



NPS and the Stimulus Package

The stimulus package contains \$750 million in funds for the National Park Service:

- \$146,000,000 in the "ONPS" appropriation for deferred maintenance of "facilities and trails and for other critical repair and rehabilitation projects" and
- \$589,000,000 in the Construction appropriation for "for repair and restoration of roads; construction of facilities, including energy efficient retrofits of existing facilities; equipment replacement" preservation and repair of historical resources within the National Park System; cleanup of abandoned mine sites on park lands; and other critical infrastructure projects
- An additional \$15 million in the Historic Preservation Fund for historically black colleges and universities.

This compares to a 2009 appropriation for the Repair and Rehabilitation Program of \$99,586,000 and a construction appropriation of \$over 233 million. As of this writing, projects included in the stimulus package had not been announced.

Appreciation

CNPSR was saddened to learn of the death of Rick Gale in March 2009.



See page 4.

CNPSR and the Transition

CNPSR played a "behind the scenes" role in the transition to the Obama Administration, using several excellent contacts that allowed the Coalition to initiate input and respond to requests. Don Barry, former DOI Assistant Secretary of Fish, Wildlife and Parks, was heavily involved in the preparation of the "Green Group's" detailed set of recommendations; this group was a coalition of 32 of the largest conservation organizations. Don asked CNPSR for input and, using the Executive Council, the Coalition provided its view of the five most critical "needs" for the NPS and the National Park System. CNPSR also circulated these "needs" to a number of other interested parties through letters and briefings.

The Coalition sent a detailed letter to Secretary of the Interior Salazar when he was named, elaborating on these needs, and outlining recommended criteria for selecting the NPS Director. CNPSR also worked closely with the Chairman Grijalva of the House Subcommittee on National Parks, Forests and Public Lands to assure that he considered our interests. Representative Grijalva was being considered as the appointee to the Secretarial position and also provided his concerns to the transition teams and the new Secretary, once appointed.

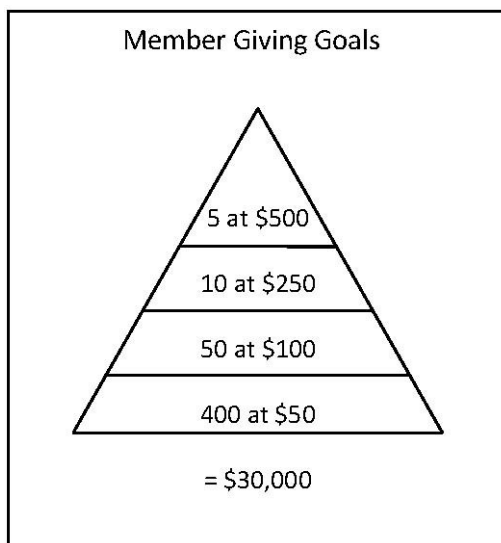
Recession Hits CNPSR

You've probably read about non-profits feeling the squeeze in this difficult economic time. CNPSR is no different in one way—foundations which have been our mainstay have less funding to give and more organizations competing. We are different in another way. As an organization of federal retirees, our members are blessed with steady pensions that aren't being left high and dry in economic crises. To continue our successes, we need the help of all of our members.

Some of you may wonder why, with an environmental friendly Administration, CNPSR needs to stay strong. However, all voices are needed as economic and energy crises create both opportunities and competition. It is important that park-specific views are carefully considered. Most of us remember the well-meaning effort to consolidate research efforts at Interior—a good motive that ignored important Park Service-specific impacts. Additionally, CNPSR is working to assist NPS with training and bringing to bear your efforts and experience to help it meet its mission. The call we issued helped NPS with contracting experience needed to handle a crushing load.

We are setting a goal of \$30,000 for 2009. This is well above 2008, but is doable. This amount will allow the basic travel for testimony and meetings, and the basic services of our media firm—which ensures that our voice is one that is listened to.

This is doable because it would only take \$43 per member if every one of you donated. On the other hand, we know that long time retirees and retirees at lower grades may be stretched, so we've come up with another approach. Here is our goal:



In 2008, member donations totaled about \$12,000, with only about 100 of you donating. The average donation, however, was over \$100, and the Executive Council ponied up a \$235 average donation. That's why we think that this goal is realistic. If those of you who can make substantial donations do so, and 400 of you make modest donations, we will meet our goal.

