



# National Park Service: FY2019 Appropriations

The National Park Service (NPS) administers the National Park System, which includes 419 units valued for their natural, cultural, and recreational importance, and covers 85 million acres (roughly 81 million acres of federal land and 4 million acres of nonfederal land). NPS typically receives funding in annual appropriations laws for Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies. This CRS product summarizes NPS’s FY2019 appropriations; for information on FY2020, see CRS In Focus IF11178, *National Park Service: FY2020 Appropriations*.

## FY2019 Appropriations Summary

P.L. 116-6, the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2019, was enacted on February 15, 2019. The law provided \$3.223 billion in discretionary appropriations for NPS, 1% more than the enacted FY2018 appropriation of \$3.202 billion. (The FY2018 amount does not reflect supplemental appropriations of \$257.6 million in P.L. 115-123 to address hurricane damage, which were designated as emergency spending not subject to discretionary spending limits.) The FY2019 appropriation included increases for four NPS accounts and reductions for two accounts, as compared with FY2018. In addition to discretionary appropriations, NPS (in its FY2020 budget justification) estimated mandatory appropriations for FY2019 of \$0.768 billion, an increase of 9% over NPS mandatory funding for FY2018. NPS’s mandatory appropriations come from entrance and recreation fees, concessioner fees, donations, and other sources, and are used for a variety of specified purposes, including deferred maintenance.

The enacted discretionary appropriations for FY2019 were 18% higher than the Trump Administration’s request of \$2.730 billion. (The Administration’s request had originally been \$2.431 billion, but was increased in a budget addendum following Congress’s increase to FY2019 spending caps in the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2018, P.L. 115-123.) The enacted discretionary appropriation exceeded the Administration’s request for each NPS budget account.

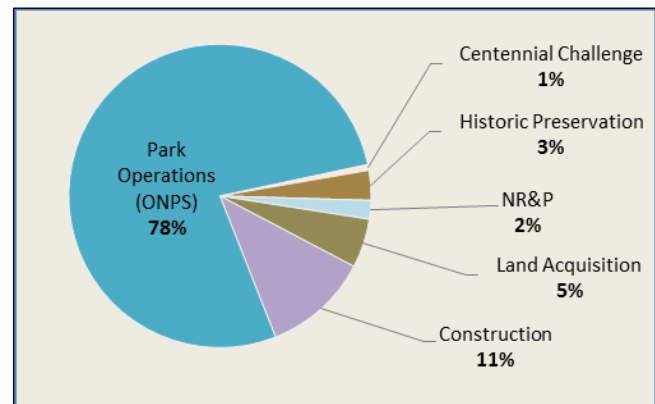
Earlier, on July 19, 2018, the House had passed H.R. 6147, which would have provided \$3.262 billion for NPS for FY2019. On August 1, 2018, the Senate passed its version of H.R. 6147, with \$3.219 billion for NPS. Because regular FY2019 appropriations were not enacted by the start of the fiscal year, NPS received continuing appropriations at the FY2018 level after October 1, 2018. However, continuing appropriations lapsed during part of the fiscal year, resulting in a partial government shutdown that affected NPS between December 22, 2018, and January 25, 2019. For more information, see CRS In Focus CRS In Focus IF11079, *National Park Service: Government Shutdown Issues*.

## NPS’s Appropriations Accounts

NPS had six discretionary appropriations accounts funded in FY2019 (**Figure 1** and **Table 1**). About 78% of the FY2019 discretionary appropriation went to the Operation of the National Park System (ONPS) account to support the day-to-day activities, programs, and services of the park system. These include resource stewardship, visitor services, park protection, facility operations and maintenance, and support and administrative costs. The FY2019 appropriation for the ONPS account was \$2.503 billion; the Administration had requested \$2.425 billion.

The next-largest amount, 11% of the appropriation, went to NPS’s Construction account, which covers rehabilitation and replacement of existing facilities as well as new construction. In recent years, the agency has planned no new facility construction, in order to prioritize deferred maintenance. NPS prioritizes projects based on “mission factors” and cost-benefit considerations. The account also covers other construction activities and planning functions. Congress appropriated \$364.7 million for the NPS Construction account for FY2019; the Administration’s request was \$241.3 million.

**Figure 1. NPS Appropriations Accounts for FY2019**  
(NPS discretionary total in P.L. 116-6: \$3.223 billion)



Source: P.L. 116-6 and H.Rept. 116-9.

Notes: ONPS = Operation of the National Park System.  
NR&P = National Recreation and Preservation.

Approximately 5% of the FY2019 discretionary appropriation went to the Land Acquisition and State Assistance (LASA) account. These monies come from the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF; 54 U.S.C. §§200301 et seq.), the primary funding source for the federal land management agencies to acquire lands. For more information on the LWCF, see CRS Report RL33531, *Land and Water Conservation Fund: Overview, Funding History, and Issues*, by Carol Hardy Vincent. NPS’s LASA account covers both NPS’s own acquisitions (typically

consisting of nonfederal "inholdings" inside the boundaries of national park units) and NPS grants to states for outdoor recreation needs. Of the \$168.4 million appropriated for the account for FY2019, \$44.4 million was for NPS acquisition and \$124.0 million was for state assistance. The federal portion included \$10.0 million for grants under the American Battlefield Protection Program, to assist states and local communities in the acquisition and preservation of threatened battlefields from the Civil War, Revolutionary War, and War of 1812. The Administration had requested negative funding overall for the LASA account (based on a rescission of prior-year funds). On the federal side, the request specified \$8.8 million for acquisition management, but no project funding for new NPS acquisitions. The Administration also requested no funding for the state assistance program. Noting a funding increase for the state program from mandatory appropriations under the Gulf of Mexico Energy Security Act of 2006 (P.L. 109-432), the Administration proposed that support for the state assistance program be shifted entirely to mandatory appropriations.

