

118TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

S. 2018

AN ACT

To require the Secretary of the Interior to conduct an assessment to identify locations in National Parks in which there is the greatest need for broadband internet access service and areas in National Parks in which there is the greatest need for cellular service, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
 2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Connect Our Parks
 5 Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. BROADBAND INTERNET ACCESS SERVICE AND CEL-**
 7 **LULAR SERVICE ASSESSMENT AND PLAN-**
 8 **NING IN NATIONAL PARKS.**

9 (a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

10 (1) APPROPRIATE COMMITTEES OF CON-
 11 GRESS.—The term “appropriate committees of Con-
 12 gress” means—

13 (A) the Committee on Energy and Natural
 14 Resources of the Senate;

15 (B) the Committee on Commerce, Science,
 16 and Transportation of the Senate;

17 (C) the Committee on Natural Resources
 18 of the House of Representatives; and

19 (D) the Committee on Energy and Com-
 20 merce of the House of Representatives.

21 (2) BROADBAND INTERNET ACCESS SERVICE.—
 22 The term “broadband internet access service” has
 23 the meaning given the term in section 8.1(b) of title
 24 47, Code of Federal Regulations (or a successor reg-
 25 ulation).

1 (3) CELLULAR SERVICE.—The term “cellular
2 service” has the meaning given the term in section
3 22.99 of title 47, Code of Federal Regulations (or a
4 successor regulation).

5 (4) NATIONAL PARK.—The term “National
6 Park” means a unit of the National Park System.

7 (5) SECRETARY.—The term “Secretary” means
8 the Secretary of the Interior, acting through the Di-
9 rector of the National Park Service.

10 (b) ASSESSMENT.—

11 (1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year after
12 the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary
13 shall complete an assessment of National Parks to
14 identify—

15 (A) locations in National Parks in which
16 there is the greatest need for broadband inter-
17 net access service, based on the considerations
18 described in paragraph (2)(A); and

19 (B) areas in National Parks in which there
20 is the greatest need for cellular service, based
21 on the considerations described in paragraph
22 (2)(B).

23 (2) CONSIDERATIONS.—

24 (A) BROADBAND INTERNET ACCESS SERV-
25 ICE.—For purposes of identifying locations in

1 National Parks under paragraph (1)(A), the
2 Secretary shall consider, with respect to each
3 National Park, the availability of broadband
4 internet access service in—

5 (i) housing;

6 (ii) administrative facilities and re-
7 lated structures;

8 (iii) lodging;

9 (iv) developed campgrounds; and

10 (v) any other location within the Na-
11 tional Park in which broadband internet
12 access service is determined to be nec-
13 essary by the superintendent of the Na-
14 tional Park.

15 (B) CELLULAR SERVICE.—For purposes of
16 identifying areas in National Parks under para-
17 graph (1)(B), the Secretary shall consider, with
18 respect to each National Park, the availability
19 of cellular service in any developed area within
20 the National Park that would increase—

21 (i) the access of the public to emer-
22 gency services and traveler information
23 technologies; or

24 (ii) the communications capabilities of
25 National Park Service employees.

1 (3) REPORT.—On completion of the assessment
2 under paragraph (1), the Secretary shall submit to
3 the appropriate committees of Congress, and make
4 available on the website of the Department of the
5 Interior, a report describing the results of the as-
6 sessment.

7 (c) PLAN.—

8 (1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 3 years after
9 the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary
10 shall develop a plan, based on the results of the as-
11 sessment completed under subsection (b) and subject
12 to paragraph (4)—

13 (A) to install broadband internet access
14 service infrastructure in certain locations in Na-
15 tional Parks; and

16 (B) to install cellular service equipment
17 and infrastructure in certain areas of National
18 Parks.

19 (2) CONSULTATION.—In developing the plan
20 under paragraph (1), the Secretary shall consult
21 with—

22 (A) affected Indian Tribes; and

23 (B) local stakeholders that the super-
24 intendent of the applicable National Park deter-
25 mines to be appropriate.

1 (3) REQUIREMENTS.—The plan developed
2 under paragraph (1) shall—

3 (A) provide for avoiding or minimizing im-
4 pacts to—

5 (i) National Park viewsheds;

6 (ii) cultural and natural resources;

7 (iii) the visitor experience;

8 (iv) other resources or values of the
9 National Park; and

10 (v) historic properties and the
11 viewsheds of historic properties;

12 (B) provide for infrastructure providing
13 broadband internet access service or cellular
14 service to be located in—

15 (i) previously disturbed or developed
16 areas; or

17 (ii) areas zoned for uses that would
18 support the infrastructure;

19 (C) provide for the use of public-private
20 partnerships—

21 (i) to install broadband internet ac-
22 cess service or cellular service equipment;
23 and

24 (ii) to provide broadband internet ac-
25 cess service or cellular service;

1 (D) be technology neutral; and

2 (E) in the case of broadband internet ac-
 3 cess service, provide for broadband internet ac-
 4 cess service of at least—

5 (i) a 100-Mbps downstream trans-
 6 mission capacity; and

7 (ii) a 20-Mbps upstream transmission
 8 capacity.

9 (4) LIMITATION.—Notwithstanding paragraph
 10 (1), a plan developed under that paragraph shall not
 11 be required to address broadband internet access
 12 service or cellular service in any National Park with
 13 respect to which the superintendent of the National
 14 Park determines that there is adequate access to
 15 broadband internet access service or cellular service,
 16 as applicable.

Passed the Senate December 18 (legislative day, De-
 cember 16), 2024.

Attest:

Secretary.

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