



Cultural Resources Challenge Act

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118th Congress

What are cultural resources & heritage?

- **Cultural resources are the legacy we inherit**, whether through stories, physical places, objects, beliefs, practices, and more and they can provide individuals and communities with a sense of belonging, continuity, and connection to their roots.
- Supporting and maintaining our cultural resources brings benefits to our communities including increasing community wellbeing, driving local economic development, preserving knowledge, and improving environmental stewardship.
 - For example, heritage tourism can drive economic growth — in 2013 the National Heritage Area Program helped bring in **\$12 billion and created 148,000 jobs**.

Our cultural resources are under threat!

- Cultural resources are abundant and prevalent — but in need of protection. **There are 428 National Park Service (NPS) units that draw over 300 million visitors each year** and 100% of these units manage historic and cultural resources in some way.
- However today our many cultural resources face ongoing threats.
 - Underfunding and staffing can lead to neglect and lost history.
 - **As of 2023, NPS has lost 25% of the historians employed in 2011**
 - Between 1995 to 2008, NPS cultural resource funding levels dropped by 19%
 - Devastating accidents, natural disasters, and increasingly climate change hurts our ability to preserve cultural resources.
 - 92% of NPS's 88 coastal units report significant sea-level rise
 - 66 NPS facilities need emergency resource relocation due to extreme weather

Congress can help safeguard history!

The Cultural Resources Challenge Act of 2024 would help by:

- ❖ **Requiring NPS to enhance cultural resources** stewardship including by addressing staff shortages, updating NPS guidance on cultural resources research and engagement, advancing resource preservation and interpretation, providing technical assistance, and encouraging interdisciplinary work and skills sharing.
- ❖ **Directing NPS to develop curriculum** to provide training to all park managers and staff with responsibilities for managing and preserving cultural resources on management best practices and cultural competency.
- ❖ **Establishing a competitive NPS grant program** focused on the resiliency and accessibility of cultural resources that prioritizes projects which address the role of climate change, involve underrepresented groups in historical preservation, engage with storytelling, and empower future generations to engage in historic preservation.

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