Addressing our maintenance backlog is a critical focus area of the NPS's core mission to preserve parks and provide a world-class visitor experience.

The deferred maintenance backlog refers to the total cost of all maintenance projects that were not completed on schedule and therefore have been put off or delayed.

Improvements to visitor facilities, campgrounds, trails, and roads are essential to providing a world-class experience to our more than 300 million annual visitors and to ensure a safe work environment for our employees, volunteers, and partners.

Over the years, aging facilities, growing visitation, and limited resources have made that task of maintaining park infrastructure more challenging.

The NPS regularly leverages funding from multiple sources such as partnership donations, park entrance fees, NPS funding from Congress and more in order to address its maintenance needs. For example, Mount Rainier National Park was able to address $5 million dollars in their maintenance backlog with the completion of restoring the Paradise Inn through a variety of funding sources and partnerships.

More than half of the backlog is transportation related. Two-fifths of all paved roads in national parks are rated in “fair” or “poor condition.” Dozens of bridges and trails are in need of rehabilitation or reconstruction.

The NPS estimates at the end of FY 2018 there was more than $11.9 billion in backlogged maintenance and repair needs for the more than 5,690 miles of paved roads, 21,000 miles of trails, and 25,000 buildings.

In 2018, 318 million people visited more than 400 national park units across the country. The NPS completed more than $671 million in maintenance and repair work in FY 2018, but aging facilities, increased visitation, and resource constraints have kept the maintenance backlog between $11 billion and $12 billion since 2010.

The NPS serves an important and pivotal role in the tourism industry for both local economies and the United States as a whole. Having a robust infrastructure will continue to help facilitate just that.

Visitor spending in communities near national parks in 2018 resulted in a $40.1 billion benefit to the nation's economy and supported 329,000 jobs.
Preserving National Parks for the 21st Century

Addressing our maintenance backlog is a critical focus area of the NPS’s core mission to preserve parks and provide a world-class visitor experience.

What are the impacts?

COMPLETED:
The National Park Service (NPS) estimates that during Fiscal Year (FY) 2018, it completed more than $671 million in needed repair work at national parks across the country, one of the largest amounts of deferred maintenance needs retired in a single year. This leaves, at the end of FY18, more than $11.9 billion in backlogged maintenance and repair needs for the more than 5,690 miles of paved roads, 21,000 miles of trails and 25,000 buildings that service visitors to America’s 419 national park units.

LOOK AHEAD:
The deferred maintenance figure increased by $313 million (2.7 percent) over FY 2017. Aging facilities, increased visitation, and resource constraints have kept the maintenance backlog between $11 billion and $12 billion since 2010.

How busy are parks?
The NPS saw 318.2 million recreation visits in 2018, the third highest total since record keeping started in 1904. In the past five years, there have been close to 1.6 billion recreational visits to national parks.

By the numbers around the National Park System in 2018:

- 13,950,759 overnight stays
- 28 parks set a new record for visitation
- 17 parks broke a record they set in 2017
- 9 parks have more than 5 million recreation visits

Parks with high visitation that also have the most deferred maintenance:
- Great Smoky Mountain National Park
- Grand Canyon National Park
- Yellowstone National Park
- Yosemite National Park
- Rocky Mountain National Park
- National Mall and Memorial Parks

How Parks impact your community

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