

We spent \$20 million last year in the Smokies on maintenance backlog. In other words, we have an obligation to maintain these valuable assets on behalf of the people, and we're meeting that obligation. Secretary Gale Norton and Fran Mainella, who runs our park system, are doing a fine job of setting clear priorities and explaining to Congress the nature of those priorities and then restoring these parks back to where they need to be so people can use them.

I wish I had been there at the park to thank the park rangers who work so hard to make sure our parks are accessible to our citizens. The rangers are a fabulous group of people, whether they be here in Tennessee or around the Nation, and they work hard on behalf of the citizens of our country. But one of the things that makes our park system work well is the fact that there are a lot of volunteers all across America who want to work in the parks. I don't know if you realize this in this part of the world, but there are 2,000 volunteers who work in the Smokies. Doesn't surprise me; after all, this is the Volunteer State.

If you're interested in serving, if conservation interests you, if you want to be a part of our national effort to be good stewards of the environment, you ought to go on to the usafreedomcorps.gov web site. It's a web site we set up to encourage voluntarism in America. And if you volunteer to serve in a national park, to restore trails, for example, you'll find a lot of other good citizens right there with you.

So my message to the good folks of Tennessee on Earth Day is, we have a duty and an obligation to protect our environment. We're meeting that obligation, but that obligation is not just a Federal obligation. There is a State obligation, a local obligation, and each of us as citizens can do our part as well.

I appreciate you all coming out. I'm honored to be traveling with some fine members of the congressional delegation from Tennessee. May God continue to bless the good folks of Tennessee and our country. Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:55 p.m. at the McGhee Tyson Air National Guard Base. In his remarks, he referred to Pat Summitt, head coach, University of Tennessee's women's basketball

team; and Kim Mulkey-Robertson, head coach, Baylor University's women's basketball team.

Digest of Other White House Announcements

The following list includes the President's public schedule and other items of general interest announced by the Office of the Press Secretary and not included elsewhere in this issue.

April 16

In the morning, at Camp David, MD, the President had an intelligence briefing.

April 17

In the afternoon, the President returned to Washington, DC.

April 18

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing and met with Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice.

Later in the morning, the President traveled to Columbia, SC, where, upon arrival, he met with USA Freedom Corps volunteer Tracey Ely.

In the afternoon, the President met with employees and patrons at the Rockaway Athletic Club in Columbia.

Later in the afternoon, the President returned to Washington, DC. Later, he participated in a television interview with Ron Insana of CNBC.

April 19

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing. Later, he and Mrs. Bush traveled to Springfield, IL, where, upon arrival, he met with USA Freedom Corps volunteer Della Amos.

Later in the morning, the President and Mrs. Bush participated in a tour of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum.

In the afternoon, the President and Mrs. Bush returned to Washington, DC. Later, in the Oval Office, he met with the chairs and

ranking members of the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, the House Committee on Energy and Commerce, the Senate Finance Committee, and the House Committee on Ways and Means to discuss energy legislation.

The President declared a major disaster in New Jersey and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by severe storms and flooding on April 1–3.

The President declared a major disaster in New York and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by severe storms and flooding on April 2–4.

April 20

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing. He then met with Secretary of Defense Donald H. Rumsfeld. Later, he had a briefing on the national economy.

Later in the morning, in the Oval Office, the President met with 2005 Teacher of the Year Jason Kamras.

April 21

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing. Later, in the Cabinet Room, he met with Members of the House of Representatives to discuss Social Security reform.

In the evening, in the Oval Office, the President participated in a swearing-in ceremony for John D. Negroponte as Director of National Intelligence.

The President announced his intention to nominate Robert B. Holland III to be the U.S. Executive Director of the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development.

The President announced his intention to nominate Charles E. Johnson to be Assistant Secretary of Health and Human Services for Budget, Technology, and Finance.

The President announced his intention to nominate Roger Dwayne Pierce to be Ambassador to Cape Verde.

The President declared an emergency in Maine and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by record snow on March 11–12.

April 22

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing. Later, he traveled to McGhee Tyson Air National Guard Base in Knoxville, TN, arriving in the afternoon. Upon arrival, he met with USA Freedom Corps volunteer Bob Lochbaum.

Later in the afternoon, the President traveled to the Bush Ranch in Crawford, TX.

The President announced his designation of the following individuals as members of the Presidential delegation to the Inaugural Mass of His Holiness Pope Benedict XVI on April 24: Jeb Bush (head of delegation); Michael S. Steele; Carl A. Anderson; Helen Alvare; and Frank Hanley.

Nominations Submitted to the Senate

The following list does not include promotions of members of the Uniformed Services, nominations to the Service Academies, or nominations of Foreign Service officers.

Submitted April 19

Alex Azar II, of Maryland, to be Deputy Secretary of Health and Human Services, vice Claude A. Allen, resigned.

Checklist of White House Press Releases

The following list contains releases of the Office of the Press Secretary that are neither printed as items nor covered by entries in the Digest of Other White House Announcements.

Released April 18

Transcript of a press gaggle by Press Secretary Scott McClellan

Statement by the Press Secretary on Madagascar signing the first Compact with the Millennium Challenge Corporation Board