



**National Trust for
Historic Preservation**
Save the past. Enrich the future.

**Statement of the National Trust for Historic Preservation
Shaw Sprague, Vice President for Government Relations and Policy
Fiscal Year 2022 Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Appropriations
Committee on Appropriations, United States House of Representatives
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Chair Pingree, Ranking Member Joyce, and Members of the Subcommittee, I appreciate this opportunity to present the National Trust for Historic Preservation's recommendations for Fiscal Year 2022 appropriations. My name is Shaw Sprague and I am the Vice President of Government Relations. The National Trust is a privately funded nonprofit organization chartered by Congress in 1949. We work to save America's historic places to enrich our future.

Thank you for the FY 2021 Interior Appropriations bill – it surpassed even the FY 2020 bill to become the most preservation friendly appropriations bill in the history of the Republic. We look forward to continuing our work with this Subcommittee as you address the ongoing needs for investments to sustain our nation's rich heritage of cultural and historic resources that also generate lasting economic and civic vitality for communities throughout the nation. We have also produced "[*The Preservation Budget: Select Preservation Priorities for FY 2022 Appropriations*](#)" which includes far more information on the programs identified below, including funding levels over time and multiple examples of program success stories.

National Park Service: Historic Preservation Fund. The Historic Preservation Fund (HPF) is the principal source of funding to implement the nation's preservation programs. The National Trust is enormously appreciative of the four successive historic funding levels the Committee has provided to the HPF, including the FY 2021 level of \$144.3 million, a remarkable 78% increase from FY 2017 levels. HPF funding supports fundamental preservation activities such as survey, nomination of properties to the National Register of Historic Places, public education, and project reviews required for federal Historic Tax Credit (HTC) projects. Among many highlights, we would like to emphasize the Committee's sustained support for the African American Civil Rights grants program and for the 2nd year its expansion to preserve and highlight sites and stories associated with securing civil rights for All Americans, including women, American Latino, Native American, Alaska Native, Native Hawaiian, and LGBTQ Americans. The competitive grant programs within the HPF have seen remarkable growth. We are also appreciative of the increases provided to state and tribal historic offices and know they continue to have significant unmet financial needs.

We request that Congress provide a total FY 2021 HPF appropriation of \$150 million, the program's full authorized level. Within that funding we recommend:

- \$60 million for State Historic Preservation Officers (SHPOs);
- \$24 million for Tribal Historic Preservation Officers (THPOs);
- \$19 million for competitive grants to preserve the sites and stories of efforts to advance African American Civil Rights;
- \$7 million for the newly established competitive grants program to preserve the sites and stories associated with securing civil rights for All Americans, including women, American Latino, Native American, Alaska Native, Native Hawaiian, and LGBTQ Americans;
- \$10 million for grants to Historically Black Colleges and Universities to preserve and

- rehabilitate historic buildings;
- \$20 million for Save America’s Treasures grants;
- \$9 million for Paul Bruhn Historic Revitalization grants; and
- \$1 million for competitive grants for the survey and nomination of properties associated with communities currently underrepresented on the National Register of Historic Places and National Historic Landmarks.

National Park Service: Operation of the National Park System. The NPS is responsible for 423 units of the National Park System ranging from the battlefields where our ancestors fought and died to recent additions like the Birmingham Civil Rights National Monument, the Reconstruction Era National Monument and the Medgar and Myrlie Evers Home National Monument. Over the past 25 years, more than 50 new parks have been added to the park system, many of which preserve historic places and themes that have been underrepresented within the system. We encourage the Committee to provide funding above the \$2.688 billion from FY 2021 to maintain NPS operations, ensure stewardship of historic and cultural resources and prevent reductions in visitor services at a time when our national parks are more popular than ever. Within this funding, we recommend robust funding for Resource Stewardship, including \$1 million for the National Underground Railroad Network to Freedom, \$1 million for the African American Civil Rights Network, and \$1 million for the Reconstruction Era National Historic Network. We recommend the Committee make some of these funds available for grants to Network sites.

National Park Service: Deferred Maintenance. The NPS is responsible for maintaining a system comprised of more than 85 million acres that tells the stories of remarkable people and events in our country's history. Unfortunately, after over 100 years of operation and inconsistent public funding, the National Park System faces a deferred maintenance backlog estimated at nearly \$12 billion, of which 47% is attributed to historic assets. Deferred maintenance in our national parks puts historic and cultural sites at risk of permanent damage or loss, and in the absence of funding, the condition of these assets will continue to deteriorate and become more expensive to repair and preserve in the future. The National Trust was deeply engaged in advocacy for the Great American Outdoors Act, and we look forward to the historic levels of dedicated funding it will commit to address these issues. We also recommend sustained increases for specific line items to ensure the maintenance backlog continues to decrease.

- **Construction.** We recommend sustained robust funding of at least \$140 million for Line Item Construction projects that address the deferred maintenance for the NPS’ highest priority non-transportation assets with project costs greater than \$1 million.
- **Repair and Rehabilitation; Cyclic Maintenance.** We are enormously appreciative of the Committee’s commitment to enhancing these accounts with significant investments since FY 2016. We recommend an increase to \$150 million for Repair and Rehabilitation, an increase of \$14 million above FY 2021 enacted and \$205 million for Cyclic Maintenance, an increase of \$11.8 million above FY 2021 enacted.
- **Leasing Historic Structures in National Parks.** We appreciate the Committee’s long-standing and strong support of expanded use of historic leasing authorities by the NPS. Leasing is a well-established tool that can bring non-federal resources to the rehabilitation and use of under-utilized or abandoned buildings within the parks. While there is some progress, the NPS continues to be slow to advance a successful national leasing program. We would like to work with the Committee to address this ongoing lost opportunity to bring unused or underperforming buildings into greater public use.

