Deferred Maintenance

The National Park Service (NPS) preserves a network of 419 parks and sites that protect spectacular historic, cultural, and natural resources and tell the stories of remarkable people and events in our nation’s history. The size and complexity of NPS infrastructure and its mission to preserve our parks’ resources represent a significant challenge. Unfortunately, after more than 100 years of operation and inconsistent public funding, the National Park System faces a deferred maintenance backlog estimated at $11.9 billion and, according to FY 2018 data, 47% of the backlog is attributed to historic assets.

Background

Each year, Congress appropriates funds for three principal accounts that help address the backlog of repairs—or deferred maintenance—of the National Park Service. Line-Item Construction funds major rehabilitation and replacement projects that cost $1 million or more. Repair and Rehabilitation projects are large-scale, non-recurring needs that cost less than $1 million and where scheduled maintenance is no longer sufficient. Cyclic Maintenance includes periodically scheduled upkeep and repairs.

### FY 2021 Appropriations Request

Please support $283 million for NPS Line-Item Construction Projects, $150 million for Repair and Rehabilitation, and $188 million for Cyclic Maintenance in the FY 2021 Interior Appropriations bill.

**APPROPRIATIONS BILL:** Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies  
**AGENCY:** National Park Service  
**ACCOUNT:** Construction (Line Item)  
**ONPS, Facilities, Operations, and Maintenance**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NPS DEFERRED MAINTENANCE</th>
<th>FY 2018 ENACTED</th>
<th>FY 2019 ENACTED</th>
<th>FY 2020 ENACTED</th>
<th>FY 2021 PRESIDENT’S REQUEST</th>
<th>FY 2021 NTHP RECOMMENDATION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Line-Item Construction</td>
<td>$137,011</td>
<td>$147,011</td>
<td>$282,956</td>
<td>$131,788</td>
<td>$283</td>
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<tr>
<td>Repair and Rehabilitation</td>
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<td>$135,980</td>
<td>$135,950</td>
<td>$121,087</td>
<td>$150</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cyclic Maintenance</td>
<td>$141,575</td>
<td>$151,575</td>
<td>$153,575</td>
<td>$188,184</td>
<td>$188</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| IN MILLIONS |

**JUSTIFICATION:** An increase to annual appropriations is necessary to address the deferred maintenance backlog and prevent historic and cultural resources from permanent damage or loss. Reliable, dedicated funding like that proposed in the Restore Our Parks Act is also necessary to offset decades of underfunding in these accounts.

In 2014, the National Trust for Historic Preservation launched the HOPE Crew (Hands-On Preservation Experience) to assist the NPS with reducing the maintenance backlog of historic properties. Here, young volunteers help to restore historic buildings at the Sandy Hook Unit of Gateway National Recreation Area in Fort Hancock, NJ.

PHOTO BY DUNCAN KENDALL
After decades of inconsistent public funding, the deferred maintenance backlog has ballooned to nearly $12 billion, putting irreplaceable historic and cultural artifacts at risk of permanent damage or loss. Without robust funding, the condition of these assets will continue to deteriorate and become more expensive to repair and preserve in the future. Reliable, dedicated funding will preserve the ability for Americans and international visitors to enjoy and experience iconic historic resources and natural wonders on federal lands.

For additional information, contact Pam Bowman, Director of Public Lands Policy, PBowman@savingplaces.org, (202) 588-6347.