

Federal Parks & Recreation

Editor: James B. Coffin

Subscription Services: Gerrie Castaldo

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Agencies identify sweeping impacts of sequestration

If Congress fails to act on the looming budget sequestration before February 28, the spending cuts will have major impacts on federal agencies, state and local agencies, businesses and, last but not least, the public.

The Interior Department and the Forest Service described those impacts in some detail in reports made public last week by the Senate Appropriations Committee.

The Department of Agriculture said of the Forest Service alone, "The agency would close up to 670 public developed recreation sites out of 19,000 sites, such as campgrounds, picnic areas, and trailheads. Closing this many recreation sites would reduce an estimated 1.6 million recreation visits across the country, thereby harming the economies of remote rural communities that depend on recreationists' economic activity, and eliminating convenient vacation opportunities for rural residents."

The Department of Interior told the committee, "The public should be prepared for reduced hours and services provided by Interior's 398 national parks, 561 refuges, and over 258 public land units." The department said the agencies would have to close 128 wildlife refuges, cut back on seasonal employees and "Reduce hours of operation for visitor centers, shorten seasons, and possibly close camping, hiking, and other recreational areas when there is insufficient staff to ensure the protection of visitors, employees, and resources."

Park Service retirees February 20 provided even more detail on the possible impacts of sequestration on

individual parks. The Coalition of National Park Service Retirees, which earlier this month published a Park Service memo anticipating widespread impacts, said sequestration would:

Yellowstone: delay spring road openings;

Grand Canyon: delay road openings and reduce visitor center hours;

Yosemite: delay road openings as much as four weeks; and

Glacier National Park: delay opening of the Going -to-the-Sun Road by two weeks.

That's just a sampling. "Congress might just as well put a big 'Keep Out' sign at the entrance to Yellowstone, Grand Canyon, Yosemite, the Cape Cod Seashore, and every other iconic national park in the U.S.," said coalition spokeswoman Joan Anzelmo, former superintendent of Colorado National Monument.

If the sequestration does kick in February 28, the next logical opportunity for Congress to address macro-budget issues will be in the writing of full-year fiscal year 2013 appropriations bills. Congress provided six-months worth of spending for fiscal 2013 in PL 112-175 of Sept. 28, 2012. That law is due to expire March 27.

As for full-year fiscal 2013 appropriations, the House Appropriations Committee approved its bill (HR 6019) June 28, 2012, that would sharply reduce park and recreation funding. The leaders of the Senate subcommittee on Interior Appropriators published a draft full-year bill Sept. 25, 2012, that would roughly maintain fiscal 2012 spending levels in fiscal 2013. (See *details below.*)

President Obama and his Democratic colleagues in Congress are pushing their Republican counterparts to at least delay the impacts of sequestration beyond February 28. In his February 12 State of the Union speech Obama said, "So let's set party interests aside and work to pass a budget that replaces reckless cuts with smart savings and wise investments in our future. And let's do it without the brinkmanship

that stresses consumers and scares off investors."

Senate Democrats last week put together legislation to delay the sequestration until January 2, 2014, but the legislation is on its face unacceptable to Republicans. The only spending cut would be a reduction in farm subsidies. At the same time the proposal would increase taxes on the rich, on companies that operate overseas, and on the oil and gas industry.

Here are the first-half fiscal 2013 numbers for the Interior and Related Agencies portion of the CR, compared to the House committee's full-year recommendations and the Senate subcommittee's full-year draft recommendations:

*** LWCF ACQUISITION FEDERAL:** For the first half of fiscal 2013 the appropriation is based on a fiscal 2012 full-year allocation of \$186.7 million. The House committee recommended \$51,578,000 for the entire fiscal 2013 and the Senate subcommittee recommended \$213 million.

*** LWCF STATE GRANTS:** For the first half of fiscal 2013 the appropriation is based on a fiscal 2012 full-year allocation of \$45 million. The House committee recommended \$2.8 million for the entire fiscal 2013 and the Senate subcommittee recommended \$45.6 million.

*** STATE WILDLIFE GRANTS:** For the first half of fiscal 2013 the appropriation is based on a fiscal 2012 full-year allocation of \$61.3 million. The House committee recommended \$30.6 million and the Senate subcommittee \$61.3 million.

*** HISTORIC PRESERVATION FUND:** For the first half of fiscal 2013 the appropriation is based on a fiscal 2012 full-year allocation of \$46.9 million. The House committee recommended \$42.5 million and the Senate subcommittee \$46.9 million.

*** NPS OPERATIONS:** For the first half of fiscal 2013 the appropriation is based on a fiscal 2012 full-year allocation of \$2.240 billion. The House committee recommended \$2.228 billion for the entire fiscal 2013 and the Senate subcommittee recommended \$2.256 billion.

* *NPS CONSTRUCTION*: For the first half of fiscal 2013 the appropriation is based on a fiscal 2012 full-year allocation of \$155.3 million. The House committee recommended \$131.2 million and the Senate subcommittee recommended the same, \$131.2 million.

* *NPS REC AND PRES*: For the first half of fiscal 2013 the appropriation is based on a fiscal 2012 full-year allocation of \$59.9 million. The House committee recommended \$51.8 million for the entire fiscal 2013 and the Senate subcommittee recommended \$60.2 million. The big difference is heritage areas (see following item.)

* *NPS HERITAGE AREAS*: Included in rec and pres above. For the first half of fiscal 2013 the appropriation is based on a fiscal 2012 full-year allocation of \$17.3 million. The House committee recommended \$9.3 million for the entire fiscal 2013 and the Senate subcommittee recommended \$17.3 million.