National Park Service: Cultural Programs. Within its cultural programs, the NPS manages the National Register of Historic Places and National Historic Landmarks, certifies federal HTC projects, coordinates federal archaeology programs, and provides funding through the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act Grants, Japanese American Confinement Sites Grants, and American Battlefield Protection Program Assistance Grants. The National Trust recommends \$35 million in FY 2022, an increase of \$3.06 million from FY 2021. We greatly appreciate the increases Congress provided in FY 2020 and FY 2021 for these programs. Additional increases in this account will enhance modernization of the National Register and support sustained demands to review and approve federal HTC projects.

National Park Service: International Park Affairs, Office of International Affairs. The National Trust recommends \$2.1 million for the Office of International Affairs to ensure engagement in the World Heritage Program and support the dozens of communities and sites across the country seeking nomination to the World Heritage List. This office is responsible for selecting sites for the World Heritage Tentative List and shepherding them through the detailed nomination process. Examples of pending sites include Hopewell Ceremonial Earthworks (Ohio) and Civil Rights Movement Sites (Alabama, Arkansas, Georgia, Mississippi).

National Park Service: National Heritage Areas. We recommend \$32 million for the Heritage Partnership Program and National Heritage Areas (NHAs). This funding would provide \$500,000 for each of the 55 individual NHAs in 34 states, as well as NPS administrative support for coordination, guidance, assistance, and training.

Bureau of Land Management: Cultural Resources Management. The BLM oversees the largest, most diverse and scientifically important collection of historic and cultural resources on our nation's public lands, as well as the museum collections and data associated with them. We deeply appreciate the Committee's commitment to oversight of the Trump Administration's reorganization of the agency. The National Trust and many other organizations are profoundly concerned with the impact of the reorganization and loss of staff within the Cultural Resources Division.

The cultural resources program also supports Section 106 review of land-use proposals, Section 110 inventory and protection of cultural resources, compliance with the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act, and consultation with Tribes and Alaska Native Governments. Moving forward, we are very appreciative of the Committee's support in FY 2020 of a dedicated increase of \$1.5 million, and \$1 million in FY 2021, for the agency to enhance its National Cultural Resources Information Management System (NCRIMS). This collaboration with state historic preservation offices is one of the nation's most innovative programs to support predictive modeling and data analysis to enhance planning for large-scale, cross-jurisdictional land-use projects. It is a significant and too-often overlooked preservation success story, and we recommend once again providing specific funding of \$1.5 million above enacted.

Bureau of Land Management: National Landscape Conservation System. The BLM's National Landscape Conservation System (National Conservation Lands) includes approximately 37 million acres of congressionally and presidentially designated lands, including National Monuments, National Conservation Areas, Wilderness, Wilderness Study Areas, National Scenic and Historic Trails, and Wild and Scenic Rivers. In 2019, new congressional designations added approximately 1.25 million acres to our National Conservation Lands. We encourage the Committee to provide \$65.131 million to the base program for the National Landscape Conservation System, a sharp increase of nearly \$20 million above enacted, but an

amount which would restore funding of this program to its FY 2006 level. An increase in funding will allow for greater inventory and monitoring of cultural resources in this growing system, prevent damage to the resources found in these areas, ensure proper management, and provide for a quality visitor experience. We also support at least level funding for wilderness and national monument management on Oregon and California Grant Lands.

Department-Wide: Land and Water Conservation Fund. The National Trust has long supported robust funding for the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF), and we look forward to the Committee's role in implementing full dedicated funding for the LWCF. Many of the nation's most significant historic and cultural places have been permanently protected through LWCF investments, including Martin Luther King Jr. National Historical Park, Canyons of the Ancients National Monument, and Dayton Aviation National Historical Park. Recent LWCF funding will benefit historic parks including Ocmuglee Mounds National Historical Park, River Raisin National Battlefield Park, Lewis and Clark National Historical Park and William Howard Taft National Historic Site. In total, more than \$550 million has been invested to acquire historic sites and 137,000 acres in 162 NPS units. Within LWCF funding, we encourage the Committee to provide \$20 million for the American Battlefield Protection Program.

Independent Agencies: National Endowment for the Arts and National Endowment for the Humanities. We urge the Committee to provide \$176 million for the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) and \$225 million for the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH). NEA and NEH funding is critical to communities around the country. It has also supported efforts by the National Trust's Historic Sites and others to tell a fuller American story and engage visitors with history in compelling ways. For example, support from the NEA has created programs like Art and Shadows at the Shadows-on-the-Teche in Louisiana, which put regionally-based artists in residence at the site, resulting in programming that attracted new audiences and brought people from around the country to the town's downtown commercial district. NEH support has brought teachers from around the country to learn about history in the places that it was made and to carry those experiences back to their classrooms, including exploring the Constitution at James Madison's Montpelier and discovering the rich, but largely unknown, African American history in the President's neighborhood at Decatur House.

Independent Agencies: Advisory Council on Historic Preservation. We recommend \$8 million million for the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP), an increase of \$600,000 over enacted. The increase would enhance the ACHP's performance of its essential roles in ensuring that the nation's historic and cultural resources are protected while also advancing timely delivery of major infrastructure projects and improving consultation with Indian Tribes. The increase would also support the ACHPs efforts to promote enhanced mapping and digitization of cultural resources.

Thank you for considering our testimony. We stand ready to assist the Committee in support of our recommendations.