

The original documents are located in Box 26, folder “Parks and Recreation (1)” of the James M. Cannon Files at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.

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THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

July 14, 1976

MEMORANDUM FOR: JIM CONNOR
FROM: JIM CANNON *J. Cannon*
SUBJECT: Lynn Memorandum Regarding Bicentennial
Declaration Conservation

The attached paper describes in greater detail the concept of doubling the nation's parks as a bicentennial gift. I would recommend that it be sent in with the Lynn memorandum. We are continuing to develop this concept and believe that a distinct initiative is needed.

attachment



EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20503

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7-14-76

MEMORANDUM TO THE PRESIDENT

FROM: JAMES T. LYNN

SUBJECT: Bicentennial Declaration for Conservation

Jim Cannon has proposed that you make a Bicentennial declaration for conservation that would affirm the values embodied in our parks, wilderness, etc., and which might be backed by a commitment of money.

While I do not recommend it, should you wish to make such a declaration, I offer two specific proposals for your consideration.

(1) A five-year plan for our National Parks.

Some critics believe conditions are deteriorating in our National Parks due to:

- . Rapid expansion of the park system since 1970 which has led to transfer of personnel and dollars from old parks to gear up the new ones.
- . Many new parks authorized over five years ago have made little progress in land acquisition or development, and are not yet fully operational.
- . Recent construction funding emphasis on Bicentennial facilities and required pollution control facilities has decreased funding for standard construction and rehabilitation.

A program could be developed to put national parks in very good shape within five years. The five-year program would include:



1. Completion of acquisition of all land within park boundaries. Can be done within National Park Service land acquisition funding levels deriving from a continued \$300 million Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF).
2. New facility construction, especially at new parks. Provide increase of roughly \$30 million/year (over \$70 million/year present level).
3. Greater effort in maintenance and rehabilitation to bring older park facilities to high quality standards. Increase of roughly \$30 million/year (over \$120 million/year current base).
4. Increased operating funds to bring all new parks to full operation. Provide increase of roughly \$20 million/year.

The total cost of this program over five years, would be roughly \$400 million. This would average \$80 million per year over the current Park Service budget of \$340 million (budget authority), excluding about \$75 million which the Park Service gets from the Land and Water Conservation Fund.

(2) Legislative proposals.

Standard procedures are being used to identify and protect additional natural and historic treasures. Congress could be urged to enact earlier Administration proposals or new ones. These include:

- . Numerous proposals for wilderness, parks, national trails, wild and scenic rivers, etc.
- . Administration proposals pending in Congress for Alaska D-2 withdrawals (parks, forests, scenic rivers, etc.).
- . Specific items of interest to conservationists, such as the New River proposal, deauthorization of Tocks Island Dam, increasing the authorization for grants to States for preservation of historic properties, and resubmitting the proposed Organic Act for the Bureau of Land Management.



Other Considerations

Should you decide to issue a declaration for conservation, I recommend that there be certain limits to the actions proposed:

- . Any increase in funds proposed should be directed at capital improvement or land acquisition efforts, not at operating programs which can be satisfactorily budgeted for through the annual budget process with perhaps an exception for National Parks. Capital improvements will show lasting results, as opposed to the transient benefits of increasing an operating program.
- . We do not believe the Park Service needs a large increase in funds, but land acquisition and capital improvements would be visible and useful to the increasing numbers of visitors.
- . You recently transmitted to the Congress a Forest and Rangeland Renewable Resources Program which set forth alternative goals and funding levels for Forest Service Programs. Consideration could be given to some increased funding there.
- . Wildlife refuges, while popular in some quarter, are considered by us to be of lower priority than some of the other natural resources programs.
- . Any financial commitment should be so as to preserve your future budget flexibility.
- . I specifically recommend against any increase in the Land and Water Conservation Fund. At its present \$300-million level it is adequate to meet land acquisition needs on a reasonable timetable.



THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

July 14, 1976

MEMORANDUM FOR: JIM CONNOR
FROM: JIM CANNON *Jai*
SUBJECT: Lynn Memorandum Regarding Bicentennial
Declaration Conservation

The attached paper describes in greater detail the concept of doubling the nation's parks as a bicentennial gift. I would recommend that it be sent in with the Lynn memorandum. We are continuing to develop this concept and believe that a distinct initiative is needed.

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ENVIRONMENTAL MESSAGE

On the fourth of July, 1976, Americans everywhere experienced what it means to join in celebrating their country and its ideals. The surge of emotion, the infectious good will that characterized that day have made us all realize that we are more united than we thought, more at ease with one another than we remembered. The fourth of July has also convinced me of something I have long thought to be true - that as a nation we are ready to embark upon a major project that will mark the Bicentennial year in a more permanent way than parades, reenactments, fireworks, and flotillas. And I know of no more appropriate project of this kind than to assure that our natural heritage will be preserved and enhanced during America's third century.

