



Support H.R. 6510 / Restore Our Parks and Public Lands Act

September 12, 2018

Dear Representative,

Since 1919, National Parks Conservation Association (NPCA) has been the leading voice of the American people in protecting and enhancing our National Park System. On behalf of our more than 1.3 million members and supporters nationwide, I urge you to **support H.R. 6510**, Restore Our Parks and Public Lands Act, when it comes before the House Natural Resources Committee for a markup on September 13th.

The National Park Service is suffering from nearly \$12 billion in deferred maintenance needs including run-down trails; crumbling roads and bridges; deteriorating historic buildings, memorials and monuments; and outdated and unsafe water, sewer and electrical systems. This challenge is largely due to both aging infrastructure that in many cases has outlived its life-cycle and inadequate federal funding over decades. Dedicating funding to repair our parks supports both the preservation of our heritage and the tourism economy that relies on accessible and functional park facilities.

NPCA is pleased to see the bipartisan support for addressing our national parks and other public lands pressing maintenance needs with the introduction of the Restore Our Parks and Public Lands Act. This legislation dedicates up to \$6.5 billion to public lands infrastructure repairs over five years. 80% of these funds are dedicated to the National Park Service, which would fund most of our parks' high priority projects. The funding is derived from 50% of miscellaneous receipts up to \$1.3 billion annually from onshore and offshore energy royalties that are not otherwise dedicated to other purposes including the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) and the Historic Preservation Fund, two programs that NPCA also supports. Of note, LWCF would still be subject to appropriations as it is now, so we continue to urge permanent reauthorization and dedicated funding for that successful program.

H.R. 6510 does not limit usage of funds to specific years; if funds are not used immediately in any particular year, they can be temporarily deposited into an interest-bearing account. This ensures the National Park Service and other Department of the Interior lands agencies can have the time required to plan for and effectively address backlog projects because many of the largest, high-priority projects will require multi-year funding. The bill also ensures parity between transportation and non-transportation projects, and no more than ten percent of the bill's funds may be used for administrative costs. Public donations may be used to augment federal investments in the fund.

Thank you for considering our views. For further information, please contact John Garder at 202.454.3395 or jgarder@npca.org

Sincerely,

Kristen Brengel
Vice President, Government Affairs