



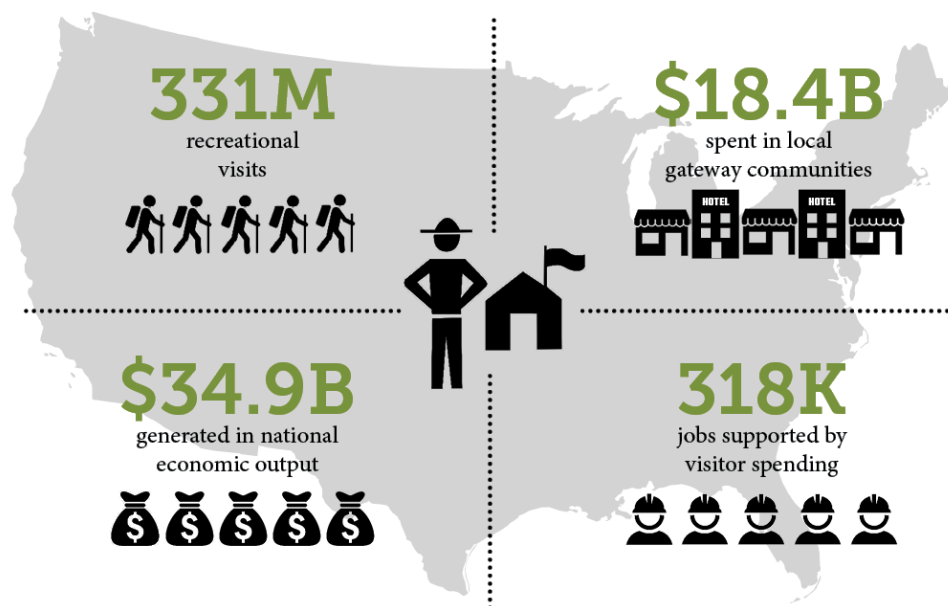
## National Park Service Legacy Act S. 751 | H.R. 2584

### ISSUE OVERVIEW

The National Park Service (NPS), which turned 100 years old last year, manages more than 400 national park units—iconic landscapes, historic and cultural sites, trails, military battlegrounds, monuments, and memorials—throughout the country.

As a result of aging facilities, strain on resources caused by increased visitation and unreliable funding, NPS has been unable to keep pace with park infrastructure repairs. Based on 2015 data, the agency estimates it would cost nearly \$12 billion if it were to fix all of the items on its deferred maintenance list.

The National Park Service Legacy Act, bipartisan legislation introduced by Sens. Warner (D-VA) and Portman (R-OH) in the Senate and Reps. Hurd (R-TX) and Kilmer (D-WA) in the House, would provide dedicated annual federal funding to address national park deferred maintenance needs. The bill would ensure that parks continue to preserve our nation's heritage and recreation opportunities and that local communities who depend on park visitors for revenue will continue to flourish.



Sources: NPS Visitor Use Statistics, Annual Summary Report 2016;  
2016 National Park Visitor Spending Effects: Economic Contributions to Local Communities, States, and the Nation.

## SPECIFIC LEGISLATIVE PROVISIONS

The National Park Service Legacy Act would:

- Establish a federal fund in the U.S. Treasury—named the “National Park Service Legacy Fund”—to draw down the national park maintenance backlog.
- The Fund would be financed using revenues from the on-shore and off-shore production of oil, gas, coal, and other mineral operations that are not already allocated by law to other programs.
- Monies would ramp up over time, based on the schedule below, to address high-priority national park deferred maintenance needs:

(1) \$50,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2018, 2019, and 2020

(2) \$150,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2021, 2022, and 2023

(3) \$250,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2024, 2025, and 2026

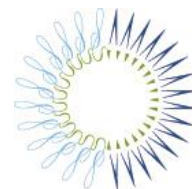
(4) \$500,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2027 through 2047

- Eighty percent of the Fund would be used for the repair and rehabilitation of NPS assets including: historic structures, visitor facilities, trails, water utility systems, and assets that impact disability access, health and safety, and recreation.
- Twenty percent of the Fund would be used to restore transportation-related infrastructure, such as roads, bridges, and tunnels.
- Prohibit allocated funds from being used for land acquisition or to replace discretionary funding for NPS facility operations and maintenance needs.
- Protect the authority of Congress by requiring review of proposed maintenance projects by appropriate committees.
- Promote public-private collaboration by incentivizing projects which have a private donation cost-share component.

