



U.S. Department of the Interior  
Great American Outdoors Act  
National Parks and Public Land Legacy Restoration Fund  
Strategic Plan

LAST UPDATED OCTOBER 21, 2022



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## Our Approach: Alignment With “Six Characteristics of Effective National Strategies”

The U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO) has identified six characteristics of effective strategies that can help government agencies and responsible parties design policies, allocate resources, and ensure accountability of national programs. In developing this Great American Outdoors Act (GAOA) National Parks and Public Land Legacy Restoration Fund (LRF) Strategic Plan, the Department of the Interior (DOI) GAOA Program Management Office (PMO) aligned information, much of which has been developed and in use since program inception, with the GAO characteristics presented in **Table 1** below.

**Table 1. GAOA Strategic Plan Alignment with GAO Characteristics**

GAO Characteristic	Description	Sections
<b>Purpose, Scope, and Methodology</b>	Addresses why the strategy was produced, the scope of its coverage, and the process by which it was developed.	<a href="#">1.1 The Great American Outdoors Act and the Legacy Restoration Fund</a>  <a href="#">1.3 DOI’s Strategic Planning Process</a>
<b>Problem Definition and Risk Assessment</b>	Addresses the national problems and threats the strategy is directed towards.	<a href="#">1.2 Background and Context</a>
<b>Goals, Subordinate Objectives, Activities and Performance Measures</b>	Addresses what the strategy is trying to achieve and steps to achieve those results, as well as the priorities, milestones, and performance measures to gauge results.	<a href="#">2.1 DOI Strategic Goals and Operational Objectives</a> <a href="#">2.2 Bureau-Level Objectives</a> <a href="#">2.3 Performance Measures</a>
<b>Resources, Investments, and Risk Management</b>	Addresses what the strategy will cost, the sources and types of resources and investments needed, and where resources and investments should be targeted based on balancing risk reductions with costs.	<a href="#">3.1 Resources and Investments</a> <a href="#">3.2 Risk Management Strategy</a>
<b>Organizational Roles, Responsibilities, and Coordination</b>	Addresses who will be implementing the strategy, what their roles will be compared to others, and mechanisms for them to coordinate their efforts.	<a href="#">3.3 Organizational Roles, Responsibilities and Coordination</a>
<b>Integration and Implementation</b>	Addresses how a national strategy relates to other strategies’ goals, objectives, and activities, and to subordinate levels of government and their plans to implement the strategy.	<a href="#">4.1 GAOA and DOI’s Financial Health</a> <a href="#">4.2 GAOA and Administration Priorities</a>



## 1 Purpose and Overview

### 1.1 The Great American Outdoors Act and the Legacy Restoration Fund

Signed into law on August 4, 2020, the Great American Outdoors Act (GAOA), [P.L. 116-152](#), represents a historic investment in U.S. National Parks and Public Lands managed by the Federal Government. GAOA established the National Parks and Public Land Legacy Restoration Fund (LRF), which provides up to \$1.9 billion annually based on energy development revenues from federal lands and waters, to help address the Deferred Maintenance & Repair (DM&R) backlog for specific U.S. Department of the Interior (DOI) bureaus and the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Forest Service. For DOI bureaus, the LRF program equates to a maximum investment of \$1.62 billion annually for fiscal years 2021 through 2025, which includes \$1.33 billion for the National Park Service (NPS) and \$95 million each for the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), the Bureau of Indian Education (BIE), and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS). Together, these four organizations are referred to throughout this document as “participating bureaus.”

DOI and its participating bureaus are keenly aware of the unique opportunity the GAOA LRF program provides to strategically address high-priority DM&R projects for U.S. national parks, federally managed public lands, and schools administered by BIE. In recognition of the historic nature of this investment, the Secretary of the Interior issued [Secretarial Order 3383](#), which created a Task Force of key Departmental stakeholders responsible for developing a strategy to maximize the program’s impact that:

- Ensures a timely project proposal and review process that minimizes delay and ensures decisive action;
- Cuts across bureaus; and
- Includes establishment and utilization of a centralized project management office.

The purpose of this GAOA LRF Strategic Plan is to document DOI’s overarching strategy for maximizing the impact of funding received by its participating bureaus as part of the LRF program. Specifically, this plan defines DOI’s goals and objectives for implementing the LRF program; describes the people, processes, resources, and systems that will be used to achieve those goals; and places the LRF program within the context of both the financial health of the Department and the strategic priorities of the Administration and the local communities that rely on national parks, public lands, and BIE schools.

