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David Vela  
Director (Acting)  
National Park Service  
1849 C St. N.W.  
Washington, DC 20240

August 3, 2020

Dear Director Vela:

I am writing on behalf of the Board of Directors and Members of US/ICOMOS to urge that the NPS abide by the directive in the FY2021 House Appropriation Committee Report, which urges NPS to prioritize deferred maintenance funding for the national park system units that are also World Heritage Sites.

With recent passage of the Great American Outdoors Act, NPS will soon begin to receive a major infusion of new funding for the next five years to address its huge backlog in heretofore unfunded maintenance work in our national parks.

We have recently combed through the *NPS Infrastructure Fact Sheets* that cover the 19 units of the national park system that are also inscribed onto the World Heritage List. Collectively these 19 units of the system have compiled \$3,957,000,000 in unfunded maintenance needs. This total is nearly one-third of the total NPS backlog and cries out for immediate attention.

These 19 NPS units are among the best known and most highly visited parks in the USA, both for domestic and international travelers. In the next several years, as the USA and the world begin to recover from the COVID-19 pandemic, we assume that both domestic and international travel will resume, and as a nation, we ought to strive to have restored our most iconic parks - our World Heritage Sites - to pristine condition, and thus be able to proudly welcome the world to these places that demonstrate outstanding universal values.

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Комитет США Международного совета по вопросам памятников и достопримечательностей

US/ICOMOS has recently embarked on a new series of Zoom-based webinars that will cover every US World Heritage Site over the next several years. We hope to engage NPS senior managers in presenting these World Heritage Sites that are national parks to the audience, and to be able to report on progress in eliminating this egregious unfunded maintenance backlog.

We stand ready to work with you and your other professional managers to make this a successful program and to inform the public of your accomplishments.

With best wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'D. Comer', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Douglas C. Comer, Ph.D.