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**The Coalition Report**  
**Wednesday, March 22, 2023**

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**Coalition Actions**

The Coalition joined six organizations in signing [comments](#) written by the Southern Environmental Law Center to the superintendent of Cumberland Island National Seashore. This letter is a supplement to previous comments on the Visitor Use Management Plan and Environmental Assessment.

We also submitted [comments](#) to the National Park Service on its proposed rule to amend regulations for sport hunting and trapping in Alaska's national preserves. Among other things, the comments support prohibiting bear baiting, concurs with the proposal to reinstate the prohibition on methods of harvest that target predators for the purpose of increasing populations of prey species, and concurs with the proposed definition of trapping. Additionally, the Coalition submitted detailed [comments](#) to the NPS on an Environmental Assessment for the proposed rule on hunting and trapping in Alaska's national preserves.

We issued a [press release](#) to thank President Joe Biden for a proposed increase for the National Park Service in the Fiscal Year 2024 budget request. We also submitted written [testimony](#) for the record to the House Committee on Appropriations, Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies, in support of the President's budget request for Fiscal Year 2024.

The Coalition submitted [comments](#) to the Bureau of Land Management on its proposed Renewable Energy Strategy. Included in the comments are a recommendation to identify exclusion areas for renewable energy development, identify priority areas, and minimize

the use of variance areas. It also recommends this final strategy be applied in its final Environmental Impact Statement for the Lava Ridge project.

We joined with more than 40 organizations on a [letter](#) to the House Natural Resources Committee expressing opposition to H.R. 1355, the Transparency, Accountability, Permitting, and Production of American Resources Act. The bill would amend the National Environmental Policy Act and Mineral Leasing Act.

The Coalition joined [comments](#) expressing serious concerns to the Iowa Department of Natural Resources on their draft regional haze state implementation plan for the second period. Among other things, the comment letter identifies a series of fundamental flaws with the draft plan and expresses concern that it will not meet the requirements of the Clean Air Act.

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We may not have found a four-leaf clover in time for St. Patrick's Day, but we sure are lucky to have generous supporters like you all! If you're feeling extra lucky this week, please consider [giving a gift to the Coalition!](#)

### **[National/Regional NPS Updates](#)**

*A summary of news pertaining to management and oversight of the NPS, to current trends and issues affecting the National Park System and its programs, or intersecting with the parks on a more regional basis.*

- *Castner Range and Avi Kwa Ame established as national monuments* - On March 21, President Joe Biden established Castner Range National Monument and Avi Kwa Ame National Monument under the authority of the Antiquities Act. Castner Range will be managed by the U.S. Army and public access will open to the monument in phases, "as it is safe and appropriate." There are unexploded munitions due to its decades of use as a U.S. Army training locale. It is the first national monument managed by the U.S. military since the 1930s. Avi Kwa Ame will be co-managed by the Bureau of Land Management and the National Park Service. Source: [The White House](#), [Department of the Interior](#), [The Texas Tribune](#)
- *DOI addresses FOIA backlog* - On March 17, the Department of the Interior released its [2023 Chief Freedom of Information Act Officer Report](#). The report acknowledged that they processed a larger number of FOIA requests in Fiscal Year 2022 than previous years and that there has also been an increase in the number of requests. They also outlined systemic changes to capacity to be able to better support backlogs. The National Park Service received a 12% increase in FOIA requests in 2022 and processed more than any previous year. Source: [Department of the Interior](#)
- *Wildfire workforce reform* - In President Joe Biden's budget submittal to Congress for Fiscal Year 2024, significant funding would be provided to support the wildland firefighting workforce, including increases to firefighters' pay, hiring more personnel,

improving mental health support, and providing better housing for personnel.