* *FWS*: For the first half of fiscal 2013 the appropriation is based on a fiscal 2012 full-year allocation of \$1.226 billion. The House committee recommended for the entire fiscal 2013 \$1.040 billion and the Senate subcommittee recommended \$1.245 billion.

* *FOREST SERVICE*: For the first half of fiscal 2013 the appropriation is based on a fiscal 2012 full-year allocation of \$1.554 billion. The House committee recommended \$1.495 billion for the entire fiscal 2013 and the Senate subcommittee recommended \$1.478 billion.

* *FS RECREATION*: For the first half of fiscal 2013 the appropriation is based on a fiscal 2012 full-year allocation of \$281 million. The House committee recommended \$260 million for the entire fiscal 2013 and the Senate subcommittee recommended \$267 million.

* *BLM RECREATION*: For the first half of fiscal 2013 the appropriation is based on a fiscal 2012 full-year allocation of \$67.5 million. The House committee recommended \$60.9 million for the entire fiscal 2013 and the Senate subcommittee recommended \$67.6 million.

Here's the status of three other outdoor-related spending bills:

Transportation: The Senate Appropriations Committee approved a year-long Transportation money bill

(S 2322) April 19, 2012, with an appropriation of \$53.4 billion, or almost \$4 billion less than the fiscal 2012 appropriation of \$57.3 billion. The House Appropriations Committee approved its bill June 19, 2012, with a spending allocation of \$51.6 billion.

Energy and Water: The House approved \$32.1 billion for a year-long Energy and Water spending bill (HR 5325) June 6, 2012, or just about the same as the fiscal 2012 appropriation. The \$32.1 billion is \$1.3 billion less than the Senate 302(b) allocation of \$33.4 billion. The Senate committee approved its version of a bill (S 2465) April 26, 2012.

Agriculture: The Senate committee approved a year-long Agriculture appropriations bill (S 2375) April 26, 2012, with a spending cap of \$20.8 billion, or \$1.4 billion more than a House cap of \$19.4 billion. The House Appropriations Committee approved its bill June 19, 2012.

LWCF extension bill dovetails with summit on law's future

Just as state and local park officials are about to hold a summit on the future of the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF), a bipartisan group of senators introduced legislation to make the venerable law permanent.

The senators would not only extend the existing \$900 million per year authorization permanently, it would also guarantee that the \$900 million would be spent each year without further appropriations.

Noteworthy this year, two Republican senators cosponsored the bill (S 338). However, House Republicans have long resisted such legislation.

The state and park officials have not pinned down a specific recommendation. Their game plan calls for the summit to serve as a starting point for developing legislation that Congress will act on. Western Republicans are traditional foes of the federal side of the program.

Said Domenici Bravo, administrator of the Wyoming Division of State Parks, "With the expiration of LWCF in 2015 we are at a precipice and we need to either get the law reauthorized or develop a new plan. This event (scheduled for April 7-11 in Denver) is designed to develop a framework."

Bravo, who also serves as the president of the National Association of State outdoor Recreation Liaison Officers (NASORLO), said state officials are well aware of recent attacks on the program, so the summit is designed to find recommendations that will fly on the Hill.

"We are inviting a lot of Congressional staffers, including from the Western Caucus, to attend and tell us what can pass," said Bravo.

He said the attendees will come from a wide range of disciplines, not just state and local governments. "It will be pretty much anyone and everyone who is involved with LWCF," he said. "That's state park directors, National Park Service officials, and people who have not been traditional players such as the U.S. Soccer Foundation, the Little Leagues, shooting ranges. We also will try to get African Americans and Hispanics to attend."

Bravo said the attendees will be invited to tackle the tough issues - such as the usual Congressional practice of appropriating proportionately more money for the federal side of LWCF than for the state side, rather than the 50-50 split authorized by law. "I'm looking for an open conversation," he said. "Everything has to be on the table. My goal is to talk about those hard problems."

The senators and NASORLO are linking their campaign to both the upcoming expiration of LWCF on Sept. 30, 2015, and the relatively modest appropriations put up by Congress in recent years.

The Land and Water Conservation Fund Act of 1965 established the fund from oil and gas royalties for use in acquiring conservation lands. Although

the law authorizes the appropriation of \$900 million per year (half federal, half state) for LWCF, it does not guarantee \$900 million. So appropriators have the discretion to spend far less than that. And they do.

For instance for the first half of fiscal 2013 the federal side appropriation is based on a fiscal 2012 full-year allocation of \$186.7 million, well below the \$450 million authorized by law. The House Appropriations Committee has recommended \$51,578,000 for the entire fiscal 2013 and the Senate subcommittee on Interior Appropriations has recommended \$213 million.

For the first half of the state side in fiscal 2013 the appropriation is based on a fiscal 2012 full-year allocation of \$45 million, again well below the \$450 million authorized by law. The House committee recommended \$2.8 million for the entire fiscal 2013 and the Senate subcommittee recommended \$45.6 million.

As we reported in the last issue of *FPR*, the Society of Outdoor Recreation Professionals separately has launched two initiatives to round up support for LWCF.

In initiative one the society will hold a roundtable to collect ideas on strengthening the often-constrained law as part of its annual meeting in Traverse City, Mich., in May of this year.

In initiative two, the society, made up largely of recreation planners, began on February 1 an on-line conversation about LWCF designed to assemble positive feedback on the fund. A memo on the initiative, provided to us by Dr. Glenn Haas, vice president of the society, says, "After June 2013, the unabridged compilation of LWCF success stories and constructive comments will be a public resource accessible from the SCORP homepage www.RecPro.org."

The importance of two Republicans cosponsoring the LWCF extension bill can't be overstated, given the need for a handful of GOP votes to move any legislation in the Senate. The

Republicans are Sens. Richard Burr (N.C.) and Sen. Lindsey Graham (S.C.) In the last Congress there were none.

