

Federal Parks & Recreation

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House rejects final deal on energy bill with LWCF, etc.

Speaker of the House Paul Ryan (R-Wis.) said December 7 that time has run out on an ambitious energy bill with important park and rec policy implications. Congress was due to end the 114th Congress this weekend.

Senate conferees reacted badly to Ryan's decision, claiming the conference was within a whisker of reaching final agreement on the bill (S 2012).

Senate Energy Committee Chairman Lisa Murkowski (R-Alaska) and ranking committee Democrat Maria Cantwell (D-Wash.) said the conferees had agreed on several park and rec provisions. They included (1) a Park Service Centennial package, (2) a sportsmen's package, (3) several individual public lands bills and (4) emergency wildfire spending.

Murkowski and Cantwell didn't provide details but not on their list of bill provisions was a permanent Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF). An earlier Senate version of S 2012 would have made the program permanent.

Said Murkowski in a last Hail Mary shot, "The House may want to claim that this bill cannot move forward because we are running out of time. The reality is that the House is attempting to run us out of time, in order to prevent this bill from moving forward, even though it contains the priorities of dozens of its members. I urge my House colleagues to reconsider and to allow our conference report to come up for a vote before we adjourn."

The House had given the Centennial provisions a big boost December 6 by approving a stand-alone Centennial bill (HR 4680) that would (1) establish a national park endowment, (2) a national

park challenge fund and (3) increase senior citizen entrance fees.

The senior citizen fee hike was criticized by the Western Slope No Fee Coalition. It advised its members, "While there have been a multitude of bills introduced (and programs authorized) aimed at giving new groups free or reduced-cost access to the public lands - 4th Graders, military families, those with disabilities, veterans, volunteers - it is difficult to understand why Congress has taken this opportunity to reduce a long-standing benefit to seniors. It is being done in the guise of celebrating the centennial of the National Park Service."

The chairman of the House subcommittee on Federal Lands, Rep. John McClintock (R-Calif.), defended the bill. The National Park Service Centennial Act provides the Park Service with new tools and authorities that it can use to maintain and improve the system," he said on the House floor. "Provisions in this bill help reduce the Service's maintenance backlog by generating new revenue to pay for needed capital improvements and leveraging private philanthropic donations to amplify this effort."

The subcommittee's ranking Democrat, Rep. Niki Tsongas (R-Mass.), said HR 4680, approved by a voice vote, falls far short of providing the money needed to upgrade the National Park System.

"New revenue generated by fees, especially at the expense of our Nation's seniors, will not solve the issue of deferred maintenance," she said. "In the short term, the legislation before us today is a good first step, and I support the bill. But Congress must find a way to appropriate new funds to our national parks in order to preserve and protect them for future generations of Americans."

Dan Puskar, executive director of the Public Lands Alliance, praised the legislation. "Most importantly, the act establishes a Centennial Challenge Fund, building on almost a decade of successfully leveraging private

dollars with federal funds to improve visitor infrastructure, engage youth and veterans, rehabilitate historical assets and offer exceptional learning opportunities," he said.

The House action on HR 4680 gave the Centennial provision a boost because it provided the House and Senate conference committee on S 2012 one more weapon to use to approve a centennial package.

Still, the Senate and House were admittedly not in agreement yet on the over substance of an energy bill. Some House Republicans have maintained for some time that the bill should be scrapped altogether and rewritten next year with a Republican in the White House. Ryan apparently bought that argument.

For the record a fortnight ago House conferees made a new offer to a House-Senate conference committee and Senate conferees responded with their own offer. Neither side released the details of the offers.

But Murkowski and Cantwell said in a statement just after Thanksgiving that the House would drop a number of provisions that senators wanted.

Favored Senate policies the House would drop deal with the Land & Water Conservation Fund, sportsmen's access to federal lands, hydropower, LNG exports, natural gas pipelines, manufacturing, innovation, carbon benefits of biomass and critical minerals.

Their House counterparts - House Energy Committee Chairman Fred Upton, R-Mich.) and House Natural Resources Committee Chairman Rob Bishop (R-Utah) said they had sent a new proposal to the Senate.

Without describing the contents Upton and Bishop said, "This offer reflects policies that represent the current bipartisan consensus in the House. We welcome any suggestions from the Senate and remain open to continuing to work with our Senate colleagues and concluding this conference in a productive manner."

But some House Republicans would reportedly like to kick the whole thing into the next Congress. Alaska newspapers said Murkowski called that "crazy talk." She said the complexity of writing a new bill should not be underestimated. Besides, Murkowski noted, Republicans will actually have a two-fewer Senate majority next year, 52-to-48, compared to 54-to-46 now.

LWCF: The Senate version of the bill would make the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) permanent. And it would set aside \$150 million each year for Park Service maintenance from offshore royalties, but in a separate fund from LWCF. The House-passed version of S 2012 includes neither of those provisions.

In fact the House singled out the Senate LWCF provision for disapproval May 25, directing House conferees to reject the Senate provision in a close 205-to-212 vote.

LWCF is not in danger of expiring any day soon. Congress extended the fund for three years in a fiscal 2016 appropriations law (PL 113-114 of Dec. 18, 2015) through fiscal 2018.

But supporters want to lock in LWCF now. Although there are several other legislative initiatives to do that floating around in Congress, the energy bill provides a golden opportunity.

Centennial: As noted above, the House December 6 gave a boost to the possibility of inclusion of a Park Service Centennial program in the energy measure by approving a stand-alone Centennial bill (HR 4680).

HR 4680 would establish a \$10 million Centennial Challenge Fund, a National Park Foundation Endowment and expand National Park Foundation authorities. In effect it gives the conferees one more reason to approve a Centennial provision.

The Senate version of the energy bill included in its version of S 2012 a provision that would establish a National Park Centennial Challenge Fund with up to \$17.5 million per year in

federal appropriations. That's not much of a gain over the \$15 million Congress appropriated in a fiscal year 2016 appropriations bill for the fund.

The Senate energy bill Centennial provision would also establish an endowment for NPS called the Second Century Endowment for the National Park System. It would be financed by "gifts, devises, or bequests."

Unlike the Senate the House would also revise senior citizen America The Beautiful Pass rates. The House committee would do away with a one-time, senior-citizen \$10 fee and substitute either an annual \$20 fee or a permanent \$80 fee.

The Senate and House Centennial provisions fall far short of an ambitious Obama administration proposal that would have Congress authorize more than \$500 million in new programs for the Centennial. (That's in addition to a huge increase in appropriations.)