Source: [Department of the Interior](#)

- *Legislation to protect bolts in Wilderness* - *Climbing Magazine* published [an article](#) about legislation to allow individual fixed anchors (i.e., bolts) for rock climbing/canyoneering in federally designated Wilderness. A proposed bill called "Protect America's Rock Climbing Act" is a response to recent wilderness management plans in several national parks interpreting bolts as "prohibited installations" under the Wilderness Act. Source: *Climbing*
- *\$2 million in maritime grants* - On March 16, the NPS, in partnership with the U.S. Department of Transportation's Maritime Administration (MARAD), announced \$2 million in maritime heritage grants for 12 preservation projects in nine states. Funding for the program comes from recycling vessels from MARAD's National Defense Reserve Fleet. The NPS administers the grant program through State Historic Preservation Offices. Source: [National Park Service Office of Communications](#)
- *"The cost of going cashless" at national parks* - *Frommer's* published [an article](#) about the growing trend of National Park Service units going to cashless systems that only allow fees to be paid by credit/debit cards or mobile payments. The article articulates the benefits of going cashless as reducing risk, transaction times, and errors. It also discusses the challenges, such as creating a barrier for low-income communities that may not have banking services and inevitable glitches due to power outages and technology. Source: *Frommer's*
- *Ongoing film permitting legal battle* - *WUFT*, an affiliate of *National Public Radio*, published [an article](#) about the ongoing legal battle around commercial filming in national park units. Currently, permits for any filming on federally owned land with the intent to generate income of any sort requires a permit. This comes after a 2022 federal appellate court decision reversed a lower court's decision that the permit requirement was unconstitutional. The case is being petitioned for decision by the U.S. Supreme Court. The article documents the murky middle ground of individuals netting very little money from social media channels and utilizing very little equipment to make their films, as well as the fees and bureaucracy required to obtain permits. Source: *WUFT*
- *Grants for Title I students* - The National Park Trust announced the award of 122 grants aimed at getting students from Title I schools into parks. Source: [National Park Trust](#)
- *Interview with 13-time national park artist-in-residence* - The *Santa Fe New Mexican* published [an interview](#) with David Halpern, a landscape photographer and 13-time NPS artist-in-residence, dating back to 1984. 800 of his images were recently added to the National Park Service History Collection at Harpers Ferry. Source:

### *Santa Fe New Mexican*

- *Op-ed against telework in the NPS* - *The Daily Sentinel* published [an op-ed](#) by Bruce Noble, a retired NPS employee with 33 years of service, arguing against telework among senior level staff at national park units because of its effects on productivity and morale. Source: *The Daily Sentinel*

### **Around the Parks**

*Reports are in alphabetical order by park/program name.*

**Editor note:** In the [3/8/2023 Coalition Report](#), we mistakenly reported that the SS *Savannah* was the first ship to cross the Atlantic, when, in fact, it was the first ship to cross the Atlantic *partially under steam power*. This was in connection with wreckage found offshore of Fire Island National Seashore. Thanks to Cassie Thomas for bringing it to our attention.

- *Acadia National Park* - Construction is going to begin soon on a new visitor's center and transit hub on Route 3 in Trenton, Maine, that would allow visitors to get information and ride the Island Explorer bus into the park. The project has been planned for over 20 years to mitigate congestion on Mount Desert Island. The site was acquired by Friends of Acadia in 2004 and has been home to the Island Explorer operations center since 2012. The Maine Department of Transportation purchased the parcel and awarded a \$27 million contract to Nickerson & O'Day of Brewer, Maine, to construct the visitor center and adjacent parking lot. It is being funded mostly by the Federal Transit Administration, with additional funds by MDOT, the NPS, and Friends of Acadia. The park will collaborate on the management of the facility with the Maine Tourism Association. The project is expected to be completed in May 2025. Source: [Bangor Daily News](#)
- *Acadia National Park* - The park is accepting expressions of interest to lease properties from mid-April through mid-November to house employees. Source: [Acadia National Park](#)
- *Alaska Region* - U.S. Senators Lisa Murkowski (R-AK) and Dan Sullivan (R-AK) and Representative Mary Sattler Peltola (D-AK) sent a letter to Interior Secretary Deb Haaland asking her to withdraw the NPS proposed rule that would regulate certain types of sport hunting and trapping in national preserves. [Also see "*Coalition Actions*" above.] Source: [U.S. Senator Dan Sullivan \(press release\)](#)
- *Bandelier National Monument* - An interagency effort has begun on construction of a new parking area and access road at the junction of New Mexico State Road 4 and East Jemez Road outside of White Rock to better align with an existing traffic light. The project will affect all existing parking at the Tsankawi unit, necessitating its temporary closure. While closed, the park will utilize the time to re-route the Tsankawi Loop Trail and mitigate social trails and impacts. The project is expected to be completed in late October. Source: [Bandelier National Monument](#)