On introducing S 338 Burr said the bill would not increase taxes because allocations are drawn from offshore oil and gas royalties.

"LWCF was founded as a separate trust that was to be funded by royalties from oil and gas exploration on federal land and water, but a significant portion of those royalties have been diverted by Congress to be spent on other purposes," he said. "I am proud to continue efforts to ensure that these funds are used for their original purpose -- to preserve parks and other wildlife spaces for future generations."

Sen. Mark Udall (D-Colo.), chairman of the Senate subcommittee on National Parks, cosponsored the bill and said, "The Land and Water Conservation Fund is an important tool for protecting public lands and ensuring access to them across the country. These issues, access and conservation, are critical for Colorado's outdoor-recreation industry and the thousands of jobs it supports."

Like a predecessor bill from the last Congress S 338 would require the allocation of 1.5 percent of the total annual appropriation for LWCF (both state and federal combined) to provide access to federal public lands for recreation, with an emphasis on hunting and fishing.

The summit has a website: <http://www.nps.gov/lwcf/Conference%20Webpages/welcome.htm>

Alaska road controversy may hold up Jewell confirmation

Sen. Lisa Murkowski (R-Alaska), whose support may be crucial to the confirmation of Sally Jewell as Secretary of Interior, issued a veiled threat against the nomination last week.

It's not that Murkowski, ranking Republican on the Senate Energy Committee, has anything against the

nomination of Jewell, per se. What disturbs Murkowski is a Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) EIS that recommends against a road in Alaska across a wildlife refuge. The road would link a village to an all-weather airport in medical emergencies.

After blasting the administration February 12 for opposing the road the senator issued the threat, presumably to filibuster administration nominations and legislation. "As such, I am prepared to consider all actions available to me as a U.S. Senator to convince this administration that denying the people of King Cove reliable access to medical care would be a travesty," she said.

We asked an aide to Murkowski if the senator intended to put a hold on Jewell's nomination in the Senate when the time comes. The aide said cryptically, "Sen. Murkowski told Sally Jewell that she was prepared to use 'every tool in her tool box' regarding King Cove."

King Cove is the community in Alaska that has requested the road through the Izembek National Wildlife Refuge. The FWS EIS is not the final word on the road under the law; the secretary of Interior still must decide whether to authorize it or not.

The Senate Energy Committee has not laid out a hearing and confirmation schedule for Jewell, an aide to committee chairman Sen. Ron Wyden (D-Ore.) told us.

At this point Murkowski's threat is the main obstacle in the path of the Jewell nomination. President Obama officially sent her nomination to Congress February 7. Jewell, CEO of Recreation Equipment Inc. (REI), would replace Secretary of Interior Ken Salazar, who is leaving office next month.

Jewell, 56, has long been a major player in the recreation policy game. She introduced President Obama when he announced the America's Great Outdoors initiative, his signature recreation proposal, at an event on April 16, 2010.

The recreation community has almost but not quite universally welcomed Jewell's nomination. The not quite comes from the BlueRibbon Coalition, which represents powered recreation users and companies.

Said the coalition in a statement on Jewell's nomination, "One concern is the anti-OHV activism that has been a hallmark of both REI and the National Parks Conservation Association, where Jewell serves as a board member. REI has long supported anti-access groups such as the Sierra Club and the Southern Utah Wilderness Alliance."

But Greg Mumm, BlueRibbon's executive director, also expressed optimism, "On the other hand, Jewell's private sector ties hopefully reflect her understanding of recreation's unique place and potential importance to rural tourism and local economies. We hope that, in her first role as a public servant, we see Sally Jewell balancing her personal predisposition to non-motorized recreation with legally supportable and just-as-popular forms of motorized recreation on both Park and non-Park lands."

Democrats on the Senate Energy Committee praised Jewell. Said subcommittee on National Parks Chairman Mark Udall (D-Colo.), "I appreciate her private-sector experience as head of one of the foremost outdoor equipment retailers, and I look forward to speaking with her about her vision for managing our public lands and how she would attack the challenges we face in Colorado and the West."

Congress in 2009 ordered the Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) to prepare the Izembek EIS attendant to a land exchange that would allow construction of the road. The road would provide access to an all-weather airport in medical emergencies.

The law that authorized the land exchange (PL 111-11 of March 30, 2009) said the EIS would not be the final deciding factor in approving the land exchange and road. The Secretary of Interior must make that call.

PL 111-11, the big omnibus lands bill of 2009, authorized the land exchange that would increase the size of the Izembek refuge and the Alaska Peninsula Wildlife Refuge by 56,000 acres. In return 206 acres of federal land would be used to build a road. The road would connect King Cove to an all-weather airport in Cold Bay.

In its EIS FWS chose as a preferred alternative no action, i.e. no land exchange. FWS said the 56,000 acres FWS would receive would not atone for the damage caused by the 206 acres for a road.

When Jewell's nomination was first announced Murkowski took a wait-and-see position. "The livelihoods of Americans living and working in the West rely on maintaining a real balance between conservation and economic opportunity," she said. "I look forward to hearing about the qualifications Ms. Jewell has that make her a suitable candidate to run such an important agency, and how she plans to restore balance to the Interior Department."

Republicans object to lack of Hill role in new Blueways

The Obama administration initiative that designates rivers and their associated watersheds as national blueways is running into opposition from western Republicans.

Seven senators and 18 House members wrote Secretary of Interior Ken Salazar February 14 to say, in effect, stay out of the West. They object to a provision of Salazar's Secretarial Order 3321 setting up the National Blueways System that puts a committee of federal officials in charge, without Congressional input.