Trump warm to energy advocate Gov. Fallin as next DoI head

The Trump administration is toying with the choice of Oklahoma Gov. Mary Fallin (R-Okla.), a leading advocate of energy development, as its nominee for the next secretary of Interior.

As governor since 2011 Fallin has become well known as an energy industry advocate and as a budget hawk.

She met personally with Trump before Thanksgiving. However, there is an old saying that the more time passes after a cabinet candidate meets with a President-elect without an announcement, the less likely that person is to get the job. And the clock is ticking.

In one controversy that may touch on the national parks Fallin in 2012 supported the erection of a Ten Commandments monument on the grounds of the Oklahoma State Capitol. After the Oklahoma Supreme Court ruled 7-to-2 that the monument was unconstitutional Fallin initially refused to take it down, but eventually acquiesced.

Religious groups have betimes attempted to erect symbols in the national parks on the grounds those symbols are freedom of speech.

Meanwhile, the Trump administration and its Republican allies continue to gear up to reverse regulations and executive orders from the Obama administration. House and Senate Republican leaders are reportedly preparing to use a Congressional Review Act to revoke Obama regulations posted during the last half of this year.

A prime candidate for reversal is an anticipated Park Service Director's Order #100 that would give protection of the park system priority over uses (see *related article page 8.*) Also on the chopping block might be new oil and gas regulations issued by the Park Service and Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS).

FWS posted a final oil and gas rule November 14 that is scheduled to go into effect December 14. NPS announced completion of a counterpart rule November 3 that went into effect December 5.

But revocation of those regulations is child's play compared to a recommendation House Natural Resources Committee Chairman Rob Bishop (R-Utah) forwarded to the Trump transition team December 5. Bishop said that President Trump should roll back noxious national monument designations.

His immediate target is a widely anticipated designation by President Obama of a Bears Ears National Monument in southern Utah. But Bishop also told the Utah press that Trump could by executive order reverse the 1996 designation of a 1.7 million-acre Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument in Utah by then President Clinton.

Some scholars believe a President would have no such reversal authority under the Antiquities Act of 1906. Said the Congressional Research Service in a report it prepared last month on the Antiquities Act that reversals may not be legal.

"No President has ever abolished

or revoked a national monument proclamation, so the existence or scope of any such authority has not been tested in courts," said CRS.

"However, some legal analyses since at least the 1930s have concluded that the Antiquities Act, by its terms, does not authorize the President to repeal proclamations, and that the President also lacks implied authority to do so." (See *following article.*)

The Trump administration has floated the names of a good dozen candidates for the Interior post, in addition to Fallin.

The early list was led by Forrest Lucas, founder of Lucas Oil Products, a manufacturer of oil products. Other candidates for Interior secretary mentioned by the *Politico* website include former Alaska Gov. Sarah Palin (R-Alaska); former Arizona Gov. Jan Brewer (R-Ariz.); Wyoming Rep. Cynthia Lummis (R-Wyo.); and Oklahoma oilman Harold Hamm. Idaho Gov. Butch Otter (R-Idaho) has also been mentioned.

More recent possibilities have included Bishop himself, Sen. Heidi Heitkamp (D-N.D.), Alaska businessman Bob Gilliam, and, on some recreationists' wish list, Wyoming Gov. Matt Mead (R-Wyo.)

At least one candidate for the boss of a line agency, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), has come forward - Utah House Rules Chairman Michael E. Noel (R). Noel is a champion of the campaign in Utah to have 31 million acres of federal land transferred to the state.

Meanwhile, in the House two key committees have selected chairmen for the 115th Congress. In a major change at the House Appropriations Committee Rep. Rodney Frelinghuysen (R-N.J.) will replace Rep. Hal Rogers (R-Ky.) as chairman.

Rep. Bill Shuster (R-Pa.) will remain as chairman of the House Transportation Committee.

For all the commotion about the

transition, little is still being said about substantive outdoor policy. The one thing Trump does advocate is energy development, particularly from the federal lands. He promises to unleash oil, gas, coal and oil shale producers on the public lands. Fallin fits that ambition.

Almost certainly the top Trump priorities - lower taxes, more infrastructure spending, more Defense spending - would require massive spending reductions for domestic programs, including the public lands. Again, budget hawk Fallin fills that bill.

While the nation's focus was on the Presidential contest in the November 8 elections, 17 Senate seats were on the ballot and early results indicated that Republicans had retained a majority of 52-to-48.

Among key Senate and House committee and subcommittee chairmen and ranking Democratic minority members, almost all are expected to be back. Sen. Lisa Murkowski (R-Alaska) was the most influential park and rec policy senator up for re-election and she won with ease.

Bishop takes his monument complaints to Trump Tower

House Natural Resources Committee Chairman Rob Bishop (R-Utah) recommended to the Trump transition team December 5 that the President-elect roll back objectionable national monument designations.

Bishop's immediate target is a widely anticipated designation by President Obama of a Bears Ears National Monument in southern Utah. Bishop also told the Utah press that Trump could by executive order reverse the 1996 designation by then President Clinton of a 1.7 million-acre Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument in Utah. Both areas are managed by the Bureau of Land Management.

After meeting with the Trump transition team Bishop said, "Any

monument designation that lacks local support, is excessive, or violates the terms of the Antiquities Act will be scrutinized and is easier to abolish. Today's discussions with the transition team examined options for the incoming administration. The talks were positive and encouraging."

A Bishop press release adds that the Antiquities Act of 1906 "does not prohibit a president from abolishing or modifying the terms of a previously declared monument which has not been ratified by Congress."

But some scholars believe a President would have limited authority under the Antiquities Act. Indeed, the Congressional Research Service in a [report](#) it prepared last month on the act questioned whether reversals would be legal.

"No President has ever abolished or revoked a national monument proclamation, so the existence or scope of any such authority has not been tested in courts," said CRS. "However, some legal analyses since at least the 1930s have concluded that the Antiquities Act, by its terms, does not authorize the President to repeal proclamations, and that the President also lacks implied authority to do so."

The environmental group Public Employees for Environmental Responsibility (PEER) criticized any attempt to revoke monument designations.

"Having a President Trump take the unprecedented step of trying to unilaterally revoke monuments is guaranteed to trigger lawsuits that will likely remain unresolved during his tenure," said PEER Executive Director Jeff Ruch. "Congresspersons who bellyache about national monuments set aside for the American people over the last generation have only themselves to blame for abdicating the constructive and dynamic role in national monuments played by past Congresses."

PEER is making the CRS Report available at:
http://www.peer.org/assets/docs/12_5_16_CRS_memo.pdf.

