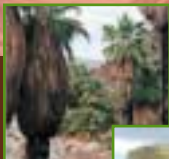


# INVEST IN AN American Treasure:

## The National Landscape Conservation System

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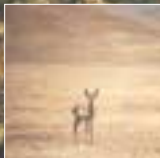
The National Landscape Conservation System—26 million acres of spectacular western National Monuments, Conservation and Wilderness Areas, Trails, and Rivers—is a unique American treasure.

Today, the System is at a crossroads.

# NLCS



**INVEST** IN AN  
American Treasure:  
The National  
Landscape  
Conservation  
System



**T**he National Landscape Conservation System—26 million acres of spectacular western National Monuments, Conservation and Wilderness Areas, Trails, and Rivers—is a unique American treasure. From redrock canyons to mountain peaks, from thousand-year-old archaeological sites to dinosaur remains, these lands offer unparalleled opportunities for recreation, scientific learning, and protection of our nation's environment and cultural history.

Since its creation in June 2000, however, the nation's newest and most innovative conservation system has been overshadowed by its higher-profile National Park and Wildlife Refuge cousins. The 2005 budget for the National Landscape Conservation System (NLCS) is approximately \$39 million, or about \$1.50 per acre. By comparison, the National Wildlife Refuge System receives about \$3-\$4 per acre, and the National Park Service receives about \$18 per acre—and these Systems are chronically under-funded.

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) is charged with conserving, protecting, and restoring the nationally significant landscapes of the NLCS. But a shoestring budget means critical needs go unmet: illegal off-road vehicle traffic increases, invasive species spread, land acquisition opportunities slip away, and ancient artifacts are vandalized.

“ The NLCS offers the Bureau of Land Management a chance to be a leader in resource conservation, not just in resource extraction.”

## Accelerating Pressures, Resource Protection Shortchanged

**A**lthough the public and Congress are increasingly cognizant of the National Park Service's acute funding needs, they are generally unaware that the National Landscape Conservation System is at even greater risk of lapsing into financial crisis. Pressures are mounting, including:

### More Needs, Less Money

While the System's funding has remained virtually unchanged in recent years, Congress has expanded the System through the addition of several new National Conservation Areas, totaling over one million acres, and more than twenty new wilderness areas.

### More Visitors, Fewer Staff

Every year, more people discover the NLCS, particularly as the residents of the fastest growing areas of the West seek open space for solitude, nature, and recreation. Unfortunately, budget cuts have driven the BLM to lay off field staff in places like Utah's Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument, even during peak visitor seasons. Increased public use, if not managed, will cause irreversible resource damage. Visitor information, safety, education, and an on-the-ground ranger presence are growing public and community demands that the BLM is currently unable to meet.

### Years of Work Wasted?

The Bureau of Land Management and thousands of citizens have invested countless hours crafting land use plans for many of the new Monuments and National Conservation Areas in the NLCS. Now, with more than 15 of these detailed Resource Management Plans due to be finalized in the next two years, the BLM will not have the ability to implement critical management guidance, from road

closures and cultural site inventories to watershed restoration projects and hiking permit systems.

The National Landscape Conservation System is only a small portion of the BLM's nearly \$2 billion budget. In fact, over \$100 million—about twice the NLCS budget—is allocated to oil and gas drilling and other minerals management programs. The NLCS offers the BLM a chance to be a leader in resource conservation. But the BLM must make a commitment to the System, and Congress must ensure the BLM has the means to do so.



PHOTOGRAPHY

## NLCS Land Acquisition Possibilities—But No Guarantees

The Administration's proposed 2005 budget requests funding for land acquisition projects in the following NLCS units via the Land and Water Conservation Fund. Congress should approve funding for these projects, as well as others noted on the map (see inside), to strengthen the NLCS and protect key natural and historic resources.

State	NLCS Unit	Amount in millions
NM	Rio Grande National Wild and Scenic River	2.7
CO	Canyons of the Ancients National Monument	1.0
CA	California Wilderness	1.0
CA	Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains National Monument	1.0
OR	Sandy River/Oregon National Historic Trail	1.5
OR/WA	Grande Ronde National Wild and Scenic River	1.0
NM	El Malpais National Conservation Area	0.5
CO	Colorado Canyons National Conservation Area	1.5
AZ	Agua Fria National Monument	0.5
MT	Chain-of-Lakes Resource Management Area/Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail	3.5

# Discover The National Landscape Conservation System

These amazing places need support now...

