

Chairman Dicks Statement Subcommittee Markup FY 2009 Interior and the Environment Appropriations Bill

WASHINGTON – Today, Norm Dicks (D-WA), Chairman of the House Interior and the Environment Appropriations Subcommittee, made the following statement at the subcommittee markup of the FY 2009 bill.

"I am very pleased to present to the Subcommittee recommendations for the 2009 Interior and Environment Appropriations. These recommendations are the product of a very deliberate and bi-partisan process. Our subcommittee held 20 separate hearings on the President's budget with more than 200 witnesses. These witnesses included agency officials, Members of Congress, more than 100 tribal leaders and many other public witnesses. The recommendations in this bill, especially those related to Native American programs, flow directly from these hearings. Mr. Tiahrt and I have also discussed the bill many times since the hearings concluded on April 9th, and the Majority and Minority Committee staff have spent scores of hours working as a team putting the Members' recommendations into today's proposal.

"I believe the Interior & Environment Subcommittee has been a model of bi-partisanship. While not suggesting that Mr. Tiahrt supports every single recommendation, I believe it is fair to characterize this bill, as well as the process through which it was developed, as fully bi-partisan.

"Former Chairman Sid Yates often reminded Subcommittee Members that the basic responsibility of the Subcommittee on Interior was to be good stewards. The stewardship responsibilities include fulfilling our obligations to Native Americans, protecting our natural and historic heritage, and preserving the biodiversity of the American landscape. They also include providing the resources to ensure that our air and water are clean, and that the energy and other natural resources on public lands are developed to meet public needs in an environmentally responsible way.

"Unfortunately, the funding proposed by the President for fiscal year 2009 was entirely inadequate to meet these challenges. His proposal would have reduced the budgets for Interior and Environment programs by almost \$1 billion. This meant that, in the aggregate, his budget was \$1.6 billion below the level necessary to maintain current services. I do not believe it is an understatement to say that Members on both sides of the aisle were appalled by many of his specific proposals and the impacts they would have had on the public. His budget requests for Native Americans and for the US. Forest Service were particularly irresponsible.

"The bill before the Members today rejects these cuts and provides \$27.9 billion for Interior and Environment programs. Instead of cutting critical programs, it provides an increase of \$1.3 billion, or about 4.9 percent, over the 2008 enacted level

"Fortunately, the FY 2009 budget allocation provided by Chairman Obey for our Subcommittee gives us a reasonable amount of funds to both reject the reductions proposed in the budget and to make significant new investments. Mr. Tiahrt and I, in putting together our recommendations, have tried to target these funds where there is the greatest need and where there is broad Member and public support.

Department of the Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies

June 11, 2008

(discretionary funding in millions of dollars)

	FY 2008 Enacted	FY 2009 Request	FY 2009 Chairman's Mark	Chairman's Mark vs. FY 2009 Request	Chairman's Mark vs. FY 2008 Enacted	Chairman's Mark vs. 2008 - % Change
Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies	26,555	25,764	27,867	2,103	1,312	4.9%
Department of Interior:	9,888	9,751	10,463	712	575	5.8%
Bureau of Land Management	1,008	987	1,013	26	5	0.5%
US Fish and Wildlife Service	1,366	1,302	1,440	138	74	5.4%
<i>National Wildlife Refuge System</i>	434	434	469	35	35	8.1%
National Park Service	2,390	2,404	2,644	240	254	10.6%
<i>NPS Operations</i>	1,971	2,132	2,125	-7	154	7.8%
US Geological Survey	1,006	969	1,054	85	48	4.8%
Bureau of Indian Affairs	2,291	2,191	2,410	219	119	5.2%
Office of Special Trustee	189	182	182	0	-7	-3.7%
Payment in Lieu of Taxes	229	195	229	34	0	0%
Environmental Protection Agency:	7,461	7,143	7,832	689	371	5.0%
Science and Technology	760	764	793	29	33	4.4%
Environmental Programs and Management	2,328	2,338	2,397	59	69	3.0%
Hazardous Substances Superfund	1,254	1,264	1,284	20	30	2.4%
State and Tribal Assistance Grants	2,926	2,622	3,151	529	225	7.7%
<i>Clean Water Fund</i>	689	555	850	295	161	23.4%
U.S. Forest Service, non-fire	2,505	2,138	2,613	475	108	4.3%
<i>NFS Operations</i>	1,469	1,349	1,508	159	39	2.7%
Indian Health Service	3,346	3,325	3,596	271	250	7.5%
Smithsonian Institution	683	716	791	75	108	15.8%
National Endowment for the Arts	145	128	160	32	15	10.6%
National Endowment for the Humanities	145	144	160	16	15	10.6%
Cross-cutting Programs:						
Land Acquisition and Forest Legacy (LWCF)	207	54	225	171	18	8.7%
Construction Accounts	580	430	781	351	201	34.7%
Wildland Fire, DOI & FS	2,752	2,828	2,969	141	217	7.9%
Indian Programs	5,637	5,516	5,988	472	351	6.2%
Climate Change	187	164	260	96	73	39.0%
Earmarks (excludes "project-based" accounts)	288	0	289	289	1	0.2%