

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
TASKING PROFILE

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Addressee: Dirk Kempthorne

From: Byrd, Robert C.
U.S. Senate
Washington
DC 20510

Subject Text: Strongly urges the Secretary to give careful consideration to including support for the suggested projects and funding levels in the agency's funding plan to be submitted to the Committee on Appropriations, pursuant to Title 1, Section 113.

Required Surnames: FNP; FW; FWS; OCL

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OFFICE OF THE
EXECUTIVE SECRETARIAT

February 16, 2007

The Honorable Dirk Kempthorne
Secretary
U.S. Department of the Interior
Washington, D.C. 20240

Dear Secretary Kempthorne:

Now that the Fiscal Year (FY) 2007 Joint Funding Resolution, H.J. Res. 20, has been signed into law, I strongly urge that you give very careful consideration to including support for the following projects and funding levels in the agency's funding plan to be submitted to the Committee, pursuant to Title 1, Section 113:

- \$1,219,000 for construction work at the Harpers Ferry National Historical Park. These funds would be allocated as follows: \$140,000 to initiate planning and design of the restoration of the historic Armorer's House (Bldg. 48), which would eventually be used as housing for the park's law enforcement personnel; \$367,000 for pre-design services for a new visitor information center at Cavalier Heights; \$302,000 to initiate planning and design of a new museum and maintenance storage facility; and \$410,000 to install new signage throughout the park in accordance with the Service's Uniguide system.
- \$3,100,000 for construction work at the New River Gorge National River. These funds would be allocated as follows: \$1,124,000 for trail improvements, including repair of storm damage, repair of trail signage, and emergency repair of railroad grade trails; \$255,000 to continue the on-going building stabilization work; \$212,000 to continue boundary survey work; \$838,000 for park-wide road repairs; \$363,000 for upgrades at picnic and recreation sites throughout the park, including making several sites handicap accessible; \$63,000 for an upgrade of the park's security system, \$120,000 for electrical improvements at the Grandview Amphitheater; and \$125,000 for continued support for the New River Parkway Authority.
- \$500,000 for land acquisition funding at the New River Gorge National River. These funds would provide for the acquisition of land within park boundaries from willing sellers.

- \$800,000 for operational support for the Wheeling National Heritage Area. These funds would be used for ongoing operations of the Wheeling National Heritage Area in Wheeling, West Virginia. Included in this request is funding for downtown revitalization projects aimed at adaptive reuse of historic structures, partnership grants with local preservation organizations focused on heritage tourism, and support for the Wheeling Artisan Center, which is a key component of the Heritage Area's self-sustainability program.
- \$250,000 through the Historic Preservation Fund's Save America's Treasures account for historic restoration and preservation of the Mother's Day Shrine Building in Grafton, WV.
- \$750,000 for land acquisition at the Gauley River National Recreation Area. These funds would be used by the Park Service to assume management of lands within its borders that are being offered by willing sellers to the Park Service.
- \$400,000 for operational costs at the Harpers Ferry Center. These funds would be used to offset a potential reduction in vital services at the Center.
- \$987,000 for additional maintenance at the National Conservation Training Center. These funds are necessary to prevent deterioration of facilities below the standards to which they were built.
- \$500,000 for operational support at the White Sulphur Springs National Fish Hatchery. These funds would be used for the recovery, propagation, and reintroduction of endangered mussels into streams throughout the Ohio River drainage area.
- \$200,000 for construction work at the White Sulphur Springs National Fish Hatchery. These funds would be used to refurbish the well that supplies water for the mussel recovery program to ensure an uncontaminated water source necessary for the recovery of endangered aquatic species.
- \$1,200,000 for construction work at the Ohio River Islands National Wildlife Refuge. These funds would be used for the continuation of an erosion-control program that was begun in 2006 on Buckley Island. Riverbank erosion threatens roads, wildlife habitat, and structures on several of the Ohio River islands in this wildlife refuge.
- \$2,500,000 for land acquisition at the Canaan Valley National Wildlife Refuge. These funds would be used by the Refuge to assume management of parcels within approved refuge boundaries for more efficient wildlife and recreation management. There are several willing sellers whose lands will be considered for acquisition in 2007.

The Honorable Dirk Kempthorne
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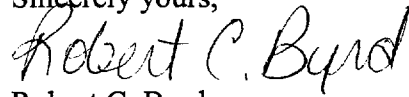
- \$1,000,000 for operations work at the Leetown Science Center. These funds would be used as follows: \$200,000 to complete a two-year water quality assessment on environmental contaminants that impact fish health and \$800,000 to continue molecular biology and genetics work at the lab.

I would appreciate a follow-up report from you regarding these projects, including the level of funding they may receive in FY 2007. If you decide to proceed with these important initiatives, please advise me of the milestone events leading to their full implementation.

Should you or your staff have any questions, please contact my Appropriations Staff Director, Mr. Terry Sauvain, at (202) 224-7200. I look forward to your prompt response.

With kind regards, I am

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Robert C. Byrd". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent "R" and "B".

Robert C. Byrd

RCB:pk



United States Department of the Interior

OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY
POLICY, MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET
Washington, DC 20240



APR 05 2007

The Honorable Robert Byrd
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Byrd:

Thank you for your February 16, 2007, letter to Secretary Kempthorne. He asked that I respond on his behalf.

The President recently signed into law P.L. 110-5 which provided full year funding for FY 2007 for the Department of the Interior as well as other Federal agencies. As you are aware, Congress did not enact regular appropriations for 2007 but instead passed the Joint Resolution and directed agencies to prepare operating plans detailing the allocation of funds.

Accordingly, final operating plans have been reviewed by OMB and have been submitted to the Appropriations Committees. The 2007 operating plan includes funding for several of the projects listed in your letter including land acquisition at the Gauley River National Recreation Area (\$550,000), construction at the White Sulphur Springs National Fish Hatchery (\$100,000), maintenance at the National Conservation Training Center (\$1.4 million), molecular biology and genetics work at the Leetown Science Center (\$788,000), operational costs at the Harpers Ferry Center (\$10.8 million). The 2007 operating plans did not include funding for construction work at the Harpers Ferry National Historical Park, land acquisition and construction at New River Gorge National River, construction at the Ohio River Islands National Wildlife Refuge, land acquisition at the Canaan Valley National Wildlife Refuge and water quality assessment at the Leetown Science Center. Funding for operational support of the White Sulphur Springs National Fish Hatchery is subject to a competitive process in 2007 and final allocations will be made later this spring.

Allocations for the National Heritage Areas program and the Save America's Treasures program are still being developed and final decisions will be made later this spring. At this time we cannot determine if funding will be provided for the Wheeling National Heritage Area or the Mother's Day Shrine Building.

We appreciate your interest in the Department's programs.

Sincerely,

R. Thomas Weimer
Assistant Secretary