Water Conservation Fund for the critical land protection in the Superior National Forest in Minnesota.

The Wilderness Society seeks to deliver to future generations an unspoiled legacy of wilderness and all the precious values it holds. I write with the support of our membership of 250,000 voices for the critical land protection of Long Island, on Burntside Lake, near Ely, Minnesota and within the Superior National Forest.

I grew up in Ely, where my parents owned and operated the area's largest canoe trip outfitting business. My parents have owned property on Burntside Lake since 1943 and I personally have owned property on Burntside Lake since 1969. I am familiar with the immense development pressure on this marvelous lake. Long Island is the largest undeveloped island in Burntside Lake and is an ecological and recreational asset to the area. At over 10,000 acres in size, Burntside Lake is an important recreational area with two entry points into the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness "BWCAW", five campsites and six public canoe launching points. It is also one of the few lakes in Minnesota that support a natural cold water fishery and is renowned for its big lake trout and walleye while supporting one of the largest populations of loons in the state.

I have worked to protect the BWCAW and the Superior National Forest my entire life. I believe that Long Island would be an outstanding addition to the Superior National Forest for its ecological and recreational qualities and its significant historical and cultural value. Long Island is the stunning view shed of writer and conservationist Sigurd Olson's legendary Listening Point. Listening Point was a place of inspiration for Olson where he wrote his books and crafted aspects of the 1964 Wilderness Act. I have spent time at Listening Point with Sigurd and Elizabeth Olson and know first-hand that it is a special place.

While Listening Point is protected today, the view across the lake featuring Long Island is not. It is a place where many people go to appreciate Sigurd Olson and the land for which he so eloquently advocated in his writing. If offers the opportunity to look at and enjoy undisturbed landscapes that are a healthy remnant of the great forests that once covered Minnesota. Over 200,000 people visit the BWCAW annually, which is a testament to the appeal of this beautiful wilderness landscape and the need to continue to preserve this area. Generations of canoeists from YMCA Camp Widjiwagan and YMCA Family Camp DuNord, both located on Burntside Lake, have paddled by and continue to travel the waterways of the north country that Olson described.

Public acquisition of the Long Island property will ensure that the attributes of the northwoods region so treasured by its many visitors will be protected in perpetuity. The Land and Water Conservation Fund has in recent years been underfunded for the protection of these special, undisturbed places, and an appropriation of $2 million for Minnesota's forests would be a step in the right direction towards fulfilling the intent of this fund.

An appropriation of $2 million from the Land and Water Conservation Fund in fiscal year 2007 for the Superior National Forest will secure the acquisition of Long Island, protect its critical natural resources for the public, and maintain the integrity of the great northwoods.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for the opportunity to present this testimony.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE WILDLIFE SOCIETY

The Wildlife Society appreciates the opportunity to provide comments on the proposed fiscal year 2007 budget for the Department of Interior and Related Agencies. The Wildlife Society is the association of over 8,000 professional wildlife biologists and managers dedicated to excellence in wildlife stewardship through science and education. The Society supports all aspects of federal programs that benefit wildlife and wildlife habitat.

U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

Funding assistance for state wildlife agencies is one of the highest priority needs for wildlife at this time, providing essential resources to conserve wildlife, fish, and habitat, and to prevent further declines in at-risk wildlife populations in every state. We appreciate the Administration's recognition of the importance of the State Wildlife Grants Program through the $74 million request, but we strongly encourage even greater funding to achieve species conservation. We recommend that $85 mil-

lion be appropriated for State Wildlife Grants in fiscal year 2007. States have recently completed their comprehensive wildlife conservation strategies (Wildlife Action Plans) as mandated by Congress. These Wildlife Action Plans detail each state's species of greatest concern, their related habitats, limitations, and related needed conservation actions. With the completion of all 56 state and territorial Wildlife Action Plans, it is critical this program receive increased funding to assist states with the actual implementation of on-the-ground actions associated with the wildlife action plans.

The North American Wetlands Conservation Act is a cooperative, non-regulatory, incentive based program that has shown unprecedented success in restoring wetlands, waterfowl, and other migratory bird populations. We are pleased by the Administration's support of this program through its $42 million request, but ask you to recognize that the authorized funding level for this program in fiscal year 2007 is $75 million. Therefore, we recommend that you appropriate the full $75 million for the North American Wetlands Conservation Fund in fiscal year 2007.

The Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Act provides a broad-spectrum approach to bird conservation. The Wildlife Society recommends that Congress fund the Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Act at its full authorization of $5 million in fiscal year 2007. The Administrations budget would include the Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Act funding in the Multinational Species Fund. A total of $8.217 million was requested for the Multinational Species Conservation Fund, with only $3.96 million for Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation. Again, we urge full funding of $5 million in fiscal year 2007 for the Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Act.

The Multinational Species Conservation Fund supports six often neglected species groups important to international wildlife conservation: African and Asian Elephants, Great Apes, Marine Turtles, Rhinoceroses, and Tigers. All of the fund species are threatened by loss of habitat, exploitation, poaching, or disease. Funds for these critical programs have been slashed by $2.1 million in the President's proposed budget. We are concerned that the President's proposal fails to adequately fund the Multinational Species Conservation Fund, and recommend that $2.0 million be added to the Multinational Species Conservation Fund to be evenly applied across program elements. This will restore programs to the fiscal year 2006 level and add additional funds for pressing challenges such as increasing Hawksbill turtle programs in the Caribbean and dealing with serious disease challenges in the Great Ape Colonies of Africa. In the future, we recommend that Congress move toward appropriating $2 million for each species group (elephants, tigers, apes, rhinos, and marine turtles) each year.

We are pleased by the $27.39 million request for Migratory Bird Management (Conservation and Monitoring) in fiscal year 2007, especially since public interest in migratory birds and the need for migratory bird management are increasing. However, we strongly recommend an additional $1 million for Migratory Bird Management to meet program objectives for migratory bird conservation in the future.

The Wildlife Society is concerned by the proposed decrease in the Operations and Maintenance budget of the National Wildlife Refuge System. We do, however, support the increased funding requested for the Wildlife and Habitat Management and Refuge Operations. There is a tremendous backlog of funding needs that must be addressed in the future to successfully meet the Refuge System's mission of conserving fish and wildlife. Several years ago, The Wildlife Society, along with 16 other organizations, created the Cooperative Alliance for Refuge Enhancement (CARE) specifically to address this growing backlog. The Wildlife Society continues to support the CARE recommendations to eliminate the backlog of Refuge operations and maintenance and also strongly urges these recommendations be used to guide future budget requests.

The Wildlife Society supports maintaining the funding levels for all subactivities within the Endangered Species Program, and is especially concerned with the proposed reduction of $7.7 million for the Recovery Program. Endangered species recovery efforts can ultimately lead to delisting actions that result in significant benefits to species through State management efforts. This proposed decrease in funding would negatively impact the ability to form important partnerships with State fish and wildlife agencies. We recommend that Congress restore the $7.7 million to the Endangered Species Program's base budget for use in recovery efforts.

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

The Administration's fiscal year 2007 budget for BLM's Wildlife Management program is $28.387 million, a $221,000 increase over the fiscal year 2006 enacted level. This increase will allow the Bureau to address, with its Partners, the loss of sage-

brush habitat and associated impacts to sage grouse and other sagebrush dependent wildlife. The Wildlife Society supports this effort provided it is carried out in a manner consistent with, and complimentary to, ongoing state sage grouse management efforts. The Wildlife Society strongly urges Congress to increase BLM's fiscal year 2007 Wildlife Management budget by an additional $3 million to meet ongoing wildlife issues.

The President has requested an $181,000 increase in BLM's Threatened and Endangered Species Management Program for fiscal year 2007. However, this request ignores the agency's March 2001 Report to Congress which called for a doubling of the current Threatened and Endangered Species budget to $48 million and an additional 70 staff positions over 5 years. The fiscal year 2007 request is woefully inadequate to meet identified needs or allow the BLM to carry out its responsibilities under the ESA. In view of this gross inequity between resource needs versus funding levels, The Wildlife Society strongly encourages Congress to add an additional $5 million to the Threatened and Endangered Species fiscal year 2007 budget.

BLM manages over 23 million acres of riparian or wetland areas, supporting some of the most ecologically diverse plant and animal communities on public lands. The Wildlife Society supports BLM efforts in riparian areas, but remains concerned that the requested $21.598 million for this program, which is a $526,000 decrease, is insufficient to meet all of the identified needs. We request that Congress add $1.5 million to this program, and urge BLM to continue its coordination with State fish and wildlife agencies in order to achieve optimal program results.

U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES DIVISION

As a member of the USGS Coalition, The Wildlife Society supports $1.2 billion for USGS in fiscal year 2007. This level of funding would enable the USGS to meet new challenges while continuing to provide data for land-use management, sustainable natural resource development, economic growth, and enhanced security from natural and manmade hazards. More investment is needed to strengthen USGS partnerships, improve monitoring networks, produce high-quality digital geospatial data and deliver the best possible science to address societally important problems.

We are discouraged to see that uncontrollables for the Biological Resources Division (BRD) are not fully funded in the budget request. We strongly recommend that the fiscal year 2007 BRD budget be increased by $1.07 million to fully fund uncontrollables.

Fiscal year 2001 was the last time Congress fully funded the Cooperative Research Units, thereby allowing unit productivity to rise to record levels. Since that was achieved—at a level of $14 million—there has been an erosion of available fiscal resources, resulting in a current staffing vacancy of 19 positions and a decrease in productivity, in order to make up for the budget shortfall. In addition, the expansion of the new unit at the University of Nebraska has been hindered by the inability to fully staff this new effort in spite of significant contributions by the cooperating partners. Applied research efforts and dissemination of research information to states and other cooperators has suffered due to the lack of funding for publication of results. In many states, the Cooperative Research Units are the research arm of the state fish and wildlife agency, and, as a result, excellent cooperative relationships have been established. The Wildlife Society strongly recommends Congress increase the fiscal year 2007 budget for the Cooperative Research Units by $2.562 million to achieve full funding and full function.

In 2003, the BRD embarked on a very limited program to provide partial funding to state wildlife agencies for Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) research. This funding is critical to permit the states to address this expanding disease. During the past year, three new states were CWD positive for the first time in wild deer populations (New York, West Virginia, and Kansas). Without research into the epidemiology and impacts of CWD on cervid populations, it will be difficult to develop adequate management methods to address the disease. The Wildlife Society recommends Congress increase the fiscal year 2007 budget by $5 million for additional chronic wasting disease research, with $3 million designated for cooperative grants to state wildlife agencies.

The advent of highly pathogenic Asian strain H5N1 avian influenza (H5N1) in Asia, Europe, Africa, and the Middle East has demonstrated the speed with which a zoonotic disease can spread, either intentionally or unintentionally. The need to ensure that the United States is able to detect this virus if it appears in North America is very important to the health of wildlife populations, humans, and the poultry industry. The Wildlife Society strongly recommends that funding in the fiscal year 2007 budget for USGS–BRD for avian influenza research and monitoring be increased by $0.4 million to enable operation and supplies for new equipment,

$0.7 million for surveillance of migratory bird populations on their wintering grounds, and $0.130 million for development of a wildlife health monitoring network.

