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**ENR Committee Passes King Legislation on National Parks  
Deferred Maintenance Bill, Advances Permanent Reauthorization  
for LWCF**

*King, bipartisan colleagues introduced the Restore Our Parks Act to address the \$12 billion backlog in national parks, including nearly \$60 million for Acadia*

*Committee also approved King-backed legislation to permanently reauthorize and fully fund the Land and Water Conservation Fund*

**WASHINGTON D.C.** – Today, U.S. Senator Angus King (I-Maine), Ranking Member of the Energy and Natural Resources Subcommittee on National Parks, applauded the ENR Committee’s passage of the [Restore Our Parks Act](#), a bipartisan bill led by Senators King, Rob Portman (R-Ohio), Mark Warner (D-Va.) and Lamar Alexander (R-Tenn.) that aims to address the [\\$12 billion deferred maintenance backlog](#) at the National Park Service (NPS). The Committee also approved legislation cosponsored by Senator King to permanently reauthorize and fully fund the Land and Wildlife Conservation Fund (LWCF). Both pieces of legislation will now be sent to the full Senate for consideration.

“Last month, I accompanied the Acting Director of the National Park Service to Acadia National Park – and while the views were as beautiful as ever, the situation behind the scenes is not so picturesque as the park grapples with serious maintenance backlogs,” **said Senator King.**

“Acadia has delayed a number of important projects worth a total of \$60 million that are vital to ensuring that visitors can continue to enjoy the park’s natural wonders with a high quality visitor experience. It’s not alone in that struggle, as national parks across the country currently face a backlog of \$12 billion. These lands are a national promise to leave behind a better world than we received, but these massive backlogs show that we’re not currently living up to that

responsibility. Today's markup is a step in the right direction for a bipartisan bill that will address this backlog and protect our national parks for future generations."

The Restore Our Parks Act consensus proposal is the product of bipartisan discussions among the senators who had previously introduced similar bills, the National Park Service Legacy Act (Warner/Portman) and the National Park Restoration Act (Alexander/King), and has been gaining momentum since its introduction; the legislation is cosponsored by 30 Senators and is supported by U.S. Secretary of the Interior Ryan Zinke, the National Parks Conservation Association, the Pew Charitable Trusts' 'Restore America's Parks' campaign, and the Outdoor Industry Association, among others. Last month, Senator King joined Acting Director of the National Park Service, Dan Smith, on a tour of Acadia National Park to assess the park's critical maintenance needs that would be funded if Congress passed the *Restore Our Parks Act*. This legislation would have a positive impact on Acadia specifically, which has a maintenance backlog of approximately \$60 million, and the surrounding communities like Bar Harbor. A companion bill, the Restore our Parks and Public Lands Act, has been introduced in the House.

More specifically, the *Restore Our Parks Act* would establish the "National Park Service Legacy Restoration Fund" to reduce the maintenance backlog by allocating existing revenues the government receives from on and offshore energy development. This consensus legislation has been praised by witnesses at a [Subcommittee on National Parks hearing in July](#). Senator King is an steadfast supporter of the National Park System, and during his tenure in the Senate has pushed for modernizations to make the parks more accessible to future generations, including the implementation of a pilot program to make entrance passes for parks available online, that was [lauded in a Subcommittee hearing last year](#). The program has been particularly successful in Acadia National Park (ANP); Acadia accounts for 72% of total sales in the pilot program, and online purchases accounted for 10% of the park's total entrance fee receipts in 2016.

"Additionally, today we took an important step to defend our public lands by approving a permanent reauthorization of the Land and Water Conservation Fund," **Senator King added**. "LWCF has been a vital protection for public lands for the last half century, helping Americans from all walks of life access the natural beauty of our country. This is important legislation that transcends partisanship, as shown by the overwhelming support within the Committee for this permanent reauthorization. In all of the noise, sometimes quieter work can go unnoticed, but today's step to permanently reauthorize and fully fund the LWCF should be commended as an important, bipartisan accomplishment."

Senator King has been a strong supporter of the LWCF, and in August joined a bipartisan group of Senators in sending a letter to the Senate Majority and Minority Leaders [requesting a permanent reauthorization of the program](#) before its expiration on September 30, 2018. The LWCF has supported more than 42,000 state and local projects in communities across the country. The program is funded by a portion of federal oil and gas royalties, operating without any taxpayer funding. However, according to the letter, since its founding in 1965 more than \$21 billion has been diverted from the LWCF trust fund to other purposes.

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