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Five Months After Stimulus, Interior Department Has Paid Out 0.4% of Stimulus Funds

Americans Want to Know: Where Are the Jobs?

Tomorrow, Friday, July 24th, Secretary of the Interior Ken Salazar will provide a progress report to the House Budget Committee on how stimulus funds are being spent by the Department of the Interior. Hopefully, the Secretary will explain why out of the \$3 billion allocated to the Department, only \$310 million (10%) has been obligated to specific projects and only \$12 million (0.4%) has actually been paid out.

The following chart from Recovery.gov shows the Department's stimulus spending as of July 22nd:



In February, Secretary Salazar emphasized the abundance of shovel-ready projects within his Department:

“Interior Secretary Ken Salazar said Thursday his agency, with a huge backlog of ‘shovel-ready’ construction projects, is ready and waiting to start work on scores of improvements in national parks and Indian reservations financed from the \$2.9 billion for his agency in the \$790 billion economic stimulus package.

Following his testimony before the Senate Indian Affairs Committee on a range of issues confronting Native American tribes, Salazar said the National Park Service alone has a \$9 billion backlog of projects.

‘We’ve got plenty of things to do with the money, and I’ve asked my divisions to prioritize those that are ready to go now,’ he said.” (Source: [CongressDaily](#))

If the Department has a “huge backlog of shovel-ready construction projects,” why - over five-months later - has it only dispersed less than 0.4% of their available stimulus dollars?

As unemployment nears 10 percent, the American people are still waiting for the new jobs that were supposed to be created by the stimulus bill.

Secretary Salazar should explain during his testimony tomorrow:

- Why the Department of the Interior has not moved faster to spend their allocated stimulus dollars given our current economic crisis?
- How many jobs have been created as a result of the Department’s stimulus spending?
- What is the timeframe for the dispersing the remaining \$2.988 billion? The Administration is now saying it will take two years for the stimulus to work. If it has taken the Department five months to pay out 0.4% of the funds, how will it be able to spend the remaining 99.6% in just 19 months?

Instead of moving the economic goal posts, the Obama Administration should finally provide specifics about how this massive bill will actually create new jobs and help the American people.

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House Natural Resources Committee Republican Press Office

Contact: [Emily Lawrimore](#) or [Jill Strait](#)

202-226-2311

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