U.S. FOREST SERVICE

We support the Administration's request of $267 million for Forest and Rangelands Research. This support is conditioned on maintaining current activities in the Wildlife, Fish, Water, and Air Program. This line item continues important research initiatives such as invasive species and Sudden Oak Death disease.

The Wildlife Society is deeply concerned that the President's budget for this program proposes another 7 percent reduction from the 2006 enacted budget for the Wildlife and Fisheries Habitat Management Program. We urge Congress to restore $11.452 million, for a total of $135 million. The Wildlife Society requests that the USFS closely coordinate use of these funds with state fish and wildlife agencies to recognize and fully utilize the state's authorities for fish and wildlife management. To maximize benefits from these funds, however, the USFS needs to facilitate cooperative design and conduct of programs and activities to reduce duplication with state programs and to increase acceptability of programs in achieving land and resource objectives.

Thank you for considering the comments of wildlife professionals. We are available to work with you and your staff throughout the appropriations process.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE UTAH GUIDES AND OUTFITTERS ASSOCIATION

Mr. Chairman and Honorable Members of the Committee: Utah Guides and Outfitters Association (UGO) strongly supports a $1.3 million appropriation from the Land and Water Conservation Fund for continuing BLM's program to protect important private lands along their Colorado River Special Recreation Management Area designation.

UGO represents more than 40 major river- and land-based recreation companies in the state, many of them in Southeast Utah. Members specialize in offering guided tours on public lands and waterways.

Southeastern Utah is particularly blessed with natural history and recreational opportunities that make rafting, mountain biking and backpacking trips very popular with clients of our member companies, which translates into very significant tourism dollars and economic benefits for Moab, Grand County and other communities throughout this part of the state.

One very important natural resource that strongly deserves permanent protection is the Westwater Canyon stretch of the Colorado River, which offers an easily accessible day trip for white water rafters to enjoy both Class IV rapids and the inspiring canyons and scenery of the Colorado Plateau. A very important part of the Westwater Canyon rafting experience occurs at the starting point, BLM Weswater Ranger Station, which is the put—in point for the expedition. Through the Ranger Station, BLM offers camping and boating facilities, and is in need of additional area for expansion due to its high usage and popularity among tourists and residents of southeastern Utah and western Colorado. Immediately downstream of the Ranger Station—and before entering Westwater Canyon itself—rafters float by the privately-owned Westwater Ranch which contains three miles of frontage along the Colorado River and contains extensive riparian vegetation, including very large Cottonwoods, and excellent wildlife habitat.

Westwater Ranch was acquired in late 2005 by a group of investors who plan to make significant investments to return it to a fully functional ranch, including removal of invasive species and enhancement of wildlife habitat along the river. We understand that this new ownership group is very supportive of selling development rights associated with the ranch to BLM, thereby offering permanent protection to this very important part of the Colorado River landscape near Westwater Canyon They are also interested in selling to BLM a small area that adjacent to the Westwater Ranger Station for expansion of BLM's recreational facilities for the public.

In fiscal year 2006, Land and Water Conservation Funds were secured to protect a first phase of the Westwater Ranch, and we understand that BLM and project partners are making good progress towards completing that work. Additional funds are requested in fiscal year 2007 federal budget to continue the program and complete the protection of the ranch.

Given the importance of both Westwater Ranch and the Ranger Station to the recreational opportunities on the Colorado River, UGO strongly supports BLM's program at the Colorado River Special Recreation Management Area. I espectfully re-

quest that you include an LWCF appropriation of $1.3 million in the fiscal year 2007 Interior and Related Agencies Appropriations bill to complete the acquisition of the remaining acreage of Westwater Ranch and other lands along the Colorado River SRMA.

Thank you for your consideration.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE UPPER MISSISSIPPI RIVER BASIN ASSOCIATION

The Upper Mississippi River Basin Association (UMRBA) is the organization created in 1981 by the Governors of Illinois, Iowa, Minnesota, Missouri, and Wisconsin to serve as a forum for coordinating the five states' river-related programs and policies and for collaborating with federal agencies on regional water resource issues. As such, the UMRBA has an interest in the budget for the water programs of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and is particularly disappointed that the water programs are slated for a disproportionate cut. In particular, funding for programs within EPA's "Clean and Safe Water" goal is proposed to be cut almost 13 percent, from $3.1 billion to $2.7 billion. The percent decline for this budget area is much greater than that for the agency overall (a 4 percent reduction) and reflects a failure to adequately invest in the nation's water quality.

STATE WATER POLLUTION CONTROL GRANTS (SECTION 106)

The Administration has proposed a $5.5 million (2.5 percent) increase in funding for Section 106 State Water Pollution Control Grants for fiscal year 2007. This increase in Section 106 funds is intended to help states implement high priority Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations (CAFO) permitting and storm water permitting activities.

While the UMRBA supports the President's proposed increase in Section 106 funding, the UMRBA states remain concerned with the adequacy of funding in the baseline Section 106 program, which has remained largely static in recent years. Under Section 106, states combine their matching dollars with federal funds to support the core state water quality programs under the Clean Water Act, including water quality assessment and monitoring, water quality planning and standard setting, total maximum daily load (TMDL) development, point source permitting, training, and public information. Adequate funds are particularly critical to supporting the states' development and implementation of TMDLs, which have the potential to overwhelm state agency resources that are already strained.

In general, UMRBA states have experienced a small, but consistent, decline in Section 106 funding in recent years. In fiscal year 2006, when Section 106 funding was approximately $216.2 million nationally, the five states in the Upper Mississippi River Basin were allocated a total of $21.1 million, a slight decrease from their fiscal year 2004 and fiscal year 2005 allocations. Even this amount of funding may not be fully realized in fiscal year 2006, because up to 10 percent of the allocated funds are potentially subject to recision. UMRBA states are concerned that the modest overall increase proposed by the Administration in fiscal year 2007 for Section 106 funding will not be sufficient to effectively maintain core Clean Water Act programs and will not reverse the erosion of resources being provided to the Upper Mississippi River states.

WATER QUALITY COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS/GRANTS (SECTION 104(B)(3))

Given the essentially static level of baseline funding under Section 106, the President's failure to request fiscal year 2007 funding for Section 104(b)(3) water quality grants is particularly disappointing. These grants are competitively awarded, with recipients including state environmental agencies, municipalities, Indian tribes, and nonprofits. Many of the innovations achieved through Section 104 have helped improve the states' core water quality programs under Section 106.

Historically, the Section 104 grants have enabled EPA to support innovative demonstration and special projects on topics ranging from institutional coordination to NPDES permits to monitoring and assessment. Special projects and studies undertaken with Section 104 funds are often critical to the states' ability to develop required TMDLs for impaired waters. Additionally, these funds have recently helped UMRBA states to address emerging management challenges on the Upper Mississippi River such as creation of more uniform approaches to fish consumption advisories and development of sediment-related water quality criteria.

Nationally, Section 104 funding fell from $14.0 million in fiscal year 2004 to $11.4 million in fiscal year 2005 and no funding was provided in fiscal year 2006. Over the same period, Section 104 funding for EPA Regions 5 and 7 combined fell from

$3.3 million to $2.7 million to zero. While it is too early to assess the full impact of the loss of Section 104 funding in fiscal year 2006, the continued failure to fund will stifle innovation and significantly limit the already overburdened state water quality programs' ability to meet new challenges. The UMRBA urges Congress to restore funding for Section 104(b)(3) grants at a recommended minimum level of $11.4 million in fiscal year 2007.

CLEAN WATER STATE REVOLVING FUNDS

The Clean Water State Revolving Fund (CWSRF) program is widely acknowledged as having been pivotal in improving the nation's water quality by addressing wastewater infrastructure needs. However, the President's fiscal year 2007 budget includes a 22 percent reduction in funding for this critical program. The UMRBA is deeply concerned with the Administration's continued lack of support for the CWSRF.

In fiscal year 2006, CWSRF funding continued a downward trend, falling to $887 million, down from $1.09 billion in fiscal year 2005. Overall, CWSAF funding has declined more than 33 percent from its historical level of $1.34 billion in fiscal year 2004. The five UMRBA states have experienced a commensurate reduction in CWSRF funding, receiving a total of $79.7 million in fiscal year 2006, down from $176.6 million in fiscal year 2004 and $143.2 million in fiscal year 2005. The Administration's budget again proposes to cut the CWSRF, this time to $688 million for fiscal year 2007, resulting in a nearly 50 percent reduction from pre-fiscal year 2005 levels.

EPA's own estimates show multi-billion dollar annual funding gaps for clean water and drinking water infrastructure over the next 20 years. The UMRBA states acknowledge that federal financial assistance is not the sole solution to this problem, but the appropriate response to this daunting challenge is most certainly not to further reduce federal support for this program. In order to best address the identified and continuing needs for clean water infrastructure improvements, the UMRBA recommends that Congress increase annual federal CWSRF appropriations to a level of $3 billion.

STATE NONPOINT SOURCE GRANTS (SECTION 319)

Nonpoint sources are one of the major causes of water pollution in the Upper Mississippi River Basin, which drains the nation's agricultural heartland. The Administration has requested $194 million for the Section 319 state nonpoint source grant program, a 5 percent decrease from the fiscal year 2006 appropriation of $204 million, and an 18 percent overall decrease since fiscal year 2004.

The prospect of a continued decline in Section 319 funding is particularly troubling to the UMRBA. For each year from fiscal year 2001 to 2004, the five states in the Upper Mississippi River Basin were allocated a total of $34.0 million in nonpoint source grants. In fiscal year 2006, this allocation stood at $29.9 million, with this amount being subject to an up to 10 percent recision.

Increased resources for the USDA's agricultural conservation programs have been cited as justification for this decrease in Section 319 funding. However, the USDA programs do not have water quality improvement as their primary purpose and do not include a monitoring component to measure efficacy. Thus, while the UMRBA welcomes and supports the expansion of USDA conservation programs, it continues to be essential to fund the Section 319 program as well. Without adequate funding, Section 319-supported programs cannot work in tandem with the USDA's conservation programs, as originally envisioned, and certainly cannot address other pressing nonpoint source needs unrelated to agriculture, such as urban runoff and degraded urban streams and lakes.

At a minimum, UMRBA urges Congress to restore funding for state nonpoint source grants to the fiscal year 2004 level of $237.1 million, recognizing that continued progress in addressing nonpoint pollution will require significantly increased resources.

HYPOXIA ACTION PLAN

The UMRBA is disappointed that the Administration's fiscal year 2007 budget proposal does not include the resources needed to address the recommendations in the Hypoxia Action Plan, submitted by the Mississippi River/Gulf of Mexico Watershed Nutrient Task Force in January 2001. The states in the Upper Mississippi River Basin have consistently said that reductions in nutrient inputs to the Gulf of Mexico and monitoring to evaluate the effectiveness of these efforts will only be possible if the federal government provides significant new budgetary resources.

