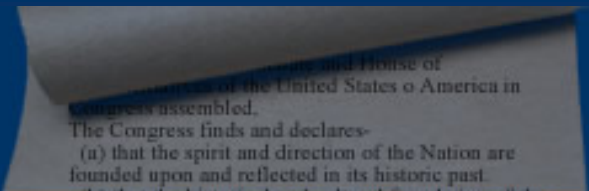


News!

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APPROPRIATIONS UPDATE

Congress continues to operate under a continuing resolution through the end of the month, hopefully giving them enough time to complete the remaining appropriations bills. While the Interior bill has yet to go to conference several other appropriations bills with outdoor and conservation programs are moving. The Energy and Water conference report was approved by the House on October 1st and conferees have also completed an Agriculture spending bill which was approved by the House on October 7. The Transportation spending bill is also awaiting conference.

The last time the Senate approved a stand-alone Interior spending bill was in calendar 2005, when it approved a fiscal 2006 bill. Congress has passed all other recent spending bills in omnibus continuing resolutions, without the Senate taking up the bills on the floor.

The White House “strongly supports” the Senate bill, according to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB.) “The bill makes efficient and effective investments that protect and enhance America’s natural and historical treasures, from our forests to our lakes and our monuments,” said OMB is a Statement of Administration Policy. “It also funds critical activities to protect the health of the American people, the environment in which we live, and the modernized 21st Century infrastructure that is vital to our economy.”



HOUSE NAGPRA HEARING

On Wednesday the House Committee on Natural Resources held an oversight hearing on the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act. Testifying on behalf of the Administration

was Dan Wenk, NPS deputy director. Additional witnesses included: The Honorable Brenda Shemayne Edwards, Chairwoman of the Caddo Nation of Oklahoma; Mr. Steve Titla, General Counsel of the San Carlos Apache Tribe; Ms. D.Bambi Kraus, President of the National Association of Tribal Historic Preservation Officers; Ms. Susan B. Bruning, Chairwoman of the Repatriation Committee of the Society for American Archaeology; and Mr. Colin Kippen, Former NAGPRA Review Committee Member. To view their written statements visit: <http://resourcescommittee.house.gov>



ALAKSA BILL PROPOSES NHPA TRIBAL DEFINITION CHANGE

On Thursday, the Senate Subcommittee on Public lands and Forests held a hearing on several bills including S.881, the Southeast Alaska Native Land Entitlement Finalization Act, sponsored by Senator Lisa Murkowski (R-AK). This legislation authorizes Sealaska Corporation, the for-profit Regional Corporation for southeast Alaska, to select and receive its remaining land entitlement under the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (ANCSA).

The bill also proposes to amend the National Historic Preservation Act by adding to the definition of "tribal lands" - land held under the ANCSA by incorporated Native groups, regional corporations, and village corporations. Enactment of this provision would allow a

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for-profit corporation to be eligible to apply for THPO status. NCSHPO firmly opposes this definition change and provided written testimony to the committee. A copy of NCSHPO's testimony can be found on our website.



NEW URBAN PARKS BILL INTRODUCED

Led by Rep. Albio Spires (D-NJ), twenty-three House Democrats introduced legislation (HR 3734) this week that would establish a new urban park restoration program in the Department of Housing and Urban Development. The bill would authorize up to \$445 million per year for grants to local governments for the rehabilitation of recreational areas and facilities and development of improved recreation programs in urban areas. Grants would require a 30% local/partner match and the money would be subject to annual appropriations.

An existing Urban Parks & Recreation Recovery (UPAR) program is housed in the Interior Department. Congress has appropriated no money for UPAR grants since fiscal year 2002, when the program received \$28.9 million. Congress authorized UPAR in 1978 with an initial spending ceiling of \$150 million per year.



AMERICAN SAMOA UPDATE – from Heritage Preservation

The town of Pago Pago was hard hit, and the American Samoa National Park offices and visitors center there were destroyed. Luckily all National Park Service employees and volunteers are accounted for and well. Damage has also been reported at the Legislative, Judicial, and Land Registrar's offices in the city of Tau. Court Clerk Terry Fielding has frozen wet documents from Judiciary files and is now assessing building issues. The Feleti Barstow Public Library <http://fbpl.org/> has been damaged, but the extent of the damage has

not yet been determined.

FEMA Region IX has activated all desks at the Regional Response Coordination Center and the National Response Coordination Center, and response teams have been deployed. At present, operations are focused on search and rescue, food, and shelter, but the situation appears to be stabilizing. Initial FEMA on-site assistance for cultural resources would most likely be in the form of a Mission Assignment to another federal agency until FEMA specialists arrive. Our FEMA colleagues have been coordinating with Jane Yagley, ESF #11 National Natural, Cultural & Historic Coordinator, Department of the Interior. Jane has reported that three NPS cultural resource people arrived last night in Samoa. Scott Wanek, Regional Chief Ranger, Pacific West Region, NPS, reported that the first priority would be to assess NPS's curatorial collection and take emergency actions to mitigate damage there. He said, "If the library [Feleti Barstow Public Library] is close, they [NPS staff] can probably get at least a quick early assessment."

In terms of immediate assistance: 1] Mary Chute, Deputy Director for Library Services at the Institute of Museum and Library Services, reports that LSTA funds for American Samoa can be repurposed for response and recovery; 2] AIC-CERT is available to provide support by email (info@conservation-us.org) and phone, (202-661-8068). Support for AIC-CERT on-site assistance may be available depending on the financial resources needed.

The following is a first-hand report on damage from the tsunami by an NPS employee:

<http://tropicalbrowns.blogspot.com/2009/09/tsunami-in-american-samoa.html>.



MARK YOUR CALENDARS

- October 13-17, 2009 – National Preservation Conference, Nashville, TN
- October 14-15, 2009 – NCSHPO Winter Board Meeting, Nashville, TN
- March 1-5, 2010 – NCSHPO annual meeting and Advocacy Day