



March 26, 2020

Dear Chairman Schatz and Ranking Member Collins, Chairman Price and Ranking Member Diaz-Balart,

We, the members of the National Parks Second Century Action Coalition<sup>i</sup>, greatly appreciate the support for the Nationally Significant Federal Lands and Tribal Projects (NSFLTP) program in the Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies (THUD) Appropriations bill. We recognize the funding constraints, but respectfully ask you to consider providing at least \$100 million for the NSFLTP program in FY22 to continue to provide targeted investments for our public and tribal lands.

For more than a century, our national parks have remained America's favorite places, important pieces of our natural and cultural heritage set aside for future generations to explore and enjoy. In 2019, 328 million park visitors spent an estimated \$21 billion in local gateway communities while visiting National Park Service (NPS) sites across the country. These expenditures supported a total of 341 thousand jobs. In addition, America's outdoor recreation economy supports over 5 million American jobs and contributes over \$788 billion in annual economic output. In 2019, there were over 79 million international arrivals to the United States and research indicates that national parks were a huge tourism attraction for those visitors.

The National Park System is second only to the Department of Defense in the amount of federal infrastructure it manages, including 10,000 miles of publicly accessible roads and 1,440 bridges to help these visitors enjoy the parks. Transportation systems located on or operating in national parks are *federal* facilities and depend upon federal transportation funding. Even with the passage of the Great American Outdoors Act, half of the \$12 billion maintenance backlog remains.

The NSFLTP program can help federal lands and tribes address massive infrastructure projects needing a large investment at one time since the projects must cost at least \$25 million to qualify for the funding. There is tremendous need for this program. In a recent request for proposals, agency projects totaled over \$2 billion for an appropriation of \$325 million (three years of combined appropriations). Of that \$2 billion, \$800 million were requests for NPS projects. Therefore, we request at least \$100 million in FY22 for the NSFLTP program.

It is our sincere hope that people will enjoy our national parks to their fullest following the COVID-19 crisis and help restore the economies of the gateway communities. NPS needs the financial resources to ensure the visitors have the experience they deserve in parks and in nearby gateway communities.

Thank you for considering our views,

American Hiking Society  
American Society of Landscape Architects  
Appalachian Trail Conservancy  
Atomic Heritage Foundation  
The Coalition to Protect Americas National Parks  
The Corps Network  
Evangelical Environmental Network  
Friends of Acadia  
International Inbound Travel Association  
National Park Hospitality Association  
National Park Partners  
National Parks Conservation Association  
National Tour Association  
National Trust for Historic Preservation  
Scenic America  
Southeast Tourism Society  
Student Conservation Association  
United States Tour Operators Association

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<sup>i</sup> The National Parks Second Century Action Coalition is made up of organizations supporting conservation, recreation, outdoor industry, travel and tourism and historic preservation that are dedicated to promoting the protection, restoration, and enjoyment of the National Park System for the long-term benefit it offers our nation.