While the states continue to support the goals and strategies set forth in the Action Plan, little progress will be made to reduce the Gulf hypoxic zone and improve water quality conditions throughout the basin without a major federal financial commitment. The President's fiscal year 2007 budget proposal does include funding to support the Gulf Program Office (a total of $4.3 million), but even this amount has decreased from previous funding and it does not supply the major resources needed for Upper Mississippi River efforts. Additionally, Targeted Watershed Grants, which in past years have supported some hypoxia-related efforts, are subject to a proposed cut of 58 percent (from $16.6 million to $6.9 million). The states of the Midwest heartland are being left to work largely through their existing programs, with limited resources, to reduce nutrient loading to the Gulf of Mexico. This approach is simply not adequate to make progress on a problem with the complexity and spatial scope of Gulf hypoxia.

ENVIRONMENTAL MONITORING AND ASSESSMENT PROGRAM (EMAP)

Within EPA's Human Health and Ecosystems Research program, the President has proposed a $5 million cut to the Environmental Monitoring and Assessment Program (EMAP) in fiscal year 2007. Part of EMAP is devoted to "the Great Rivers of the Central Basin" (EMAP–GRE), including the Mississippi, Missouri, and Ohio Rivers. EMAP–GRE is working to develop improved science and practical tools that states can use to assess the ecological conditions of these Great River ecosystems. In addition to doing some baseline sampling in the Mississippi River, EMAP–GRE is conducting research on reference conditions and developing a "report card" on water quality, plants, sediments, insects, fish, and other aquatic life. A valid report card requires consistent, uniform grading standards such as those provided by EMAP–GRE. Additionally, EMAP–GRE is developing biological criteria universally applicable to these great rivers and is working to standardize the numerous assessment protocols used by states to allow for reliable comparison and interpretation of data across state lines. This is the type of scientific work that no one state would be able to undertake alone, yet is fundamentally important to the states' ability to manage and protect the river. Thus, UMRBA urges Congress to reject the proposed cut to EMAP's budget and, at a minimum, fund EMAP at its fiscal year 2006 level.

WATER SECURITY MONITORING PILOT PROGRAM (WATERSENTINEL)

EPA's proposed budget includes a $30.5 million increase in funding of the "WaterSentinel" program. This increase will support additional pilot systems for water quality surveillance and emergency response. The UMRBA supports the Administration's commitment to this program and its proposed allocation of additional funds. The Upper Mississippi River states and utilities using the Mississippi River have been working together to initiate the establishment of an early warning monitoring network on the river and welcome any efforts by EPA to further progress in this area.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE UPPER MISSISSIPPI RIVER BASIN ASSOCIATION

The Upper Mississippi River Basin Association (UMRBA) is the organization created in 1981 by the Governors of Illinois, Iowa, Minnesota, Missouri, and Wisconsin to serve as a forum for coordinating the five states' river-related programs and policies and for collaborating with federal agencies on regional water resource issues. As such, the UMRBA has an interest in the budget for both the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the U.S. Geological Survey.

U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has important responsibilities in the Upper Mississippi River Basin, including management of federal refuge lands and coordination with other federal, state, and local agencies on river-related ecological issues. The UMRBA strongly supports funding necessary to enable the Fish and Wildlife Service to fulfill its responsibilities in the Upper Mississippi River Basin.

National Wildlife Refuge System.—The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service administers over 284,000 acres of land and water scattered along the Mississippi and Illinois Rivers from the most northerly unit near Wabasha, Minnesota to the most southerly unit near Gape Girardeau, Missouri. This includes the Upper Mississippi River, Mark Twain, and Illinois River Complexes. The existence of this extensive national refuge system is, in part, the reason that, in 1986, Congress designated the Upper Mississippi River System as a "nationally significant ecosystem and a nationally significant commercial navigation system."

The UMRBA strongly supports increased funding for the National Wildlife Refuge System. With the essentially level funding proposed by the Administration for fiscal year 2007, inflation will increasingly erode the Service's capacity to manage the refuge system. As an example, in fiscal year 2006, spending for the refuges along the Upper Mississippi and Illinois Rivers will likely total $6.8 million. Considering the land base managed by the Service on the Upper Mississippi River, this equates to a very modest $24 per acre, and does not represent an increase from fiscal year 2005. As a result, there continues to be a backlog in routine maintenance and a need for additional personnel to address law enforcement, biological needs, floodplain forest management, technical assistance to private landowners, environmental education, and other refuge management needs. In particular, the refuges along the Upper Mississippi River System have responsibility for the operation and maintenance (O&M) of projects that the Corps of Engineers constructs on those refuges, under the authority of the Environmental Management Program (EMP), one of six national priority construction programs in the President's Corps of Engineers budget. Currently, the Service's annual O&M costs for EMP projects are running between $300,000 and $500,000, and its O&M liability for these national priority projects will only increase in the future. Fully funding the O&M of EMP projects is vital to ensuring that these habitat restoration and enhancement projects are fully operational and provide lasting environmental and public use benefits. A $1.0 million appropriation to the Upper Mississippi River Refuge Complex in the Service's construction budget is needed for EMP project management.

Land Acquisition.—The President's fiscal year 2007 budget includes just $27.1 million for land acquisition, a 3 percent decrease from fiscal year 2006 and almost 27 percent below the fiscal year 2005 level. The three Upper Mississippi River System refuge complexes alone have acquisition opportunities from willing sellers totaling $4 million annually. These are priority acquisitions within the authorized refuge boundaries that would address significant ecological needs on the refuges and, in many instances, also reduce potential flood-related economic losses. But, with $4 million representing 15 percent of the President's annual request for the entire country, it will be difficult to make progress on these UMRS acquisition opportunities, many of which could be lost if delays force landowners to make other decisions regarding their property. The UMRBA encourages Congress to fund land acquisition at a level that permits the Service to address such acquisition priorities.

Ecological Services.—Funding from the Ecological Services account supports field offices in Rock Island (IL), the Twin Cities (MN), and Marion (IL), which provide most of the ecological services work on the Upper Mississippi River and its tributaries. This includes work on threatened and endangered species, environmental contaminants, habitat conservation, and Partners for Fish and Wildlife. In fiscal year 2006, work being done by these Ecological Services field offices related to the Upper Mississippi River is estimated to be $375,000. The UMRBA is concerned that the Administration is proposing an 8 percent decrease for the Ecological Services Habitat Conservation account in fiscal year 2007. The ability of the Ecological Services offices to fully participate in a wide variety of interagency restoration programs on the Upper Mississippi is critical to balanced management of this nationally significant river system and must be supported from within the Service's own budgetary resources. Thus, the UMRBA asks that, at minimum, funding for Habitat Conservation be maintained at fiscal year 2006 levels.

Fisheries.—Most of the Service's fish management on the Upper Mississippi River is conducted out of the La Crosse (WI), Columbia (MO), and Carterville (IL) Fisheries Resource Offices (FROs). These offices assess interjurisdictional fish and threatened and endangered species (paddlefish, pallid and shovelnose sturgeon, and freshwater mussels), help combat aquatic nuisance species (e.g., Asian carp), and restore fish habitat. The UMRBA supports this important work and is thus concerned about the 7.4 percent cut proposed for Fish and Wildlife Management Assistance in the fiscal year 2007 Fisheries account. (This reduction figure excludes $1.4 million that the Administration is proposing to transfer to the hatchery operations account.) Portions of the $4.4 million cut will affect general program activities (−$1.2 million) and efforts related to aquatic nuisance species control (−$75,000). These reductions could delay the Upper Mississippi FROs' work on a controversial and technically demanding Asian carp control plan. At a minimum, funding for these activities should be maintained at fiscal year 2006 levels.

The UMRBA is particularly pleased that the President's fiscal year 2007 budget proposes an increase of $2.5 million for Hatchery Operations and Maintenance funding. (This increase excludes $1.4 million that the Administration is proposing to transfer from Fish and Wildlife Management Assistance.) This account supports the work of the Genoa (WI) National Fish Hatchery and the La Crosse (WI) Fish Health Center. The Genoa Hatchery, established in 1932 on the banks of the Mississippi

River, has become a center of excellence in the recovery of endangered mussels. It cultures endangered Higgins eye pearly mussels and rears 20 species of fish, including lake sturgeon, that are stocked into the Mississippi River near Missouri. The Genoa facility has teamed with state partners on mussel restoration work that has helped avert significant controversies on the Upper Mississippi. The La Crosse Fish Health Center provides critical diagnostics for diseases such as largemouth bass virus and spring viremia of carp. The Health Center's invaluable expertise is unique within the country.

U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY

The President's fiscal year 2007 budget for the U.S. Geological Survey reflects an overall decrease of $20.5 million, with a $7.7 million decrease in water resources and a $5.9 million decrease for biological research. Funding levels for most of USGS's Water Resources and Biological Research programs have declined or remained static in recent years. The states of the Upper Mississippi River Basin are concerned that the USGS's ability to provide timely and unbiased scientific information about complex natural systems not be compromised. There are several specific research and monitoring programs in the Water Resources and Biological Research accounts that are of particular interest to the UMRBA.

Water Resources Investigations.—The UMRBA strongly supports the President's proposed 20 percent increase in fiscal year 2007 for the National Streamflow Information Program (NSIP). The streamgaging network is essential to protecting public health and safety by forecasting floods and droughts, managing the nation's navigation system, and monitoring water quality. In 1998, Congressional concern about streamgaging led the USGS to create NSIP. Unlike the Cooperative Water Program (which is funded in large part by non-federal Cooperators), Congress determined that NSIP should be funded entirely with federal appropriations. In November 2004, the National Research Council's Committee on Water Resources Research completed its assessment of the USGS plans for NSIP: "Overall, the Committee concludes that the National Streamflow Information Program is a sound, well-conceived program that meets the nation's needs for streamflow measurement, interpretation, and information delivery."

Of the 4,424 gages proposed for inclusion in NSIP nationwide, 524 are in the five UMRBA states. However, only about 69 percent of the NSIP gages in the UMRBA states are currently in operation, most funded through the Cooperative Water Program rather than NSIP. Furthermore, of the 333 active NSIP gages operated by USGS, 30 are on the USGS's list of "threatened streamgages," which may be discontinued in 2006 unless new funding sources can be identified. Another 80 NSIP gages are already inactive, due to past funding shortfalls. This erosion in funding support has led to the elimination, disrepair, or obsolescence of many long term gages, reducing our forecasting and emergency warning capabilities. To reverse this trend and enhance the long term stability and security of the nation's streamgaging network, UMRBA urges Congress to provide, at a minimum, the President's request of $16.764 million for NSIP in fiscal year 2007.

The UMRBA also strongly supports increased funding for the Cooperative Water Program (CWP). CWP is an essential tool in meeting state and local water science needs, including both interpretive studies and streamgaging. For most of its 110 years, the CWP was a 50:50 cost-shared program between USGS and non-federal cooperators. More recently, increased requests by cooperators for USGS services, coupled with stagnant federal funding, have altered that proportion. USGS now pays only 33 percent of the program costs. USGS funding for the CWP would need to almost double in order for USGS to match current cooperator funding on a dollar-for-dollar basis. In 2004, there were 1,386 cooperators nationwide, of which 163 were in the five UMR basin states. The President's fiscal year 2007 request for the CWP ($62.17 million) represents a cut of $2 million and would exacerbate the continuing decline in CWP capability. Thus, UMRBA joins with water resource managers across the nation in asking that Congress provide $74 million for the CWP in order to restore real program purchasing power to its fiscal year 2003 level.

