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Subject: HUGE: Anonymous donor gives to NPS after POTUS
Date: Monday, April 03, 2017 3:35:58 PM

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NATIONAL PARKS

Trump donates his salary to NPS

Corbin Hiar, E&E News reporter
Published: Monday, April 3, 2017

Ryan Zinke, superintendent of Harpers Ferry National Historical Park and Sean Spicer

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From left: Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke and Tyrone Brandyburg, the superintendent of Harpers Ferry National Historical Park, accept a check from White House press secretary Sean Spicer after President Trump decided to donate his salary to the National Park Service. Photo courtesy of C-SPAN.

President Trump today gave a check worth \$78,333.32 — the first quarter of his \$400,000 salary after taxes — to the National Park Service.

The move was prompted by a promise Trump made on the campaign trail to not take a salary if elected, despite a constitutional requirement that the president be compensated for his service.

White House press secretary Sean Spicer at the opening of his daily press briefing handed over Trump's NPS gift to Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke, who oversees the agency, and Tyrone Brandyburg, the superintendent of the Harpers Ferry National Historical Park.

The check will be used to shore up "the infrastructure on our nation's battlefields," Zinke said at the briefing.

The NPS has a deferred maintenance backlog of more than \$12 billion, of which \$229 million is attributable to the agency's 25 national battlefields.

The National Park Foundation, the agency's congressionally chartered charity, has already benefited from the attention Trump's gift has brought to the backlog issue. An anonymous donor called NPF President and CEO Will Shafroth moments after it was announced to provide \$22,000 to NPF, he said in an interview.

"I think it's fantastic that the president has decided to focus some of his personal philanthropy around supporting the National Park Service and in particular the work around battlefields," he said. "There's certainly huge need."

But at least one green group criticized Trump's salary donation, given that his administration has proposed cutting the Interior Department's budget by 12 percent.

"President Trump and Secretary Zinke should be embarrassed by today's publicity stunt," Center for Western Priorities Deputy Director Greg Zimmerman said in a statement. "You can't propose \$1.6 billion in cuts to our public lands, then pretend a \$78,000 donation makes it better. The White House needs to protect America's parks and public lands, not pay lip service to them."

During the briefing, Zinke also highlighted several moves the department has made during his first month on the job, including his riding a horse to work on his first full day and introducing a "Doggy Days" pilot program.

The attempt to make Interior the first dog-friendly agency is necessary because "we compete on millennials," Zinke said. "We're trying to develop ourselves as a friendly department that will work with people."

Asked about the Gold Butte National Monument, Zinke said Interior is reviewing the status of a host of national monuments across the country.

"We're looking at everything across the board," he said. "No monument in specific, but looking at the process, look at the law, making sure that the monuments follow the law on there."

Zinke has previously suggested that the Trump administration may attempt to revoke protections from national monuments like Gold Butte that were established by President Obama under authority granted by the Antiquities Act.

Zinke also promised management reforms, saying, "We have, unfortunately, uncovered a lot of internal controls that weren't there."

"There's been in the news several incidences of sexual harassment and a culture of discrimination. And you can hear it from me: I put policies forth, zero tolerance for sexual harassment or discrimination," he said.

But he also promised that the department will not have a heavy hand.

"If you're outside of Washington, D.C., there's a lot of anger out there, and I want the Department of Interior, our rangers and land managers, to be first viewed as rangers and land managers, not law enforcement," he said. "I don't want to be — us to be heavy-handed, and I want us to work with local communities because that's where we're embedded."

Zinke again vowed not to sell or transfer public lands and vowed to enforce reclamation of coal sites.

"I'm a Boy Scout," he said. "So I was taught long ago that when you — when you leave a campground, you leave it the same or better condition you found it, and that's why we're looking at royalties to make sure we have a reclamation program that makes sense."