"According to the Order, it appears that any watershed in the United States could be designated without any vote in Congress and without proper public notice," said the Western Caucus en masse. Caucus cochairs Sen. John Barrasso (R-Wyo.), Rep. Stevan Pearce (R-Ariz.) and Rep. Cynthia Lummis (R-Wyo.) led the effort.

The caucus asked Salazar to rescind his executive order of May 24, 2012, that set up the blueways system. "We urge you to immediately withdraw Secretarial Order 3321," the members said. "We also encourage you to bring proposals to Congress that are creating new land and water designations so that we may consider them through the normal committee process and with public transparency."

The caucus's primary concern is the impact of a possible blueway designation on water rights. "Water is the lifeblood of our communities, and it should be managed for the benefit of the community in a transparent fashion," the members said. "While water law varies by region, non-navigable water is managed by the states, not the federal government. Any designation by a federal agency that directly or indirectly attempts to manage the non-navigable headwaters of many of our nation's rivers, would be a usurpation of state authority."

Salazar announced the establishment of the National Blueways System in June 2012 concurrent with the designation of the first unit - a Connecticut River and Watershed National Blueway in New England.

On January 9 the Department of Interior designated a second unit - the White River National Blueway in Arkansas and Missouri. The White River blueway extends from the Ozark Mountains to the Mississippi River.

Salazar established the system through the executive order.

The Obama administration touts the blueway system as a signal achievement of the President's America's Great Outdoors Initiative.

The system is not supposed to affect either private property or the existing regulations that govern nominated lands, said Salazar in the secretarial order establishing the system. "Nothing in this Order is intended to be the basis for the exercise of any new regulatory authority, nor shall this initiative or

any designation pursuant to this Order affect or interfere with any Federal, state, local, and tribal government jurisdiction or applicable law. . .," the order says.

The secretarial order offers this definition of blueways: "National Blueways will be nationally and regionally significant rivers and their watersheds that are highly valued recreational, social, economic, cultural, and ecological assets for the communities that depend on them. National Blueways encourage a landscape-scale approach to river conservation that involves a river from its headwaters to its mouth and across its watershed, rather than individual segments of the channel and riparian area alone."

The Wyoming Congressional delegation - Barrasso, Lummis and Sen. Mike Enzi (R)- also wrote Salazar separately from the Western Caucus and said the executive order appears to shut out the public.

"The Secretarial Order does not require that residents of impacted areas be afforded the opportunity to participate in advance of a Committee decision to recommend a designation," they said. "This is unacceptable."

Agenda set for event to find money for national parks

The participants at a March 19 event to identify unconventional sources of money for the National Park System will be presented with more than a dozen white papers.

The brief, half-day agenda projects that major players in the outdoor game will discuss those papers to make way for concrete recommendations for financial assistance as the National Park System approaches its centennial in 2016.

Says a white paper prepared by hosts of the event, "Using this input (from the discussions), and additional information gathered from recreation, conservation, tourism, health, education

and other national leaders, the white papers will be revised and then reviewed by a prominent group of Americans with business and political experience for efficacy and potential significance to aid America's parks. The resulting set of prioritized white papers will be delivered to Congress and the Administration for action. Transmittal of these recommendations is expected by June 2013."

As we reported in the last issue of *FPR*, among the expected participants are former Secretary of Interior Dirk Kempthorne (Bush administration), former House Appropriations Committee Chairman Norm Dicks (D-Wash.), former House Transportation Committee Chairman James Oberstar (D-Minn.) and former Secretary of Agriculture Dan Glickman (Clinton administration).

Also invited are Senate subcommittee on National Parks Chairman Mark Udall (D-Colo.) and House subcommittee on Interior Appropriations Chairman Mike Simpson (R-Idaho). If, as anticipated, the event leads to concrete recommendations for Congressional action, Udall and Simpson would take the lead.

The 150 expected attendees represent a wide range of disciplines including park and conservation, Congress, National Park Service itself, health, education and tourism.

The National Parks Conservation Association (NPCA), the National Park Hospitality Association (NPHA), the National Park Foundation (NPF) and the Bipartisan Policy Center will host the conference. The last is an influential consortium founded by former Republicans and Democrats of stature. The center, established by former Senate Majority Leaders Howard Baker (R-Tenn.), Tom Daschle (D-S.D.), Bob Dole (R-Kan.) and George Mitchell (D-Me.), attempts to forge compromises on major issues.

The participants will hear presentations in two areas - taxes and fees (entrance fees, penny for parks, historic tax credit, etc.) and partnerships (endowment, philanthropy, destination marketing, etc.)

The event falls just after a February 28 budget deadline when the national parks are scheduled to experience major budget cuts from an appropriations sequestration. The sequestration could lead to closed parks and reduced services. (*See separate article page one on sequestration.*)

In a related major event that went virtually unremarked by the Park Service and the National Park Foundation, the two organizations in January chose the public relations firm Grey New York to spread the word of the Park Service brand. Said James R. Heekin, CEO of Grey Group, "We are deeply proud to partner with the National Park Foundation and honored to be entrusted with building awareness of our national parks and the National Park Service as they mark this milestone anniversary."

Grey New York will begin with more than \$1 million donated to the National Park Foundation by John Nau III, CEO of Silver Eagle Distributors, L.P. of Houston, Texas. Nau is reportedly close to family of former Presidents George H.W. Bush and George W. Bush.

Grey New York will be overseen by a subcommittee of the National Parks System Advisory Board chaired by Gretchen Long of Wilson, Wyo. She is a former past chair of NPCA.

The summit has a website, www.2016parksummit.org. And the park partners have a website, <http://www.parkpartners.org>.

Here are a few of the white paper topics for the event and their projected presenter, in the two broad areas.