The President's fiscal year 2007 budget proposes $13.2 million for the Toxic Substances Hydrology program, a decrease of 8 percent. The Toxics Program, which conducts research on the behavior of toxic substances in the nation's hydrologic environments, is particularly important to the states of the Upper Midwest. Under this program, USGS provides a range of scientific information to support management decisions related to excess nutrients in the Mississippi River Basin and hypoxia in the Gulf of Mexico. In particular, USGS assesses the sources and transport of nitrogen, models nutrient flux, and conducts research on nutrient transport in both the Mississippi River and smaller streams in the basin. Given the important work un-

derway in the USGS Toxic Substances Hydrology Program, UMRBA urges Congress to provide $14.5 million, at a minimum, commensurate with the fiscal year 2005 level of funding.

The UMRBA continues to support funding for the National Water Quality Assessment (NAWQA), which is slated for $62.6 million under the President's fiscal year 2007 budget. NAWQA is designed to answer basic questions about the status and trends in the quality of our nation's ground and surface waters, assessing 50 major river basins and aquifers across the nation on a rotating basis. The Upper Mississippi River Basin includes four NAWQA study units (Upper Mississippi, Eastern Iowa, Lower Illinois, and Upper Illinois). The first three of these are in the assessment cycle that began in fiscal year 2004. The Upper Illinois assessment cycle is scheduled to begin in fiscal year 2007.

Biological Research.—The President's budget request for USGS Biological Research is $172.6 million, $5.9 million below the fiscal year 2006 enacted level and less than $900,000 above fiscal year 2005. In inflation-adjusted dollars, the overall Biological Research budget has been declining in recent years, impairing the USGS's ability to meet critical science and information needs, both within the Interior Department and more broadly. Indeed, USGS's Biological Research supports critical national needs, including maintenance of a vital data infrastructure, as well as several specific research efforts of great regional importance. For example, through its Upper Midwest Environmental Sciences Center, USGS is studying bird migration, native mussels, amphibian decline, invasive species, and vegetation response to water level management on the Upper Mississippi River. All of these research questions have direct relevance to the real world challenges associated with managing the river for both navigation and ecosystem health. Of particular concern to the UMRBA states is the Administration's proposal again this year to cut funding for pallid sturgeon research. Understanding the movements and habitat needs of this ancient, but endangered, species is critical to its recovery on the Mississippi and Missouri Rivers. State and federal resource managers need answers to these questions. Unfortunately, USGS's capacity to contribute sound science to river management is increasingly constrained by its fiscal limitations. Given these needs, the UMRBA recommends that, at a minimum, Biological Research be funded at the fiscal year 2006 level of $178.5 million.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE USGS COALITION

SUMMARY

The USGS Coalition urges Congress to increase the budget of the U.S. Geological Survey to $1.2 billion in fiscal year 2007.

The USGS plays a crucial role in protecting the public from natural hazards such as floods and earthquakes, assessing water quality, providing emergency responders with geospatial data to improve homeland security, analyzing the strategic and economic implications of mineral supply and demand, and providing the science needed to manage our natural resources and combat invasive species that can threaten agriculture and public health. The USGS is working in every state and has nearly 400 offices across the country. To aid in its interdisciplinary investigations, the USGS works with over 2,000 federal, state, local, tribal and private organizations.

The USGS Coalition is an alliance of nearly 70 organizations united by a commitment to the continued vitality of the unique combination of biological, geographical, geological, and hydrological programs of the United States Geological Survey. The USGS Coalition supports increased federal investment in USGS programs that underpin responsible natural resource stewardship, improve resilience to natural and human-induced hazards, and contribute to the long-term health, security and prosperity of the nation.

FUNDING SHORTFALL

From 1996 to 2006, total federal spending for research and development has risen by 55 percent from $87 billion to $134 billion in constant dollars. By contrast, real funding for the USGS has been nearly flat, as shown in the accompanying chart (Figure 1). Even this flat funding for the USGS reflects congressional restoration of proposed budget cuts.

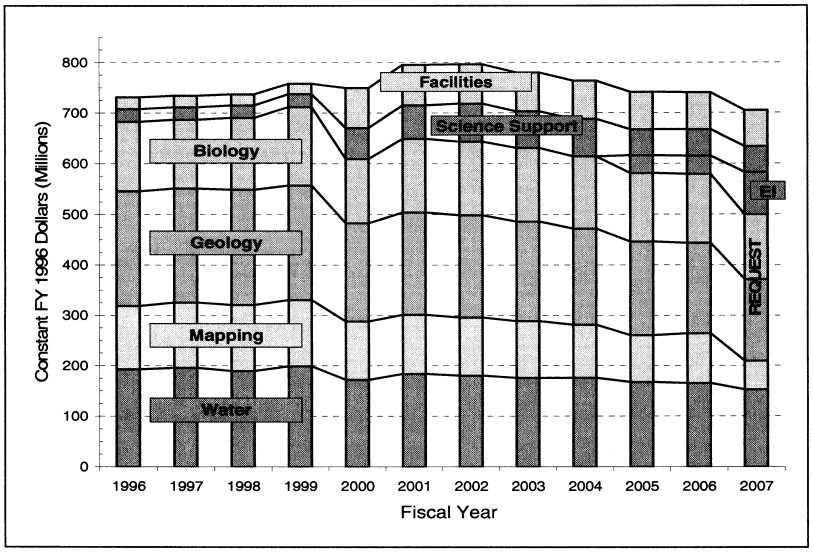

Figure 1. USGS funding in constant dollars, FY 1996 – FY 2007. EI is the Enterprise Information account. Source: USGS Budget Office.

The need for USGS science in support of decisionmaking has never been greater. In the wake of Hurricane Katrina, the USGS was praised for quickly arriving on the scene and providing specialized geospatial maps to locate victims trapped in flooded neighborhoods and support rescue efforts. The USGS provided water level and flow measurements from stream gages for the dewatering of New Orleans and performed health-based water quality and sediment analyses throughout the Gulf Coast.

The USGS plays a lead role in reducing the impacts of natural hazards. It operates seismic networks and conducts seismic hazard analyses that are used to formulate earthquake probabilities and to establish building codes across the nation. The USGS monitors volcanoes and provides warnings about impending eruptions. It operates a stream gage system that enables the National Weather Service to issue flood warnings. Research on ecosystem structure and function assists forest and rangeland managers with forecasting fire risk and managing natural systems following fires.

After a series of devastating natural disasters during the past two years, people around the globe have a greater appreciation of the need to improve environmental monitoring, forecasting, and warning systems that can prevent natural hazards from becoming natural disasters.

Equally as important as natural hazards, natural resources—from energy to freshwater supplies—captured the public's attention in 2005. The USGS conducts essential assessments of water levels, flow rates and quality, and of mineral, coal, oil and natural gas resources. USGS biologists assess wildlife populations, such as through the bird-banding program, that provide land managers with data needed to effectively manage fishing and hunting, as well as public lands for healthy wildlife populations. These comprehensive assessments are among the most reliable source of data for natural resource management at a national level.

The potential for an avian flu pandemic remains a global concern. The USGS is conducting targeted surveillance of aquatic birds for avian flu in North America. Other biological programs assess the health, distribution, and diversity of wildlife and provide information necessary to track and respond to infectious diseases that can be transmitted from wildlife to people. Still other programs help sustain land and water resources and monitor the spread of invasive species that can pose significant economic threats.

Greater investment in the USGS is required to meet the tremendous needs of the future. That investment should be used to strengthen USGS partnerships, improve

monitoring networks, produce high-quality digital geospatial data and deliver the best possible science to address societal problems and inform decisionmakers.

The USGS Coalition is grateful to Congress for its leadership in restoring past budget cuts and strengthening the U.S. Geological Survey. The House Appropriations Committee has expressed the importance of funding USGS science programs in the base budget. Likewise, the Senate Appropriations Committee said: "The strength of the Survey's existing efforts in many program areas is deserving of additional support. The Committee urges that future budget requests place a stronger emphasis on the Survey's core programs, which have proven value and strong public support" (S. Rpt. 108–341).

USGS BUDGET REQUEST

The USGS Coalition urges Congress to increase the budget of the U.S. Geological Survey to $1.2 billion in fiscal year 2007, which is necessary for the agency to continue providing critical information to the public and to decisionmakers at all levels of government. The recommended budget increase would enable the USGS to restore the science cuts proposed in the budget request, accelerate the timetable for deployment of critical projects (such as the National Streamflow Information Program), and launch new science initiatives that would begin to reverse the cumulative effects of the long-term funding short fall discussed above (Figure 1).

The President's fiscal year 2007 budget request would cut funding for the USGS by $20.6 million or 2.1 percent to $944.8 million. The budget request would add $40.1 million in new programs and fixed costs, which would be offset by redirecting $50.7 million from lower priority activities and eliminating $10.0 million in earmarked funds, according to USGS budget documents.

The USGS budget request would provide funding for several initiatives, including a multi-hazards pilot initiative, development of Landsat 8, increased energy research, and testing for avian influenza in wild birds as part of an expanding detection effort. These initiatives deserve the support of Congress.

The USGS budget request would cut $22.0 million from the Mineral Resources program, a 41.7 percent decrease in funding that would decimate the program. The budget request would also eliminate the entire $6.4 million budget for the Water Resources Research Institutes, which are located in all 50 states. These and other proposed budget cuts would adversely affect the ability of the USGS to achieve its mission. We encourage Congress to restore the cuts, but this funding should not come at the expense of other high priority programs elsewhere in the USGS budget.

The USGS Mineral Resources program is an essential source of unbiased research on our mineral resources. This guidance is important to reduce the environmental impacts of mining and to maintain the growing value of processed materials from mineral resources that accounted for $478 billion in the U.S. economy in 2005, an increase of 8 percent over the previous year. The proposed cuts would terminate multidisciplinary research that has important implications for public health (such as studies on mercury, arsenic and other inorganic toxins), environmental protection, infrastructure, economic development, and national security.

The Water Resources Research Institutes have been highly successful in developing cooperative programs that leverage federal investments with funds from other sources. The proposal to eliminate all funding for this partnership is inconsistent with guidance from the House Appropriations Committee: "The Administration has placed a high priority on cooperative programs that leverage funds from State and local governments as well as private entities. The Committee believes that Bureaus that are successful in implementing these policies should be rewarded and not penalized" (H.Rpt. 108–542).