## Headwaters Forest Reserve, California

**\$500,000 for restoration, scientific monitoring, and visitor education**

7,400 acres of old-growth coastal redwood groves, including trees 300 feet tall and 2,000 years old, are the hallmark of Headwaters Forest Reserve. Creating the Reserve in 1999 was a critical step toward protection of this unique place, but now the BLM lacks the funding to fully implement the area's strong new Resource Management Plan. Major needs include invasive species control, removal of old logging roads that fragment the redwood grove, watershed restoration, interpretive signs for visitors, and monitoring of species and ecosystem health.

For more information: Karen Pickett, Bay Area Coalition for Headwaters, 510-548-3113



1

**Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument, Utah**  
**\$1.5 million to study and protect geological and paleontological resources and support essential science programs**

No management staff on the ground, all seasonal rangers laid off, the Monument's science programs gutted—these are the result of devastating funding cuts to Grand Staircase in late 2003. Restoring the Monument's 2005 budget for field staff, managers, science, and paleontology through Congressional appropriations of \$1.5 million is critical. Without this funding, Monument staff can't run cutting-edge science programs, or research, inventory, and protect from looting the staggering array of ancient ruins, and fossil resources spread across vast and remote areas of the Monument. Grand Staircase's applied science programs draw on partnerships with communities and universities, and advance the world's knowledge about topics ranging from dinosaurs to healthy soils. These programs are models for the BLM and other federal land management agencies.

For more information: Jill Ozarski, The Wilderness Society, 303-450-8518

## Vermilion Cliffs National Monument, Arizona

**\$600,000 for resource protection and inventories**

This Monument is a wonderland of 3,000-foot rock walls, wind-sculpted hoodoos, rivers, hanging gardens, grottos, vaulted rock amphitheaters and Anasazi artifacts. Unfortunately, visitors and illegal off-road vehicles (ORVs) are jeopardizing these treasures. To protect Vermilion Cliffs, the BLM needs an additional \$600,000 in FY 2005 funds should be used in part to manage recreation in the area. The BLM also urgently needs the capacity to restore areas damaged by ORVs, to administer the permit system in the popular Paria Canyon-Coyote Buttes area, and to discourage visitors from crushing, climbing on, or looting the Monument's sandstone treasures. Funds should also be earmarked to support the California condor reintroduction program, and to facilitate cultural resource studies and protection plans for the Monument's artifacts, ruins, and rock art, most of which have never been studied.

For more information: Julie Sherman, Sierra Club, 928-213-1176



3

**Grand Canyon-Parashant National Monument, Arizona**  
**\$400,000 for cultural and historic site research and protection**

The BLM lacks the capacity to learn about and protect the historic and cultural resources on this Monument's one million-plus acres. Less than one percent of the Shivwits Plateau region has been assessed for cultural sites, but even limited studies have identified ancient artifacts dating to ca. 6000 BC. Sites range from 20 room pueblos with abundant pottery and burials, to rock shelters with elaborate rock art, to historic mines, ranches, and schoolhouses. Approximately \$400,000 a year for several years would allow the BLM to inventory and protect some of the numerous historic and cultural sites in the Monument before they are lost to vandalism and the elements. Funds supporting a greater field presence would also benefit efforts to protect the Monument's endangered desert tortoise.

For more information: Julie Sherman, Sierra Club, 928-213-1176

## Canyons of the Ancients National Monument, Colorado

**\$150,000 to prevent looting and vandalism and protect cultural treasures**

Canyons of the Ancients contains the highest known density of archaeological sites in the nation—perhaps 20,000-30,000 sites total, some covering 10 acres or more. However, these treasures, found all across the mesas and canyons of the Monument, are in jeopardy. Because of inadequate resource protection staff, the Monument is severely abused by pothunting, theft of artifacts, vandalism of visitor signs and facilities, and rampant violation of motorized vehicle closures. Additional funds would enable staff to patrol the Monument, monitor sites, enforce rules, and educate visitors.

For more information: Amber Clark, San Juan Citizens Alliance, 970-259-3583



5

**Carrizo Plain National Monument, California**  
**\$100,000 to restore wildlife habitat**

Though development and agriculture cover much of the rest of the surrounding San Joaquin Valley, the 2001 designation of Carrizo Plain National Monument helps preserve 250,000 acres of spectacular grasslands, wetlands, wildlife, and birds just 100 miles from Los Angeles. However, a key native species, the pronghorn antelope, still struggles to survive. Though the pronghorn can sprint up to 70 miles per hour and see up to 4 miles, it cannot jump fences. That inability is a major problem in the Monument, where hundreds of miles of fences were built to pen livestock (hunting was once a dominant use of the area). To ensure the herd's survival, the fences must be removed or relocated.