### 1.2 Background and Context

Across its three primary land management bureaus, DOI oversees approximately 475 million acres of federal public lands, which account for more than 20 percent of the total land area of the United States ([BLM Testimony on S.434](#)). Within DOI, participating bureaus are responsible for maintaining a diverse array of physical assets that range from public-facing facilities like national historic monuments, visitor centers, and BIE schools to wastewater systems, roads and bridges, and employee housing structures. At the time that GAOA was signed into law, applicable DOI bureaus were responsible for overseeing a



portfolio of nearly 170,000 assets<sup>1</sup>, while the Department as a whole manages a portfolio with a combined replacement value of more than \$330 billion ([DOI AFR, 2021](#)).

Without a dedicated and predictable source of funding to preserve and maintain these critical assets, DOI bureaus have covered operations and maintenance costs in recent decades primarily through a combination of discretionary spending, recreation and concession fees, philanthropic contributions, and other sources. However, factors including increased visitation to national parks and public lands, a lack of planning predictability caused by year-to-year fluctuations in funding levels and availability, and a rapidly aging portfolio of assets have compromised DOI's ability to keep pace with necessary repairs and maintenance.

The inability of DOI bureaus and other land management agencies to complete all necessary maintenance and repair activities as scheduled has led to the growth of what is referred to as the DM&R backlog, which represents the estimated cost of "maintenance and repairs that were not performed when they should have been or were scheduled to be and which are put off or delayed for a future period" ([FASAB Handbook of Federal Accounting Standards and Other Pronouncements](#)). In fact, according to DOI's 2021 [Agency Financial Report](#), NPS, FWS, and BLM had an estimated combined DM&R backlog of approximately \$20 billion as of FY 2020, while [BIE reported a total backlog](#) of more than \$925 million across its portfolio of schools, educational facilities, and teacher living quarters. Further, the backlogs on assets managed by these bureaus have grown significantly in recent years, increasing by over 11% in constant dollars between 2011 and 2020 ([R43997](#)). However, it is important to note that since GAOA passed in 2020, changes in how bureaus calculate DM&R needs intended to increase consistency across the Department have led to further increases in the backlog.

While there is significant variation in the type and condition of assets administered by the participating bureaus, these agencies collectively manage many of the nation's most significant natural and cultural resources. National parks and federally managed public lands attract hundreds of millions of visitors each year and are also key drivers of economic activity in gateway communities, as an estimated 501 million visits to DOI-administered Public Lands added approximately \$34.8 billion to the Nation's Gross Domestic Product in FY 2019 ([DOI Economic Contributions Report, FY 2019](#)). In order to address this growing issue, Congress passed GAOA with a strong bipartisan majority and the explicit goal of addressing high-priority DM&R projects. Pursuant to this goal, GAOA dedicated 50 percent of energy development revenues on federal lands up to \$1.9 billion for each year from FY 2021 through FY 2025 to address the DM&R backlog at four DOI bureaus and the USDA's Forest Service. However, DOI recognizes that without a coordinated strategy to address the DM&R backlog at national parks, federal public lands, and BIE educational facilities, the condition of these important assets may continue to deteriorate, threatening access to critical historic and natural resources, driving up future costs to preserve and maintain these assets, and creating potentially unsafe conditions for those we serve.

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<sup>1</sup> In FY2018, BLM managed 45,871 assets and NPS managed 76,039, while, in FY2020, BIE managed 3,630 assets and FWS managed over 44,000. BLM, NPS, and FWS data reported in Congressional Research Service. [Deferred Maintenance of Federal Land Management Agencies: FY2011-2020 Estimates and Issues \(R43997\)](#). Prepared by Carol H. Vincent. Washington: Library of Congress, November 30, 2021. BIE data from U.S. DOI, BIE. [Budget Justifications and Performance Information, Fiscal Year 2021](#).



### 1.3 DOI's Strategic Planning Process

Following the enactment of GAOA on August 4, 2020, DOI recognized the importance of quickly developing a strategy to implement the GAOA LRF program that would maximize the benefit of this historic legislation for the American people, while also providing bureaus with the autonomy to identify high-priority projects that align with their respective transportation, DM&R, or capital improvement funding priorities. In keeping with these goals, the Secretary of the Interior signed *Secretarial Order 3383* on August 11, 2020, which formally established a GAOA Coordination and Implementation Task Force and tasked it with developing a strategy to maximize the impact of the legislation.