Taxes, bonds and fees: Five papers including a Highway Trust Fund penny-a-gallon allocation to parks, an estimated \$1.5 billion per year (presented by NPHA Counsel Derrick Crandall); and an increase in and restructure of entrance fees (presented by Outdoor Recreation and Park Services, LLC. head Destry Jarvis, brother of NPS Director Jon Jarvis).

Partnerships, concessions and philanthropy: Ten papers including a

National Park Foundation fund matched by Congress (presented by NPCA Senior Vice President Craig Obey); endowment (presented by the Friends Alliance); and fundraising events near parks (presented by Kempthorne).

OIA posts state-by-state data on rec's economic impacts

The Outdoor Industry Association (OIA) published February 14 a state-by-state tabulation of the economic impact of outdoor recreation.

The report follows up on a landmark national report of June 2012 on the countrywide economic impacts of outdoor recreation. That report is used by politicians, conservationists, and federal and local officials to promote programs that support outdoor recreation.

The national bottom line is that outdoor recreation contributes \$646 billion per year to the economy. The association's board chair Will Manzer said last week, "For example, Americans spend almost twice as much on outdoor recreation as they spend on pharmaceuticals each year. And outdoor recreation supports more than twice as many jobs as the oil and gas industry." Manzer is a former CEO of Eastern Mountain Sports.

The OIA report is playing a major role now in the debate over federal funding for conservation programs, just as a federal sequestration law is about to chop billions of dollars out of domestic spending.

For instance, Sen. Max Baucus (D-Mont.) on introducing legislation (S 338) February 14 to make the Land and Water Conservation Fund permanent quoted copiously from the OIA report. Baucus itemized the consumer spending, jobs and wages outdoor recreation engenders in Montana.

As Outdoor Industry Association President Frank Hugelmeyer said, "Outdoor recreation is good for the American economy and our future. When we invest in the nation's network

of public lands and waters, we are protecting and enhancing outdoor experiences for the benefit of the thousands of businesses, communities and families whose livelihoods depends on the outdoor recreation economy."

With that background OIA released the state-by-state report on the impact of outdoor recreation on the economy. It is available at: outdoorindustry.org/recreationeconomy. The analysis was prepared by Southwick Associates, a research firm that specializes in outdoor economics.

Southwick is the same firm that prepares periodically a similar analysis of the economic contributions of recreation and historic preservation in the U.S. Fish and Wildlife System for the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation.

The broader state-by-state report prepared for OIA summarizes four categories - consumer spending, wages and salaries, jobs, and state and local tax revenues. California is by far and away the biggest winner among the states with \$85.4 billion in consumer spending from outdoor recreation, \$27 billion in wages and salaries, 732,000 jobs, and \$6.7 billion in state and local tax revenues.

Florida comes in second with \$38.3 billion in consumer spending from outdoor recreation, \$10.7 billion in wages and salaries, 329,000 jobs, and \$2.5 billion in state and local tax revenues.

Bringing up the rear is North Dakota with \$2.2 billion in consumer spending from outdoor recreation, \$606 million in wages and salaries, 28,400 jobs, and \$189 million in state and local tax revenues.

Southwick began its attempt to pin down human-powered recreation spending with a Harris Interactive poll of July 2011 that interviewed 15,596 people. Harris then reduced that to 300 residents in nine census regions.

Similarly, to obtain numbers for motorized outdoor recreation

Harris International began with 24,000 interviews conducted during March 2012 to come up with 300 qualified residents.

All this data will play a role in the upcoming debates as a budget sequestration threatens outdoor spending.

As OIA's Hugelmeyer told Congressional leaders recently, "Sequestration has dire implications for our national outdoor recreation system and threatens a \$646 billion recreation economy. Indiscriminate cuts to the protection and management of our parks, forests, rivers and trails threaten the outdoor experiences that feed an economic sector responsible for 6.1 million American jobs."

DoT candidate Rendell says gasoline taxes must go up

Former Pennsylvania Gov. Ed Rendell (D), supposedly a candidate to be the next secretary of Transportation, forcefully recommended February 13 that Congress increase gasoline taxes.

Such an increase would help provide enough money to finance the current surface transportation law through Oct. 1, 2014, and provide money for a long-term follow-on law. That in turn might provide enough money for park and rec programs to ease the pressure on those programs now. They are targets for budget cutters who say gasoline taxes should be spent only on road and bridge construction.

However, any increase in the gasoline tax is probably some time off, given the national controversy over federal spending and taxes.

Still, at an inaugural hearing of the House Transportation Committee on infrastructure needs February 13, Rendell made the case for an increase in the gasoline tax above the existing 18.4 cents per gallon. Gasoline taxes fuel the Highway Trust Fund, which in turn fuels the federal surface transportation law Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act (MAP-21), PL 112-141 of July 6, 2012.

Said Rendell, "I know it's a difficult time to talk about taxes but I think we have to fund our transportation system. I think that for the short term the reality is we will need an increase in the gas tax. In the long term we can have a form of a vehicle-miles-traveled tax."

The House hearing did not target any particular legislation but was designed to provide Congress with an overview of the looming national infrastructure needs, not just for highways but also for broader national construction needs.

In addition to Rendell, who chairs an organization titled Building America's Future, the witnesses were Thomas J. Donohue, president of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, and Terry O'Sullivan, president of the Laborers' International Union of North America.

Not coincidentally friends of the National Park System will hold an event March 17 to identify unconventional sources of new revenues as the parks approach 100 years old, and gasoline taxes are on their radar.

Specifically, the event will be presented with a white paper that assesses the possibility of allocating one penny per gallon of a gas tax hike to the National Parks System and other federal lands roads. That could provide as much as \$1.5 million per year. The money would not be available for other park and rec programs such as transportation enhancements, recreational trails and Scenic Byways.

The existing transportation law, MAP-21, provides money for surface transportation programs through Oct. 1, 2014. So Congress will be working on a successor law over the next 18 months.

