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A statue stands on Little Round Top, which is popular with visitors but needs millions of dollars in upkeep.

Gettysburg National Military Park

Pennsylvania

Overview

Gettysburg National Military Park preserves the site of the deadliest battle fought on American soil. The three days of fighting in and around this town in south-central Pennsylvania in July 1863 marked the turning point of the Civil War and was immortalized in President Abraham Lincoln's Gettysburg Address.

In addition to protecting the land where more than 35,000 Union and Confederate soldiers were killed or wounded, the park's visitor center and guided tours explain how the fighting unfolded, including key engagements such as Pickett's Charge, Devil's Den, and Little Round Top. Equally important, they put these stories into the broader context of a nation struggling with slavery and its effort to remain united.

Despite its significance, Gettysburg National Military Park lacks the funds to properly maintain its historic structures and landscapes. The park's backlog of infrastructure repairs totals \$55.5 million.

Maintenance challenges

The biggest deferred maintenance needs, totaling \$16.2 million, are associated with the roads that enable visitors to view battle sites. West Confederate Avenue, which traverses the rebel lines, including the launching point for Pickett's Charge, needs \$1.6 million in repairs. Hancock Avenue, where the 1st Minnesota Volunteer Infantry Regiment staged an attack against 5-to-1 odds to hold the Union line, requires more than \$900,000 to resurface.

Gettysburg's landscapes also need investment to undo decades of damage and achieve the park's goal of returning them to their 1863 appearance. Undesignated trails created by visitors have caused erosion, damaged historic earthworks, and compacted soil so that nothing can grow. In other spots, nonnative plants have supplanted indigenous varieties. About half of the \$16 million in deferred landscape work is to restore Little Round Top and Devil's Den.

More than \$11 million is needed to rehabilitate many historic buildings at Gettysburg. This includes \$400,000 to repair the Rose farmhouse, which Confederate troops used as cover during the battle and also served as a field hospital for soldiers.

And trails and sidewalks need more than \$500,000 in deferred maintenance, including \$98,000 for the trails around the 20th Maine Infantry Regiment's position on Little Round Top. From this rocky hill that marked the extreme end of the Union line, the Mainers fought off repeated Confederate assaults and led a bayonet charge that drove them off.

Visitors usually don't see other significant overdue repairs that present challenges for park staff. For example, the park's water system needs more than \$2 million in upgrades, and \$1.6 million is needed to update computer systems.

“ As the park's lead partner, Gettysburg Foundation has provided more than \$8 million over the past seven years for land preservation, artifact conservation, and landscape rehabilitation, but there is so much more that needs to be done. ... Routine maintenance of our landscape and the monuments is essential to tell the story of this place.”

Barbara Sardella, interim president, Gettysburg Foundation

Recommendations

To address the deferred maintenance needs at Gettysburg and other NPS sites in Pennsylvania and 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.

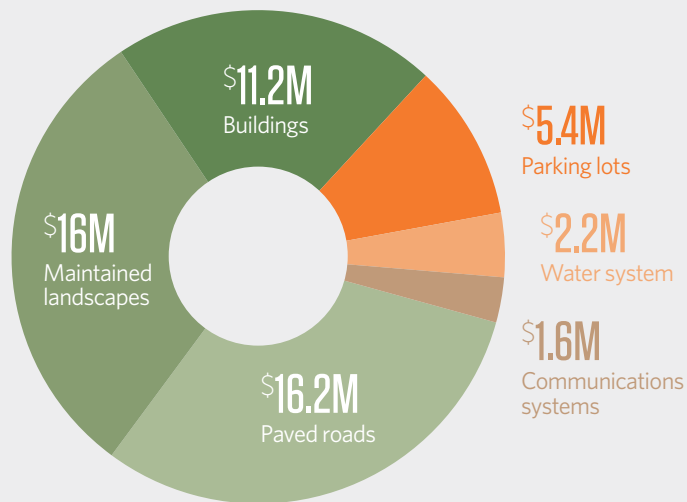
Table 1
 Gettysburg National Military Park Facts
 2016

Visitor spending	\$70.1 million
Jobs created by visitor spending	953
Economic output	\$94 million
Labor income	\$37 million
Visits	1,091,320
Deferred maintenance (fiscal year 2015)	\$55.3 million

Sources: National Park Service, "Annual Visitation Report by Years: 2006 to 2016," accessed June 14, 2017, [https://irma.nps.gov/Stats/SSRSReports/National%20Reports/Annual%20Visitation%20By%20Park%20\(1979%20-%20Last%20Calendar%20Year\)](https://irma.nps.gov/Stats/SSRSReports/National%20Reports/Annual%20Visitation%20By%20Park%20(1979%20-%20Last%20Calendar%20Year)); National Park Service, "Visitor Spending Effects," accessed June 14, 2017, <https://www.nps.gov/subjects/socialscience/vse.htm>; National Park Service, "NPS Deferred Maintenance Reports," accessed Aug. 19, 2016, <https://www.nps.gov/subjects/plandesignconstruct/defermain.htm>

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Figure 1
 Gettysburg National Military Park Needs Millions of Dollars for Infrastructure Repairs
 Key deferred maintenance



Note: This chart depicts the largest maintenance categories.

Source: Pew analysis of National Park Service data

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