Through a series of meetings in the Fall of 2020, the seven-member Task Force worked with stakeholders from participating bureaus to understand the factors contributing to the growth of the DM&R backlog in recent decades and to define the factors that would be used to determine the long-term success of the program. Based on these initial meetings, the Task Force developed an initial set of success factors for the program that have continued to evolve as program implementation has progressed:

- Decreased growth rate of the backlog achieved by attaining a favorable ratio of DM&R addressed to project cost.
- A maximum return on investment achieved by restoring and protecting high visitation/public use facilities, improving accessibility for those with disabilities, and expanding recreation and education opportunities/public access.
- Improved financial health, achieved through smart investments, asset portfolio right-sizing, leveraging opportunities, and lifecycle cost management.
- Safe and secure facilities that help to safeguard those we serve, our partners and volunteers, and our workforce.
- Rehabilitated assets/facilities prepared to support conservation, recreation, and education opportunities for future generations.

Using these success factors as a starting point, the Task Force established a set of strategic goals, operational objectives, and management structures to ensure successful implementation of the program and to maximize its impact. As part of this planning process, the Department published 110 *DM 18* (updated to [112 DM 37](#) following the change in Presidential Administration), which established the GAOA PMO and gave it responsibility for administering and coordinating DOI's implementation of its LRF program<sup>2</sup>. The Task Force developed the nimble, flexible PMO structure that continues to manage and coordinate the overall GAOA implementation and help support bureaus' autonomy in identifying their own projects and determining success factors.

## 2 Strategic Goals, Objectives, and Performance Measures

### 2.1 DOI Strategic Goals and Operational Objectives

At the heart of DOI's [mission](#) are its duties to protect and manage the Nation's natural resources and cultural heritage and to honor its special commitments to American Indians. With its focus on reducing

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<sup>2</sup> In May 2021, the Office of the Secretary realigned the GAOA PMO from the immediate Office of the Secretary to the Policy, Management, Budget Office (PMB) to provide a closer link to the budget process and Land and Water Conservation Fund implementation.





the DM&R backlog on assets and facilities managed by DOI's bureaus, GAOA is closely aligned with the Department's core mission and its implementation represents a key Departmental priority.

In keeping with the high priority that DOI places on maximizing the impact of GAOA, the Task Force worked with the Secretary of the Interior to develop a strategic framework for the Department's implementation of the LRF program. Through a series of discussions held shortly after GAOA was enacted, the Task Force identified a set of four Department-wide goals and supporting objectives that continue to guide project selection under the GAOA program, which are described below:

### *Goal #1: Maximize Return on Investment and Citizens Served*

In order to achieve its goal of maximizing return on investment and the number of citizens served by the program, DOI established the following operational objectives:

- **Objective 1.1:** Restore & protect high visitation and high public use facilities
- **Objective 1.2:** Improve Americans with Disabilities Act accessibility
- **Objective 1.3:** Expand recreation opportunities and public access
- **Objective 1.4:** Remediate facilities with the poorest facility condition indexes

### *Goal #2: Improve DOI's Financial Health*

In order to achieve its goal of using the GAOA program to improve its overall financial health, DOI established the following operational objectives:

- **Objective 2.1:** Reduce or eliminate DM&R [at the project or site]
- **Objective 2.2:** Leverage funding and pursue partnering opportunities
- **Objective 2.3:** Reduce annual operating costs
- **Objective 2.4:** Remove, replace, or dispose of assets

### *Goal #3: Protect Those We Serve*

In order to achieve its goal of using the GAOA program to protect those that it serves, DOI established the following operational objectives:

- **Objective 3.1:** Address safety issues
- **Objective 3.2:** Protect employees and improve retention

### *Goal #4: Plan for the Future*

In order to achieve its goal of using the GAOA program to plan for the future of the assets that it administers, DOI established the following operational objective:

- **Objective 4.1:** Modernize infrastructure

## **2.2 Bureau-Level Objectives**

On January 15, 2021, DOI updated its *Departmental Manual* to include Chapter *110 DM 18*, which created the GAOA PMO and gave it responsibility for administering and directing the implementation of the GAOA LRF program. While the updated [112 DM 37](#) authorizes the PMO to issue guidance and assist "Bureaus with strategically selecting and executing priority deferred maintenance projects" to maximize the impact of the GAOA program, primary responsibility for implementing the program lies with individual bureaus. To this end, each participating bureau has established its own set of objectives that align with DOI's overarching strategic goals; its broader transportation, DM&R, and/or capital improvement plans; and the GAOA legislation.