Congress cut back substantially on park and rec programs in MAP-21, such as transportation enhancements and Safe Routes to Schools. It lumped them into one new line item with the Recreational Trails Program and provided \$760 million per year for the line item. That's about a \$200 million decrease. In addition the programs must compete with

each other and with other programs for the \$760 million.

Rendell is one of many candidates to replace current Secretary of Transportation Ray LaHood, who said January 29 he will stay in office until a successor is chosen.

By our rough count as many as 17 names are being circulated as possible candidates to replace LaHood. Almost all have been major supporters of transportation-related recreation in the past, particularly trails.

Leading the list of rumored nominees is Los Angeles Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa (D), who played a leading role in the development of MAP-21.

Also on the list of candidates is former House Transportation Committee Chairman James Oberstar (D-Minn.) Oberstar has long been a major champion of transportation-related recreation, particularly programs related to bicycling.

Other possibilities include former Michigan Gov. Jennifer Granholm (D), Rendell, Rep. Earl Blumenauer (D-Ore.) and Deborah Hersman. Hersman chairs the National Transportation Safety Board. Blumenauer is perhaps the strongest advocate of bicycling in the House and was considered a leading candidate for the secretary position four years ago.

Many lands bills introduced, perhaps anticipating omnibus

If and when new Senate Energy Committee Chairman Ron Wyden (D-Ore.) carries through on his promise to attempt to move a busload of stalled lands bills, there will be plenty of candidates on the table.

We won't attempt to prioritize them but senators have this year introduced a wide range of lands bills including the designation of a First State National Historical Park in Delaware and the protection of hundreds of thousands of acres in Montana. Not to speak of a pile of bills to designate national heritage areas (NHAs).

In the last Congress of course more than a hundred lands bills were bottled up in the Senate, despite the efforts of former energy committee chairman Jeff Bingaman (D-N.M.) and Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid (D-Nev.) to break them free in an omnibus measure.

Blocking the way, as always, was the Senate "hold" procedure that allows any one senator to stall legislation for weeks with a single objection. Traditionally, Senate leaders have piled lands bills into one omnibus containing 100 or more individual measures sponsored by members from both parties.

Last year Bingaman and Reid couldn't find the time and support to move an omnibus. How Wyden overcomes the hold obstacle is not clear, perhaps by starting early with a jumbo bill now.

At any rate Wyden's press aide told us last month that the senator intends to revive the huge pile of lands bills that Congress did not act on last year. "To that end, one of Sen. Wyden's first priorities will be to pass the dozens of lands bills left over from last Congress," said the aide, Samantha Offerdahl.

Private property advocates are aware of the ferment in the Senate and are concerned about the possibility of an omnibus bill. The American Land Rights Association (ALRA) has been ringing the alarm to its members with a number of bulletins, such as this one, "(Senate Majority Leader) Harry Reid (D-Nev.) and the Democrat majority on the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee are working on the Omnibus Federal Lands Bill they failed to get through Congress before the end of last year. They want to move quickly before the opposition gets organized."

Here is a sample of lands bills that have been introduced

National park in Delaware: This bill would incorporate a number of historic sites in Delaware into the first national park in the first state to join the union. Rep. John Carney (D-Del.) introduced the House bill (HR

703) February 14 and Sen. Thomas Carper (D-Del.) introduced the Senate bill (S 347) February 14.

Valles Caldera park in New Mexico:

This bill would transfer 88,900 acres of a Valles Caldera National Preserve in the Santa Fe National Forest to the National Park Service. As a Forest Service unit the Valles Caldera management is not bringing in enough money to pay its own way. Presumably the Park Service would raise more money. Sen. Tom Udall (D-N.M.) introduced the bill (S 285) February 12.

Heritage area bills return:

Reps. Charlie Dent (R-Pa.) and Paul D. Tonko (D-N.Y.) introduced legislation (HR 445) February 1 that would designate a national policy and national standards for national heritage areas (NHAs).

Separately, senators introduced two bills February 4 to designate individual heritage areas: Sen. Robert P. Casey (D-Pa.) introduced S 219 to establish a Susquehanna Gateway NHA in Pennsylvania and Sen. Dianne Feinstein (D-Calif.) introduced S 228 to establish a Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta NHA in California. Heritage areas usually consist of a mix of public and private lands with striking social, economic, historical and natural features.

Fishing and hunting:

Sens. Lisa Murkowski (R-Alaska) and Joe Manchin (D-W.Va.) January 29 reintroduced legislation to declare federal lands open to hunting and fishing unless specifically closed. Their bill (S 170) would apply just to the Forest Service and the Bureau of Land Management. It would NOT affect lands managed by the Park Service and the Fish and Wildlife Service. Murkowski and Manchin said in a joint statement that Rep. Dan Benishek (R-Mich.) this year intends to introduce a House version of S 170.

Refuges need Hill approval:

This bill (HR 638) would require Congressional approval of any new wildlife refuge. Under existing law the Fish and Wildlife Service has authority to administratively designate refuges and has done so for more than 90 percent of the 556 units in the National

Wildlife Refuge System. Rep. John Fleming (R-Ia.) is the lead sponsor of HR 638.

Fleming and the Republicans don't trust FWS and want to control the designation of any new refuges.

Montana Forest Jobs and Recreation

Act: Sen. Jon Tester (D-Mont.) introduced this bill (S 37) January 22 that would designate from Montana national forests and Bureau of Land Management areas 666,260 acres of wilderness, six recreation areas totaling 288,780 acres and special management areas totaling 80,720 acres.

