

**ROUNDTABLE: LISTING SUMMIT TUNNEL ON
NATIONAL REGISTRY OF HISTORIC PLACES
PART 1 TRANSCRIPT**

ALAN SPEARS: I'm Alan Spears, I'm the director of Cultural Resources for the National Park's Conservation Association, and I work for Ted now.

PHIL SEXTON: And I'm the guy who doesn't represent my agency. But I'm Phil Sexton again with California State Parks. And did somebody just mention the CHL, the California Historic Landmark for the Railroad? Let me explain a little bit about that. It's an interesting set of markers that goes from Sacramento as far East as Dutch Flat I believe, and they all have the same historic landmark number, I think it's 773, but it's sequential. So it's 773 dash 1, dash 2, dash 3, as so on. So anything that would go up at the Pass, I think would be, would have that same number, and the idea was to represent that linear accomplishment of building the railroad, so it really is a fascinating idea, and I have checked many times and I never learned why it stopped at Dutch Flat. But that would be a little complicated process, but much simpler than a National Historic Landmark Designation. They, the NHL ones, are very very exhaustive, and it's a good springboard to doing that.

MODERATOR: Okay, Alan, why don't you start? Give us a little bit of, ideas about...

ALAN: So, you know, John, for me it's all about politics, and that's what I do at NPCA and that's what I hope to bring to this particular group, and the funding and the development of [unintelligible] of American history and historic sites and Summit Tunnel, um, it's going to be much more difficult to make that happen if the politics aren't aligned. So I'm happy to give you guys what you need in here promptly at 2 o'clock to head to the Library of Congress and probably with Judy Chu. Judy Chu and some of her colleagues [unintelligible]. The funding options, I think, and the [unintelligible] influence of politics [unintelligible], just want to share a couple things with you, really quick in bullet point order.

I think there needs to be an understanding again that historic preservation does have a political context and that, I think that one of the things that this group needs to concentrate on moving forward is making sure you've got the political alignment and support for what you do at the local, state, and federal level. That's critically important. But also

within the preservation community. The historic preservation fund, the underserved or underrepresented communities grant programs, all these things are [unintelligible] people are identifying these as potential pots of money. And if you walk in, brand-new to Capital Hill and claim that you want 500 thousand dollars or 50 thousand dollars, or something, and you've not yet made the rounds in working with groups like the NPCA or the Trust for Historic Preservation, or The Wilderness Society, or other groups, you're going to find that there are other people who are like, listen, we've been here for a while, waiting in line so take your place. So you've gotta do some cultivation at the grassroots level, at the local state, and federal level that's incredibly important. The underrepresented communities grant program has an FY2019 inactive budget of 750 thousand dollars. That's not a lot. It is an increase. But the recommended level for FY2020 is to raise it all the way up to 1 million dollars. That's still federal chump change. So there also has to be a bit of activism involved in making sure that you are being stewards for these programs, whether we are doing Antiquities Act defense where we want more money for the historic preservation fund, underserved communities grants, [unintelligible] grants, civil rights grants, Network of Freedom Program, or even the National Heritage Program which right now has collected 20.3 million dollars annually. And we need [unintelligible] funding increase out of Congress for that program as well, especially if we want to add new [unintelligible] to that component. So, again, the politics of making sure you're connected, making sure that the money works.

The other part of the funding component is, how do you get the message out to those federal land management agencies that you're working on. We've got a bunch of [unintelligible] Forest Service folks here. So is Vicki Christiansen still the interim chief, or do you guys have a permanent chief at this point?

AUDIENCE:

She is permanent.

ALAN:

She's permanent, okay. So one agency down. The National Park Service still does not have a confirmed director at the National Park Service. We hope [unintelligible] they'll do a confirmation. The timeline on that is sometime between now and the next two to three months, depending upon how the paperwork goes. But revisiting these agencies with permanent leadership, so that they can actually set guidelines and a plan in making sure that they're aware that this kind of an expansion is something that's important to these communities and to all Americans, is something that really is important to

get on their radar. And the other thing is, as we move forward on this work, be careful about accepting unfunded mandates. You will find right now in Congress, especially a Democratically controlled House, that there will be a number of people who are interested in introducing a [unintelligible] bill to establish something that's a Forest Service [unintelligible], something that's jointly managed between the Forest Service and the Parks Service. Where are congressional representatives, and I'm talking about friends of ours, Democrats and Republicans, champions for historic preservation [unintelligible] is understanding that after you designate you have to fight. And if we designate 5, 10 new sites in heritage areas but do not increase funding for these programs or we do not give our colleagues in our Parks Service the funding increase that they deserve, or we don't tackle the deferred maintenance issue, then we are essentially creating new sites that can't do anything good [unintelligible]. So designation and funding have to be tied together, it's like left and right hand. And then, I think, the other part in terms of the funding issue, and I don't have any solutions to this but it's just something to introduce early in the conversation, is the notion of an endowment. So not only do we want to designate the Summit Tunnel National whatever, but we also want to convince the Forest Service, the Park Service, the administration, the Department of Interior, Department of Agriculture, that the people in this room have contacts with high profile donors, whether individuals or corporations, that can put 10 million dollars in the fund to establish an endowment so that the week after, I think it was Terry, you mentioned creating the statue you can't fund after it's designated, they know that there's some money there to help with interpretation, paying salaries, paying interns, covering costs, making sure the fire suppression system's up to date, all those things. So the other thing to think about is an endowment going forward.

The last thing that I wanted to share with my time, in terms of funding, is there's an awful lot of research that needs to be done to make sure that the fundamentals are in place to get the best possible outcomes for preservation purposes. My organization, the National Parks Conservation Association, would be open to partnering with organizations, like people in this room, to house an intern. If we get going on that process early enough in a year, we might be able to produce some funding that could bring someone in. I know in the past, working with Ted and with Stan, we never quite got there. But there are interns that, if we had the costs covered through an outside organization, that could be housed at NPCA. And if we are able to do something like that, we could get someone in

for 3 months, 6 months, an entire year, especially if their salary's being covered. And I can put them to work in my Cultural Resources team, working on nothing but Summit Tunnel. Or working on nothing but Asian-Pacific Island or American Historic Preservation initiatives. So, and that gives them an office, where they are in a conservation, preservation, non-profit. They are meeting other professionals. They are doing work on Capital Hill. They really getting a soup to nuts opportunity to see how this business works. And they are producing product that could go into the production of the Summit Tunnel site. So, again for me it's mostly politics. I didn't come with a checkbook, I apologize but I do work for a non-profit, so that's the best I can do.