- *Bandelier National Monument* - Due to a combination of wildfire and significant flooding events, native fish populations in the park were "wiped out." In 2018, the NPS, in collaboration with the New Mexico Department of Game and Fish, began reintroducing Rio Grande cutthroat trout. More recently, Rio Grande chub and sucker have also been reintroduced. Monitoring efforts have shown that the cutthroat population has not recovered as expected and macroinvertebrate populations have also remained in decline. The park is working to restore the riparian habitat to improve ecological conditions. On March 10, the park enacted a temporary parkwide fishing closure to support these efforts. Source: [Bandelier National Monument](#)
- *Black Canyon of the Gunnison National Park* - On April 14, the park will begin offering use permits for Red Rock Canyon Wilderness online on *Recreation.gov*. Source: [Black Canyon of the Gunnison National Park](#)
- *Cape Cod National Seashore* - The park is soon beginning work on the construction of two new bicycle path spurs in the Prince Lands area that will improve connections between the park and Provincetown. The contractor for the project is Henry General Contractors, Inc. Source: [Cape Cod National Seashore](#)
- *Cape Hatteras National Seashore* - *The Washington Post* published [an interactive article](#) about the ongoing erosion due to sea level rise in Rodanthe, North Carolina, resulting in the collapse of several houses in the last year, including one last week (see "Incidents" below). At least a dozen more houses remain in danger of collapse onto the beach, which is a part of Cape Hatteras. The article outlines the challenges to mitigating the issue on both a local and global scale. Source: *The Washington Post*
- *Cape Lookout National Seashore* - The park has installed a wave attenuation system on Harkers Island, which is designed to break up and reduce the force of incoming waves and protect historic structures at the park, such as the Cape Lookout Lighthouse. The system is a temporary solution until the Army Corps of Engineers is able to dredge the channel from Harkers Island to Barden Inlet, which will begin in November. Source: [The News & Observer](#)
- *Channel Islands National Park* - On March 15, the park announced a 10-year concession contract for boat travel to the park, awarded to Island Packers and starting January 1, 2024. Island Packers is a new company resulting from the merger of Island Packers Corporation (the current concession since 2011) and Superboat Incorporated. Under the new contract, the company will offer more convenience items on their vessels and make sustainability upgrades to the fleet, including a conversion to diesel-electric hybrid transmissions with solar charged batteries. Source: [Channel Islands National Park](#)

- *Cumberland Island National Seashore* - *The Current* ran [an article](#) about feral horses on the island. A group of advocates has threatened to sue to the NPS because they feel current management practices "amount to animal cruelty" under Georgia's Humane Care for Equines Act and the Georgia Equine Act. The park said that the herd functions as a wild population, including ebbs and flows to population due to environmental conditions, but nothing to indicate overall poor condition. There also concerns about the horse's impact on ecological systems. Source: *The Current*
- *Cuyahoga Valley National Park, New River Gorge National Park and Preserve* - North Wind Site Service of Morgantown, West Virginia, has been awarded a \$1.27 million federal contract to plug one abandoned gas well at New River Gorge and two at Cuyahoga Valley. Source: [The Dominion Post](#)
- *Death Valley National Park* - The park has selected Destination Death Valley, LLC, to operate visitor services at Stovepipe Wells Village. The concession contract will start on January 13, 2024 and go for 10 years. Source: [Inyo Register](#)
- *Denali National Park and Preserve, Gates of the Arctic National Park and Preserve, Wrangell-St Elias National Park and Preserve* - Scientists from the University of Alaska Fairbanks' Arctic Research Center utilized data from park weather stations and climate modeling to identify landslide risks in the three parks. The effects of global climate change, such as thawing permafrost and heavy precipitation, can create large slides. The research was recently published in the scientific journal, *Atmosphere*. Source: [KINY](#)
- *Everglades National Park* - *WUSF* published [an article](#) about the success of restoration efforts in the Everglades. After several decades and a multibillion dollar, multiagency effort, wildlife is starting to rebound and water flows are getting back to historic levels. Restoration efforts are ongoing, particularly in the western end of the Everglades. Source: *WUSF Public Media*
- *Gettysburg National Military Park* - Starting on April 1, the park will begin road construction on Visitor Center Drive from Taneytown Road to the Visitor Center, which will affect parking. A free shuttle bus will be available to help visitors get to the Museum and Visitor Center. The project is expected to be completed this summer. Source: [Gettysburg National Military Park](#)
- *Glacier National Park* - *KPAX* ran [an interview](#) with Superintendent Dave Roemer about priorities in the park, including vehicle reservations, co-stewardship agreements with the Blackfoot and Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes, and the reintroduction of bison into the landscape. Source: *KPAX*
- *Glacier National Park* - The park has announced construction projects for Summer 2023, including bridge rehabilitation/replacement and roadwork on Going-to-the-Sun Road. There will be some closures and delays as a result. There are also