### *NPS Objectives*

NPS identified four primary objectives for its projects and initiatives under the GAOA program:

- **Objective 1:** Address the maintenance backlog and protect critical resources
- **Objective 2:** Optimize project execution and minimize overhead
- **Objective 3:** Minimize operational impacts and maximize outcomes
- **Objective 4:** Separate from existing programs and processes

### *BIE Objectives*

BIE identified four primary objectives for its projects and initiatives under the GAOA program:

- **Objective 1:** Improve the safety and overall condition of educational facilities in order of Site Assessment and Capital Investment (SA-CI) Plan priority
- **Objective 2:** Reduce the DM&R backlog
- **Objective 3:** Protect and enhance relationships with sovereign Tribes across Indian Country
- **Objective 4:** Provide an educational environment conducive to student learning

### *BLM Objectives*

BLM identified four primary objectives for its projects and initiatives under the GAOA program:

- **Objective 1:** Maximize return on investment/citizens served by restoring and protecting high visitation/public use facilities, improving Americans with Disabilities Act accessibility, expanding recreation opportunities and public access, and remediating poorest Facility Condition Index (FCI) facilities
- **Objective 2:** Improve financial health by reducing or eliminating DM&R; leveraging funding/pursuing opportunities, reducing annual operating costs; and removing, replacing, or disposing of assets
- **Objective 3:** Protecting those we serve by addressing safety issues and protecting employees/improving retention
- **Objective 4:** Plan for the future by modernizing infrastructure

### *FWS Objectives*

FWS identified six primary objectives for its projects and initiatives under the GAOA program:

- **Objective 1:** Retire DM&R backlog at Refuge priority locations in alignment with the National Wildlife Refuge System (NWRS) mission
- **Objective 2:** Leverage DM&R and Federal Lands Transportation funding sources with construction appropriations, grants, and partnerships for maximum impact
- **Objective 3:** Strategically focus the funding on Urban Refuges and the top 10 percent most visited field stations, supporting 80 percent of the public use and more than one-third of the total DM&R backlog
- **Objective 4:** Complete 20 to 30 large projects utilizing all fund sources, including 10 to 20 partially or fully funded by GAOA and reduce the rate of DM&R backlog growth from 1.2 percent to 0.75 percent annually
- **Objective 5:** Complete proactive life-cycle investments to prevent DM&R, maximizing return on taxpayer investment
- **Objective 6:** Implement a surge workforce of Maintenance Action Teams and a Fellows program of STEM-focused individuals.





## 2.3 Performance Measures

DOI has established a set of performance measures to ensure accountability related to program and project performance and milestones. While DOI continues to develop metrics and managerial tools to help bureau and Departmental leaders monitor and assess project and program performance, selected accountability measures and milestones related to the program include those listed in **Table 2**.

**Table 2. DOI GAOA Performance Measures**

Measure Category	Performance Measures
<b>Program Performance</b> (reported at bureau and Departmental levels)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Total DM&amp;R Addressed</li> <li>• Total Project Spending to DM&amp;R Addressed</li> <li>• Count of Improved Assets</li> </ul>
<b>Project Performance</b> (reported at individual project level)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Total Estimated DM&amp;R Addressed</li> <li>• % DM&amp;R Retired per project dollar spent</li> <li>• <i>Additional measures are being evaluated and may be added</i></li> </ul>

