



The Great American Outdoors Act is providing crucial funding – up to \$6.65 billion over five years – to fix our national parks’ crumbling roads, decaying buildings, outdated water systems and many more repair needs. This bill, along with other funding sources, is ensuring our parks can continue to welcome millions of visitors each year and protect the natural and cultural resources that tell our nation’s history.

Alcatraz Island NATIONAL PARK



BY THE NUMBERS:



\$36 million

investment from the GAOA to repair projects



1.6 million

annual visitors



22 acre island

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Rising from the fog that often hangs over San Francisco Bay, Alcatraz Island is one of the most-visited sites in San Francisco. This small, rugged island has a colorful and rich history: First it was a fort, then a red brick military prison, then a cement maximum security federal penitentiary, and finally the site of a 19-month Native American protest. The prison closed in 1963—largely because it was expensive to operate. Facilities had deteriorated significantly because of the corrosive salty marine air.

Alcatraz became a unit of Golden Gate National Recreation Area in 1972 and now welcomes 1.6 million visitors annually. The busiest summer days can bring more than 5,000 people to the 22-acre island. Each ferry, operated by concession partner Alcatraz Cruises, carries up to 500 passengers. Everyone exits on a wharf that was initially constructed in 1886 and upgraded for the prison in 1939. (Prisoners coming to the island arrived in a train car on the ferry, exiting the train car once it was on the wharf.) After disembarking from the ferry, today’s visitors walk from the wharf to the Cell House—a quarter-mile stroll that ascends about 13 stories in elevation. The wharf, roughly the size of two football fields, supports

Building 64, which once provided accommodations for military officers and today houses ranger offices and a bookstore.

People visit the iconic island for a variety of reasons: to hear and read stories of incarceration, justice, and our common humanity; to enjoy natural beauty; and to tour the former prison, touching its concrete walls and experiencing the isolation of the island.

Regardless of the reason, everyone who visits Alcatraz—visitors, park personnel, concessionaires, and park partners—accesses the island via the wharf. The wharf is the only way onto the island. In the event of an emergency, it’s also the only way off.



THE CHALLENGE: a harsh environment corroding historic structures, an earthquake-prone city, and a wharf in disrepair

Alcatraz Island National Historic Landmark District sits in the middle of a cold bay with strong currents and harsh weather conditions. It's an unfriendly environment to historic structures and one that demands a regular maintenance schedule. But that hasn't been possible given the park's maintenance backlog. The wharf—the only point of egress to and from this popular tourist attraction—is a critical part of the visitor and staff experience. But the historic piles, beams, and slabs are in fair or poor condition, with varying degrees of damage. The wharf has never been rehabilitated. When it was built, nobody imagined that it would one day support millions of visitors. The wharf builders also didn't consider—near a city known for its



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earthquakes—the importance of seismic strengthening.

THE PROJECT

Through an investment that is approximately \$36 million, the Great American Outdoors Act will address over \$23.8 million in deferred maintenance associated with this facility. This project is the first major rehabilitation of the wharf carried out by the Park Service since it acquired the property. The work, which will be completed in phases, will include repair of the historic steel-cased concrete piles, concrete beams, and concrete slabs. Two new seismic resisting elements will be installed to bring the wharf up to a seismic Risk Category III structure. This project has also been supported by the Golden Gate National Parks Conservancy, the park's non-profit support group, which contributed almost \$2 million towards planning and design.

THE IMPACT

Last November, Secretary of the Interior Deb Haaland toured Alcatraz and other Golden Gate

projects and highlighted how critical infrastructure investments are helping improve visitor experiences, maintenance operations, and public safety. The



work represents a big step for the park in addressing its maintenance backlog. When complete, the wharf project will join a list of several other recent projects on the island involving upgrades and seismic strengthening. All of these projects significantly improve both the visitor experience and protection of cultural resources on the island. The wharf investment will enhance public safety and access, as well as historic preservation and interpretation. When the day comes that the rumble of an earthquake reaches Alcatraz, the historic landing will be fortified.

The Great American Outdoors Act is successfully repairing infrastructure at hundreds of parks across the country. However, with a nearly \$22 billion backlog, much more is needed. We urge Congress to extend the Legacy Restoration Fund for an additional five years.

Preserving Our Past.



Protecting Our Future.