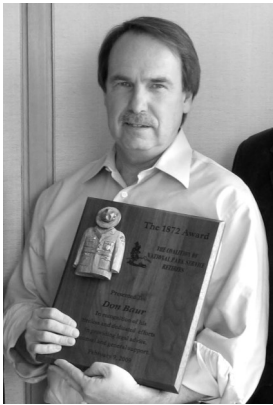
We're asking you to think seriously about where your commitment and your circumstances fit in this effort. We are still seeking foundation help, but foundations look for member commitment, as demonstrated by the number of members giving. This means it is

important that you donate, even if it is a small amount. Your Executive Council is doing its part, so please – donate now; or send us a little bit each month or each quarter. You can use the form on the back of this newsletter for submitting a donation (or just send a check without the form), or you may use PayPal on the website.

AWARDS

CNPSR recently presented awards to Don Baur, of Vermont Law School and the DC law firm Perkins Coie, and Arizona Representative Raúl Grijalva.

Grijalva was presented with the Hartzog Award for his unparalleled contributions in supporting the National Park Service and for his principled leadership and diligence in determining the best ways to protect the National Park System. As the Chair of the U. S. House Subcommittee for National Parks, Forests and Public Lands, Representative Grijalva was instrumental in protecting parks. In a letter to Secretary Kempthorne, he objected strongly to the new concealed carry firearms rule that went into effect early in 2009. He was instrumental in the Congressional action that withdrew lands around Grand Canyon from uranium exploration and mining. He recently published "*A Report on the Bush Administration Assaults on our National Parks, Forests and Public Land,*" which publicized failures of the previous administration in relation to national parks and other public lands.



Baur received the CNPSR "1872 Award" in recognition of the important pro bono work he and his firm have undertaken on behalf of CNPSR, including during the last year, work on the gun issue. Baur began his law career in the Department of Interior's Solicitor's Office and later worked as chief counsel for the Marine Mammal Commission. For the past two decades he has been a senior partner at practicing environmental law and has maintained his strong interest in, and love for our national parks.

Second Century Commission

Our Fall 2008 newsletter included information on implementation of the commission idea CNPSR has long pushed, as preparation for the 2016 centennial of the National Park Service. In addition to the public meetings outlined in the earlier newsletter, the panel held the third and fourth of its planned five sessions during the last quarter, both attended by CNPSR representatives. The Commission invited EC member JT Reynolds to speak at the Yellowstone meeting to the workforce capability committee and he was accompanied by Bill Wade. Bill also attended one day of the panel held in Gettysburg.

Commission and CNPSR member Jerry Rogers informed us that all of the Professional Opinion Papers (POPs) had been delivered to the Commission. The chair of the Visitation and Public Engagement Committee quoted the POP 7 on education and interpretation.

Appreciation for Rick Gale

On behalf of the family of Richard T "Rick" Gale, retired career NPS ranger and wildland fire manager, it is with great sadness that we pass along the news of his unexpected death in Boise, Idaho, on Friday, March 27th. Rick had a wide net of family, friends, and colleagues within the National Park Service, the interagency fire and emergency services communities, and a number of other professions. Due to his work in the international fire community and with the International Ranger Federation, that network extends worldwide. Also included in this extended family are friends and colleagues from more than three decades of active membership within and leadership of the Association of National Park Rangers. He was an original member of the CNPSR Executive Council when the Coalition was formed.

The "remembrance celebration" for Rick was held in Boise on April 3 and was attended by about 150 of his friends, family and colleagues. Among those who provided testimonials were CNPSR members Bill Wade, Rob Arnberger, Elvira Arnberger, Rick Smith, Maureen Finnerty, Bill Halainen and Bob Sellers.

The Gun Rule

CNPSR became heavily involved as soon as it learned that DOI intended to initiate a rulemaking to allow concealed-carry firearms in national parks. In March, 2008, five members of the Executive Council met with Assistant Secretary Lyle Laverty to discuss Coalition concerns and the Coalition sent several letters attempting to avert the rulemaking. CNPSR submitted very detailed comments as part of the public comment process of the published proposed rule.

