

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

September 24, 2026

The Honorable Susan Collins
Chair
Senate Committee on Appropriations
U.S. Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Patty Murray
Vice Chair
Senate Committee on Appropriations
U.S. Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Tom Cole
Chair
House Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Ranking Member
House Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chair Collins, Vice Chair Murray, Chair Cole, and Ranking Member DeLauro:

Over the past year, Grand Canyon National Park and the surrounding landscapes have suffered a devastating series of disasters that have damaged critical infrastructure and disrupted communities across the region. Three weeks ago, catastrophic flash floods caused loss of life and extensive damage across the Park, even as recovery efforts continue from the Dragon Bravo and White Sage Fires that tore across the landscape last summer. These successive disasters have created recovery needs that cannot be adequately addressed through existing National Park Service (NPS) resources. We therefore request that the Committees provide the resources needed to repair damaged infrastructure, address ongoing hazards, safely restore visitor access and services, and ensure this national treasure remains safe and accessible for generations to come.

The Grand Canyon is a defining feature of Arizona and a cornerstone of our National Park System, drawing millions of visitors from every state and around the world. The park supports nearly 10,000 local jobs and generates approximately \$1 billion in economic output.¹ When disasters close trails, lodging, or entire portions of the park, those impacts extend well beyond park boundaries to families and communities across northern Arizona and southern Utah.

On August 29, a severe flash flood tore through Bright Angel Canyon and the Phantom Ranch area of Grand Canyon National Park, killing multiple people and causing extensive damage to critical park infrastructure. Nearly every footbridge across Bright Angel Creek was destroyed, and significant portions of the water intake and pipeline that supply the South Rim were

¹ Grand Canyon Trust, "Grand Canyon National Park Economic Impact Reports by Year," September 2025.
<https://www.grandcanyontrust.org/resources/grand-canyon-national-park-economic-impact-reports-year/>

damaged.² These impacts forced the park to close portions of the inner canyon, implement water restrictions, and temporarily suspend all overnight lodging and restaurants. This has disrupted park operations and created additional challenges for workers, families, and small businesses that depend on Grand Canyon tourism.

These are many of the same communities that have spent the past year recovering from last summer's fires on the North Rim. The Dragon Bravo Fire burned nearly 150,000 acres and destroyed more than 100 buildings and other structures, including the historic Grand Canyon Lodge.³ The White Sage Fire forced evacuations around Jacob Lake and temporarily cut off access to the North Rim.

Together, these fires disrupted an entire tourism season, damaged critical infrastructure, and imposed significant costs on communities across northern Arizona, but their impacts did not end when the flames were extinguished. The Dragon Bravo fire severely damaged several North Rim watersheds, resulting in increased risks for flash flooding and debris flow during heavy rainfall. The August 29 flooding is evidence that the consequences of these disasters can compound over time, creating new threats to infrastructure, visitor safety, and recovery efforts. A year after the fires, these same communities are being asked to recover from another major disaster before the last recovery is complete.

On the ground, NPS, first responders, and partner agencies are working in incredibly difficult conditions to clear debris, assess damaged infrastructure, restore a reliable water supply, and continue recovery from last year's devastating wildfires. Additional assessments are needed to fully scope the damage and determine the total cost of recovery and reconstruction. But given the destruction already documented and the significant needs remaining from last year's fires, **it is clear that the final cost will be substantial.** We strongly urge the Committee to ensure sufficient funding is available to address the emergency response, repair, reconstruction, and long-term recovery needs resulting from the August 29 flooding and the Dragon Bravo and White Sage Fires.

Grand Canyon National Park is one of our nation's greatest treasures, and over the last few years, it has suffered incredibly. Restoring this national treasure after successive disasters will require a sustained federal commitment that reflects its importance to Arizona and the nation. The communities of northern Arizona, the millions of Americans who visit the Grand Canyon every year, and future generations should not bear the consequences of an incomplete recovery because the resources were not available when they were needed.

² National Park Service, "Dragon Bravo Fire BAER Executive Summary," February 2026.

<https://www.nps.gov/articles/000/dragon-bravo-fire-baer-executive-summary.htm>

³ National Park Service, "Significant Flash Flooding Closes Phantom Ranch and North Kaibab Trail," August 2026.

<https://www.nps.gov/grca/learn/news/significant-flash-flooding-closes-phantom-ranch-and-north-kaibab-trail.htm>

We appreciate the Committees' consideration of this request and urge you to provide the resources necessary to restore Grand Canyon National Park and ensure that one of America's most treasured national parks remains safe and accessible for generations to come.

Sincerely,

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