

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
TASKING PROFILE

ACCN #: 356460 Status: O Fiscal Year: 2007
Document Date 02/15/2007 Received Date 02/21/2007 Due Date 03/12/2007 Action Office PMB Signature Level A/S Doc Source CM

Addressee: Dirk Kempthorne
From: Reed, Jack
United States Senate
Washington
DC 20510

Subject Text: As the DOI prepares its spending plan for FY07 Continuing resolution, urges for the support of the following Rhode Island projects:
-Rhode Island Historical Society John Brown House;
-Rhode Island National Wildlife Refuge Complex;
-Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor.

Required Surnames: FNP; FWS; OCL

Mail Carrier: HC

Mail Track#:

Cross Reference:

Copies To: FNP; FWS; OCL; SIO-Exsec; PMB - *Monica Nae*

Status Tracking:

MF Correspondence Specialist:
MFeeney

Corresp. Specialist Phone:
513-0705

Closed Comments:

Signed:

POB

2/27/07
AMB

JACK REED
RHODE ISLAND
COMMITTEES
APPROPRIATIONS
ARMED SERVICES
BANKING, HOUSING, AND URBAN AFFAIRS
HEALTH, EDUCATION, LABOR, AND PENSIONS

United States Senate
WASHINGTON, DC 20510-3903

PLEASE RESPOND TO:
WASHINGTON, DC:
728 HART SENATE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20510-3903
(202) 224-4642
RHODE ISLAND:
201 HILLSIDE ROAD
SUITE 200
GARDEN CITY
CRANSTON, RI 02920-5602
(401) 943-3100
U.S. FEDERAL COURTHOUSE
ONE EXCHANGE TERRACE
ROOM 408
PROVIDENCE, RI 02903-1773
(401) 528-5200
1 (800) 284-4200
TDD RELAY RHODE ISLAND
1 (800) 745-5555
<http://reed.senate.gov>

February 15, 2007

The Honorable Dirk Kempthorne
Secretary
Department of the Interior
1849 C Street, N.W.
Washington DC 20240

Dear Secretary Kempthorne:

As the Department of Interior prepares its spending plan for the fiscal year 2007 Continuing Resolution, I urge you to support the following Rhode Island projects included in the Senate Interior and Related Agencies Appropriations bill.

Rhode Island Historical Society John Brown House: The John Brown House is a designated National Historic Landmark and one of the most important historic structures in Rhode Island. The house was built in 1788 for John Brown, Rhode Island's leading citizen, a patriot who participated in the burning of the British revenue cutter *Gaspee* in 1773, a founder of Brown University, and a member of the U.S. Congress. The building also figures significantly into the mercantile, industrial, banking, and political history of the state well into the modern era. The John Brown House is owned and managed by the Rhode Island Historical Society and is open to the public five days a week. It houses much of the Society's collection of 30,000 artifacts, the most significant assemblage of Rhode Island historical objects in existence. The house is in poor physical condition, having received no major repairs in over 60 years. Roof leaks are endangering the interior of the house and threatening the collections stored in the building. It also requires extensive repair of lovely existing original woodwork and it needs rebuilding of several of its grand masonry chimneys as well as substantial re-pointing of its walls. Deterioration endangers the structural integrity of the house and creates a public safety hazard. The Society also has developed an ambitious plan to improve and extend the public interpretation of the house, and its educational value. I urge the Department to provide \$465,000 for the Rhode Island Historical Society for the physical restoration and educational enhancements at the John Brown House in Providence, Rhode Island. This funding will allow the Society to complete essential repairs and restoration work as well as improve educational exhibits at the John Brown House, without which the building will not be able to be sustained as a public museum and educational enterprise.

RECEIVED

005387

DEPT. OF THE INTERIOR
OFFICE OF LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS

Rhode Island National Wildlife Refuge Complex: I urge the Department to provide \$1,000,000 for the Rhode Island National Wildlife Refuge Complex for four projects within the approved Refuge boundaries. The four projects will conserve 87.5 acres.

- State of Rhode Island General Lands – John H. Chafee National Wildlife Refuge: \$700,000

Located within the John H. Chafee National Wildlife Refuge, this 58-acre parcel contains 2,900 feet of shoreline along Pettaquamscut Cove between two existing parcels of National Wildlife Refuge System land. Approximately half the acreage is comprised of salt marsh, which is used by American Black duck, a species targeted for conservation. Also present is the sharp tailed salt marsh sparrow, which is the bird with the highest priority for conservation management in the Northeast region's BCR 30. Forested uplands, which comprise the other half of the parcel, are interlaced with sheer rock outcroppings, providing habitat for relatively rare plant species and also for a host of amphibians including marbled salamanders. These lands are managed in general by the state land board, and are not protected from development or sale. Acquiring this parcel will link existing refuge parcels, and will result in conserving about 85% of the north shore of Pettaquamscut Cove for future generations. This is the last remaining tract of non-conservation lands on the north shore of Pettaquamscut Cove.