## CURRENT STATUS

S.751 was introduced on March 28, 2017 and was referred to the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee.

H.R. 2584 was introduced on May 22, 2017 and was referred to the House Natural Resources and House Transportation and Infrastructure Committees. Original co-sponsors include Rep. Dave Reichert (R-WA) and Colleen Hanabusa (D-HI).



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# Restoring America's National Parks

## OREGON

Oregon enjoys the economic, recreational, and cultural benefits of the National Park System, which includes six park units in the state.

National park sites in Oregon are part of a system that encompasses 84 million acres across the country. Established by Congress in 1916, the National Park Service (NPS) manages and maintains more than 400 nationally significant sites in all 50 states and several territories. National parks are a mosaic of wild landscapes, historic and cultural sites, scenic byways, trails, military parks, and monuments that celebrate and commemorate remarkable people and America's heritage.

Unfortunately, 100 years after its creation, NPS is struggling to maintain many of its facilities. The agency currently faces a deferred maintenance backlog that is estimated to be \$11.3 billion based on FY2016 data.

### Why is there Deferred Maintenance?

- Aging infrastructure: many park facilities and systems are 50-70 years old and need updating
- Record visitation—approximately 331 million visitors in 2016—causes wear and tear on resources
- Unreliable funding for deferred maintenance.

### What is Deferred Maintenance?

Deferred maintenance is work that is not completed at required intervals to ensure acceptable facility conditions. If work is delayed for more than a year it is typically considered deferred. Examples of repairs include:

- Crumbling roads and bridges
- Unsound buildings, including historic structures
- Outdated wastewater and electrical systems
- Neglected military sites
- Deteriorating monuments and memorials

### National Parks in Oregon

In 2016, over 1 million visitors enjoyed national parks in Oregon. From Oregon Caves to Fort Vancouver, Oregon saw \$97.5 million spent in gateway communities. That spending supported 1,640 jobs and added a cumulative benefit of \$138.4 million to the state economy – money that helps businesses, schools, and families.

Despite the importance of national parks to Oregon's economy, they need more than \$105 million in infrastructure repairs. To keep national parks in Oregon strong and vibrant, and to capture the benefits they provide to the state, restoration must be a priority.



### NPS Deferred Maintenance in Oregon - FY2016

Crater Lake National Park	\$ 85,318,818
Fort Vancouver National Historic Site	\$ 528,524
John Day Fossil Beds National Monument	\$ 1,565,383
Lewis and Clark Historical Park	\$ 2,515,096
Nez Perce National Historical Park	\$ 144,281
Oregon Caves National Monument	\$ 15,435,755
<b>Total.....</b>	<b>\$ 105,507,876</b>

### Questions? Contact Us.

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## Why Address Deferred Maintenance?

- **Preservation:** We need to ensure care of our nation's historic and cultural resources.
- **Access:** Without working roads and trails, visitors can't enjoy all our park resources.
- **Revenue:** Local communities are dependent on park-generated tourism dollars.
- **Kids:** Maintaining our national parks is a responsibility Congress owes to future generations.
- **Safety:** Aging infrastructure and building code issues need to be addressed so visitors are provided a safe experience.
- **Cost Savings:** Repairing and updating park facilities can provide significant cost savings to tax payers.

## Proven Economic Boosters

- Parks are a top travel destination in the U.S.
- There were an estimated 331 million visits to the national parks in 2016.
- In 2016, park visitors spent an estimated \$18.4 billion in nearby communities and a collective \$34.9 billion boost to the national economy. That spending supported 318,000 jobs (2016 data).



Photo (above): NPS needs \$2.5 million to address deferred maintenance needs on trails at John Day Fossil Beds National Monument. (NPS Photo).