Americans have always evinced a profound love for their land. They have also displayed a great capacity for adventure. In examining our past during this Bicentennial year, we cannot help being struck by the hardiness of our ancestors. For them, the ability to live in rugged, undeveloped countryside was a necessity and encounters with wild creatures were commonplace. The American historian, Frederick Jackson Turner, considered the frontier--the invisible but very real barrier

between civilization and wilderness--to be the dominant force in shaping the American character. More recently, writers such as Ernest Hemingway and William Faulkner have depicted the almost religious regard that Americans have for their wild places. Interaction with nature, the solitude and self-reliance that can be found in parks and other natural areas - these are still vital elements in our national character. Accordingly I propose that we set as one of our highest priorities the doubling of the acreage throughout the country which is devoted to parks, recreation, and wildlife. To help accomplish this objective, the Bicentennial Land Heritage Act, which I am submitting to the Congress today, would rely heavily on the public lands of the United States.

A good measure of the vitality of this aspect of our character is visitation to the National Parks, which is again up - as high as 20 percent in some parks - this year, to a projected total of 260 million visitors during 1976. This influx of visitors, however, can also pose problems for the National Park Service, whose mandate is to provide for the enjoyment of the parks "in such manner and by such means as will leave them unimpaired for the enjoyment of future generations". I have concluded that if visitors are to be properly accommodated, both the National Park Service and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, which manages the national wildlife refuges, must have substantial increases in manpower and funding. In addition, the National Wildlife Refuge System should be expanded to include several million additional acres of vital wildlife habitat before these lands are converted to other uses.

As America has developed into the world's leading industrial nation, her people have migrated to cities. Today we are an urban nation. Unfortunately, however, many of our city residents have forgotten or been deprived of that vital force in our national character to which I have referred--the zest for recreation in natural settings. A major cause of this deprivation has been the inability of our cities to keep up the parks which they have created and to serve the visitors who use them. I believe there is a need for a widespread infusion of Federal funds to help our cities rehabilitate and improve their parks and other outdoor recreation facilities.

To carry out these initiatives, I am today submitting to the Congress a legislative proposal to be known as the Bicentennial Land Heritage Act. This bill contains a \$1.5 million, 10-year program which would do the following:

- provide for the establishment of new national parks, recreation areas, trails, wild and scenic rivers, and wildlife refuges, from public domain lands and lands acquired from private owners, at a cost of no more than \$500 million;
- provide for the development of these areas for public use, at a cost of no more than \$300 million;

- provide for the upgrading and increased staffing of existing national parks and refuges, at a cost of no more than \$100 million;
- provide for the development of existing national parks and refuges whose development has been delayed for lack of manpower and funding, at a cost of no more than \$400 million;
- provide for grants to cities for the repair and improvement of urban parks and other outdoor recreation facilities, at a cost of no more than \$200 million.

I believe that enactment of this proposal, together with enactment of my proposal to establish new parks, refuges, and wild and scenic rivers in Alaska, would constitute a superb environmental bequest from Bicentennial America to our successors. It is my fervent hope that upon our nation's 300th birthday, on July 4, 2076, Americans will remember us both by our spirited celebration of the Bicentennial and by the size of the land heritage which we preserved unimpaired and devoted to the enjoyment of future generations.

It is my earnest desire to cooperate fully with the Congress in achieving this important national objective. Prompt enactment of the Bicentennial Land Heritage Act is necessary if we are to acquire already scarce lands for public use and to accommodate the mushrooming visitation

to our national parklands. However, if it becomes necessary to do so, I am prepared to use existing authorities to accomplish the objectives of this proposal.

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

INFORMATION

July 15, 1976

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

FROM: JIM CANNON *Jim*
SUBJECT: Bicentennial Gift of Doubling
the Nation's Parklands

If you approve the proposal for a ten-year program to double the nation's parks as a Bicentennial gift to this and future generations of Americans, I suggest you announce this proposal in a national park, where there are good and appreciative crowds at this time of year.

As possible sites I would suggest:

1. Yellowstone National Park

Located at the juncture of Wyoming, Montana, and Idaho, Yellowstone was the world's first national park and is the oldest of our national parks. Established in 1872, Yellowstone set a pattern for national parks throughout the world.

The fact that you worked as a park ranger in Yellowstone would be an added note of interest.

2. Yosemite National Park

One of the stalwarts of the National Parks System, Yosemite has spectacular views equal to Yellowstone and is one of the most popular of the parks in terms of annual visitation. Yosemite was brought into the system in 1876.

3. Grand Canyon National Park

The most heavily visited of the national parks, with spectacular views and great national and international identity, the Grand Canyon site would be an excellent one for the announcement of your initiative.

