

*News!*

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...and House of  
Congress assembled.  
The Congress finds and declares-  
(a) that the spirit and direction of the Nation are  
founded upon and reflected in its historic past.

## NPS RELEASES STIMULUS PROJECTS

At a press conference on Wednesday, Secretary of the Department of Interior, Ken Salazar, announced the release of \$750 million in American Recovery and Reinvestment Act funds for 750 national parks service projects. The total amount includes \$15 million from the Historic Preservation Fund for Historically Black Colleges and Universities. In his speech, the Secretary stated that these funds are an investment in America's heritage and that they "tell our story by conserving treasured landscapes, stories and culture." Tom Kiernan, President of the National Parks Conservation Association called these funds a great first step towards the NPS centennial celebration and that the funds will be used on places that "speak to our heritage and our future."

Projects were selected using a merit-based process based on the criteria put forth in the Recovery Act: that a project addresses the Department's highest priority mission needs; generates the largest number of jobs in the shortest period of time; and creates lasting value for the American public.

Secretary Salazar has pledged unprecedented levels of transparency and accountability in the implementation of the Department of Interior's economic recovery projects. The public will be able to follow the progress of each project on the recovery web site and at [www.interior.gov/recovery](http://www.interior.gov/recovery). The website includes an interactive map that enables the public to follow where and how the department's recovery dollars are being spent.

For a full list of the projects, go to [www.intrior.gov/recovery](http://www.intrior.gov/recovery).



### BATTLEFIELD PROTECTION BILL PASSES HOUSE (AGAIN)

On Tuesday, the House passed H.R. 1694, the Revolutionary War and the War of 1812 Act which would establish a grant program to acquire and protect battlefields from the Revolutionary War and War of 1812. According to a 2007 report from the National Park Service, 170 of 677 sites significant to the two wars are in danger of being destroyed in the next 10 years due to urbanization and development.

Last month, the House approved a previous version of the bill, H.R.146. At the same time, House and Senate leaders were trying to pass the public lands omnibus bill. In order to avoid procedural blocks on the omnibus bill, the Senate leadership stripped the contents of H.R.146 and inserted the language of the omnibus in its place. This maneuver left the battlefield language out of the bill, leading to the new battlefield's bill that passed the House yesterday.



### BORDER CONSERVATION BILL INTRODUCED

House National Parks Subcommittee Chairman, Raul Grijalva (D-AZ) introduced legislation, H.R.2076 to give federal security officials more options for protecting the nation's borders while conserving natural resources. The bill would require the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) to consult with federal land managers and local and state governments along the border to develop security solutions with minimal environmental impacts.

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Under the 2005 Secure Fence Act, the DHS has erected about 613 miles of new pedestrian fencing and vehicle barriers designed to thwart illegal border crossers and drug smugglers. According to Rep. Grijalva, "Current policy has driven crossing activity to remote isolated areas along the border, which in southern Arizona represent significant public and tribal lands and many of these lands have suffered extensive environmental degradation as a result of unauthorized activity and border security efforts."

Grijalva's legislation would allow DHS officials to have flexibility over what kind of fences are used for particular lands, permitting them to decide whether fences, virtual fences, barriers or other options are the optimal way to guard the border while conserving the local natural resources. It would also appeal a contentious provision Congress approved in 2005 as part of the REAL ID Act that allows the DHS secretary to waive any federal or state law deemed to interfere with fence construction, including environmental laws like the National Environmental Policy Act.



### MARK YOUR CALENDARS



#### UPCOMING EVENTS

July 8-11, 2009 – NCSHPO Summer Board Meeting, Big Bend, Texas