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## National Park Service: FY2024 Appropriations

The National Park Service (NPS) administers the National Park System, which includes 429 units valued for their natural, cultural, and recreational importance. System lands cover 81 million federal acres and 4 million nonfederal acres. As part of the Department of the Interior (DOI), NPS receives funding in annual appropriations laws for Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies. This CRS product discusses NPS's FY2024 appropriations; for information on FY2025, see CRS In Focus IF12713, *National Park Service: FY2025 Appropriations*.

### FY2024 Appropriations

P.L. 118-42, the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2024, was enacted on March 9, 2024. Division E of the act contained \$3.325 billion for NPS for FY2024, 4% less than the enacted FY2023 regular appropriations of \$3.475 billion in P.L. 117-328. (The comparison does not reflect FY2023 supplemental funding in response to natural disasters—\$1.500 billion in P.L. 117-328, Division N.) The FY2024 appropriations in P.L. 118-42 included decreases for all NPS accounts compared with FY2023 (**Table 1**).

NPS's FY2024 appropriations in P.L. 118-42 were 12% lower than the Biden Administration's request of \$3.764 billion. The enacted discretionary appropriations exceeded the Administration's request for one account and were less than requested for the remaining four accounts (**Table 1**).

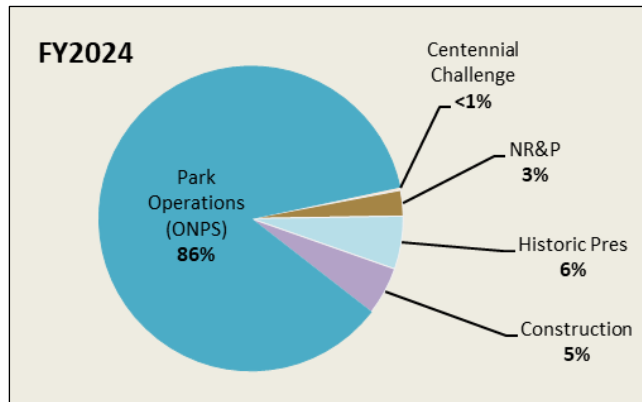
In addition to discretionary appropriations, NPS estimated mandatory appropriations for FY2024 at \$1.200 billion, a decrease of 2% from estimated NPS mandatory funding for FY2023. NPS's mandatory appropriations come from entrance and recreation fees, concessioner fees, donations, and other sources and also include land acquisition funding from the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF, 54 U.S.C. §§200301 et seq.), designated as mandatory appropriations by the Great American Outdoors Act (GAOA; P.L. 116-152). NPS's mandatory total does not include NPS's share from the National Parks and Public Land Legacy Restoration Fund (LRF), the deferred maintenance fund established by the GAOA (see below for further discussion).

In earlier action, on November 3, 2023, the House had passed H.R. 4821 (H.Rept. 118-155), with \$3.043 billion for NPS for FY2024. On July 27, 2023, the Senate Committee on Appropriations reported S. 2605 (S.Rept. 118-83), with \$3.457 billion for NPS for FY2024. Because FY2024 appropriations were not enacted by the start of the fiscal year, a series of continuing resolutions provided funding at FY2023 levels before enactment of P.L. 118-42.

### NPS's Appropriations Accounts

NPS had five discretionary appropriations accounts in FY2024 (**Figure 1**). About 86% of NPS's FY2024 discretionary appropriations went to the *Operation of the National Park System* (ONPS) account to support day-to-day activities, programs, and services at park units. These include resource stewardship, visitor services, park protection, facility operations and maintenance, and administrative costs. The FY2024 appropriation for the ONPS account was \$2.888 billion; the Administration had requested \$3.190 billion.

**Figure 1. NPS Discretionary Appropriations Accounts**  
(percentages reflect FY2024 appropriations)



**Source:** Joint explanatory statement for P.L. 118-42.

**Notes:** ONPS = Operation of the National Park System. NR&P = National Recreation and Preservation. Totals may not sum precisely due to rounding.

The next-largest amount, 6% of the discretionary appropriation, went to the *Historic Preservation Fund* (HPF) account. The HPF, established by the National Historic Preservation Act (54 U.S.C. §§300101 et seq.), receives \$150 million annually from offshore energy revenues, but monies are available only as provided in appropriations acts. P.L. 118-42 provided \$188.7 million for FY2024, primarily for NPS formula grants to state and tribal historic preservation offices to preserve cultural and historical assets and sites. Portions of the total also were for competitive grant programs, historically black colleges and universities, and historic revitalization, as well as the Save America's Treasures program (which preserves nationally significant sites, structures, and artifacts) and sites related to the U.S. Semiquincentennial (the 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the founding of the United States). Certain individual projects also were included as community project funding/congressionally directed spending (also called earmarks). NPS had requested \$177.9 million overall for the HPF account.

