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The historic Hammond-Cranz Farm house, on one of several farms at this NPS site, needs \$80,000 in repairs.

Cuyahoga Valley National Park

Ohio

Overview

Cuyahoga Valley National Park, covering 50 square miles in northeastern Ohio, is one of America's newest and smallest national parks. In the 1960s, communities in the Cuyahoga River Valley that were concerned about development pushed Congress to set aside remaining open space as a national recreation area. Lawmakers designated these tracts of forest, wetlands, and farmland as a national park in 2000. In addition to hiking and wildlife viewing, visitors can ride a scenic railroad, hear live music, attend an art exhibit, play golf, and ski. Unfortunately, the park has \$42 million in deferred maintenance, including repairs to historic farm structures.

Maintenance challenges

The 226 buildings in the park have almost \$24 million in deferred maintenance. These include historic properties that are part of the Countryside Initiative, comprising 11 farms owned by the National Park Service (NPS) but managed by park partners who agree to adopt sustainable agricultural practices. One of these, the Hammond-Cranz Farm, needs \$80,000 to repair its barn and cider, smoke, and carriage houses that date to 1810. The Albert Cofta Farmstead, listed on the National Register of Historic Places, needs more than \$3 million in repairs.

Because the park hugs the Cuyahoga River and its many tributaries, trail bridges are necessary to give visitors full access. More than \$3 million is needed to repair these structures. The Old Carriage Trail has been closed since 2009 after three bridges became corroded and unsafe. Replacements are needed to enable visitors to access the area.

A popular way to navigate this linear park is on the Cuyahoga Valley Scenic Railroad. Founded in 1871 by entrepreneurs from Cleveland, Akron, and Canton, Ohio, the railway snaked along the Cuyahoga River Valley, providing an important passenger link among the three cities. It also connected coal fields in Stark and Tuscarawas counties to Cleveland's iron mills and other growing industries. Railway service ended in 1962 and was revived in the early 1970s. A nonprofit runs it now, allowing hikers, bikers, and other passengers to access many parts of the park. Unfortunately, the rail system needs \$5 million to repair bridges and other features.



Cuyahoga Valley National Park is a destination for both area residents and tourists from around Ohio and across the country. Its economic value is significant, and properly maintaining its features is very important to attracting visitors."

Hannah Fritzman Belsito, Destination Cleveland

Recommendations

To address the deferred maintenance needs at Cuyahoga Valley and other NPS sites in Ohio 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
Cuyahoga Valley National Park Facts
 2016

Visitor spending	\$69.7 million
Jobs created by visitor spending	1,100
Economic output	\$87.2 million
Labor income	\$31.2 million
Visits	2,423,391
Deferred maintenance (fiscal year 2015)	\$42.7 million

Note: This case study was updated on Dec. 13, 2017, to correct the number of visitors.

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>

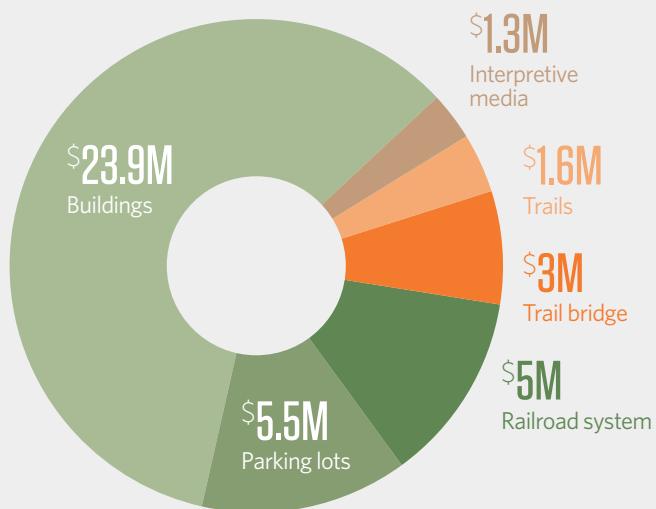
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Figure 1
Cuyahoga Valley National Park Needs Millions for Infrastructure Repairs
 Key deferred maintenance

Note: This chart depicts the largest maintenance categories by dollar value.

Source: Pew analysis of National Park Service data

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The Pew Charitable Trusts works alongside the National Parks Conservation Association, the National Trust for Historic Preservation, and other national and local groups to ensure that our national park resources are maintained and protected for future generations to enjoy.

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For further information, please visit:
pewtrusts.org/nationalparks

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