For more information: Sara Barth, The Wilderness Society, 415-561-6641

## Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains National Monument, California

**\$500,000 for tamarisk removal, watershed assessment, and visitor education**

This Monument provides an island of wilderness in a sea of suburbia and golf courses surrounding Palm Springs. Unfortunately, a highly invasive tree called tamarisk threatens its ecosystems. Tamarisk grows in the Monument in stands so dense that wildlife cannot access key water sources, streams dry up, and native plants like cottonwood and pinyon are crowded out; tamarisk may also make riparian areas more fire-prone. Removing tamarisk, plus non-native fountain grass, is labor-intensive work that will cost approximately \$200,000 a year for several years. Another essential action is an assessment of the Monument's watersheds and soils. This effort will require about \$150,000; the BLM will employ topographic mapping, on the ground research, and land use data to help determine what practices—like livestock operations, invasive plants, road construction, and other natural and human-induced changes—are degrading watersheds and soils. Finally, the Monument needs a second law enforcement officer to handle the visitors and problems that accompany the population growth and urbanization occurring just outside the Monument.

For more information: Jeff Morgan, Sierra Club, 760-324-8696



7

**Ironwood Forest National Monument, Arizona**  
**\$150,000 for an increased field presence and visitor education**

Ironwood's limited staff struggles to cope with numerous problems. These include: trash dumped illegally in the Monument; target shooting with handguns and high-powered rifles; drug smugglers and illegal immigrants who use the Monument as a point of entry, leave behind trash, and carve new roads; and all terrain vehicles and dirt bikes running through washes and wildlife corridors. Currently just two law enforcement officers patrol the Monument, making funding for a greater field presence a top priority.

For more information: Carolyn Campbell, Coalition for Sonoran Desert Protection, 520-388-9925

## Land Acquisition Needs

### Steens Mountain Cooperative Management and Protection Area, Oregon

**\$512,000 for land acquisition along Ankle Creek**

The most immediate threat to Steens Mountain is the potential residential development of private lands within the Steens Mountain Wilderness. With over 5,000 acres of private inholdings within the Steens Wilderness, these lands are the BLM's number one acquisition priority in Oregon. A key inholding in the Steens Mountain Wilderness (also located on the Donner and Blitzen Wild and Scenic River) is now available for purchase by the BLM. The 640 acre parcel is appraised at \$512,000 and, if acquired, would address many contentious management issues such as inholder access and development rights, and help secure the integrity of the Steens Mountain Wilderness.

For more information: Jill Workman, Sierra Club, 503-232-6799 or Bill Martlett, Oregon Natural Desert Association, 541-330-2638



12

**Cascade-Siskiyou National Monument, Oregon**  
**\$500,000 to acquire Soda Mountain inholdings**

The Cascade-Siskiyou National Monument connects the southern Cascade Range with the globally outstanding botanical diversity of the Siskiyou Mountains. The important biological corridor the Monument provides for plants and animals is diminished by thousands of acres of private inholdings. Most of the inholdings are industrial timberlands whose owners are willing to sell—and may, unfortunately, sell to developers. Timber Resource Services (formerly U.S. Timberlands) has for many years been willing to sell 560 acres surrounded on three sides by the Congressionally recommended Soda Mountain Wilderness Study Area within the Cascade-Siskiyou National Monument, but the BLM has lacked funds to buy the land. Further fragmentation of this unique "monument to biodiversity" is likely if these 560 acres—and many more—are not acquired soon from willing sellers like Timber Resource Services.

For more information: Dave Willis, Soda Mountain Wilderness Council, 541-482-8660

13

# A Map of Opportunities

This map shows the places that make up the National Landscape Conservation System (NLCS), truly some of the "best of the West." Across this map you will also find examples of critical funding needs in the System—needs identified by the Bureau of Land Management and by conservation and historic preservation groups working to protect these places.

Priority operations and management projects identified on this map total approximately \$5 million; also depicted are \$1.8 million in land acquisition needs. Additional funds must be earmarked specifically for resource protection priorities in the NLCS budget for fiscal year 2005, including those highlighted here. These funds should be additional line-item allocations, not funds subtracted from the BLM's core budget or shifted from other resource protection efforts.

An appropriation of an additional \$5 million, bringing the NLCS operations budget to at least \$44 million, would be a gift to all Americans—hikers, history buffs, archaeologists, rafters, bird watchers, sportsmen, families—now and in the future. Rather than create a chronic short-fall in funding for the NLCS, it's time to make a modest investment in the most pressing needs of the system. Furthermore, additional funding of at least \$1.8 million for land acquisition in the NLCS is essential to protect precious open space, clean water, and wildlife habitat, and to enhance recreation.

The National Landscape Conservation System is at a crossroads: we can opt to ignore its resource protection needs, and scramble to repair the damage for decades to come. Or, we can provide sufficient funding for appropriate programs now, and ensure that the system thrives and endures.



