



## **WASTE REPORT for September 28, 2015**

### **National Park Service's Flower Show: A Blooming Waste**

If you are a national parks enthusiast, then you probably already know that next year marks the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the National Park Service (Park Service). However, you probably did not know as part of its Centennial Celebration, **the Park Service is planning to spend \$100K for a “flower show” in Philadelphia, Pa., this upcoming March.**<sup>1</sup>

The Philadelphia Flower Show is an event the Pennsylvania Horticulture Society (PHS) puts on every year going back to 1829. This year's theme is “Explore America: 100 Years of the National Park Service,” and **will span over 33-acres of the Philadelphia Convention Center, and include a Park Service's “Find Your Park” pavilion.**<sup>2</sup>

While the flower show itself is a remarkable event and the nearly 200-year old PHS uses the proceeds to finance charitable activities -- **the question remains, why is this the Park Service's best use of taxpayer money?**

**This is especially troubling considering the Park Service and their supporters have cried foul for years over the agency's funding.** The National Parks Conservation Association said earlier this year that “the current Fiscal Year 2015 funding level for national parks is vastly insufficient to bring parks back to where they were, and where they need to be—especially in advance of the 2016 Centennial.”<sup>3</sup>

Additionally in 2012, the Washington Post reported that the Park Service's financial situation has caused, the Blue Ridge Parkway to be “...**unable to fill 75 vacant positions since 2003.**” and, “[f]or the past three years, New Mexico's Bandelier National Monument has lacked the money to hire a specialist to protect its archaeological ruins and resources.”<sup>4</sup>

While some of our national parks are facing staffing shortfalls, the Park Service included in its grant notice that it would, “**provide one full-time staff member as a point of contact to [PHS] for the duration of the project,**” as well as provide staffing at the Park Service pavilion when the flower show takes place in March.<sup>5</sup> **It is just a little hard to swallow that on one hand there are cries of a lack of funds and personnel at parks, then on the other hand you hear money and staff can be found for a flower show.**

## **Government Waste, as reliable as Old Faithful**

<sup>1</sup> 2016 Philadelphia Flower Show, National Park Service, U.S. Department of Interior. Washington, D.C. Via, Grants.gov. Award Number: NPS-15-NEO-0150. Sep2015

<sup>2</sup> Ibid

<sup>3</sup> National Park Service Funding, National Parks Conservation Association. Washington, D.C.; September 2015 [NPCS](#)

<sup>4</sup> Eilperin, Juliet. National parks face severe funding crunch, Washington Post. Washington D.C.; August 2012

<sup>5</sup> 2016 Philadelphia Flower Show, National Park Service, U.S. Department of Interior. Washington, D.C. Via, Grants.gov. Award Number: NPS-15-NEO-0150. Sep2015