Separately, Bishop and Rep. Jason Chaffetz (R-Utah), who are attempting to protect Bears Ears short of a national monument designation with legislation, charged last month that neither the Interior Department nor a coalition of Indian tribes are cooperating with them.

The Congressmen said they had proposed co-management of the area. Bishop and Chaffetz have sponsored an omnibus Utah lands bill (HR 5780) that would protect 1.4 million acres in the Bears Ears area by establishing national conservation areas totaling 858,000 acres and by designating a wilderness area.

Said Bishop, "It is frustrating that efforts to work with people who claim a great interest in this area are continuously rebuffed with arguments that parrot special interest groups. Ironically, if this group is banking on a monument, they will never get the co-management they want. We're willing to give it to them. Why can't they just say yes?"

Bishop, Chaffetz and the state's two senators wrote to the Bears Ears Inter-Tribal Coalition November 18 asking the coalition to draft legislative language that would allow co-management of the area.

The delegation told the coalition, "It has been widely reported that co-management cannot be achieved through an Antiquities Act designation. We believe the congressional process can craft a meaningful co-management plan in which the Tribes are made equal to other participants."

The Interior Department took exception the charge that it was not cooperating. "There appears to be a disconnect between public statements and facts here," Interior Department spokeswoman Jessica Crenshaw told us. "On September 2 Interior provided technical assistance to the Hill which included thoughts on proposed management with the tribes."

The Utahns complaint represents one more objection from western Republicans to the possibility that

President Obama would soon designate hundreds of thousands of acres of national monuments in the West.

In another example last month Nevada Sen. Dean Heller (R-Nev.) asked Obama not to designate a Gold Butte National Monument or an Owyhee Canyonlands National Monument in Oregon adjacent to Nevada.

"I urge you to abandon any plans to unilaterally designate a national monument that affects Nevadans before the end of your term," Heller wrote just before Thanksgiving. "I remain committed to 'the Nevada model' of advancing conservation priorities legislatively as I assume the role as Nevada's senior Senator in the 115th Congress."

Despite those criticisms President Obama is expected to designate at least a few monuments in his last six weeks from these candidates - Bears Ears National Monument in southern Utah, Gold Butte National Monument in southern Nevada, Greater Grand Canyon Heritage National Monument in northwestern Arizona, Owyhee Canyonlands monument in Oregon and expansion of the Cascade-Siskiyou National Monument in Oregon. That is by no means an exclusive list.

Obama's weapon of choice of course is the Antiquities Act of 1906, which gives a President almost unchecked authority to designate national monuments from public lands, and then prescribe uses on those lands.

Obama has designated or enlarged 26 national monuments including a dozen in western states. For instance on July 9, 2015 he designated a 704,000-acre Basin and Range National Monument in Nevada and on May 21, 2014, he established a 500,000-acre Organ Mountains-Desert Peaks National Monument in New Mexico.

Environmentalists are behind the President. The Wilderness Society President Jamie Williams in a statement asked President-elect Trump to abide by such laws at the Land and Water Conservation Fund and the Antiquities Act. Then he said, "In the immediate

weeks ahead, we will focus on ensuring that the Obama administration and Congress finalize critical conservation gains that in many cases have been years in the making and enjoy strong public support."

Would Trump have the authority to undo any national monument, other than public disapprobation? The *Salt Lake Tribune* asked public lands scholars that question and said those experts doubted it, although the courts have not ruled definitively on the matter.

The *Tribune* cited a 1938 opinion written by then-Attorney General Homer Cummings as ruling out the undesignation of a national monument by a President, reflecting the conclusions of the Congressional Research Service study.

Perhaps more likely next year, with a Republican President and a Republican Supreme Court to back them, Congress would act on one or more of a half-dozen bills that would limit a President's monument authority.

But by then the cat may be out of the bag because Obama will have swept the board clean (to mix metaphors) of premier monument candidates.

Legislation: Sen. Steve Daines (R-Mont.) in September added a new twist to legislation that would condition a President's authority to designate national monuments under the Antiquities Act.

He introduced a bill (S 3460) that would forbid the reduction of most existing uses in a designated area until a review period had expired and a state wildlife agency had concurred in the reduction.

The Senate Energy Committee held a hearing September 22 on several bills to curb a President's monuments power. The most sweeping of the three from committee chairman Lisa Murkowski (R-Alaska), S 437, would require the approval of both Congress and a state governor before a President could designate a national monument anywhere in the country.

A second bill, S 3317 from Sens. Mike Lee (R-Utah) and Orrin Hatch (R-Utah), would forbid the designation of a national monument anywhere in Utah. A third bill, S 1416, from Sen. Jeff Flake (R-Ariz.), would not allow a President to reserve water rights associated with a monument. Instead the federal government would have to acquire the water under state law.

The Daines bill was introduced after the September 22 hearing was held.

Bears Ears: The big action right now on the monument front is in the House where the House Natural Resources Committee September 22 approved the Bishop and Chaffetz Utah Public Lands Initiative Act.

Instead of a national monument Bishop and Chaffetz would protect 1.4 million acres in the Bears Ears area in the form of national conservation areas totaling 858,000 acres and a wilderness area.

Five Indian tribes located near the Bears Ears area - Ute Mountain Ute, Zuni, Hopi, Navajo, and Ute Tribe of the Uintah - are leading the campaign for a 1.9 million-acre national monument, along with environmental groups. That is the Bears Ears Inter-Tribal Coalition Bishop and Chaffetz are complaining about.

Gold Butte: Gold Butte is located on BLM land between the Grand Canyon-Parashant National Monument in Arizona and the Lake Mead National Recreation Area in Nevada. BLM manages Gold Butte as an area of critical environmental concern, but has no reception facilities there.

The Obama administration has the backing of conservationists and numerous tourism groups for a monument designation. Supporters include Friends of Gold Butte and Friends of Nevada Wilderness.

President Obama designated a separate, major national monument in southern Nevada just last year - the Basin and Range National Monument.

Gold Butte is adjacent to the Bundy ranch, where Cliven Bundy has refused to pay grazing fees for years. Most other ranchers in the area have quit the livestock business under duress from the Endangered Species Act, etc.

Grand Canyon: On Nov. 3, 2015, Rep. Raúl Grijalva (D-Ariz.) introduced a bill (HR 3882) that would designate a 1.7 million-acre Greater Grand Canyon Heritage National Monument in Arizona. The bill would be located north and south of Grand Canyon National Park and would protect the park's watershed as well as lands held sacred by Native American tribes. The land is currently managed by BLM and the Forest Service.