From sites that are culturally important to Native American tribes or that honor those who served in our military, to parks that commemorate painful aspects of the Civil War, Japanese internment, or the Civil Rights movement, our National Park System documents our nation's diverse and evolving history.

Congress has a responsibility to ensure the NPS has the resources needed to maintain park infrastructure, so future generations can enjoy and learn from our national treasures.

## Solutions

To address deferred maintenance at NPS sites across the country, Congress should:

- Ensure that infrastructure initiatives include provisions to address park maintenance.
- Provide dedicated annual federal funding for national park repairs.
- Enact innovative policy reforms to ensure that deferred maintenance does not escalate.
- Provide more highway funding for NPS maintenance needs.
- Create more opportunities for public-private collaboration and donations to help restore park infrastructure.

## You Can Help

Ask your federal representatives to support dedicated federal funding and an infrastructure proposal that addresses the deferred maintenance needs within the National Park System.

Contact your senators, Ron Wyden and Jeff Merkley, at [senate.gov](http://senate.gov). To contact your congressman, visit [house.gov](http://house.gov) and enter your zip code.



# Guest Comment: Eclipse visitors underscore need to address deferred maintenance at John Day Fossil Beds

By Jim Hammett • To the Blue Mountain Eagle

Published on August 22, 2017 4:34PM

We are lucky for all of the benefits the John Day Fossil Beds National Monument brings to our local communities, offering an amazing natural wonder that enriches our local economy. To protect this treasure, particularly after the influx of visitors for the solar eclipse, it is critical that we fix our national parks.

I worked in the National Park System for over 40 years, 19 of which as superintendent of John Day Fossil Beds. Its beauty and geological significance make it truly one of a kind. In 2016, over 200,000 visitors to the park were able to see that for themselves. The number of visitors is expected to skyrocket in 2017 thanks, in no small part, to the solar eclipse.

Estimates are that the Fossil Beds welcomed roughly 50,000 visitors for the eclipse. Keeping the Fossil Beds safe and accessible for the regular volume of visitors is a challenge. The influx of 50,000 visitors over the eclipse weekend challenged the park's facilities and infrastructure to keep up and should serve as a reminder about the importance of ensuring our National Monument and the National Park System as a whole have the resources necessary to keep up the maintenance and repairs that allow hikers, scientists and eclipse watchers alike to enjoy the Fossil Beds.

Years of underfunding from Congress, an increase in visitation and normal infrastructure aging have left John Day Fossil Beds with a backlog of \$1,565,383 of necessary repairs.

We have a responsibility to preserve the Fossil Beds for future generations. We also have a responsibility to today's area residents and businesses who benefit economically from the tourism generated by the Fossil Beds. In 2016, visitors spent an estimated \$10 million in local communities while visiting John Day Fossil Beds National Monument and those dollars supported 153 local jobs. For those local communities and businesses supported by the Monument, it is important to ensure that the John Day Fossil Beds are able to continue offering a quality experience that entices visitors to return to our community. Living here, we know that once those 50,000 visitors learn what a special place this is, they'll want to return.

It is also important to understand the enormity of this issue to the entire National Park System. There is over \$11.3 billion worth of deferred maintenance projects across the National Park System and over \$105 million worth of backlogged projects here in Oregon alone.

To help address the backlog issue, Sens. Warner (D-Virginia) and Portman (R-Ohio) and Representatives Hurd (R-Texas) and Kilmer (D-Washington) introduced bipartisan legislation, H.R. 2584 or the National Park Service Legacy Act. This legislation would provide dedicated federal funds annually to address park maintenance needs. As a result, the National Park Service would be able to preserve our nation's most significant natural and cultural treasures like John Day Fossil Beds.

I hope that Oregon's congressional delegation will show their support for our national parks both here in their home state and throughout the country by cosponsoring the Legacy Act.

The 50,000 eclipse watchers that came to the Fossil Beds are a testament to the popularity of our National Parks System. Protecting our parks means protecting our economy, our recreation opportunities, and our state's natural heritage. We cannot allow this growing backlog to cast a shadow over our national parks. It is time to act.

*Jim Hammet was superintendent of the John Day Fossil Beds National Monument for 19 years before retiring four years ago.*

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