## 3 Program Implementation

### 3.1 Resources and Investments

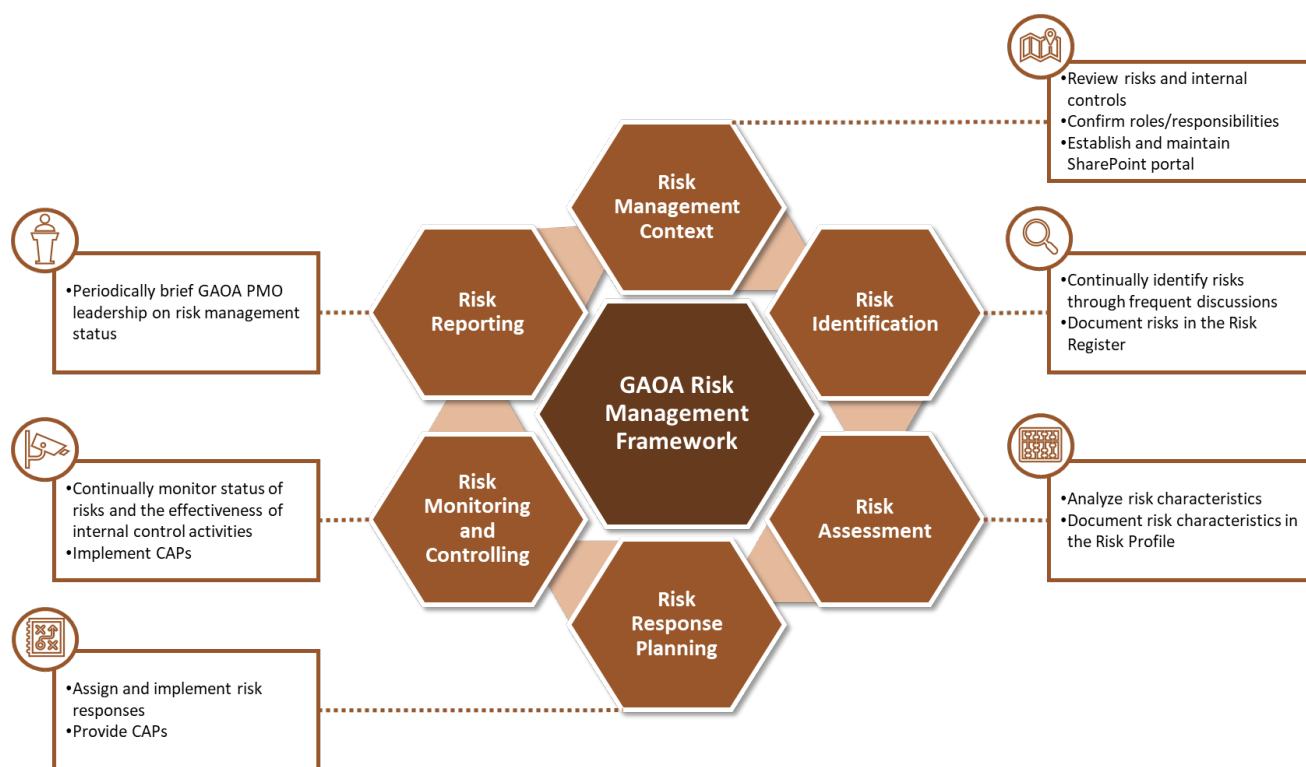
With the enactment of GAOA and the establishment of the LRF, Congress made a historic financial commitment to preserving the facilities Americans depend upon to enjoy the Nation’s greatest natural and cultural assets, as well as the educational facilities that students at BIE-funded schools rely upon for access to high-quality education. In total, this funding amounts to a maximum investment of more than \$8 billion for DOI bureaus over the five years of the program. In order to maximize return on investment for taxpayers, the GAOA legislation also authorizes the Secretary of the Interior to accept donations and invest any portion of the fund not required to meet current disbursement needs.

While GAOA provides significant funding for a specific period lasting from FY 2021 through FY 2025, the GAOA PMO views the LRF as one piece of the comprehensive puzzle of asset management and recognizes that the funding provided by the program will not be sufficient to eliminate the full DM&R backlog of approximately \$29.5 billion on assets maintained by the four participating bureaus (as of FY 2022, Quarter 1). Furthermore, the DM&R backlog is not a static measure, but one that is dynamic and constantly changing. While GAOA will help to retire existing backlog, new backlog is created each year as a result of maintenance and repair needs that get deferred due to a lack of sufficient annual maintenance funds. As such, the selection process for GAOA involves multiple layers of review to ensure that projects that receive program funds align with bureaus’ overarching capital investment, DM&R, and/or transportation plans. Additionally, the GAOA PMO is coordinating with the broader DOI asset management community to ensure the Department is able to sustain LRF investments and maintain assets rehabilitated with program funding in good condition.



### 3.2 Risk Management Strategy

As part of the GAOA implementation, the Department and its participating bureaus are taking a proactive and coordinated approach to identifying and mitigating risks to program success. The PMO created a Risk Management Plan (RMP) to provide the PMO and bureaus with a framework to identify, assess, plan, monitor, and report risks that could negatively impact the execution of GAOA projects and expenditure of LRF funding. The RMP describes how DOI implements the Risk Management Framework displayed in **Figure 1**.



**Figure 1. DOI GAOA Risk Management Framework**

The GAOA Risk Management Framework was adapted from the [GAO’s Essential Elements of Enterprise Risk Management](#) and includes six key process steps (risk management context, risk identification, risk assessment, risk response planning, risk monitoring and controlling, and risk reporting). The risk management framework is a cyclical and iterative process where the GAOA community continually strives to identify opportunities for improvement, make those improvements through corrective action plans, increase efficiencies, and remain diligent in the face of emerging and changing risks. Refer to the RMP for additional detail about the approach to key activities and artifacts associated with each process step.