Owyhee Canyon: An Owyhee Canyonlands conservation proposal seeks to protect 2.5 million acres of Malheur County in Oregon via a combination of wilderness and other conservation designations. In that no major wilderness designations are going to be entertained by this Congress in its last week or so, that leaves it up to President Obama. Thus, a coalition of advocates is now asking for a 2.1 million-acre national monument.

Cascades-Siskiyou expansion: Sen. Jeff Merkley (D-Ore.) has entertained the notion doubling the size of the existing, 66,000-acre Cascade-Siskiyou National Monument in southern Oregon.

Like proposed Order #100, NPS system plan has critics

In addition to a director's order designed to lock in protection of the national parks as a first priority, NPS is attempting to finish up a "system" plan that assesses the needs of the parks.

As we have documented the proposed Director's Order #100 from NPS Director Jonathan B. Jarvis is drawing attacks from key Congressional Republicans for tilting too far toward protection and away from visitor uses.

The proposed system-wide plan is also drawing fire from agency concessioners because it is being

prepared with minimal public input. In fact NPS circulated the system proposal only to a handful of key players, and asked those players not to share it with the public.

The National Park Hospitality Association (NPHA) objects to the secrecy. Said association counselor Derrick Crandall, "We were not happy with this System Plan. Especially offensive to me was the prohibition on copying and sharing the draft plan. I was told that review was by invitation only and that I could brief NPHA and ARC members, but could not copy and share the contents of the plan." Crandall is also president of the American Recreation Coalition (ARC).

A Park Service spokesman said the system plan is an internal agency undertaking. "The system plan is an internal management document which, as opposed to a NEPA document, does not require public notice and comment," said spokesman Jeffrey Olson. "We developed the National Park System Plan in response to 2012 National Park System Advisory Board recommendations on the future of the National Park System. We looked to the Advisory Board for comment. The Advisory Board represents the public."

The association also has substantive complaints about the system plan. When NPHA submitted comments this fall to Temara Delaplane, project manager for the plan, the concessioners said the plan lays the groundwork for an expansion of the system without saying how the government and/or its partners would pay for it.

NPHA in its comments took a shot at an alleged lack of growth in recreation uses in the National Park System. "The document might well ask why NPS is not thriving like the outdoor recreation community overall, which is expanding at roughly twice CPI, or why other leisure choices seem to be more successful in reaching a more urban, more diverse population - from theme parks to state parks to cruises," said the concessioners.

The NPS spokesman said Jarvis

plans to sign both Director's Order #100 and the National Park System Plan "before he leaves the NPS in January." The Trump administration begins at noon on January 20.

NPS described the systems plan this way: "The purpose of a System Plan is to provide 'a framework for the proactive direction for the future of the national park system, identifying gaps in the nation's protected natural and cultural areas, and establishing a collaborative conservation system that fully reflects our nation's cultural and natural heritage.'" "

The System plan is different from Jarvis's Director's Order #100, which would establish protection of the parks as a priority even if a threat were not clear and imminent via a key "Precautionary Principle."

House and Senate Republican leaders are strongly objecting to the order. Senate Energy Committee Chairman Lisa Murkowski (R-Alaska) on November 17 wrote Jarvis, and asked him for an additional 60-day comment period.

House Natural Resources Committee Chairman Rob Bishop (R-Utah) did the same thing the next day.

Bishop also met with Park Service concessioners November 15 and told them if Order #100 were approved, it would be a candidate for revocation by the next Congress under something called the Congressional Review Act.

The comment period on the proposal closed November 18, so a 60-day extension would run until January 18, or two days before President-elect Donald Trump takes over.

Administratively, a new Interior Department could always amend or replace the Director's Order, but that may take time. NPS spent four years writing the Jarvis proposal.

The White Paper advances this Precautionary Principle: "The Precautionary Principle requires that, when an activity raises plausible or probable threats of harm to park

resources and/or human health, management should take anticipatory action even when there is uncertainty."

The proposed order adds, "When such uncertainty exists, NPS managers will take actions that err on the side of caution to protect natural and cultural resources in accordance with section 7 of this Order. Any decision made using the precautionary principle should take into account: (1) the threat of harm to park resources or public health; (2) the level of scientific uncertainty; and (3) the preventive, precautionary action."

Director Jarvis has already announced that he will leave office in January when the Trump administration takes over.

Sen. Murkowski said that the precautionary approach could backfire on park visitors. "Under such a precautionary approach, I am concerned that many of the roads and allowable activities in our parks today would be under assault," she wrote. "Traditional lifestyles and tourism economies do not deserve to be put at risk due to management philosophies developed in Washington."

Bishop said the proposed order would go beyond direction from Congress. "I am particularly concerned about the National Park Service adopting a number of operational definitions and goals which have not been addressed by the Congress, including 'expand(ing) land/seascape-scale resource management and connectivity by increasing the use of existing authorities to manage resources outside parks.' I have serious concerns about this management approach and respectfully request that you revisit this policy objective."

The American Recreation Coalition said the order "would severely limit the agency's ability to be flexible and responsive to its visitors' changing interests and expectations." The coalition's president Derrick Crandall said, "As NPS moves into its second century, it must do so with a balanced approach to visitor experiences and protection, championing both park

resources and the enjoyment of great experiences in the great outdoors.”

On the other hand, as we have reported, a senior official at the advocacy group National Parks Conservation Association (NPCA) endorsed Jarvis’s overall message.

“What’s interesting is the implementation in writing of the Precautionary Principal of proactively protecting the parks, even if we don’t know the impacts of activities,” said NPCA Vice President for Government Affairs Kristen Brengel. We reached out to NPCA for its final comments on the proposal but have not received a response yet.

The director’s order does not mention active uses except in terms of activities that managers should be aware of. Nor does it mention visitation often.

The order does mention visitation as a derivative of good management. “The overarching goal of NPS resource management should be to steward NPS resources for continuous change that is not yet fully understood, in order to preserve ecological integrity and cultural and historical authenticity, provide visitors with transformative experiences, and form the core of a national conservation land- and seascape,” it says.

An environmental group with a different perspective and that has been after Jarvis’s scalp all year, the Public Employees for Environmental Responsibility (PEER), criticized the proposed order for not being specific enough.

“The draft of Director’s Order #100 is full of lofty but nebulous terms, crammed into a mish-mash of confusing and largely unexplained precepts,” said PEER. “Nonetheless, it claims to advance ‘a new framework for stewardship decision making’ based on wholly ‘new conservation concepts and guiding strategies.’ None of these fundamental changes are coherently explained, however.”

