



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Death Valley National Park

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Death Valley National Park News Release

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Scotty's Castle Update

DEATH VALLEY, CA – The National Park Service (NPS) has received funding and permits to move ahead with several major projects to repair Scotty's Castle.

A flash flood on October 18, 2015 severely damaged the road, utilities, and historic buildings at Scotty's Castle. The NPS has temporarily closed the area to public access until repairs are substantially complete, likely in 2020.

"People ask why it's taking so long," said Abby Wines, management assistant for Death Valley National Park. "I don't think they understand how much damage happened in the flood. We had many decisions to make about how to do the repairs. Scotty's Castle is such a special historic place. It's better to do this right than to do this fast."

The National Park Service (NPS) brought in historic specialists, architects, and engineers to provide designs. For larger projects, the consultants provided several alternatives. NPS staff then chose the preferred alternative by comparing their advantages.

At that point, the park incorporated the preferred designs into documents called Environmental Assessments (EA) that were available for review by the public, the State Historic Preservation Office, and others. This consultation is required by the National Environmental Policy Act.

The NPS Regional Director gave the green light for several projects which have cleared the review process. Contractors might start working on Bonnie Clare Road as soon as September. Work on Scotty's Castle's water system, sewer system, and electrical system should start later this fall.

E X P E R I E N C E Y O U R A M E R I C A

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The park has had recent good news about funding. Death Valley National Park received confirmation of \$5,394,000 in funding to repair flood damage to Scotty's Castle Visitor Center. While announcing funding for several national parks, Secretary of the Interior Ryan Zinke said, "The President is a builder, he loves to build and he loves our National Parks, so it is a natural fit that the Administration is dedicating so much attention to rebuilding our aging parks infrastructure. These approved projects are more than just line items on an Excel spreadsheet. They have a tangible effect on a person's experience when visiting our nation's parks."

However, the Visitor Center project highlights why flood repairs are not as straightforward as they might sound. The NPS proposes to widen a historic opening from 3 feet to 14 feet wide. This will allow future flooding to pass through the L-shaped building without backing up into the interior of the historic building. However, it would involve a significant change in the appearance of the historic building. The California State Historic Preservation Office has not issued a final determination yet.

Death Valley National Park released a six-minute video recently that documents recent work. It can be viewed at go.nps.gov/DV/videos.

-www.nps.gov/deva-

Death Valley National Park is the homeland of the Timbisha Shoshone and preserves natural and cultural resources, exceptional wilderness, scenery, and learning experiences within the nation's largest conserved desert landscape and some of the most extreme climate and topographic conditions on the planet. About two-thirds of the park was originally designated as Death Valley National Monument in 1933. Today the park is enjoyed by about 1,300,000 people per year. The park is 3,400,000 acres – nearly as large as the state of Connecticut. Learn more at www.nps.gov/deva.

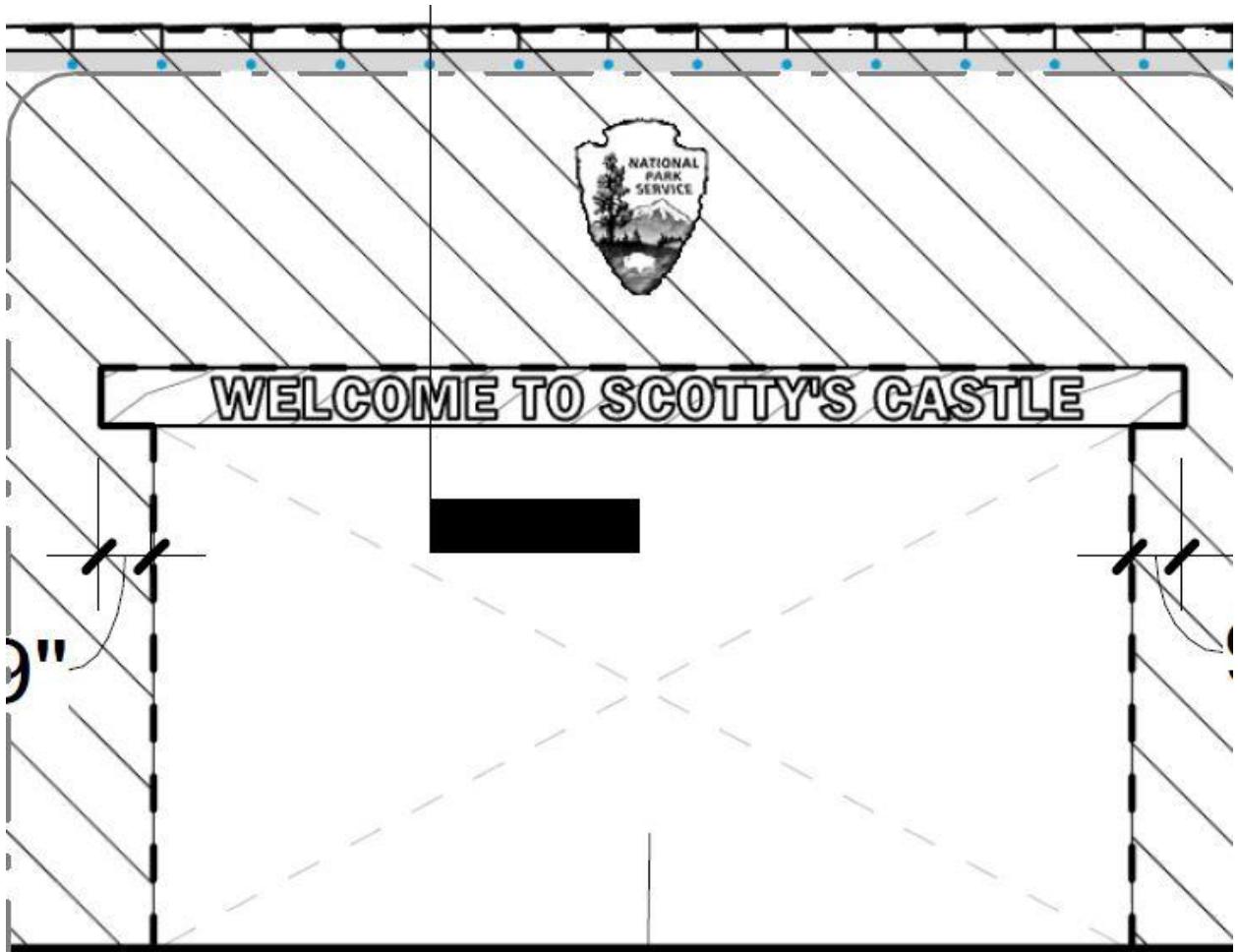


NPS photo

Photo of damage to Scotty's Castle Visitor Center breezeway caused by flood debris backing up behind it.

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Architect's concept by Anderson Hallas.

Proposal to widen the breezeway between the Scotty's Castle Visitor Center and the Longshed from 3 feet to 14 feet wide.

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