- West Bay Landowner Association -- John H. Chafee National Wildlife Refuge: \$75,000

Located within the John H. Chafee National Wildlife Refuge, this 24-acre parcel contains 2,300 feet of shoreline along the Lower Narrow River between two existing parcels of National Wildlife Refuge System land. Approximately half the acreage is comprised of salt marsh which is used by American Black duck, a species targeted for conservation. Also present is the sharp tailed salt marsh sparrow, which is the bird with the highest priority for conservation management in the Northeast region's BCR 30. This project is to acquire a management and conservation easement on the subject property to allow the Service to actively manage these lands for waterfowl and marsh habitat, and also to manage access and invasive species, two particularly threatening issues on this property.

- Block Island Conservancy -- Block Island National Wildlife Refuge: \$200,000

Located adjacent to existing Block Island National Wildlife Refuge lands on the north shoreline of the great Salt Pond, this parcel contains important coastal shrub lands that are in rare supply and used quite heavily by migratory songbirds. Block Island is world-renowned for the wide variety of juvenile songbirds that use this area for fall migration. This habitat type is crucial in supplying food and shelter for these young birds. Also included are small portions of salt marsh and salty pond shoreline, which are used by the state-listed American oystercatcher and a wide variety of shorebirds. Acquiring this parcel is crucial to meeting land protection objectives and consolidating Service ownership to reduce management costs and better conserve natural resources. Proceeds from the sale of this land will go to the Block Island Conservancy to purchase and conserve other lands on the southern end of Block Island.

- The Nature Conservancy Tract -- Block Island National Wildlife Refuge: \$25,000

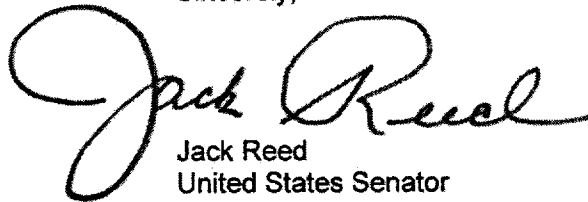
This parcel within the Block Island National Wildlife Refuge contains barrier beach habitat and is used by a variety of shorebirds during the summer months. Acquisition would allow the Service to reduce costs associated with management of refuge lands adjacent to the parcel, and permanently conserve it under the National Refuge System. Proceeds from the sale of this land will go to the Nature Conservancy to purchase and conserve other lands on the southern end of Block Island. This strategy has been employed on the Island before by the Service, and resulting in the eventual conservation of the most important piece of habitat on the North end of Block Island.

Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor: The Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor recognizes the national and historical significance of the Blackstone region as the birthplace of the American Industrial Revolution. Spanning across two states and encompassing twenty-four communities and a half million people, the Corridor represents a unique partnership between the National Park Service, the States of Rhode Island and Massachusetts, and the local communities. I urge the Department to provide \$1,000,000 under the National Recreation and Preservation/Heritage Partnership Programs account for the Corridor's operations; and, \$1,000,000 under Line item Construction Projects for interpretive programming, river restoration, historic preservation, and educational programming.

Thank you for your consideration of these important Rhode Island priorities.

If you or your staff has any questions, please feel free to call me or Kris Sarri on my staff at (202)224-4642.

Sincerely,



Jack Reed
United States Senator



United States Department of the Interior

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



APR 05 2007

The Honorable Jack Reed
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Reed:

Thank you for your February 15, 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. Allocations for the National Heritage Areas program are still being developed and final decisions will be made later this spring. At this time, we cannot determine what level of funding will be provided for the Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor. The 2007 operating plan does not include funding for land acquisition at the Rhode Island National Wildlife Refuge Complex.

In response to your request for \$465,000 for the Rhode Island Historical Society for the physical restoration and educational enhancements at the John Brown House, I wanted to inform you that this is not a National Park Service unit and is therefore not eligible for National Park Service funding. Congress would need to pass authorizing legislation giving the NPS authority for this project.

We appreciate your interest in the Department's programs.

Sincerely,

R. Thomas Weimer
Assistant Secretary