

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 is part of the Department of the Interior and typically receives funding in annual appropriations laws for Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies. This CRS product discusses NPS's FY2019 appropriations; for information on FY2020, see CRS In Focus IF11178, *National Park Service: FY2020 Appropriations*.

FY2019 Appropriations

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 regular appropriation of \$3.202 billion. The law included increases for four NPS accounts and reductions for two accounts, as compared with FY2018.

FY2019 appropriations in P.L. 116-6 were 18% higher than the Trump Administration's request of \$2.730 billion. (The request originally had been \$2.431 billion but was raised in a budget addendum following an 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.

In addition to regular appropriations, Congress included supplemental funding for NPS hurricane recovery activities in FY2019 as part of P.L. 116-20, enacted on June 6, 2019. These funds, designated as emergency spending (outside of discretionary spending limits), totaled \$128.0 million across two accounts, bringing NPS's total FY2019 discretionary appropriations to \$3.351 billion. This compares to a total of \$3.460 billion for FY2018, which included supplemental appropriations (\$257.6 million) in P.L. 115-123, also to address hurricane damage.

In addition to discretionary appropriations, NPS 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 they are used for a variety of specified purposes, including deferred maintenance.

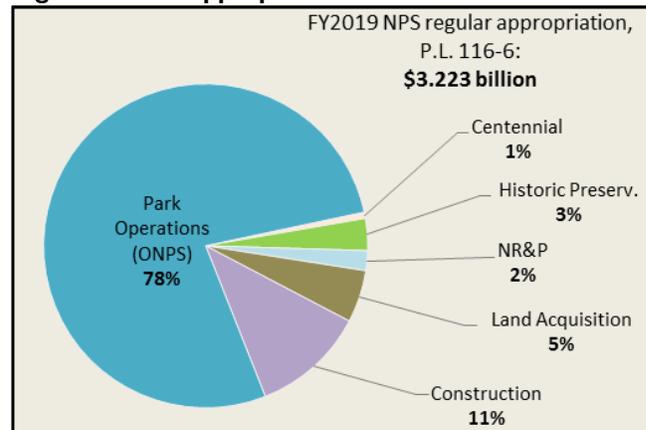
The House passed H.R. 6147 on July 19, 2018. It would have provided \$3.262 billion for NPS for FY2019. On August 1, 2018, the Senate passed its version of H.R. 6147, with \$3.219 billion for NPS. Because regular FY2019 appropriations were not enacted by the start of the fiscal year, NPS received continuing appropriations at the FY2018 level after October 1, 2018. When continuing appropriations lapsed, a partial government shutdown affected NPS between December 22, 2018, and January 25,

2019. For more information, see 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 regular 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.

Figure 1. NPS Appropriations Accounts for FY2019



Source: H.Rept. 116-9.

Notes: Figure does not reflect FY2019 supplemental appropriations of \$128.0 million in P.L. 116-20.

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

The next-largest amount, 11% of the regular 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. P.L. 116-6 appropriated \$364.7 million for the NPS Construction account for FY2019; the Administration's request was \$241.3 million. The account also received supplemental appropriations of \$78.0 million in P.L. 116-20 to address hurricane damage.

Approximately 5% of the FY2019 regular 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*. NPS's LASA account covers both NPS's own acquisitions (typically consisting of nonfederal "inholdings" inside the boundaries of national park units) and grants to states for outdoor recreation needs. Of the \$168.4 million appropriated 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 American Battlefield Protection Program grants to assist states and localities with acquiring threatened battlefields. The Administration had requested negative funding for the LASA account (with a rescission of prior-year funds). The request included no project funding for new NPS acquisitions and none for state assistance. Noting a funding increase for the state program from mandatory appropriations under the Gulf of Mexico Energy Security Act (P.L. 109-432), the Administration proposed that support for the state program be shifted entirely to mandatory appropriations.

About 3% of the FY2019 regular appropriation was for the Historic Preservation Fund (HPF) account. The HPF was established by the National Historic Preservation Act (54 U.S.C. §§300101 et seq.). The fund receives \$150 million annually from offshore energy revenues, but monies are available only as provided in appropriations acts. P.L. 116-6 provided \$102.7 million for FY2019, primarily for NPS formula grants to state and tribal historic preservation offices to conserve cultural and historical assets and sites. Portions of the total also were for competitive grant programs, including programs targeted to underserved communities, sites associated with the civil rights movement, 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). P.L. 116-20 provided an

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

Account	FY2018 Enacted ^a	FY2019 Request	House-Passed H.R. 6147	Senate-Passed H.R. 6147	FY2019 Enacted (P.L. 116-6)	% Change from FY2018	FY2019 Supplemental (P.L. 116-20)
Operation of Nat'l. 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%	78.0
Land Acquisition & State Assistance	180.9	-1.2 ^b	172.4	174.4	168.4	-7%	—
National Recreation & 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%	50.0
Centennial Challenge	23.0	0	30.0	23.0	20.0	-13%	—
Total	3,202.2^a	2,730.1^c	3,261.6	3,218.6	3,222.7	+1%	128.0

Source: House Appropriations Committee detailed spending tables and P.L. 116-20. 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.

additional \$50 million in supplemental appropriations for activities related to hurricane recovery. 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 appropriation. 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.

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 provides matching grants 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 also is 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*.