About 3% of the FY2019 discretionary appropriation was for the Historic Preservation Fund (HPF) account. The HPF was established by the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (NHPA; 54 U.S.C. §§300101 et seq.). The fund receives \$150 million annually from offshore energy revenues, but funding is available only to the extent appropriated in annual appropriations laws. The FY2019 appropriation was \$102.7 million, primarily for NPS matching grants to state and tribal historic preservation offices to conserve cultural and historical assets and sites. Also, \$15.3 million of the account total was for competitive grants to underserved communities (\$0.8 million) and to preserve sites associated with the Civil Rights movement (\$14.5 million); \$8.0 million was for competitive grants to historically black colleges and universities; \$5.0 million was for historic revitalization grants; and \$13.0 million was

for competitive grants under the Save America's Treasures program, which preserves nationally significant sites, structures, and artifacts. The Administration had requested \$32.7 million overall for the HPF account.

The National Recreation and Preservation (NR&P) account received about 2% of the FY2019 total. This account funds NPS programs that assist state, local, tribal, and private land managers with outdoor recreation planning, resource preservation, and other activities. The largest single program funded through the account is NPS assistance to national heritage areas. The total FY2019 appropriation for the NR&P account was \$64.1 million, of which \$20.3 million was for national heritage areas. The Administration had requested \$32.2 million for the account, of which \$0.4 million was for national heritage areas.

Finally, about 1% of the FY2019 appropriation went to the Centennial Challenge account, to support the National Park Centennial Challenge Fund. Authorized by Congress in 2016 (54 U.S.C. §§103501 et seq.), the fund is a matching-grant program to spur donations for projects or programs that further the NPS mission and enhance the visitor experience. Deferred maintenance projects are prioritized. The FY2019 appropriation for the account was \$20.0 million; the Administration had requested no discretionary funding. The Centennial Challenge Fund is also authorized to receive offsetting collections from the sale of senior passes under the Federal Lands Recreational Enhancement Act (16 U.S.C. §§6801-6814), and the Administration estimated that FY2019 offsetting collections would be \$15.0 million.

### For More Information

For more information, see CRS Report R42757, *National Park Service Appropriations: Ten-Year Trends*; and CRS Report R44934, *Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies: Overview of FY2019 Appropriations*.

**Table I. NPS Discretionary Appropriations by Account (\$ in millions)**

Account	FY2018 Enacted <sup>a</sup>	FY2019 Request	House-Passed H.R. 6147	Senate-Passed H.R. 6147	FY2019 Enacted (P.L. 116-6)	% Change from FY2018
Operation of the National Park System	2,478.0	2,425.1	2,527.8	2,500.4	2,502.7	+1%
Construction	359.7	241.3	366.3	364.7	364.7	+1%
Land Acquisition and State Assistance	180.9	-1.2 <sup>b</sup>	172.4	174.4	168.4	-7%
National Recreation and Preservation	63.6	32.2	63.6	64.1	64.1	+1%
Historic Preservation Fund	96.9	32.7	101.4	91.9	102.7	+6%
Centennial Challenge	23.0	0	30.0	23.0	20.0	-13%
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,202.2<sup>a</sup></b>	<b>2,730.1<sup>c</sup></b>	<b>3,261.6</b>	<b>3,218.6</b>	<b>3,222.7</b>	<b>+1%</b>

**Source:** House Appropriations Committee detailed spending tables, unless otherwise noted. Column totals may not sum precisely due to rounding.

- FY2018 figures do not reflect supplemental appropriations of \$257.6 million in P.L. 115-123 to address hurricane damage (designated as emergency spending not subject to discretionary spending limits).
- Amount reflects a request of \$8.8 million in new budget authority offset by a \$10.0 million cancellation of prior-year balances.
- Total as shown in NPS FY2019 Budget Addendum. The total differs from that shown in H.Rept. 116-9 (\$2,702.0 million) because the NPS FY2019 Budget Addendum did not include a \$28.1 million rescission of contract authority from the Land and Water Conservation Fund that is shown in H.Rept. 116-9.

IF10900

---

## Disclaimer

This document was prepared by the Congressional Research Service (CRS). CRS serves as nonpartisan shared staff to congressional committees and Members of Congress. It operates solely at the behest of and under the direction of Congress. Information in a CRS Report should not be relied upon for purposes other than public understanding of information that has been provided by CRS to Members of Congress in connection with CRS's institutional role. CRS Reports, as a work of the United States Government, are not subject to copyright protection in the United States. Any CRS Report may be reproduced and distributed in its entirety without permission from CRS. However, as a CRS Report may include copyrighted images or material from a third party, you may need to obtain the permission of the copyright holder if you wish to copy or otherwise use copyrighted material.