Adding a personal note, PEER Executive Director Jeff Ruch said in a press release, “If Director Jarvis is going to hang on until January, he should be barred from issuing any more agency-wide rules.”

Ruch also wrote Interior Secretary Sally Jewell and asked her to defer the order to the next NPS leadership. “Given his highly questionable record, Jon Jarvis’ vision for the National Park Service should end with him,” said Ruch.

Obama expected to sign bill to require rec impact study

President Obama had on his desk at press time legislation that directs the Department of Commerce to conduct a first-ever analysis of the economic activity generated in this country by recreation. He is expected to sign the measure.

The human-powered outdoor recreation industry celebrated and said the legislation would give the recreation economy more prominence.

Said Outdoor Industry Association (OIA) Executive Director Amy Roberts when the Senate approved the bill (HR 4665) November 28, “(OIA) and the thousands of manufacturers, retailers and service providers in the outdoor recreation industry know about the hundreds of millions of dollars our industry contributes to the U.S. economy and the millions of jobs our businesses support. Today’s Senate passage of the REC Act shows that Republicans and Democrats in both chambers of Congress understand that as well.”

On its own hook OIA commissioned a report published in 2012 that held that outdoor recreation is one of the nation’s largest economic engines, producing \$646 billion in consumer spending each year. That trails only financial services and health care.

The powered outdoor recreation industry said a federal government report would give the OIA data even more credence.

Said the American Recreation Coalition, "Congress' action is necessary to make sure the outdoor economy receives official government recognition for years to come. Federal agencies play an important role in outdoor recreation, managing lands and waters which host more than a billion recreation visits each year. The Outdoor REC Act will help shape good choices in allocating federal funds through the budget process and in investing private funds which enhance recreation on public lands and waters."

The principal bill sponsors in the Senate, Jeanne Shaheen (D-N.H.) and Cory Gardner (R-Colo.), took victory laps.

Said Shaheen, "In the Granite State, we know that preserving our natural treasures isn't just good for the environment; it's also a smart move for state and local economies. Policymakers need to see the full picture of the role that outdoor recreation plays in supporting jobs and economic growth, and craft policy accordingly."

Agreed Gardner, "Outdoor recreation is a cornerstone of our economy in Colorado, yet its true economic impact from the federal government's perspective remains unknown."

The House approved the bill (HR 4665) first November 14 followed by the Senate November 28.

The bill would have the Department of Commerce measure the outdoor recreation economy and its impacts on the overall national economy. The department would consult with federal land managers and businesses before completing a report within two years.

Separately, the recreation interests would have appropriators allocate \$3.5 million to set up an Outdoor Recreation Satellite Account in the Department of Commerce. Among the supporters are the American Recreation Coalition, the National Recreation and Park Association, and the Corps Network.

The Commerce Department's Economic

Development Assistance Program has recently established similar accounts for the arts, and for travel and tourism.

The Senate Appropriations Committee April 21 approved a fiscal year 2017 appropriations bill (S 2837) that endorses the proposal.

Appropriators moving interim bill to give Trump a shot

The House December 8 approved a short-term fiscal year 2017 spending bill (HR 2028) that will keep the government in money through April 28. The measure would roughly maintain fiscal 2016 spending under roughly the same terms and conditions.

Whether the Senate will follow suit today (December 9) before Congress leaves for the Christmas holidays remains to be seen. It is more than likely even though Senate Democrats are threatening a filibuster because they want Congress to complete full-year appropriations bills now.

The continuing resolution is relatively spare of policy provisions. For instance, it does not include extra emergency wildfire money. Nor does it address any substantive park and recreation issues. All that presumably can wait for a full-year appropriations bill next spring.

Naturally, the Republican majority would prefer to leave the policy options in fiscal 2017 spending bills to incoming President Trump.

What happens when Congress reconvenes in January is up in the air. As a first order of business the Republican majority may want to blow up an overall spending agreement and start over with lower spending caps for appropriations bills.

A current overall spending agreement between the Obama White House and Congress (PL 114-74 of Nov. 2, 2015) gave appropriators extra money to work with for all domestic and military programs in fiscal years 2016

and 2017. For fiscal 2017 the total is \$1.070 trillion. Senate Appropriations Committee Chairman Thad Cochran (R-Miss.) said the continuing resolution was based on the \$1.070 trillion expenditure rate.

This past fall House Republicans from the House Freedom Caucus recommended trimming \$30 billion off the top of the \$1.070 trillion.

For the record the House approved its version of a fiscal 2017 Interior and Related Agencies spending bill (HR 5538) July 14 and the Senate Appropriations Committee approved its bill (S 3068). Both would trim Land and Water Conservation Fund spending.

The two bills also include both wildfire and payments-in-lieu of taxes spending, which eat up much of annual appropriations.

If by some miracle Congress actually prepares an Interior appropriations bill next year based on HR 5538 and S 3068, here are some of the recommended House and Senate committee appropriations:

For the LAND AND WATER CONSERVATION FUND the House bill recommends an appropriation of \$145.8 million, or \$88.4 million short of a fiscal 2016 appropriation of \$234.2 million. The House also would reduce the state side of LWCF by \$30 million, cutting it from \$110 million to \$80 million.

The Senate committee bill recommends \$40 million more for federal land acquisition than the House, approving \$184.4 million. The senators would also allocate \$10 million for state grants, a total of \$110 million.

CENTENNIAL CHALLENGE GRANTS: The House approved \$30 million, or \$5 million less than the \$35 million the administration requested. The Senate committee approved \$20 million.

PARK SERVICE OPERATIONS: The House approved \$2.435 billion, or \$39 million more than a fiscal 2016 appropriation of \$2.396 billion. The Senate committee

would appropriate \$2.406 billion.

STATE WILDLIFE CONSERVATION GRANTS: The House approved \$62.6 million, or \$2 million more than the fiscal 2016 appropriation of \$60.6 million. The Senate committee would appropriate \$62.6 million, the same as the House.

FOREST SERVICE RECREATION: The House approved \$263.9 million, just over the fiscal 2016 appropriation of \$261.7 million. The Senate committee would appropriate \$264.6 million.

BLM RECREATION MANAGEMENT: The House would appropriate \$69.5 million, compared to a fiscal 2016 appropriation of the same, \$69.5 million. The Senate committee would appropriate \$68.7 million.

RIDERS: Conservationists object to numerous amendments/riders in the House and Senate committee bills.

They have singled out for special condemnation a House amendment that would forbid the designation of any national monument in specific counties in eight states - Arizona, California, Colorado, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, Utah and Maine. Critics of the amendment say the ban would apply to 160 million acres.