Flathead withdrawal revived:

Sens. Tester and Max Baucus (D-Mont.) February 7 resumed their campaign to forbid new oil and gas leasing in the North Fork of the Flathead River by introducing legislation (S 255) to withdraw a 300,000-acre area from oil and gas leasing and hard rock mining. The withdrawal areas are located in the Flathead National Forest and the Lewis and Clark National Forest.

Not yet introduced:

Here is a sample of bills that have yet to be introduced but that were candidates for an omnibus bill last year: reauthorization of the Federal Land Transaction Facilitation Act; a hotly-contested House-passed bill that would require federal land managers to cooperate with Border Patrol agents who operate on federal lands near Mexico and Canada; a House-rejected bill that would designate a Manhattan Project National Park to commemorate the development of the Atomic Bomb.

Notes

Outdoors omitted from SOTU.

In his State of the Union (SOTU) address February 12 President Obama made zero mentions of the outdoors. Nothing about national parks, nothing about recreation, nothing about the outdoors, nothing about trails, nothing about conservation. He did recommend major policy changes to control global warming, which has profound effects on outdoor activities. (See the following.)

Climate change in SOTU message.

President Obama gave climate change a top priority for the nation February 12 in his State of the Union (SOTU) address, but he did not say how that policy would play out for the outdoors. The President didn't delve into specifics about the implications of his emphasis on global warming. "I urge this Congress to get together, pursue a bipartisan, market-based solution to climate change, like the one (Sen.) John McCain (R-Ariz.) and (former Sen.) Joe Lieberman (I-Conn.) worked on together a few years ago," he said. "But if Congress won't act soon to protect future generations, I will. I will direct my Cabinet to come up with executive actions we can take, now and in the future, to reduce pollution, prepare our communities for the consequences of climate change, and speed the transition to more sustainable sources of energy." Conservation groups are encouraging the administration to fight for more climate change assistance for federal land management agencies in budget battles with Congress. Said a broad coalition of groups, "As President Obama works to put the nation's fiscal house in order, conservation leaders urge him to support budget deals that protect our health and environment, strengthen our economy and invest in the future. This includes investing in agencies and programs that are essential to protecting America's air, water, oceans, wildlife, and national parks - all of which make up only slightly more than 1 percent of the entire federal budget but provide enormous benefits to every American family." The coalition includes the major national environmental organizations, such as the Sierra Club, Earthjustice and the Natural Resources Defense Council.

Cumberland Gap has bat disease.

The Park Service said February 11 that the national bat disease called "white-nose" syndrome has spread to a tenth unit of the National Park System - Cumberland Gap National Historical Park in Kentucky, Tennessee and Virginia. In January the disease showed up in Mammoth Cave National Park in Kentucky. NPS Director Jon Jarvis said the agency has released three videos to alert the public and to solicit the public's help

in preventing the spread of the disease. "We need the public's help to limit the spread of this disease so we are asking visitors to take a look at these videos and understand what steps they can take when touring or exploring caves," he said. Mollie Matteson, a bat advocate at the Center for Biological Diversity who has led the national campaign to track the spread of the disease, said, "The arrival of white-nose syndrome in yet another national park is the latest chapter in this tragedy, which is threatening the very existence of several bat species." The center said seven million bats have died from Ontario in the north to Alabama in the South and Missouri in the West. While biologists believe the disease (a form of fungus) is spread by bats themselves, humans may also spread it. The 10 national parks that have reported bats with white-nose syndrome are: Acadia National Park (Maine), Chesapeake and Ohio Canal National Historic Park (Washington, D.C, Md., W.Va.), Chickamauga and Chattanooga National Military Park (Ga. Tenn.), Cumberland Gap National Historical Park (Ky., Tenn., Va.), Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area (N.J., Pa.), Great Smoky Mountains National Park (N.C., Tenn.), Mammoth Cave National Park (Ky.), New River Gorge National River (W.Va.), Ozark National Scenic Riverways (Mo.), and Russell Cave National Monument (Ala.) The Park Service provides more information at <http://www.nature.nps.gov/multimedia/wns01/>.

Pinnacles National Park cited.

Secretary of Interior Ken Salazar and Rep. Sam Farr (D-Calif.) February 11 helped Californians celebrate the designation of Pinnacles National Monument as Pinnacles National Park. President Obama had signed into law January 10 (PL 112-245) legislation that converted the 27,000-acre area. Salazar and Farr attended the event in Paicines, Calif., to acknowledge the signing. This is California's ninth unit in the National Park System. The Interior Department said that more than 343,000 visitors spent \$4.8 million in and around Pinnacles last year, even before it became the 59th national park.

Statue of Liberty still closed.

Even though money from a Hurricane Sandy relief law (PL 113-2 of January 29) has begun to flow, the Park Service said February 12 it does not know when the Statue of Liberty will be reopened. "We appreciate the U.S. Department of Transportation's assistance to restore and replace Liberty Island docks," said Superintendent David Luchsinger in a brief statement. "We are working on the many other necessary repairs to ensure visitor safety and we don't yet have a timeline for reopening the Statue of Liberty." NPS Director Jon Jarvis and some of his top cadre told Statue of Liberty concessioners January 31 that money is now in the pipeline to begin restoration work on the currently closed unit. Hurricane Sandy of course devastated the Statue of Liberty (and many other National Park System units) on Oct. 29, 2012. PL 113-2 allocates directly \$348 million to the Park Service, \$78 million to the Fish and Wildlife Service, \$50 million to historic preservation, \$4.4 million to the Forest Service and more than \$1 billion to the Corps of Engineers. And it appropriates to the Secretary of Interior an additional \$360 million to restore and rebuild parks and refuges, as his or her discretion.

Some Utah Canyonlands support.