### 3.3 Organizational Roles, Responsibilities, and Coordination

Under [Secretarial Order 3383](#), the Secretary of the Interior established the DOI Task Force to “lead and coordinate implementation of the Department’s portion of the Great American Outdoors Act” and gave it responsibility for establishing and utilizing a centralized PMO to coordinate program execution. While the Task Force ceased to operate after the position of Task Force, Chair was vacated on January 20, 2021, the Department has established the GAOA LRF Executive Steering Committee to provide strategic direction and recommend actions to maximize program impact in coordination with the PMO. Since its



establishment, the GAOA PMO has served as the central governance structure for DOI’s GAOA implementation. Comprised of a Director and support personnel, the PMO works closely with members of participating bureaus to ensure consistency in program implementation, data management, reporting, communication, and risk management. Additionally, the PMO provides guidance on annual project selection and tracking, as well as on policies to maximize successful program implementation. Other guidance includes quarterly reporting, Congressional notifications for large projects, and policy bulletins.

While the PMO provides the central governance structure for DOI’s GAOA implementation, ultimate responsibility for project selection and program implementation lies with the individual bureaus receiving LRF funds. In order to bring the GAOA program into alignment with bureaus’ core operations and minimize overhead associated with the launch of the program, each bureau has taken steps to clearly define internal roles, responsibilities, and processes as noted in **Table 3**.

**Table 3. Bureau Oversight Structure**

Bureau	Oversight Structure
NPS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Oversight</b> — DOI Leadership and NPS Leadership</li> <li>• <b>Program Management</b> — Core Team consisting of NPS LRF PMO, Washington DC Area Support Office (WASO) Budget Staff, Contracting staff and PPFL Staff including a Denver Service Center (DSC) Coordinator</li> <li>• <b>Project Selection</b> — NPS LRF PMO and Bureau Investment Review Board (BIRB)</li> <li>• <b>Project Execution</b> — DSC Regional LRF Coordinators and Regional and Park Offices</li> </ul>
BIE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Oversight</b> — Assistant Secretary of Indian Affairs</li> <li>• <b>Program Management</b> — Indian Affairs Office of Facilities, Property, and Safety Management (OFPSM)</li> <li>• <b>Project Selection</b> — Projects selected in accordance with SA-CI Plan</li> <li>• <b>Project Execution</b> — Indian Affairs Division of Facilities Management and Construction (DFMC)</li> </ul>
BLM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Oversight</b> — GAOA Executive Steering Committee within BLM HQ</li> <li>• <b>Program Management</b> — GAOA Program Manager, HR Team, and DM Team</li> <li>• <b>Project Selection</b> — HQ Team Including Engineers and Business Staff</li> <li>• <b>Project Execution</b> — District or Field Office (Small Projects) or State Office or National Operations Center (Large Projects)</li> </ul>
FWS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Oversight</b> — National Wildlife Refuge System (Programmatic), Joint Administrative Operations (JAO)</li> <li>• <b>Program Management</b> — Internal stakeholder group comprised of headquarters and regional NWRS leadership</li> <li>• <b>Project Execution</b> — Regional Infrastructure Management Division (IMD) Chiefs</li> </ul>

## 4 DOI’s GAOA Strategy in Broader Context

### 4.1 GAOA and DOI’s Financial Health

With a maximum investment of \$8 billion dollars at DOI over FY 2021-2025, GAOA represents one of the largest investments in America’s public lands in over half a century. As the primary steward of the



Nation's public lands, DOI recognizes that this significant influx of funding has the potential to greatly impact its ability to preserve and maintain the assets and facilities that Americans rely upon to experience many of the country's greatest natural and cultural treasures. However, the GAOA PMO and participating bureaus are also aware that GAOA and the DM&R backlog do not exist in a vacuum but are linked to the Department's overall financial health and its ability to carry out its core mission. As such, the GAOA PMO and participating bureaus have made it a priority to select projects that will enable them to not only retire significant amounts of DM&R on public lands and at BIE schools, but also to move towards more sustainable financial and asset management practices that will help DOI to preserve these critical resources for public use in the long term.

By working to eliminate long-standing DM&R projects and those that have historically been out of reach due to annual discretionary funding limitations, participating bureaus can free up funding from other sources and continue their transition towards a proactive system of lifecycle management that can help to sustain assets in the long term. Under a system of proactive lifecycle management, DOI bureaus will be able to move away from the practice of running assets to failure and needing to use scarce resources to salvage or restore those that are in the worst condition to the more financially sustainable practice of maintaining assets still in good condition before they deteriorate further. This practice has the potential to pay dividends for the taxpayers in the long-term. The GAOA PMO and participating bureaus are working closely with the DOI Office of Acquisition and Property Management to help ensure that GAOA projects and approaches are aligned with the broad transition that DOI is making to lifecycle management across its asset portfolio.