**Table 1. NPS Discretionary Appropriations by Account (\$ in millions)**

Account	FY2023 Enacted (P.L. 117-328)	FY2024 House-Passed Request H.R. 4821	Senate-Reported S. 2605	FY2024 Enacted (P.L. 118-42)	% Change from FY2023
Operation of the Nat'l. Park System	2,923.4	3,189.8	2,654.0	2,935.0	-1%
Historic Preservation Fund	204.5	177.9	175.4	195.2	-8%
Construction	239.8 <sup>a</sup>	286.6	114.6	232.9	-28%
Nat'l. Recreation and Preservation	92.5	95.2	84.0	93.4	-1%
Centennial Challenge	15.0	15.0	15.0	12.0	-20%
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,475.3<sup>a</sup></b>	<b>3,764.5</b>	<b>3,043.0</b>	<b>3,457.0<sup>b</sup></b>	<b>-4%</b>

**Sources:** Joint explanatory statement for P.L. 118-42, H.Rept. 118-155, and S.Rept. 118-83. Totals may not sum precisely due to rounding.

- a. Does not include supplemental funding provided in P.L. 117-328, Division N, to address natural disasters.
- b. Total reflects rescissions of \$14.5 million in unobligated balances from the Centennial Challenge and Construction accounts.
- c. Total reflects rescissions of \$27.5 million in unobligated balances from the Construction account.

About 5% of the FY2024 discretionary appropriation went to NPS's *Construction* account, which covers repair, replacement, and improvement of existing facilities as well as new construction. Projects are evaluated based on criteria related to the condition of assets, their importance to park purposes, and project benefits and risks. The account also covers other construction activities and planning. P.L. 118-42 appropriated \$172.3 million for the NPS Construction account for FY2024; the Administration's request was \$286.6 million.

The *National Recreation and Preservation* (NR&P) account received about 3% of the FY2024 total discretionary appropriations. This account funds NPS programs that assist state, local, tribal, and private land managers with grants for outdoor recreation planning, natural and cultural resource preservation, and other activities. The largest single program funded through the account is NPS assistance to national heritage areas. The FY2024 appropriation for the NR&P account was \$91.2 million, of which \$29.2 million was for national heritage areas. The Administration had requested \$95.2 million for the account, of which \$29.3 million was for national heritage areas. Other funded programs included natural and cultural programs, international park affairs, and environmental and compliance review. The account also contained community project funding/congressionally directed spending under the category of statutory and contractual aid.

Less than 1% of the FY2024 discretionary appropriations went to the *Centennial Challenge* account, to support the National Park Centennial Challenge Fund. Authorized in 2016 (54 U.S.C. §§103501 et seq.), the fund matches donations for projects or programs that further the NPS mission and enhance the visitor experience. The FY2024 appropriation for the account was \$12.0 million; the Administration had requested \$15.0 million. The fund also receives offsetting collections from senior pass sales under the Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act (16 U.S.C. §§6801 et seq.).

### NPS Mandatory Appropriations Under the Great American Outdoors Act

The GAOA established NPS funding from the LWCF as mandatory appropriations. (Previously the LWCF funding

had been provided through discretionary appropriations.) The LWCF funds NPS's own land acquisitions—typically nonfederal “inholdings” inside the boundaries of national park units—as well as NPS grants to states for outdoor recreation needs. Allocation of the funding remains an issue in the appropriations process, as the GAOA requires that the President's annual budget submission include account, program, and project allocations for the LWCF funds, and appropriations acts may specify alternate allocations. For FY2024, NPS received \$429.9 million from the LWCF, including \$305.5 million for the state assistance program, \$104.3 million for federal acquisitions, and \$20.0 million for the American Battlefield Protection Program (an NPS-administered grant program to preserve battlefield sites).

Funding for the LRF, the deferred maintenance (DM) fund established by the GAOA, also is designated as mandatory spending. NPS's share is allocated from a DOI department-wide account and thus is not included in the agency's mandatory appropriations estimate (see above). The LRF receives annual deposits over five years based on amounts of federal energy revenues. The fund has a cap of \$1.900 billion annually, with 70% allocated to NPS. As with the LWCF, the Administration must submit to Congress, with the annual budget request, lists of priority DM projects to be addressed with LRF funding. Appropriators may specify alternate allocations for the funds. For FY2024, NPS proposed \$1.330 billion in DM projects and administrative costs, and appropriators provided \$1.338 billion. Congress's allocations included funding for all NPS's proposed projects, as well as higher amounts than requested for a “contingency fund” to address unanticipated adjustments to project costs.

### For More Information

For more information, see CRS Report R42757, *National Park Service (NPS) Appropriations: Ten-Year Trends*; and CRS Report R47664, *Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies: Overview of FY2024 Appropriations*.

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