

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE CENTENNIAL LEGISLATION

Background:

The 2016 Centennial of the National Park Service is a cause for celebration and an opportunity to prepare for many more celebrations in the years ahead. The agency faces many challenges – from resource protection to financial resources to changing lifestyles to balancing traditions with new technologies and capabilities. Key park partners seek Congressional efforts linked to the 2016 Centennial to review, and perhaps adjust, existing authorities and programs and add new capabilities designed to be the framework for second-century successes. Among the key areas of discussion identified at the *America's Summit on National Parks* and in the *A Call to Action* are:

- I. Clarification of the Role of NPS Programs as a part of the Overall NPS Mission
 - RTCA
 - Historic Preservation
 - LWCF
 - Urban parks
- II. Funding
 - Fees (including modification of senior pass, addition of Purple Heart pass, possible special edition Centennial ATB pass, international ATB pass)
 - Multi-year funding cycle
 - Leveraging volunteerism, philanthropy (Centennial Challenge redux)
 - Health, education and tourism as channels of resources for park operations
 - Highway Trust Fund access for roads and more: alternative transportation and improved access to and from parks
 - Endowment provisions: reconciling different visions
 - Bonds for revenue-generating facilities (Chicago Lakeshore); possible role for NPF or new entity to sell and administer proceeds
 - Leveraging local tourism taxes, perhaps through special tax districts
 - Guest donation program
- III. Outreach and Promotion
 - Using fee-free days as the example of appropriate outreach and promotion
 - Authorizing use of certain fees for visitor research and communications efforts
 - International visitors, and support services when they visit
 - Clarifying inter-relationship of NPS and supportive services on the internet: overcoming the challenge of implied endorsements, etc.
- IV. Improving and Maintaining Park Visitor Infrastructure
 - Stimulating private investment in visitor infrastructure/new generation of El Tovar, Ahwahnee structures which is LEED-compliant, ADA-responsive
 - Guidelines for internet access in parks
 - Rewarding excellence by concessioners and other partners
 - Authorization of pilots and expansion of partner services in undervisited parks
 - Coordination of planning with state agencies and gateway communities
 - Historic Tax Credit applicability
 - Flexibility in use of combined federal/partner funds