The USGS budget request includes an increase of $20.7 million for non-discretionary "fixed cost" increases (such as salaries and rent), of which $15.2 million are budgeted and $5.5 million are "absorbed." The cumulative effect of absorbing fixed cost increases over many years has had a disproportionate impact on core USGS programs in biology, geology, hydrology, and mapping, which cannot absorb cuts without affecting scientific research and monitoring activities. Without full funding of fixed cost increases, the USGS may be forced to curtail ongoing activities, hindering or preventing the delivery of data needed by natural resource managers and emergency planners. This could increase our vulnerability to natural disasters and increase the costs of recovery.

In addition to restoring proposed program cuts, we encourage Congress to consider additional increases that would enable the USGS to meet the tremendous need for science in support of public policy decisionmaking. More investment is needed to strengthen USGS partnerships, improve monitoring networks, implement important bioinformatics programs, produce high-quality digital geospatial data and de-

liver the best possible science to address societally important problems. The USGS has a national mission that encompasses the homes of all citizens through natural hazards monitoring, drinking water studies, biological and geological resource assessments, and other activities.

Thank you for your thoughtful consideration of our request. If you require additional information or to learn more about the USGS Coalition, please contact co-chairs Robert Gropp of the American Institute of Biological Sciences (rgropp@aibs.org) or Craig Schiffries of the National Council for Science and the Environment (schiffries@NCSEonline.org).

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE ARCHERY TRADE ASSOCIATION, BOONE AND CROCKETT CLUB, BOWHUNTING PRESERVATION ALLIANCE, CAMPFIRE CLUB OF AMERICA, CONSERVATION FORCE, DALLAS SAFARI CLUB, DUCKS UNLIMITED, FOUNDATION FOR NORTH AMERICAN WILD SHEEP, INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF FISH AND WILDLIFE AGENCIES, IZAAK WALTON LEAGUE OF AMERICA, NATIONAL TRAPPERS ASSOCIATION, NORTH AMERICAN BEAR FOUNDATION, NORTH AMERICAN GROUSE PARTNERSHIP, QUALITY DEER MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATION, ROCKY MOUNTAIN ELK FOUNDATION, RUFFED GROUSE SOCIETY, SAFARI CLUB INTERNATIONAL, TEXAS WILDLIFE ASSOCIATION, THEODORE ROOSEVELT CONSERVATION PARTNERSHIP, THE WILDLIFE SOCIETY, WHITETAILS UNLIMITED, INC., AND WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT INSTITUTE

We write to ask for your support in providing $17.5 million in fiscal year 2007 to fill the many vacant scientist positions in the Cooperative Fish and Wildlife Research Unit Program of the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS). We greatly appreciate your past efforts in behalf of the Cooperative Fish and Wildlife Research Units, especially given difficult budgetary constraints.

As you know, the 40 Cooperative Fish and Wildlife Research Units across the country provide very important and cost-effective products and services to state and federal agencies, universities and private landowners in the form of management-oriented research, graduate level education, and technical assistance.

Full funding and scientist staffing for the Cooperative Fish and Wildlife Research Units, which was achieved through your support in fiscal year 2001, resulted in unparalleled cooperation, productivity, and service in the management of our natural resources. Unfortunately, The $14.938 million requested by the Administration for fiscal year 2007 is $2.6 million less than the amount needed to fill the vacant Unit scientist positions and meet congressionally mandated increases in federal salaries and benefits, and is only $861,000 more than the amount appropriated 6 years earlier. During that same time the Cooperative Fish and Wildlife Research Units will have been required to absorb $3.0 million in uncontrollable salary and benefit costs, while being directed to establish and staff a new Unit. The result is that a record number of Unit scientist positions (22) will need to be vacant by the end of fiscal year 2007 in order to meet the funding level in the current budget request. Lack of funding to fill these vacancies has caused the number of Cooperative Fish and Wildlife Research Unit scientists to be reduced by 25 percent to 67 percent within a given state.

The Cooperative Fish and Wildlife Research Units have been a remarkably successful investment. Unit scientists leverage the USGS base funding provided by Congress more than 3:1 with funds from other sources. Unit scientists also play a vital role in practical, real-world training of the next generation of natural resource managers, who will be needed soon to replace a significant professional workforce component that is nearing retirement. Scientist vacancies hamper the ability of the program to leverage funding from state, federal, and private sources for addressing key natural resource problems and training tomorrow's managers.

We urge you, therefore, to support providing $17.5 million for the Cooperative Fish and Wildlife Research Unit Program in fiscal year 2007. This action will fill vacant scientist positions at the Units and ensure that the Units can continue to support the needs of state, university, and private cooperators in your states and elsewhere across the country.

We thank you for consideration of our request.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE LAC DU FLAMBEAU BAND OF LAKE SUPERIOR CHIPPEWA INDIANS

As President of the Lac du Flambeau Band of Lake Superior Chippewa Indians, located in Wisconsin, I am pleased to submit this testimony, which reflects the

needs, concerns and issues of the tribal membership arising from the President's fiscal year 2007 Budget.

INDIAN EDUCATION

Johnson O'Malley.—We urge the Subcommittee to restore $16.8 million to the Johnson O'Malley (JOM) program. The Administration proposes substantial cuts to education funding, and Indian education has been especially hit hard. Of particular significance to the Band is the proposed elimination of JOM funding. The JOM program provides funding for supplemental education programs for Indian students attending public schools. Because the Band's member children attend public schools, this funding forms the core of the Band's education program. We urge the Subcommittee to restore full funding to this program.

NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

Circle of Flight.—We strongly urge the Subcommittee to restore $600,000 for the Tribal Wetland and Waterfowl Enhancement Initiative (Circle of Flight), which the Administration proposes to eliminate entirely. Congress has restored this funding when it was targeted in past years, and the Band would like to thank the Subcommittee for understanding how important this program is in restoring and preserving our Nation's wetlands and waterfowl populations. The preservation and restoration of wetlands is vital to the culture and economy of the Great Lakes region. Moreover, in addition to waterfowl habitat and gathering areas, wetlands are important in providing flood control, clean water and recreation, benefiting residents up and down the Mississippi Flyway. Your strong support of this program is required again.

Wildlife and Parks.—We urge this Subcommittee to restore full funding to the Wildlife and Parks budget, including the proposed $4.2 million cut to tribal management and development programs. Tribes are leaders in natural resource protection and this funding is essential to maintain these programs. The Band has a comprehensive Natural Resource Department and dedicated staff with considerable expertise in natural resource and land management. Our activities include raising fish for stocking, conservation law enforcement, data collection on water and air quality, developing well head protection plans, conducting wildlife surveys and administering timber stand improvement projects on the 86,000-acre reservation.

The Band also requests funding for the Lac du Flambeau Tribal Management and Development Program to be restored to the fiscal year 2005 level, which was $178,500.

Tribal Historic Preservation Officers.—The Band requests that $10.4 million be allocated within the Historic Preservation Fund for Tribal Historic Preservation Officers (THPOs).

In 1995, Congress began encouraging tribes to assume historic preservation responsibilities as part of self-determination. There are currently 54 tribes in the United States—six in Wisconsin—approved by the Secretary to administer historic preservation programs. These programs conserve fragile places, objects and traditions crucial to tribal culture, history and sovereignty.

As was envisioned by Congress, more tribes qualify for funding every year. In fiscal year 2001, there were 27 THPOs with an average award of $154,000; in fiscal year 2005, there were 54 THPOs, and the Band received only $48,000. Paradoxically, the more successful the program becomes overall, the less each tribe receives to maintain professional services, ultimately crippling the programs. The requested appropriation would provide a modest base funding amount of $180,000 per THPO program.

Great Lakes Indian Fish and Wildlife Commission.—The Band also supports funding for the Great Lakes Indian Fish and Wildlife Commission (GLIFWC) in the amount of $4,174,000 to meet the needs outlined in the Commission's testimony submitted to this Subcommittee. The Band is a member of the Commission, which assists the Band in protecting and implementing its treaty-guaranteed hunting, fishing and gathering rights.

PAY COST SHORTAGES FOR BIA PUBLIC LAW 93–638 EMPLOYEES

We urge the Subcommittee to restore full Public Law 93–638 pay cost funding for tribes in fiscal year 2007 and to restore pay cost funding not received in fiscal year 2002–2005 through a special appropriation. Under the Indian Self-Determination Act, many tribes have assumed responsibility for providing core services to their members. If these services were provided by the federal government, employees would receive pay cost increases mandated by federal law. While tribal governments have assumed this responsibility, Congress and Interior have failed to fulfill their

obligation to ensure that tribes have the same resources to carry out these functions. Tribes received only 75 percent of the pay cost adjustment in fiscal year 2002, 15 percent in fiscal year 2003 and approximately 30 percent in fiscal year 2004. This inequity threatens to undermine tribal self-determination.

The Band also requests an appropriation of $59,600 to provide a 5 percent cost of living increase for its employees. Funding for the Band's most critical core services, including law enforcement, courts, education, natural resource management and social services, has eroded significantly in recent years because of the lack of appropriate pay cost increases. The requested appropriation would cover a 5 percent cost of living adjustment for the Band's program employees within TPA, Management and Development and Fish Hatchery Operations.

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

Indian General Assistance Program.—The Band requests that the Subcommittee increase funding for the Indian General Assistance Program (GAP) by $11.4 million. GAP funding is the primary federal mechanism available for tribes to protect our lands. These funds, which provide support for many of our programs, enable tribes to assume environmental responsibilities delegated by EPA. We ask the Committee to increase GAP funding to at least $68.3 million to enable tribes to continue developing environmental management infrastructure. We also ask you to clarify that GAP funding can be used for development, implementation and continued support of tribal environmental programs, not merely "capacity building."

Clean Water Program.—We request restoration of full funding to the Clean Water Program, including restoration of $171,000 from this fund for the Band's Water Resources Program. The Clean Water Program provides grants to tribes under Section 106 of the Clean Water Act to protect water quality and aquatic ecosystems. We received $171,000 in fiscal year 2005, the minimum required to support the Band's program. In fiscal year 2007, the Administration reduced this to $150,000. Continued operation of the program requires restoration of this $21,000 cut.

INDIAN HEALTH

We urge the Subcommittee to significantly increase funding for Contract Health Care (CHC).—Federal funding for health services has fallen dramatically behind the rising cost of health care over the past five years. In fiscal year 2000, The Band's shortfall for health care was $1.2 million. We anticipate the fiscal year 2007 shortfall to be in excess of $2.9 million. This deficit has increased 136 percent or an average annual increase of 27 percent. Despite rising costs, the Administration proposes an increase of only $27 million for CHC. A substantial funding increase is needed to address the need across Indian county.

The Band also requests an appropriation of $8 million for construction of a new clinic facility.—The inadequate design of the present facility, which was not intended for use as a clinic, restricts access to patient care and limits the quality of service we are capable of providing to community. A new facility would improve patient access to providers, enable the Band to provide wellness education and health screenings for cancer and diabetes, and reduce payments to outside vendors because more high cost services could be provided on-site. In light of this significant need for construction dollars at the Lac du Flambeau, we are disappointed in the President's proposed IHS Construction budget, which proposes significant cuts in this program.