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

INFORMATION

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THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

July 19, 1976

MEMORANDUM FOR: JIM CANNON
FROM: ART QUERN
SUBJECT: Doubling the Nation's Parks

Attached is a rough draft statement announcing the President's proposal to double the Nation's parks.

It needs some more work but I thought you might give us your comments at this juncture since things, if they move, will probably move quickly.

Attachment

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Art Quern', with a stylized, cursive script.

cc: George Humphreys

THE WHITE HOUSE

DRAFT

WASHINGTON

July 19, 1976

ENVIRONMENTAL MESSAGE

On the fourth of July, 1976, Americans everywhere experienced what it means to join in celebrating their country and its ideals. The surge of emotion, the infectious good will that characterized that day have made us all realize that we are more united than we thought, more at ease with one another than we remembered. It was a day filled with memories for a people again discovering the hopes and promises of the future.

The fourth of July has also convinced me of something I have long thought to be true - that as a nation we are ready to embark upon a major project that will mark the Bicentennial year in a more permanent way than parades, reenactments, fireworks, and flotillas. And I know of no more appropriate project of this kind than to assure that our natural heritage will be preserved and enhanced during America's third century.

I am, therefore, asking this generation of Americans, the generation that is privileged to celebrate our 200th

birthday, to join in a commitment to the land, a commitment to the future, a commitment to our children, a commitment to ourselves. I ask that Americans in 1976 endorse and enact a 10 year program to double the nation's heritage of parks and recreation areas.

I am submitting to Congress the Bicentennial Land Heritage Act which will provide a total of \$1.5 billion over a ten-year period to:

- double our heritage of land for parks, recreation areas and wildlife refuges.
- begin development of these lands to make them accessible, useable, and enjoyable.
- upgrade current facilities and increase staff at existing parks.
- provide a new \$200 million program for ^{EXISTING} urban parks._A
- accelerate the development of parklands and refuges which have had to be delayed for lack of manpower and funding.

Americans have always evinced a profound love for their land. They have also displayed a great capacity for adventure. In examining our past during this Bicentennial year, we cannot help being struck by the hardiness of our ancestors. For them, the ability to live in rugged, undeveloped countryside was a necessity and encounters

with wild creatures were commonplace. This history has left an indelible mark on our national character.

A good measure of the vitality of this aspect of our character is visitation to the National Parks, which is again up -- as high as 20 percent in some parks -- this year, to a projected total of 260 million visitors during 1976. This influx of visitors, however, can also pose problems for the National Park Service, whose mandate is to provide for the enjoyment of the parks "in such manner and by such means as will leave them unimpaired for the enjoyment of future generations". I have concluded that if visitors are to be properly accommodated, both the National Park Service and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, which manages the national wildlife refuges, must have substantial increases in manpower and funding. In addition, the National Wildlife Refuge System should be expanded to include several million additional acres of vital wildlife habitat before these lands are converted to other uses.

As America has developed into the world's leading industrial nation, her people have migrated to cities. Today we are an urban nation. Unfortunately, however, many of our city residents have been deprived of that vital force in our national character to which I have referred -- the zest for recreation in natural settings.

A major cause of this deprivation has been the inability of our cities to maintain the parks which they have created and to serve the visitors who use them. I believe there is a need for a widespread infusion of Federal funds to help our cities rehabilitate and improve their parks and other outdoor recreation facilities.

The Bicentennial Land Heritage Act is an opportunity for us today to address these issues on behalf of future Americans. I believe that enactment of this proposal, together with enactment of my proposal to establish new parks, refuges, and wild and scenic rivers in Alaska, would constitute a superb environmental bequest from Bicentennial America to our successors.

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THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

July 23, 1976

WEEKLY DOMESTIC ACTIVITIES REPORT
FOR THE PRESIDENT

1. National Parks Proposal

At your direction, the Domestic Council staff prepared for your consideration a program proposal to double the national parks over ten years at a total cost of \$1.5 billion. OMB sent you their comments.

The Domestic Council proposal and a draft statement have been turned over to Bob Hartmann. The Domestic Council, with Interior, has prepared a draft bill.

We are ready to work with Hartmann, Interior and OMB to complete the Presidential statement and the proposed legislation and to find a good occasion to announce this initiative. A Presidential statement and legislation can be ready in a week.

Proceed with preparation of Presidential statement and legislation _____.

Review further with OMB _____.

2. Drug Abuse

A subcommittee of the Senate Judiciary Committee has scheduled hearings on your drug abuse legislation for Monday, July 28. In your message to the Congress of April 27, 1976 on this subject, you directed the Secretary of the Treasury to have the Commissioner of IRS work with the Attorney General and DEA to develop a tax enforcement program aimed at high level drug traffickers.

So far, IRS and Treasury have made little progress on your directive.

I would like your authority to discuss with Secretary Simon the importance of IRS action relating to drug law enforcement.

Approve _____ Disapprove _____.