Although most of the federal Utah Congressional delegation is not on board, two Utah state legislators introduced a resolution this month calling for the designation of a Canyonlands National Monument in the southeastern corner of the state. The resolution from State Sen. Jim Dabakis and State Rep. Patrice Arent, both Salt Lake City Democrats, recommends that President Obama designate a 1.4 million-acre national monument managed by the Bureau of Land Management adjacent to Canyonlands National Park. But three of the four U.S. House members from Utah struck back February 15 by introducing a bill (HR 758) that would require Congressional approval of any national monument in Utah. Rep. Mike Stewart (R-Utah) is the lead sponsor of HR 758. The idea of a Canyonlands National Monument was revived Nov. 13, 2012, by more than 100 recreation-related businesses and the Outdoor Industry Association. They asked Obama to

designate the monument. The Antiquities Act of 1906 authorizes a President to designate national monuments from federal lands without Congressional action.

PEER: Act now on NPS wilderness.

The Public Employees for Environmental Responsibility (PEER) environmental group offered a plan February 11 for resolving the decades-long impasse over designation of millions of acres of wilderness in the National Park System. PEER published a report that calls on Congress and the Park Service to take 11 steps toward the designation of wilderness. NPS has submitted wilderness recommendations to Congress for 17 parks but Congress has not acted on those recommendations. In addition NPS is overdue in submitting recommendations for seven other units. While NPS management policies protect the areas, PEER says an administration can waive those policies. Wilderness designation by Congress would lock in protections. "In a nation of increasing population and development, what will make the parks ever more relevant is not more high-end destination resorts, thrill sports and Wi-Fi but the solitude and preservation that only wilderness afford," said PEER Board Chair Frank Buono, a former career NPS manager who compiled the analysis. Many millions of acres are at risk, said Buono. PEER's 11-step recommendation begins with the precise definition of legal boundaries and includes a review of the 17 parks, for which NPS has submitted wilderness recommendations. More information is available at <http://www.peer.org>.

Enviros sue BLM on solar energy.

Three environmental groups February 12 filed a lawsuit against an Interior Department program that opens portions of public lands in six southwestern states to solar energy development. The groups, led by the Western Watersheds Project, argued that the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) EIS that backs the Oct. 12, 2012, department policy fails because it did not consider sufficient alternatives. "The purpose and need for the plan amendments were defined too narrowly in the PEIS, in violation of NEPA," the suit says. "Relying upon the too-narrowly defined purpose and

need, BLM failed to analyze reasonable alternatives to the proposed plan amendments, in violation of NEPA." The other plaintiffs include the Western Lands Project and Desert Protective Council. The solar energy policy makes available to development 285,000 acres in Arizona, California, Colorado, Nevada, New Mexico and Utah. And BLM said it would consider development on a project-by-project basis on another 19 million acres. The administration has already approved some 20 utility-scale solar energy projects that were applied for before BLM began developing the programmatic EIS for a national program. More information on the suit is available at <http://www.westernwatersheds.org/>.

Ten best urban forests named. The American Forests association this month named the 10 best city forests in the United States, as chosen by a panel of 11 experts. The association didn't say which city's forests were best but it praised the following 10 cities, listed alphabetically: Austin, Charlotte, Denver, Milwaukee, Minneapolis, New York, Portland, Sacramento, Seattle and Washington, D.C. Scott Steen, American Forests CEO and a judging panelist, said, "Whether it is achieving cleaner air and water, managing stormwater, reducing energy usage or stemming erosion, no two cities have worked exactly the same way to achieve their place on our top 10 list, but they each serve as a role model for others." Among the standards used by the judges was "accessibility of urban forest and greenspaces to the public, including percentage of park land per capita." The report is at www.americanforests.org/10bestcities.

Conference Calendar

MARCH

2-3. **National Association of Counties** legislative conference in Washington, D.C. Contact: National Association of Counties, 440 First St., N.W., 8th Floor, Washington, D.C. 20001. (202) 393-6226. FAX (202) 393-2630. <http://www.naco.org>.

10-14. **Association of Partners for**

Public Lands annual convention. Contact: Association of Partners for Public Lands, 2401 Blueridge Ave, Suite 303, Wheaton, MD 20902. (301) 946-9475. <http://www.appl.org>.

19-21. **NRPA National Legislative Forum on Parks and Recreation**, in Washington, D.C. Contact: National Recreation and Parks Association, 1901 Pennsylvania Ave, N.W., Washington, DC 20006. (202) 887-0290. <http://www.nrpa.org/legforum/>.

19-23. **National Outdoor Recreation Conference** in Traverse City, Mich. Contact: The Society of Outdoor Recreation Professionals at www.recpro.org.

23-27. **American Alliance for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance** annual meeting in Charlotte, N.C. Contact: AAHPERD, 1900 Association Drive, Reston, VA 20191. (703) 476-3400. <http://www.aahperd.org>.

24-29. **North American Wildlife Conference** in Arlington, Va. Contact: Wildlife Management Institute, 1146 19th Street, NW, Suite 700, Washington, DC 20036. (202) 371-1808. <http://www.wildlifemanagementinstitute.org>.

APRIL

3-7. **Society for American Archaeology** annual meeting in Honolulu, HI. Contact: Society for American Archaeology, 900 2nd St., N.E., Suite 12, Washington, DC 20002-3557. (202) 789-8200. <http://www.saa.org>.

7-11. **LWCF Summit** in Denver, Colo. sponsored by the National Association of State Outdoor Recreation Liaison Officers and the National Association of State Park Directors. Contact: <http://www.nps.gov/lwcf/Conference/Webpages/welcome.htm>.

19-23. **National Association of Recreation Resource Planners** annual meeting at Park Place Hotel in Traverse City, Michigan Contact: National Association of Recreation Resource Planners, P.O. Box 221, Marienville, PA 16239. (814) 927-8212. <http://www.narrp.org>.