If we can provide any additional information, please do not hesitate to contact our counsel, Mary J. Pavel or Addie C. Rolnick at Sonosky, Chambers, Sachse, Endreson & Perry, LLP, 1425 K Street NW, Ste. 600, Washington D.C. 20005; 202–682–0240 (tel); 202–682–0249 (fax); mpavel@sonosky.com; arolnick@sonosky.com.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE VILLAGE OF WELLINGTON, FLORIDA

Mr. Chairman and members of the subcommittee: On behalf of the Village of Wellington, I am pleased to submit this statement for the record in support of our request for funding in the amount of $2.7 million in the fiscal year 2007 Appropriation Bill for Interior & Related Agencies to support the Village's efforts to comply with the mandates of the Everglades Forever Program.

PROJECT EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The 1994 Everglades Forever Act (EFA) established water quality goals for the restoration and preservation of the Everglades Protection Area. It also identified Basin B within the Village of Wellington as an area that will need to meet the new

phosphorus standard by December 31, 2006 for its stormwater discharges into the Arthur Marshall Loxahatchee National Wildlife Refuge (conservation Area No. 1). To meet these mandates, the Village created the Village of Wellington Water Clean Up/Phosphorus Removal Project.

The Acme Basin B drainage has been one of the biggest issues and challenges the Village has faced. Wellington has spent the last several years working toward compliance with the EFA. In March 2005, the Village of Wellington began constructing its improvement per the approved Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD) to redirect Basin B waters to the C–51 canal and then to STA 1–E.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Acme Basin B Discharge project is one of 55 projects that comprise the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan (CERP). The Basin B drainage area is part of the Acme Improvement District, which was created by the state of Florida in 1953 to provide drainage for agricultural land in central Palm Beach County. During the 50 years since its inception, land uses within the improvement district have changed dramatically. The Acme Improvement District now serves the Village of Wellington with over 55,000 residents, and impacts the West Palm Beach metropolitan area with a population of approximately 1.3 million. Basin B consists of 8,680 acres of low-density development located in the southern half of the Improvement District. The western boundary of Basin B abuts the Loxahatchee Refuge.

The benefits created by the CERP Acme Basin B Discharge project are largely related to restoration of the natural environment. The health of the Loxahatchee Refuge and Everglades National Park will be enhanced with improved quality and quantity of water generated from within the basin. Specifically, the project will provide the equivalent of 28.5 million gallons of water per day to the Everglades, which, without the project, would be needlessly sent to the ocean via the Lake Worth Lagoon.

Wellington was the first Everglades community to develop and implement a comprehensive Everglades strategy with the South Florida Water Management District, which included:

—Removing phosphorus at the source to reduce the need for costly infrastructure; Best Management Practices have lowered the phosphorus levels and helped reduce clean up costs;

—Use of partnership opportunities to make environmental water cleaner and available when and where the Everglades need it;

—Wise use of resources to ensure the most cost effective solution, taking the least land out of productive use and giving the most up front clean-up;

—Complete redesign of the Wellington drainage system to divert unclean water from direct discharge to Loxahatchee Wildlife Preserve;

—This non-traditional, Best Management Practices focus will allow the Basin B Project to use a large portion of a section of land for recreation and environmental education in addition to flood attenuation rather than building another clean-up marsh.

As part of its Basin B Water Clean Up Initiative, the Village of Wellington assembled a "Surface Water Action Team" (SWAT) comprised of key personnel and expert consultants. This Initiative is presently working on a Phase II BMP Ordinance, along with an updated Cooperative Agreement with SFWMD.

The ongoing water quality monitoring program has indicated a fairly significant decrease in average phosphorus concentrations since 1999. In 1999, the average Basin B phosphorus concentration discharged to the Loxahatchee Refuge was 189 parts per billion (ppb). In 2004, the average concentration had dropped to 67 ppb, which is a large decrease in phosphorus levels. Although inconclusive, it is likely that the implementation of the BMP Ordinance played a part in this decrease in phosphorus concentrations.

In March 2005, the Village of Wellington began constructing its improvement per the approved Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with SFWMD to redirect Basin B Waters to the C–51 Canal and then to STA 1–E. The Village projects all its improvements to be completed well ahead of schedule.

One of the final components to this project is the successful implementation of Section 24 Recreational Wetland Acquisition, Planning and Development Study. This project was established to examine land that is presently owned by the South Florida Water Management District for potential development by the Village as a wetlands park for the purpose of preserving the wetlands and for potential environmental and/or recreational uses. The main use of the property is flood attenuation. Other potential uses include recreational use, consisting of elevated nature board-

walks, trails, horse trails, storm water retention and a recharge area. The Village is seeking assistance with this project through matching grant opportunities as part of the Basin B solution.

Wellington is currently refining its agreements with the South Florida Water Management District to ensure that structured parts of the project are built on time and within budget, and that the unique recreational aspects fit into the Wellington Community and enhance citizen opportunities to understand the Everglades. To do this, Wellington and the SFWMD continue to work together to complete the project and review operational progress to determine the optimal and practical operations of the redesigned system.

Carol Wehle, Executive Director of South Florida Water Management District has stated the cooperative mission very well: "Restoring the Everglades is one of the most significant restoration efforts world-wide not only because of the significance of its natural communities, but also because of the urban communities that live within its watershed. Science and engineering can only go so far. Residents and communities also have a critical role, and we are especially proud of the working relationship we have developed with Wellington. The commitments from communities like Wellington are proving that it is possible to work cooperatively toward solutions that create benefits for everyone involved, including the environment."

FUNDING NEEDS

Since 1999, the Village has invested over $5 million (not including $5.4 million for Pump Station renovations currently scheduled in conjunction with this project) of its own funds toward the preservation and, in some cases, restoration of environmentally sensitive land. We are committed to continuing our investment and our progress, and we anticipate additional costs to the Village of $3.25 million. The project under the recently approved Basin B agreement has a total estimated cost of approximately $22 million (which will be shared with South Florida Water Management District and the Federal Government).

For fiscal year 2007, the Village of Wellington is seeking $2.7 from the Environmental Protection Agency through your Appropriations Subcommittee.

Thank you for your consideration of our request.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE VENTANA WILDLIFE SOCIETY

The Ventana Wildlife Society appreciates the opportunity to present this testimony in support of a $2 million appropriation from the Land and Water Conservation Fund for the first phase of the Rancho Calera conservation project in the Los Padres National Forest as part of the Big Sur Ecosystem program.

My organization is the only non-profit group to release condors in California and have done so since 1997. We have the most robust database of condor locations anywhere in the state. The Rancho Calera property is strategically located for many species of wildlife, including California Condors. Condors are fairly commonly found at this property as it is an important flyway and is in close proximity to naturally occurring food supplies along the Big Sur Coastline.

This year, the 800-acre Rancho Calera property is available for protection. This critical property is adjacent to Forest Service and local park lands and would link upland forests to the rugged Pacific coastline via trails and habitat corridors. The property contains over 200 acres of redwoods, some of which have been used by condors for overnight roosting. The recent sighting of a condor nest in a hollow redwood tree in Big Sur, for the first time in 100 years, as reported March 29, 2006 in the Monterey Herald, makes clear the importance of protecting Rancho Calera and its redwood forests as condors are re-introduced into the wild.

Big Sur is one of the most stunning landscapes in California. Protection of this property would secure an important connection between existing public lands, so that visitors may enjoy its grandeur for generations to come. An appropriation of $2 million from the Land and Water Conservation Fund in fiscal year 2007 is needed to start this property's acquisition and to ensure that acres of prime wildlife habitat and recreation lands within the Big Sur Ecosystem are forever preserved.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for the opportunity to present this testimony in support of an appropriation from the Land and Water Conservation Fund for the Rancho Calera project in California.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE WHIRLING DISEASE FOUNDATION

Whirling disease is a parasitic infection of trout and salmon that is present in 23 states and has caused trout population declines in many of the West's finest trout streams. The discovery of rainbow trout strains with resistance to Myxobolous cerebralis infection (whirling disease) has provided a unique and potentially powerful approach to control whirling disease in selected wild trout populations. The Hofer rainbow trout strain was the first among several recently discovered "resistant" trout strains, and therefore research on this strain is the most advanced. Considerable data has now been obtained on the response of both pure strain and crosses between the Hofer strain and natural rainbow trout to infections with the parasite. Evaluation of other potentially naturally resistant strains of rainbow trout from areas endemic for whirling disease in North America is ongoing, and at least two additional strains have been identified as having some degree of resistance to the parasite. Research on these "resistant" rainbow trout strains is considered a very important part of the fisheries management programs to control whirling disease. Research is currently in progress in Colorado, Montana, Utah, California, and Idaho.

The research on resistant strains has proceeded using a strategic plan developed by the Whirling Disease Foundation and funded with private and federal funds (FWS), with each phase addressing particular concerns that might arise:

Phase I provided confirmation of resistance of the fish.

Phase II provided assurance that the strain identified poses no pathogenic threat to existing native fishes. For the Hofer trout, this has meant extensive testing for presence of exotic pathogens, repeated health examinations for any pathogens, and testing for susceptibility to common pathogens they might encounter in the wild. Results of these tests showed this strain was not a carrier of any exotic pathogens and their susceptibility to other pathogens was similar to other rainbow trout. In other words, it had neither gained nor lost resistance to other pathogens as a result of selection for resistance to whirling disease.

Phase III, currently in progress, provides information necessary for resource managers to decide if resistant rainbow trout strains have a role in their program. This has involved extensive testing of crosses between resistant and other rainbow trout strains (for example, Colorado River and Harrison Lake strains) for resistance to whirling disease, growth characteristics, survival in river and reservoir habitats and behavioral characteristics (such as vulnerability to angling). The studies are most advanced with the Hofer strain but work on both the Harrison Lake and Madison River strains is underway. In coordination with more applied studies on resistant trout the WDF also sponsors basic research that explores the cellular and molecular mechanisms that are providing the resistance observed in these resistant trout strains. This combination of applied and basic research is viewed as a balanced approach to understanding disease resistance in both general and more specific terms but also to provide potential applications that solve current problems created by whirling disease in wild trout populations.

As the research on these resistant trout progresses the potential application of selectively bred rainbow trout for fisheries management will increase. Decisions on just how resistant trout will be utilized to control whirling disease will be dependent on the approval by agencies responsible for the aquatic resources. One potential application of selectively bred rainbow trout in the intermountain west where they are not native will be the restoration of prized fisheries decimated by whirling disease. However, this application must be tied closely to the protection of native fish including other salmonid species, which is the responsibility of resource managers. The WDF's contribution to such decisions will not be in making or supporting policy but in sponsoring research that will assist resource managers in making informed decisions when they are making policies. The WDF does this by funding a variety of research projects on whirling disease and by organizing venues for the exchange of information among scientists, resource managers, and other constituents (12th annual Whirling Disease Symposium, Denver, February, 2006).

Lastly, the WDF believes and state fisheries managers acknowledge that resistant trout will be one of the most important solutions to reduce the effects of whirling disease in states where its effects have devastated trout populations but other important considerations and other approaches are warranted. These include:

1. Naturally reproducing wild rainbow and cutthroat trout in their native range must be protected from genetic or biological intrusions of hatchery rainbow trout of any strain. And that dollars spent to benefit these populations are best spent for habitat restoration that is the long-term key to their success.