Other House amendments would bar the designation of any new ocean national monuments; block limits on motorboat use in Havasu Wildlife Refuge; block an Obama administration ocean policy; prevent designation of a national heritage area in southeastern Colorado; and bar the designation of any new ocean national monuments.

Finally, both the House and the Senate committee would forbid EPA from implementing a May 27, 2015, rule that would expand the definition of a wetland subject to a Section 404 permit under the Clean Water Act. EPA and the Corps of Engineers said that the rule would go beyond the existing regulation that only requires a permit for navigable waters. The rule would also require permits for seasonal streams, wetlands near navigable waters and other waters.

WRDA with major Everglades project on final Hill agenda

Congress at press time was nearing final votes on a water resources bill (HR 5303) that would authorize a major Everglades restoration project called the Central Everglades Planning Project (CEPP).

A House-Senate conference committee reached agreement on the final bill December 5. The House and Senate are expected to address the conference legislation shortly. However, Sen. Barbara Boxer (D-Calif.) says she will contest the conference report because it contains a California drought provision she opposes.

House Majority Leader Kevin McCarthy (R-Calif.) had left no doubt that this Congress would approve the water bill, called the Water Resources Development Act (WRDA), as well as an extension of fiscal year 2017 appropriations before it left town for the holidays.

"So we will not leave until we get a continuing resolution done and get WRDA done," he said on the House floor. The WRDA bill gets top billing because it authorizes money to clean up the Flint, Mich., water supply.

McCarthy is also the author of the California drought provision that Boxer objects to that would divert water to farmers. Boxer would prefer the water be used to help fishermen and endangered species.

Criticism of the bill is also coming from some conservative groups such as Heritage Action, which objects to overall spending in the bill. Despite that, support for HR 5303 was broad and deep, even from conservatives.

For instance, conservative Sen. Marco Rubio (R-Fla.) has been all in behind WRDA because of the CEPP project. "Authorizing the Central Everglades Planning Project is more important than ever, because Florida's ecosystems are being ravaged by toxic algae that is also threatening the livelihoods of thousands of workers and their

families," he said. "This project will help move more water south, which is the single most important step we can take toward resolving the serious water issues afflicting Florida and protecting our environment."

The Central Everglades Planning Project provision would authorize the expenditure of almost \$2 billion on CEPP - \$976,375,000 from federal coffers and the same amount from the State of Florida.

Currently, the Corps of Engineers, the State of Florida, the Fish and Wildlife Service, the Park Service, Indian tribes and local governments are working on a \$7.8 billion - and counting - Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan (CERP) to restore the Everglades over the next 30 years.

Various projects in CERP have been approved by past versions of WRDAs. The law requires the feds and the state to each put up half of the money needed for each project. Florida appears to be doing its part because Florida Gov. Rick Scott (R) signed into law April 7 state legislation that would guarantee at least \$200 million per year for Everglades restoration. Although Congress has approved several CERP projects, the Corps didn't clear the CEPP project in time for past WRDA bills.

Sen. Bill Nelson has introduced the CEPP project as a stand-alone bill (S 2481) in this Congress.

Congress doesn't approve CERP projects until the Corps of Engineers and other federal and state agencies and Indian tribes prepare environmental documentation and formally approve the documents.

CEPP has trailed some other Everglades restoration projects while the Corps worked on an EIS, which it complete in July 2014. Coincidentally, the Park Service said December 2 that it has adopted the Corps EIS as its own.

In describing the importance of CEPP to Everglades National Park NPS said the project "is designed to

redirect water that is currently being discharged to the Atlantic Ocean and Gulf of Mexico to the Everglades and Florida Bay. The project optimizes the use of public lands to move additional water to the south. The CEPP will deliver approximately 210,000 acre-feet of water from Lake Okeechobee to the central Everglades every year."

Utah RS 2477 ROW approval provision dropped from bill

After eliminating a controversial provision to validate Utah county and state claims to 6,000 miles of RS 2477 rights-of-way (ROWs), the Senate gave final approval December 8 to a huge National Defense Authorization Act (S 2943).

A version of the bill the House approved back in May would have authorized the RS 2477 ROWs, but a version the Senate approved in June would not. A House-Senate conference committee on November 30 dropped the House provision.

The House's RS 2477 provision was part of a larger proposal that would withdraw 625,000 acres of Bureau of Land Management (BLM) property for a Utah Test and Training Range. A second, related provision would have allowed the Defense Department to control more than 800,000 acres of the Desert National Wildlife Refuge in Nevada.

In the final bill the conferees retained the Utah Test withdrawal, increasing the acreage to 703,621 acres and dropped the Desert National Wildlife Refuge provision.

The Office of Management and Budget had objected to the RS 2477 provision and a subset of the Utah Test range withdrawal that would have authorized a land exchange between BLM and the State of Utah. That exchange would transfer 84,000 acres of Utah land for 99,000 acres of federal land.

In a veto threat of the House bill in May, the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) singled out the RS

2477 and Utah Test Range exchange in a laundry list of objections. "Further the Administration strongly objects to exchanges of Federal land in Utah without adequate consideration to the Federal taxpayer or NEPA contained in section 3023 and to section 3031, which would recognize the existence and validity of unsubstantiated and disputed claims of road rights-of-way across Federal lands in Utah," said OMB. "These sections are not necessary to further the military mission of the Utah Test and Training Range."

The final version of S 2943 retains the land exchange but meets OMB at least part way by requiring that the exchange be subjected to BLM's planning and environmental rules.

OMB also criticized the Nevada wildlife transfer to DoD. "The Administration stands ready to consider measures and approaches to make the use of public lands for military needs more efficient," said OMB. "The Administration cannot support provisions that would alter the current use and management structure of the Desert National Wildlife Refuge and strongly opposes provisions that could allow unrestricted Air Force activities in areas of the Refuge."

Utah Test Range withdrawal:

The base goal of the provision is to withdraw more than 700,000 acres for the Air Force to accommodate F-35 jets, while retaining the lands under BLM ownership. It would also validate 6,000 miles of RS 2477 rights-of-way in Box Elder, Juab, and Tooele Counties, Utah.

Again, the conferees dropped the RS 2477 provision.

When the House Natural Resources Committee took up the legislation committee Democrats offered an amendment to strike the RS 2477 ROW provision from the bill, but Republicans defeated it in a 14-to-20 vote.

Amendment sponsor Alan Lowenthal (D-Calif.) said, "There is an administrative procedure for counties to address their RS 2477 claims and many of these claims identified in these maps are

part of active litigation. I believe it would be irresponsible of this committee to overrule the established administrative procedure and the judicial system."

