



**House Natural Resources Subcommittee on Federal Lands:  
Legislative Hearing on H.R. 2584 and H.R. 5210**

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Chairman McClintock, Ranking Member Hanabusa, and members of the Subcommittee, I appreciate the opportunity to appear before you today to share the views of the Motorcycle Industry Council, and views of other outdoor recreation interests, on potential solutions to reduce the deferred maintenance and repair backlog of the Department of the Interior, as well as that of the U.S. Forest Service.

The Motorcycle Industry Council is a not-for-profit, national trade association representing over 600 manufacturers, distributors, dealers, and retailers of motorcycles, scooters, motorcycle/ATV parts, accessories, and related goods and services, and members of allied trades.

Our member companies and their customers - over 50 million off-highway motorcycle, side-by-side, and all-terrain vehicle riders, many of whom recreate on Federal lands - are very concerned over the Department of the Interior's and the U.S. Forest Service's growing deferred maintenance and repair backlogs. Roads, trails, campgrounds, water systems and more recreational infrastructure suffer from this accumulated problem that is negatively impacting visitor access, enjoyment, and safety on public lands for the rapidly growing community of outdoor recreation enthusiasts. In 2017, 330 million people visited the 417 NPS sites across the country. The NPS completed over \$650 million in maintenance and repair work in FY 2017, but aging facilities, high visitation, and resource constraints have kept the maintenance backlog between \$11 billion and \$12 billion since 2010.

The National Park Legacy Restoration Fund (H.R. 2584) and the National Park Restoration Act (H.R. 5210) are significant efforts to overcome the National Park Service's \$11.6 billion maintenance backlog, an amount that is nearly four times the agency's annual appropriations. Directing Federal receipts associated with the sale of publicly-owned energy resources towards addressing the maintenance backlog creates an opportunity to make a strategic contribution to our National Parks early in the second century of the National Park Service.

Establishing a sustainable source of funding for rebuilding recreational infrastructure is an investment, not an expense. A recent report from the Department of Commerce's Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA) calculated the outdoor recreation industry's annual gross output to be \$673 billion, surpassing other sectors such as agriculture, petroleum and coal, and computer and electronic products. The BEA report also determined that outdoor recreation makes up 2.0 percent of the U.S. GDP, and the outdoor recreation industry's GDP has increased an average of 4.4 percent since 2012, significantly greater than the 3.6 percent average increase in the overall U.S. GDP.

The outdoor recreation economy is among our Nation's largest economic sectors, and public lands are the backbone of our industry. These measures you are considering today would be the largest investment the Nation has ever made in its National Park system. National Parks and other public lands and waters account for \$45 billion in economic output and about 396,000 jobs nationwide. These public areas provide significant economic benefits, particularly for nearby rural communities. Ensuring

maintenance of roads and trails is critical in many rural areas of the county that depend on those routes to provide access to important energy structures or infrastructure, connectivity for residents, and tourism.

While the Park Service holds the largest share of the Interior Department's overall \$16 billion maintenance backlog, it's important to shine a light on other land management agencies that are struggling to address mounting deferred maintenance backlogs from a lack of adequate resources. The Bureau of Land Management's (BLM) total backlog is estimated at \$810 million, which has increased 65 percent over the past decade. It's important to note that the BLM is one of the few federal agencies that brings in more revenue than it spends through timber harvesting, livestock grazing, recreation, and energy development. The U.S. Forest Service's \$5.49 billion backlog interferes with the agency's ability to provide access and safe passage on its more than 158,000 miles of trails. Due to growing visitor use and limited funding compounded by the rising costs of wildfire suppression and the associated decrease of nearly 40 percent in non-fire personnel, the Forest Service lacks capacity and resources for achieving a sustainable trail system.

The Forest Service currently manages 192.9 million acres, and the BLM manages 248.3 million acres of public land and administers about 700 million acres of federal subsurface mineral estate throughout the nation. Maintenance of Forest Service and BLM roads and trails is imperative because these two agencies maintain multiple-use missions that support a variety of activities and programs. Through this multiple use management model, the outdoor recreation industry thrives on Forest Service and BLM lands. To emphasize that point, more than 99% of BLM-administered lands are available for recreational use with no fees. When one Forest Service or BLM road or trail goes out of service, it is indefinitely placed on the backlog and can negatively impact a number of outdoor recreational pursuits, energy development, livestock grazing, and timber harvesting.

The longer this systemic problem continues, the more challenging it will become for the Departments of the Interior and Agriculture to manage public lands in a way that maximizes opportunities for commercial, recreational, and conservation activities. Without including the Forest Service and BLM in the solution, the agencies will continue to be limited in their ability to carry out their multiple-use approach that enables prioritization of energy independence, shared conservation stewardship, putting Americans back to work, and serving the American public.

The MIC and our outdoor recreational business community partners urge the committee and Administration to broaden this funding measure to include maintenance of roads and trails managed by the Forest Service and BLM in order to establish a comprehensive solution to our public lands management agencies' deferred maintenance backlogs.

I thank the subcommittee for allowing me to testify on this all too important issue. We look forward to working with Congress and the Administration to support maintenance of roads and trails on NPS, Forest Service, and BLM lands. Mr. Chairman, this concludes my statement. I would be pleased to answer any questions you or other members of the Subcommittee may have.