**Agua Fria National Monument, Arizona**  
**\$350,000 for cultural resource protection and to improve the visitor experience**

Agua Fria contains 71,000 acres of canyons, rivers, birds, wildlife, and Native American ruins. Its proximity to the fast-growing Phoenix area makes Agua Fria a hotspot for increasing numbers of visitors who crave quiet, open space, hiking, and an opportunity to learn about American history. One of the BLM's top needs is the ability to manage those visitors while protecting the area's cultural resources. Critical under-funded activities include assessing the Monument's cultural resources; stabilizing the most popular sites; and providing appropriate signage, information, and visitor education to discourage people from climbing on ruins and removing objects. Funds are also needed to leverage volunteers and community interest in helping to provide a stronger field presence to protect resources from vandals, unaware visitors, and illegal ORV damage.

For more information: Julie Sherman, Sierra Club, 928-213-1176

**Upper Missouri River Breaks National Monument, Montana**  
**\$150,000 for an increased field presence, law enforcement, and visitor education**

Currently, the Monument has just one ranger south of the Missouri River and two spread over vast reaches of land north of the Missouri River. The rangers must cover 149 miles of Wild and Scenic River as well as 377,000 acres of wild Breaks country. An increased field presence is essential: the upcoming bicentennial of the Lewis and Clark Expedition is expected to bring crowds of people to the Monument; the Monument is one of the few remaining places where Americans can still explore part of Lewis and Clark's route in all its wildness and beauty. The area is historically known for outlaws of all kinds. This tradition continues.

For more information: Mary Jones, Friends of the Missouri Breaks Monument, 406-538-8506

**Black Rock-High Rock Emigrant Trail National Conservation Area, Nevada**  
**\$400,000 for wilderness boundary analysis and protection**

Designated by Congress in 2000, this Conservation Area has since expanded to include 10 new wilderness areas—places that offer wildlife and people solitude and opportunities for primitive recreation. However, wilderness protection occurs only with adequate management. Funds are needed first to map the wilderness boundaries, create a legal description, and create official wilderness-specific boundary maps; these tools will help the public and the BLM to fully recognize the wilderness recreational opportunities in those special areas. To further raise public awareness and decrease wilderness violations, the BLM will then need funds to sign the boundaries and apply and enforce the rules, including prohibitions on off-road vehicle use in the wilderness areas through visitor contact persons in the field seasonally. Another critical effort that requires funding is closing roads and restoring areas to a wild, natural condition.

For more information: Karen Boeger, Nevada Wilderness Project, 775-722-4249

**Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument, Utah**  
**\$770,000 to acquire Call Creek parcel**

Motels in the heart of the Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument? Gift shops and fast food restaurants at the scenic climax of the Monument's lone highway, where Call Creek empties into the Escalante River? Such tourist development in the grandest of the Monument's canyons is an all-too-real possibility, unless Congress allocates funds for the BLM to purchase a 26 acre inholding of private, commercially-zoned land. Conservationists and the BLM agree that public ownership of these inholdings is essential to safeguard the Monument's wildness. Local residents, too, want development directed away from the Monument and into nearby towns. Now, working in collaboration with a non-profit group, there's a chance to make the endangered lands part of the Monument. The Grand Canyon Trust has taken out a loan to protect the land for the moment, but the BLM must reimburse them for the \$770,000 purchase price if the land is to be protected forever as part of this flagship National Monument. Completing this vital acquisition will forever preserve this popular scenic area in Utah's redrock country.

For more information: Laura Kamali, Grand Canyon Trust, 520-774-7488

14

# The National Landscape Conservation System: Not Just Another National Park

**The National Landscape Conservation System (NLCS) is a major departure from conventional land conservation.**

## The Landscapes

NLCS protected areas reflect a growing understanding that conserving natural and cultural values means protecting large landscapes—entire ecosystems and archaeological communities—not small, isolated tracts surrounded by development. For example, Arizona's Agua Fria National Monument contains hundreds of archaeological structures and sites; to understand the story these sites tell, you have to see them together in the harsh desert landscape where their inhabitants traded, hunted, and farmed.

## The Communities

Because the NLCS seeks to preserve the remote and wild character of its landscapes, visitor facilities and other developments are typically located in neighboring communities. This reduces impacts on natural resources, and brings economic benefits to the communities. An investment in the NLCS is an investment in America's communities.

## The Experience

The NLCS provides a unique, independent visitor experience with opportunities for wilderness exploration, hunting and fishing, education, and other kinds of low-impact recreation.

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For more information about the lands of the NLCS and to learn more about threats to the System or the NLCS Coalition, please visit [www.discoverNLCS.org](http://www.discoverNLCS.org).

**Additionally, you can contact:**

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