But provision sponsor House Natural Resources Committee Chairman Rob Bishop (R-Utah) said, effectively, the county claims qualify as RS 2477 ROWs. "These roads are actively used by the counties and they do come under the air space that surrounds the UTTR, . . ." he said. "These roads were grandfathered in under RS 2477. They are not being contested by the state but by BLM, which is having difficulty giving them up. All are actively used rights-of-way in these three counties."

Testifying for the Interior Department at a February 25 House committee hearing, Karen E. Mouristen, assistant director of BLM for Energy and Minerals, objected to the RS 2477 ROW conveyances. "The resolution of these disputed claims is not necessary for the management of the periodic closures around the UTTR," she said. "For this and many other reasons, the Administration strongly opposes the resolution of these right-of-way claims in the manner laid out in this bill."

The RS 2477 provision is technically still alive because it has been introduced as stand-alone legislation (HR 4579, S 2383) by Rep. Chris Stewart (R-Utah) and Sen. Orrin Hatch (R-Utah).

Desert National Wildlife Refuge transfer: The provision would have allowed the Defense Department to demand transfer to it of more than 800,000 acres of the Desert National Wildlife Refuge north of Las Vegas from the Fish and Wildlife Service.

That would have taken away about half of the refuge's 1.65 million acres. Last year, at the request of Senate Minority Leader Harry Reid (D-Nev.), the provision was removed from a Defense authorization bill. Much of the land is located within the Nevada Test and Training Range. Again, the provision was dropped from the final bill.

FS takes exception to bill to speed outfitter permits

It's kind of late in the game for this Congress but the House Natural Resources Committee November 30 held a hearing on legislation to accelerate outfitter permits. The hearing may set the stage for action next year.

The Obama administration opposed the bill on the grounds that it is unnecessary because the Forest Service has already begun an initiative to expedite permits. However, a Trump administration may be more willing to endorse such legislation.

The Forest Service as much as said in its testimony to the committee that if Congress would increase the agency's appropriation it might have enough people to process permits promptly. The service noted the huge amount of money it now spends on wildfire fighting.

Said Glenn Casamassa, associate deputy chief for the National Forest System, "In 1995, fire made up 16 percent of the Forest Service's annual appropriated budget - this year, more than 50 percent of the Forest Service's annual budget will be dedicated to wildfire. Along with this shift in resources, there has also been a corresponding shift in staff, with a 39 percent reduction in all non-fire personnel since 1995."

The bill (HR 5129) from Rep. Doug LaMalfa (R-Calif.) would, among other things, authorize joint permits for operations across several agency jurisdictions, cap permit fees, and establish categorical exclusions from environmental review of projects that are similar to projects previously reviewed, among other things. Six House Republicans, all from the West, cosponsored the legislation.

According to the America Outdoors Association, which represents outfitters, the Forest Service "issues approximately 7,500 permits for outfitting, 3,400 temporary recreation event permits, and 900 non-commercial, group use permits. The BLM (Bureau of Land Management) issues over 4,500 special recreation

permits. That is nearly 17,000 permits which generate several million visits to federally-managed lands throughout rural America."

House Republican leaders who will be working with the Trump administration next year were more sanguine about the legislation than the Obama administration.

Said LaMalfa, "While much of the West consists of National Parks, National Forests, and other federal lands, the permitting process and costs have become so cumbersome in recent years that it is harder than ever for Americans to enjoy these areas. I'm proud that the GO Act will help get more Americans outside at a lower cost and with less red tape, goals that I believe everyone can support."

In criticizing the legislation The Wilderness Society focused on categorical exclusions (CEs) from environmental review granted by the legislation. Said Paul Sanford, national director of recreation policy for the society, "We prefer to direct the agencies to develop specific NEPA CEs rather than creating them in legislation. Legislated CEs circumvent public input and are sometimes applied without regard to whether extraordinary circumstances exist that suggest the need for additional environmental review."

But David Brown, executive director of the America Outdoors Association, said, "This is not a waiver from NEPA since scoping is required for categorical exclusions and a higher level of NEPA has been completed previously in some form."

The Forest Service's Casamassa had one more bone to pick - a bill proposal to use recreation permit fee revenues for the administration of the program. Most of those fees are now used for maintenance.

Said Casamassa, "USDA strongly believes that outfitters, guides, recreation event sponsors, and their clients - our visitors - are better served by directing permit fees toward

the operation and maintenance of these facilities, used by recreation permit holders and their clients, rather than restricting expenditure of permit fees to administration and application processing."

Notes

Long Washington Monument closure.

The signature of the nation's mall in Washington, D.C. - the Washington Monument - will close for two years while a balky elevator is effectively replaced, the agency said December 1. The monument, which receives 500,000 visitors a year, has been closed since August 17. Philanthropist David Rubenstein will contribute the \$2 million to \$3 million needed to repair/replace the elevator, NPS announced. Rubenstein has already contributed more than \$50 million to the National Park System to restore and improve park facilities around the nation's capitol. Among those other donations are \$18.5 million to restore the Lincoln Memorial and \$7.5 million to restore the Washington Monument following damage from an earthquake in 2012. The Park Service said it will twin the Washington Monument repair/replacement with a \$9 million project to build a permanent screening facility for the monument. The agency has not received money yet for the screening facility.

Pocahontas site acquired by NPS.

The Interior Department said December 1 that the Park Service has acquired the historic Werowocomoco site in Virginia where Pocahontas met Captain John Smith. The price was \$7.1 million. The 264-acre acquisition was purchased through the cooperation of landowners, the Commonwealth of Virginia, Indian tribes and nonprofits. The Conservation Fund initially purchased the site and resold it to NPS. Werowocomoco was the headquarters for the Powhatan tribe when the English arrived at Jamestown in 1607. The site will be managed by the staff of the Captain John Smith Chesapeake National Historic Trail. NPS said the site is an intact, major town.

President boosts FS trails.

President Obama signed into law (PL 114-245) November 28 legislation that

will expand the use of volunteers and partners in opening and maintaining trails in the national forests. Under the bill the Forest Service is to develop a strategy within two years to increase the use of volunteers and partners in trail maintenance. Environmentalists and outfitters alike endorsed the Congressional approval of the bill last month. Said David Brown, executive director of America Outdoors Association, which represents outfitters, "With little more than 30 percent of Forest Service trails being maintained to standards, access to the backcountry is diminishing which will have a negative impact on rural economies. Passage of the National Forest System Trails Stewardship Act is an important step toward developing a comprehensive strategy to maintain access to our public lands and sustaining rural economies." Said Paul Spitler, director of wilderness policy at The Wilderness Society, "We need to provide more opportunities for Americans to experience their great outdoors, and this bill will help do that." The Senate gave final approval to the bill November 16 after the House approved it in September. Reps. Cynthia Lummis (R-Wyo.) and Tim Walz (D-Minn.) were the lead sponsors.