## 4.2 GAOA and Administration Priorities

America's national parks and public lands are among our Nation's greatest resources. Assets managed by DOI bureaus preserve important aspects of our Nation's history, offer unparalleled recreational access to natural treasures, support critical environmental conservation efforts, and help to ensure access to high-quality educational opportunities for students in BIE schools. In addition to the direct benefit that these assets provide to park visitors, students, and broader environmental conservation efforts, they also serve as important economic engines for gateway communities and the Nation overall. Beginning with project selection for the second year of the program, DOI's GAOA implementation has been closely aligned with the bold action that the Department has taken to support the Administration's overarching priorities surrounding job creation, climate resiliency, protection against resource threats, utilization of clean energy, promotion of youth engagement with conservation, and support for underserved communities.

### *Economy and Jobs*

Investing in creating millions of family-supporting and union jobs is one of the Administration's top priorities in its whole-of-government response to the four intersecting challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic, economic recovery, racial equity, and climate change ([DOI Priorities](#)). DOI's implementation of the GAOA program will help to support the Administration's priorities surrounding job creation in two distinct ways. In a narrow sense, DOI's GAOA implementation will support job creation by directly creating jobs for thousands of Americans. According to DOI's Office of Policy Analysis (PPA), program spending related to GAOA will support an estimated 36,166 jobs and contribute approximately \$3.8 billion to GDP over the first two years of the program ([2021](#), [2022](#)).

In a broader sense, DOI's GAOA implementation will enable bureaus to address high-priority DM&R projects, thereby helping to preserve national parks and public lands as important economic engines for local communities throughout the country. In fact, analysis from PPA indicates that an estimated 501 million visits to DOI lands in 2019 supported "an estimated \$34.8 billion in value added, \$60.6 billion in



economic output, and about 469,000 jobs” ([PPA](#)). By making smart, tactical investments in high-visitation and high-public use facilities, DOI’s GAOA implementation will help to promote job creation in these national parks and public lands, thereby driving economic activity for communities throughout the country.

### *Energy and the Environment*

As the Cabinet-level agency responsible for managing the Nation’s vast natural and cultural resources, DOI plays a central role in how the United States stewards its public lands, protects its environmental resources, and responds to climate change. In keeping with the Administration’s priorities to bolster resilience and natural solutions to climate change, DOI bureaus have emphasized and will continue to select projects that align with the Administration’s broader priorities related to energy and the environment.

Among the projects identified as aligning with these priorities are the stabilization of the Jupiter Inlet Lighthouse Outstanding Natural Area’s living shoreline in Florida, replacement of aging school facilities at BIE’s Cheyenne-Eagle Butte School with LEED-compliant buildings, modernization of water control structures to support habitat and huntable wildlife at San Luis National Wildlife Refuge in California, and revegetation with native plants of land previously covered by outdated infrastructure in Lake Mead National Recreation Area in Nevada. These initiatives will help the Administration to achieve its broader goals, while preserving important natural and cultural assets for generations to come.

### *Supporting Underserved Communities*

DOI has long played a critical role in supporting underserved communities and ensuring access to government services. The Department’s GAOA strategy both aligns with the Administration’s goals in these areas and furthers its historic commitments to underserved populations in significant ways. GAOA investments will bolster underserved and remote communities’ resilience to some of the most severe potential effects of climate change while also improving infrastructure and investing in local jobs.

Beyond preserving critical infrastructure for remote communities, DOI’s GAOA implementation has the potential to provide long-lasting benefits to students in BIE schools by enabling the Department to significantly improve the condition of educational facilities. Based on the bureau’s Budget Justification for FY 2021, more than 30% of students in BIE schools attend schools in conditions deemed to be less than acceptable. Beyond these challenges, many students in BIE schools face social and socio-economic challenges at disproportionately high rates, presenting long-term hurdles to their academic and economic success. By investing up to \$95 million per year from FY 2021 to FY 2025 in addressing long-standing DM&R projects in educational facilities managed by BIE, DOI’s GAOA implementation has the potential to dramatically improve opportunities and outcomes for a critically underserved community.