When it became clear that DOI was going to "ram through" the rule without appropriate NEPA compliance and consultation on endangered species, CNPSR initiated an extensive survey of NPS leaders and resource specialists to determine perceived impacts of the rule. This survey also included members of former NPS employees (members of CNPSR) and a number of current and former USFWS Refuge management personnel. This survey was spearheaded by Don Baur, of the legal firm of Perkins-Coie and expenses were covered by The Turner Foundation. DOI ignored CNPSR's survey and all other expressions of inappropriate process and published the final rule to be implemented on January 11, 2009, preventing the new administration from stopping implementation.

The CNPSR Executive Council decided to engage in litigation being planned by NPCA (and later joined by the Association of National Park Rangers). The complaint was filed by the legal firm Hogan and Hartson. on January 6, 2009 in US District Court in Washington DC, along with a motion for preliminary injunction. It

Save the Date!

The new 6-part public television series on the National Park Service will begin airing on September 27.

Ken Burns and Dayton Duncan have shown clips from the series to a wide range of Park Service-related audiences. All reports have been enthusiastic.

con't on page 5

Highlights of the 1st Quarter of 2009

In addition to its involvement with the Second Century Commission and meeting with new DOI officials (see related articles), the following highlights capture some of the CNPSR activities during the first quarter of 2009:

- Bill Wade presented testimony at a House Subcommittee on National Parks, Forests, and Public Lands hearing on **workforce issues**. The hearing included testimony from the Partnership for Public Service, whose report on the Best Places to Work in the Federal Government showed low morale at NPS and other land management agencies. Representative Grijalva, using information from the report, pointed out that Federal prison guards enjoyed their jobs more than park rangers. Bill's testimony, posted on the CNPSR website, cited lack of training, problems with succession planning and recruitment, core operations "efficiency" efforts and privatization, time spent on data bases and processes, and other causes.
- New EC member Jake Hoogland joined Bill Wade for meetings in **Washington** with NPS, DOI, NPCA, Hill staff, and others. These meetings included new deputy Assistant Secretary for Fish, Wildlife and Parks Will Shafroth. Items discussed included, among others:
 - New Administration actions on **RS 2477**
 - **Gun** rule litigation
 - CNPSR assistance to NPS in its **Superintendents Academy**
 - Proposed mountain **biking** regulations
 - Park specific issues, including--
 - Public involvement (through hunting) in **elk management** at Theodore Roosevelt NP
 - **GMP** issues at Lyndon B Johnson NHP, Badlands NP, Theodore Roosevelt NP, and Jefferson National Expansion Memorial
 - Yellowstone **winter use**
 - Cape Hatteras **ORV negotiated rule-making**; the last committee meeting was held in February without a consensus being reached. Rob Milne and Dwight Rettie represented CNPSR, as environmental group representatives, on the committee.
 - Bill Wade met with Hartzog family members about the status of the **Hartzog Institute**—which CNPSR would like to see implemented according to George Hartzog's vision.

Gun Rule con't from page 4

was filed on behalf of NPCA and CNPSR. Additional motions and replies have been filed, and the suit joined by other parties, including ANPR, the NRA and the Mountain States Legal Foundation. On March 19, US District Court Judge Colleen Kolar-Kotelly issued the requested preliminary injunction, giving the DOI until April 20 to decide what it wants to do. The judge called the rulemaking process by DOI "astoundingly flawed." NPS has issued directives to enforce the "old" rule disregard the new rule until further notice. We owe thanks to Hogan and Hartson and Perkins-Coie for covering all legal fees on a pro bono basis.

I'd like to make a donation the old-fashioned way (alternative is at www.npsretirees.org)

Name _____

Address _____

Donation amount (check enclosed) _____

Please email an acknowledgement

Please send acknowledgement by mail

Email address if we don't have it _____

CNPSR is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. Contributions are tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law.

Please use this space to let us know if and how you'd like to be involved in the collaborative initiative with NPS, provide feedback on this newsletter, or pass on any other thoughts you'd like to share with the Executive Council. (You can also contact us at www.npsretirees.org)

Coalition of NPS Retirees
5625 North Wilmot
Tucson, AZ 85750