EPA pulls Texas haze rule. Facing likely defeat in federal court, EPA November 28 withdrew a rule governing haze-causing pollution over Class One federal areas in Texas. The Fifth U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals on July 15 suspended the rule. The court said the appellant State of Texas was likely to win on the merits because EPA erred in saying its rule should be substituted for a Texas rule. Said EPA in a [filing](#) with the court last month, "In light of the Court's July 15 Opinion and the fact that the parties' settlement discussions were unsuccessful, EPA intends to seek a voluntary remand of the final rule in this Court." Earlier before the court EPA had argued that Texas, instead of considering a broad range of emissions, should have focused on source specific sites, such as power plants. But the court said, "EPA's requirement that Texas conduct a source-specific analysis is not supported by the Clean Air Act or the Regional Haze Rule." Under

the Clean Air Act's haze rule states are supposed to gain EPA approval of plans to limit pollutants over Class One federal areas (national parks and wilderness areas) that limit visibility. Environmentalists said the Fifth Circuit decision would impair visibility over Big Bend and Guadalupe Mountains National Parks in Texas. Normally the U.S. Circuit Court for the District of Columbia handles national Clean Air Act litigation, but the Fifth Circuit said this is a local issue.

BLM completes planning rule.

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) December 1 completed a new planning [rule](#) that would revise the substance of an existing planning rule. Among the proposed changes are a greater emphasis on broad area planning, preparation of an assessment prior to writing a management plan and earlier public involvement in the planning process. Western Republicans said they will attempt to reverse the rule, either by Congress or by the Trump administration. The critics object to an emphasis on areawide planning and an alleged lack of deference to state and local plans. BLM Director Neil Kornze said the plan would expedite the writing of management plans. "Under the current system, it takes an average of eight years for the BLM to finish a land use plan. Too often, by the time we've completed a plan, community priorities have evolved and conditions on the ground have changed as well," he said. "This update to our planning rule allows for a more streamlined process that also increases collaboration and transparency." But the chairman-elect of the Congressional Western Congress, Rep Paul Gosar (R-Ariz.), promised Republicans would attempt to reverse/revoke the rule. "Local planning decisions should be made by the experts on the ground at the local level, not Washington bureaucrats. The Congressional Western Caucus will work with the Trump Administration, Republican leadership and important industry groups like the Public Lands Council and the National Cattlemen's Beef Association to scrap misguided directives imposed by Obama's political hacks during their waning days," he said. Information about the rule is available at: www.blm.gov/plan2.

Boxscore of legislation

Fiscal year 2017 appropriations (until April 28)

HR 2028 (Simpson). House approved December WHEN. Senate has yet to approve. Would extend funding at fiscal 2016 levels through April 28.

Fiscal year 2017 appropriations (until December 9)

HR 5325 (Graves). President Obama signed into law September 29 as PL 114-223. Extends funding at fiscal 2016 levels through December 9.

Fiscal year 2017 appropriations

HR 5538 (Calvert), S 3068 (Murkowski). House approved July 14. Senate committee approved June 16. Both committees would trim LWCF spending, include fire and PILT appropriation in bill. The administration asks for more conservation spending, including full funding for LWCF.

Land and Water Conservation Fund

S 338 (Burr), S 890 (Cantwell), HR 1814 (Grijalva), S 2012 (Murkowski), S 1925 (Heinrich), S 2165 (Cantwell), unnumbered draft (Bishop), HR 4151 (Simpson), HR 2029 (Dent). Fiscal 2016 appropriations bill extends program as is for three years. Grijalva introduced April 15, 2015. Senate approved Murkowski bill April 20. Bishop posted draft November 5, 2015. Simpson introduced December 1, 2015. All but Bishop would extend program at \$900 million per year in perpetuity. Bishop would extend for seven years. S 890, HR 1814 and S 1925 would guarantee the money each year. Simpson would change allocation to 40 percent federal, 40 percent state and related initiatives and 20 percent flexible.

Urban park fund

HR 201 (Sires). Sires introduced January 7, 2015. Would authorize HUD grants and HUD loans to provide assistance to urban parks.

NPS Centennial

HR 3556 (Grijalva), S 2257 (Cantwell), HR 4680 (Bishop). House committee reported Bishop bill May 19. Senate approved placeholder legislation (S 2012) April 20. S 3556 and S 2557 are

administration bills that would have Congress put up an additional \$800 million for the Park Service Centennial in 2016. Fiscal 2016 spending bill includes extra \$100 million for program. HR 4680 includes little new money but several important program authorizations.

Federal land recreation fees

HR 1991 (Bishop), HR 2822 (Calvert), S 1645 (Murkowski), HR 719, S 2706 (Wyden), HR 4790 (Blumenauer). House committee approved HR 1991 April 29, 2015. Senate hearing September 17, 2015. Wyden and Blumenauer introduced March 17. President Obama signed into law an extension of the fee law through Sept. 30, 2017, as part of PL 114-53 of September 30, 2015. House bill would revise FLREA. Wyden and Blumenauer would streamline rec fees and permits.

Emergency fire spending

HR 167 (Simpson), S 235 (Wyden), S 508 (McCain), S 1645 (Murkowski), HR 2647 (Westerman). Simpson introduced January 6, 2015. Wyden introduced January 22, 2015. McCain introduced February 12, 2015. Senate committee approved S 1645 June 18, 2015. House approved HR 2647 July 9, 2015. All would shift emergency fire fighting costs out of line appropriations and into disaster spending. McCain would also increase timber harvests. Appropriators did not include provision in fiscal 2016 spending bill above.

Monument restrictions

HR 330 (Young), HR 488 (Amodei), S 437 (Murkowski), HR 900 (Labrador), S 228 (Crapo), HR 3946 (Gosar). Young introduced January 13, 2015. Amodei introduced January 22, 2015. Murkowski introduced February 10, 2015. Labrador introduced February 11, 2015. Crapo introduced January 21, 2015. Gosar introduced November 5, 2015. All would require Congressional or state approval of national monuments.

Wetlands regulations

HR 594 (Gosar), HR 2028 (Simpson), S 1140 (Barrasso). House approved HR 2028 May 1. Barrasso introduced April 30, 2015. Would forbid completion by EPA of regulations expanding kinds of water bodies requiring wetlands permits.