## Appendix I

### DM&R Best Practices

In order to maximize the impact of GAOA LRF funding, DOI's GAOA PMO and participating bureaus are committed to developing and implementing best practices to effectively and efficiently address DM&R. Alongside the leading practices that participating bureaus have already developed to manage DM&R projects and identify areas for continual improvement, the GAOA PMO has made it a priority to actively engage with the U.S. Department of the Interior, Office of Acquisition and Property Management and industry leaders to identify additional best practices that can advance effective project and construction management in GAOA LRF projects. Through its efforts to prioritize continual improvement, the GAOA PMO's goal is to work with bureaus to adopt leading practices and ensure that bureaus are able to realize efficiencies through collaboration and knowledge sharing.

#### *Best Practices at DOI*

During the first two years of the GAOA LRF program, participating bureaus have implemented a number of leading practices for managing DM&R projects. Some of the leading practices already in place at DOI bureaus are described below.

**Flexible Contract Vehicles.** Traditional contracting methods and vehicles can require time-intensive steps that could potentially limit a bureau's ability to meet project goals and scheduled milestones. DOI bureaus have established flexible contracting vehicles, such as Indefinite Delivery Indefinite Quantity (IDIQ) contracts and Multiple-Award Task Order Contracts (MATOC), to support faster and streamlined contracting needs that are highly beneficial to GAOA projects. For example, BIE's IDIQ for demolition projects and FWS' MATOCs for repair and geotechnical engineering support have enabled bureaus to procure technical services from experienced and qualified contractors, leading to a more streamlined, consistent, and cost-efficient procurement process.

**Coordination among Functional Teams.** The bureaus have embraced using functional teams to deliver specific technical services for GAOA LRF projects. There are several examples where the bureaus have coordinated and shared these functional experts within the bureau and with the other bureaus. For example, Maintenance Action Teams (MATs) – geographically-placed teams of trade or technical specialists that complete historic restoration and preservation projects – are used by NPS and FWS to complete smaller projects using a mobile workforce. These bureaus coordinate and share ideas and training opportunities to make MATs more efficient. BLM also utilizes state and regional engineering teams to timely come in-and-out of projects to deliver their specific expertise. By engaging and sharing technical experts, the bureaus derive consistent and effective DM&R practices in project execution.

**Data-Informed Project Selection and Oversight.** Project managers across the bureaus utilize best-in-class project management tools and techniques to oversee their individual projects. Additionally, project managers are adept at communicating risks, successes, and on-the-ground insights up the relevant communication channels as needed, resulting in tailored responses from leadership at the project level. Furthermore, bureaus use project-level data sharing to inform decisions and are working to implement similar practices at the portfolio level, which will help inform strategic decision-making across similar projects. In keeping with its commitment to use project data to inform decision-making, the PMO is exploring approaches to better integrate considerations about project risk in project selection and monitoring.





### *Industry DM&R Best Practices under Consideration*

The GAOA PMO has worked with experts to identify industry best practices for managing DM projects and has identified initiatives that could be of particular benefit to the the LRF program. Specific areas of focus are described below.

**Program-wide Construction and Cost Estimating Training.** Cost estimation represents a critical capability in construction projects, with deficiencies potentially leading to estimates are drastically over or under budget. Given the importance of cost estimation to effective construction management, the GAOA PMO is committed to ensuring that participating bureaus have access to the resources and expertise they need to develop accurate project estimates in an uncertain economic environment. Through the use of uniform trainings in cost estimation and the establishment of a Subject Matter Expert (SME) hotline, bureau project managers will have access to the resources that they need to more accurately scope projects at early stages in the lifecycle and better predict and monitor risks as projects develop.

**Expanding IRB Best Practices.** Among DOI bureaus, NPS has served in a leading capacity by its use of a Bureau Investment Review Board (BIRB) to provide leadership, direction, and accountability for major investment decisions. Comprised of senior managers from across NPS, the BIRB provides a servicewide policy perspective and oversight of major facility investments, helping parks to think more strategically about their facility and infrastructure investment proposals by considering park-wide needs, priorities, and logical construction sequences. As part of its continual improvement initiatives, the GAOA PMO is exploring opportunities to expand elements of the NPS BIRB process to other bureaus, helping to ensure that each bureau has the processes in place to make sound investment decisions that maximize the impact of LRF funds.

### *Next Steps related to DM Best Practices*

The PMO and bureaus are proactively engaging in prioritization of DM&R best practices to determine which will yield value with the greatest breadth and depth. Through weekly discussions, the bureaus are able to engage with each other on shared risks and opportunities, providing a key forum by which they can continue to align improvement efforts across the Department.