2. In areas where rainbow trout fisheries outside of their native range have been established and then have declined or face elimination due to WD, introduction of

WD resistant rainbow trout may serve a useful role in restoration. However, programs to rebuild or restore these nonnative fisheries should not occur at the expense of re-establishing native fish assemblages, particularly those fish species that might hybridize with rainbow trout (e.g. cutthroat trout).

3. The most cautious approaches to re-introducing/re-establishing rainbow trout populations outside of their native ranges is done by using progeny from crosses between WD resistant rainbow trout and naturalized rainbow trout.

Presently, resistant strains of rainbow trout are being used in a research program in Colorado, where Hofer trout and progeny between Hofer and other strains are being evaluated for some of the applications above. Progeny of these crosses have also been shared with the states of Utah and California, where they are being reared in state hatcheries and private aquaculture for the purpose of evaluating their performance under different culture conditions, and in Idaho, the Hofer rainbow will be utilized in an attempt to re-establish an important recreational rainbow fishery in the Big Lost River. Another resistant trout strain discovered in Montana is being reared and evaluated in cooperation with a federal research facility. The progress in research and the expansion of the WD resistant trout research program indicate that $400,000 in federal support would required in fiscal year 2007.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF WEBER PATHWAYS

Mr. Chairman and Honorable Members of the Committee: On behalf of Weber Pathways, I appreciate the opportunity to present this testimony in support of a $3 million appropriation from the Land and Water Conservation Fund for critical land protection efforts along the Bonneville Shoreline Trail in Utah.

Weber Pathways in a non-profit organization that is particularly committed to creating a network of trails in Weber County. We are committed to the idea that non-motorized network of public pathways significantly contribute to our community's economic vitality and quality of life.

Weber Pathways believes that the proven benefits of trails include:

—Encouraging outdoor recreation, fitness and good health;
—Enabling residents, especially children, to travel safely to their destinations on foot, bicycle, horseback, skis or even wheelchair;
—Fostering sustainable economic activity by providing amenities that attract business development and tourism;
—Protecting access to trailheads, mountains, rivers, open spaces, and public lands;
—Revitalizing people as they engage with their landscape, and
—Creating community pride as neighbors interact and come to appreciate their environment.

Weber Pathways, with the strong support of counties and cities in the area, envisions a comprehensive network of greenways joining urban and rural pathways that respect private landowners while linking communities throughout Weber County.

In 2005, Weber Pathways successfully negotiated a trail easement over a five-mile stretch of the Bonneville Shoreline Trail along the northeastern side of North Ogden City in Weber County. The easement is along a utility corridor that is owned by the utility company Pacificorp. This stretch of the trail offers spectacular views in several directions; south overlooking the Salt Lake Valley and north towards existing National Forest and Ben Lomond Peak, an iconic natural feature of Weber County. We anticipate that the trail will be completed and opened for public use by the fall of 2006.

North Ogden is a rapidly growing city, with housing development growing towards the northeastern foothills of the Wasatch Mountains towards the National Forest and the newly acquired stretch of the Bonneville Shoreline Trail. The Forest Service and project partners have proposed a program whereby private lands between the existing National Forest and the Bonneville Shoreline Trail could be acquired to protect the views and protect this vital public recreation trail, and further to facilitate spur trails off BST that would enable hikers, bikers and horse-riders to access canyons within the Forest. The Bonneville Shoreline Trail is also intended to serve as a firebreak between the National Forest and urban areas and as a physical demarcation of the boundary of Forest Service property. Both of these functions are dependent on the acquisition of the private lands in question. I understand that the program area is already within the authorized boundaries of the Wasatch Cache National Forest.

In fiscal year 2007, a total of $3 million is needed to acquire BST properties, and which would provide funding for the Forest Service for a land protection program along this new section of the Bonneville Shoreline Trail in Weber County.

I respectfully request that you include an appropriation of $3 million for the Bonneville Shoreline Trail in the fiscal year 2007 Interior and Related Agencies Appropriations bill.

Thank you for your attention to this request.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE WESTERN COALITION OF ARID STATES

The Western Coalition of Arid States (WESTCAS) is submitting this testimony regarding the Presidents fiscal year 2007 budget request for the United States Fish and Wildlife Service.

WESTCAS is a coalition of approximately 125 water and wastewater districts, cities and towns and professional organizations focused on water quality and water quantity issues in the States of Arizona, California, Colorado, Idaho, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon and Texas. Our mission is to work with Federal, State and Regional water quality and quantity agencies to promote scientifically-sound law, regulations, appropriations and policies that protect public health in the environment of the arid West.

WESTCAS supports the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service mission of working with others to conserve, protect, and enhance fish, wildlife, plants and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people. The budget of the FWS is designed to support this mission. WESTCAS welcomes opportunities to partner with FWS in the promotion of this mission and in that we support several programs outlined within the fiscal year 2007 budget.

Protecting the environment requires the development of best management practices and policies that can be implemented, validated and measured. In administering the Endangered Species Act the FWS is developing partnerships with agencies and scientific standards for its implementation. WESTCAS supports the fiscal year 2007 budget for this critical program and requests an evaluation of additional funding opportunities for the Endangered Species. Specifically WESTCAS would like to ensure the Colorado River Flow study is fully funded. This Colorado river and its basin is the major water source for millions of people in Colorado, Nevada, California and Arizona.

Thank you for considering our request.

State and tribal wildlife grants provide funding to ensure research and development continues within the FWS program. The FWS program has changed dramatically over time, many changes due to research performed. Therefore, it is critical to continue to evaluate the environment and the effects of discharges and encroachment on wildlife. This evaluation provides the foundation for future research into minimizing those effects and the development of practices, regulations and standards that allow for the continuing benefit of the American people.

The Private Stewardship program has enhanced the management of non-native species, restoration of habitat and assisted in reforming habitats which support imperiled species. WESTCAS supports these programs and the appropriation for the continuation of the Private Stewardship program.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE WESTERN COALITION OF ARID STATES

The Western Coalition of Arid States (WESTCAS) is submitting this testimony regarding the Presidents fiscal year 2007 budget request for the United States Geological Survey.

WESTCAS is a coalition of Western towns and municipalities, water and wastewater agencies, irrigation districts, Native American nations, companies with water and wastewater concerns and professionals in the fields of engineering, the environmental sciences, and natural resources law and policy. WESTCAS was formed in 1992 by Western water and wastewater agencies concerned with the quality and management of water resources in the Arid West. A grass roots organization, WESTCAS is dedicated to encouraging the development of water programs and regulations which assure adequate supplies of high quality water for those living in the arid regions while protecting the environment.

MISSION AND SERVICES

The United States Geological Survey (USGS) is the nations primary provider of earth and biological information related to natural hazards; certain aspects of the environment; and mineral, energy, water, and biological resources. It is the Federal Government's principal civilian mapping agency and primary source of data on the quantity and quality of the nation's water resources by maintaining a network

water measuring stations. The USGS is the sole science agency for the Department of the Interior and provides impartial science information that is used by many other Federal, State and local agencies. Its motto of "science for a changing world" says it all. A major value of the USGS to the Nation is its ability to carry on studies on a national and regional scale and to sustain long-term monitoring and assessment of natural resources.

The scientific focus of the USGS and its non-regulatory role, enable the USGS to provide information and interpretation that are policy relevant and policy neutral. The agency also forms collaborative partnerships with State and local governments, which is used to leverage matching funds for topographic and water resources investigations, and directly contracts for reimbursable work.

FISCAL YEAR 2007 BUDGET ANALYSIS

The following is a comparison of the President's proposed budget (in millions of dollars) to the 2005 and 2006 budgets in the major categories:

[In millions of dollars]

Program	2005 actual	12006 enacted	2007 request	Change
National Mapping Program	118,751	129,273	76,614	−52,659
Geologic Haz, Res, & Proc.	237,346	235,286	217,418	−17,868
Water Resources Invest.	211,200	211,764	204,047	−7,717
Biological Research	171,699	178,544	172,597	−5,947
Enterprise Information	44,373	46,394	111,230	+64,838
Science Support	65,584	69,302	67,382	−1,920
Facilities	94,611	94,782	95,472	+690
Total	943,564	965,345	944,760	−20,585

WESTCAS INTEREST IN USGS BUDGET

As the premier, grassroots organization dedicated to scientifically proven methods for environmentally sound long-term water supply planning in the arid West, WESTCAS member agencies rely on USGS water resources and biological data in assessing programs and regulations. Federal and State regulators rely on USGS data for the same purpose.

1. The overall reduction in the total USGS budget by 2 percent is of great concern to WESTCAS in light of major changes in the ecosystems of the Arid West due to global warming, and a variety of natural disasters, which to evaluate comprehensively, requires significantly more scientific data and analyses, not less.

2. WESTCAS initiatives are most affected by the USGC budgets for Water Resources Investigations. These include the Ground-water Resources Program, the National Water-Quality Assessment, the Toxic Substances Hydrology, Hydrologic Research & Development, National Streamflow Information Program, the Hydrologic Networks and Analysis, the Cooperative Water Program, and the Water Resources Research Act Programs. Except for the National Streamflow Information Program and a small increase in the National Water-Quality Assessment, all other 2007 budgets are proposed to be reduced with funding for the Water Resources Research Institutes eliminated. We are concerned that some of the Water Resources Research Institutes will not be able to support themselves and be forced to close. The overall decrease of 3.6 percent in Water Resource Investigations is significant, when more funding in all areas is required to the reasons mentioned in item 1.

3. It is noted that the funding to the National Streamflow Information Program (NSIP) is proposed to be increased by $2.3 million for streamgaging activities. This will allow 30 additional streamgages and continued operations at high priority sites. This is good start in reversing the trend and bring back some of the 1,790 streamgages that were lost due to lack of funding from 1980 to 2000. However, WESTCAS supports additional funding for several years for the NSIP to further stabilize, modernize, and expand the streamgage program to meet the USGS goal of 4,700 backbone streamgages from the current 3,100 currently active. We support the sharing of these additional costs with funding partners.

4. WESTCAS is concerned about the decrease in the Biological Research funding by 3.5 percent, because of the increased need for this data in establishing regulations based on good science. Most of our arid western water projects impact and are impacted by issues with flora and fauna. WESTCAS supports the Arid West Project, which is providing biological data and analyses of arid west ecosystems, so that better decision making can occur.

5. The USGS should be complimented on its publication of their Scientific Investigations Report—Water Availability for the Western United States—Key Scientific Challenges. WESTCAS agrees with its analysis of the complex issues and scientific challenges associated with sustainability of water supplies in the arid west. Funding should be provided to implement additional research in areas identified by the Report.

Thank you for considering our request.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE WESTERN COALITION OF ARID STATES

The Western Coalition of Arid States (WESTCAS) is submitting this testimony regarding the Presidents fiscal year 2007 budget request for the United States Environmental Protection Agency.

WESTCAS is a coalition of approximately 125 water and wastewater districts, cities and towns and professional organizations focused on water quality and water quantity issues in the States of Arizona, California, Colorado, Idaho, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon and Texas. Our mission is to work with Federal, State and Regional water quality and quantity agencies to promote scientifically-sound law, regulations, appropriations and policies that protect public health in the environment of the arid West.

Most citizens of the United States consider the public safety departments to be police and fire. Yet when these people come into their lives it is usually do to a personal catastrophe or problem. Yet water service providers are their every day. It is a service that is taken for granted until it is not available. People providing water services truly are a part of public safety and the Environmental Protection Agency provides the rules, regulations, tools and often funding to ensure that this public safety item is one which the residents of the United States can trust.

Providing clean, safe water services to citizens is not just a function of the members of WESTCAS it is the mission of each and passion of each of its members. The proposed decrease of greater than twenty percent in Water Protection funding could greatly impair the ability of State, Local and Regional representatives to support EPA's goal of increasing drinking water standards to 89–95 percent of the population and increasing shellfish growing areas from 77 to 91 percent.

EPA's decision to move forward on the Total Coliform Rule, developing ways of comprehensive contamination warning systems, and requiring the reduction of vessel discharges and invasive species will assist organizations in providing services to residents. WESTCAS supports these budget initiatives. Databases provide critical information to all users. The Safe Drinking Water Information System (SIDWIS) is used by Federal, State, Local agencies and public interest groups. Ensuring this data is accurate is crucial. As this database is expanded to allow the regulated community to directly input and update their information the EPA will have data with fewer inconsistencies.

State Revolving Funding programs provide low cost loans and grants to ensure drinking water and wastewater regulations are met. The needs surveys indicate that funding needs are increasing not decreasing. The proposed reductions to the State Revolving Fund program will cause a dramatic reduction in infrastructure programs. The current Clean Water Needs Survey provided to Congress identifies billions in need that directly affect water safety. WESTCAS supports increasing the SRF program funding to its original level.

Ensuring the aquifer is protected provides security to all residents. Leaking underground storage facilities, illegal dumping and mismanagement of land application products can lead to contamination of this vial resource. WESTCAS therefore supports EPA's superfund program and the pursuance of cost recoveries.

The border of Mexico is great interest to WESTCAS as many of its members are a border state. EPA's "build a partnership work group for Mexico" is an area that WESTCAS would like to offer as a partnership opportunity. WESTCAS members are familiar with the terrain, complications in sighting wells, and wastewater challenges. At this time WESTCAS supports this initiative and welcomes the opportunity to assist in this process and would appreciate consideration to be part of the work group.

EPA has recognized the need to cultivate its own employees. American Water Works Association and Water Environment Federation have identified the need for additional utility workers in the future. Operators are retiring at an alarming rate and due to the need to be competitive, training opportunities for grade 1 and 2 operators are limited. This is causing a regional and national decrease in available workers with the required skill sets to run water and wastewater facilities. EPA's decision to eliminate funding for operator training will increase this problem. There-

fore, WESTCAS is requesting that EPA evaluate this decision and its long term effects on future operations of facilities.

Budget development and allotment of funding is a challenge and one which requires a great deal of introspection within the organization. WESTCAS appreciates the opportunity to provide testimony on this complex task.

Thank you for considering our request.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE WASHINGTON SUBURBAN SANITARY COMMISSION

WASHINGTON SUBURBAN SANITARY COMMISSION

The Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission (Commission or WSSC), established in 1918, is a public, bi-county agency providing water and wastewater services to Montgomery and Prince George's Counties in the Washington Capital region. WSSC is governed by six Commissioners with equal representation from each county and has developed its systems to the point where it is a national leader in the water and sewerage industry. The Commission is the among the ten largest water and wastewater utilities in the country, serving approximately 1.6 million people in a 1,000 square mile service area. In addition, the Commission provides services to 26 key federal installations and facilities in the Washington area, including such important military facilities as Andrews Air Force Base; the National Imagery and Mapping Agency; the National Naval Medical Center; the Naval Surface Warfare Center; the U.S. Army Research Center. Numerous other state and local security-related installations and offices also receive service from the Commission.

Water treatment and distribution facilities operated by the Commission include three water supply reservoirs; two water filtration plants; fourteen water pumping stations; 5,100 miles of water mains; and 54 treated-water storage facilities. Water production at Commission facilities is 166 million gallons per day. In terms of wastewater facilities, the Commission operates six wastewater treatment plants; 41 wastewater pumping stations; and approximately 4,900 miles of sewer mains.

WASTEWATER INFRASTRUCTURE UPGRADES AND IMPROVEMENTS, ANACOSTIA RIVER

Under the EPA's State and Tribal Assistance Grant (STAG) program, WSSC seeks $1,000,000 for wastewater infrastructure upgrades and improvements along the Anacostia River.

In order to address sanitary sewer overflow (SSO) issues for wastewater pipes along the Anacostia River, capital funding is needed to allow for the necessary inspections and monitoring to identify critical areas and then repair and upgrade pipes as needed. This work is expected to be consistent with requirements that are being negotiated as part of the current consent decree between EPA and WSSC.

Upgrading key pipes along the Anacostia River will provide many environmental benefits to this critical ecosystem and riparian habitat. Furthermore, by helping to clean the Anacostia River, the water quality of the Potomac River—a key source of drinking water for the WSSC service area—will also be improved, as the Anacostia flows into the Potomac.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE WILKESON TOWN COUNCIL, WILKESON, WASHINGTON

On behalf of the Town of Wilkeson I appreciate the opportunity to present this testimony regarding the appropriation of $5 million from the Land and Water Conservation Fund to acquire 800 acres at Mount Rainier National Park in Washington.

The Town of Wilkeson is a gateway community to Mount Rainier National Park on its northwestern side. For 80 years, entry to the Town has been highlighted by a prominent sign stating "Wilkeson, Gateway to the Carbon Glacier". Following a road up the Carbon River Valley from Wilkeson, visitors are able to access the Park including Ipsut Campground and picnic area and numerous trails. The northwestern entrance to the national park through Wilkeson is the closest by distance to the nearby metropolitan areas of Seattle and Tacoma.

Mount Rainier is one of the oldest National Parks in the country and is certainly considered a treasure not only by the people of the Pacific Northwest but by people from around the world. The Park receives nearly 2 million visitors a year many of whom pass through Wilkeson on their way to the "Mountain" .

Ensuring access for the Park's many visitors has been a particular concern at the northwest entrance. The Carbon River road within the Park has occasionally washed out, preventing visitors from reaching the Ipsut Creek campground and picnic area, as well as day-use parking for access to the Carbon Glacier and other area

trails. In 2004 Congress passed and President Bush signed legislation adding land along three miles of the Carbon River to the Park.

In part the stated intent of the boundary expansion is to improve access to the Park with new roads, campgrounds, trails and other facilities. However, I understand through information from the "Trust for Public Lands" that the existing Carbon River Road from the Park entrance to Ipsut Campground and the Carbon Glacier trail is to be converted to a hiking and biking trail. Also the National Park has no plan to replace the existing Carbon River road. The loss of this road to vehicle or general public access will significantly, negatively impact the use of this very popular destination.

The Carbon Glacier trail is a very popular and relatively easy 3.5 mile hike that many people use throughout the year. The closure of the Carbon River road will mean the hike will become an 8.5 mile trip, one way. The hike is currently very popular with families, school classes in the spring and people of all ages.

As a gateway community the Town of Wilkeson supports this critical appropriation only if it will truly improve the present degree of public access to the Park by maintaining existing roads, campgrounds and picnic areas and not closing or restricting their use. Continuing the current level of access is critical to the people and businesses of Wilkeson and surrounding communities.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman for your consideration of the request and for this opportunity to present testimony regarding the appropriation of $5 million for the acquisition of 800 acres of land for Mount Rainier National Park.

LETTER FROM THE WYOMING WATER ASSOCIATION

WYOMING WATER ASSOCIATION,
Cheyenne, WY, March 6, 2006.

Hon. CONRAD BURNS, *Chairman,*
Hon. BYRON DORGAN, *Ranking Member,*
Subcommittee on the Interior and Related Agencies, Committee on Appropriations, U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN BURNS AND RANKING MEMBER DORGAN: On behalf of the members of the Wyoming Water Association, this letter is sent to request your support and assistance in insuring continued funding for the Upper Colorado River Endangered Fish Recovery Program and the San Juan River Basin Recovery Implementation Program.

Founded in 1933, the Wyoming Water Association (WWA) is a Wyoming non-profit corporation and voluntary organization of private citizens, elected officials, and representatives of business, government agencies, industry and water user groups and districts. The Association's objective is to promote the development, conservation, and utilization of the water resources of Wyoming for the benefit of Wyoming people. The WWA provides the only statewide uniform voice representing all types of water users within the State of Wyoming and encourages citizen participation in decisions relating to multi-purpose water development, management and use.

The Wyoming Water Association is a participant in the Upper Colorado River Endangered Fish Recovery Program. That program, and its sister program within the San Juan River Basin, are ongoing partnerships among the States of Colorado, New Mexico, Utah and Wyoming, Indian tribes, federal agencies and water, power and environmental interests. The programs' objectives are to recover endangered fish species while water use and development proceeds in compliance with the Endangered Species Act. Consistent with the requests made by our other Upper Colorado and San Juan Recovery Programs' partners, the WWA respectfully requests support and action by the Subcommittee that will provide the following:

1. Appropriation of $697,000 in "recovery" funds (Ecological Services Activity; Endangered Species Subactivity; Recovery Element; $697,000 within the $5,631,000 item entitled "General Program Activities") to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) for fiscal year 2007 to allow FWS to continue its necessary participation in the Upper Colorado River Endangered Fish Recovery Program. This is the same level of funding appropriated to the FWS in fiscal years 2004, 2005 and 2006.

2. Appropriation of $437,000 in operation and maintenance funds (Resource Management Appropriation; Fisheries Activity; Hatchery Operations & Maintenance Subactivity, Hatchery Operations Project) to support the ongoing operation of the FWS' Ouray National Fish Hatchery in Utah during fiscal year 2007.

3. Allocation of $211,000 in "recovery" funds for the San Juan River Basin Recovery Implementation Program to the FWS for fiscal year 2007 to meet FWS's Region 2 expenses managing and implementing the San Juan Program's diverse recovery actions.

These recovery programs have become national models for collaboratively working to recover endangered species while addressing water needs to support growing western communities in the Upper Colorado River Basin region of the Intermountain West. Since 1988, these programs have facilitated ESA Section 7 consultation (without litigation) for over 1,000 federal, tribal, state and privately managed water projects depleting approximately 2.9 million acre-feet of water per year. The requested federal appropriations are critically important to these efforts moving forward.

The past support and assistance of your Subcommittee has greatly facilitated the success of these multi-state, multi-agency programs. On behalf of the members of the Wyoming Water Association, I thank you for that support and request the Subcommittee's assistance for fiscal year 2007 funding to ensure the Fish and Wildlife Service's continuing financial participation in these vitally important programs.

Sincerely yours,

JOHN W. SHIELDS,
Executive Secretary.