several road and bridge projects in areas adjacent to the park that will involve traffic control. Source: [Glacier National Park](#)

- *Glen Canyon National Recreation Area* - *The New York Times* published [an essay](#) about an issue that is sparsely covered in Colorado River news coverage: silt. The accumulation of silt and formation of "mud glaciers" that can loosen under current record drought conditions are a threat to the water supply and dam infrastructure. Source: *The New York Times*
- *Grand Canyon National Park* - The park will soon begin work on a \$208 million project to repair and upgrade the Transcanyon Waterline. The first stage will focus on establishing construction infrastructure and staging areas at Grand Canyon Village. The project is expected to be completed in 2027. Source: [Associated Press](#)
- *Grand Portage National Monument* - On March 21, the NPS signed a Finding of No Significant Impact to realign Mile Creek Road and construct a new bridge over Grand Portage Creek. The existing historic bridge will remain in place and some of the old road will remain as a walking path. Source: [Grand Portage National Monument](#)
- *Great Smoky Mountains National Park* - The park has announced new shuttle services provided by local commercial businesses to locations in the park where visitor demand exceeds parking capacity. Source: [Great Smoky Mountains National Park](#)
- *Harriet Tubman National Historical Park* - The NPS is finishing up a \$5 million project to restore the Thompson Memorial A.M.E. Zion Church and parsonage on Parker Street. The work includes installing a new steeple and bell, replicating historic stenciling, installing an accessible lift, and reconstructing the parsonage's porch. The NPS and National Park Foundation funded the work. The church and parsonage are expected to open in September. Source: [AuburnPub.com](#)
- *Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park* - The eruption of Kīlauea has paused after 61 days of volcanic activity. The U.S. Geological Survey's Hawaiian Volcano Observatory found that lava is no longer flowing on the crater floor of Halemaumau. Source: [Los Angeles Times](#)
- *Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park* - The park has reopened some of the Mauna Loa Trail and Red Hill Cabin. Both were closed due to hazards from a volcanic eruption that lasted from November 27 to December 10, 2022. The part of the Mauna Loa Trail and backcountry wilderness above Red Hill Cabin remain closed due to hazards created by the eruption, including localized pockets of volcanic gas, thin layers of lava that can collapse, and new lava areas that make it difficult to navigate. Source: [Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park](#)

- *Hot Springs National Park* - On March 17, the Fordyce Bath House Visitor Center reopened to the public after a two-month closure to update 30-year-old exhibits. The project was funded by campground fees. The park will next install wayside exhibits in front of bath houses on Bathhouse Row at at Hot Springs Mountain Tower and complete a new interpretive film. Source: [The Sentinel-Record](#)
- *Indiana Dunes National Park* - *NWI.com* published [an article](#) about the economic benefits of the park on the region, as well as ongoing projects in the park, such as the remodeling of the Paul H. Douglas Center for Environmental Education, the restoration of the historic Union Station, and the construction of a bike trail connecting the park to local communities. Source: *NWI.com*
- *Isle Royale National Park* - The park is now accepting Commercial Use Authorization applications for the 2023 operating season for guided boating, diving, fishing, backpacking, and photography. CUAs will run two years. Applications are due by May 15. Source: [Isle Royale National Park](#)
- *Jimmy Carter National Historical Park* - *E&E News* published [an interview](#) with Superintendent Jill Stuckey about her relationship with former President Jimmy Carter, the management of the park, and a planned future addition of the Carters' home and garden to the site. The article also considers the effects of President Carter's transition into hospice care on the park and community. Source: *E&E News*
- *Joshua Tree National Park* - The park has created a new podcast called "Where Two Deserts Meet." The first five episodes are available now. Source: [Joshua Tree National Park](#)
- *Lake Mead National Recreation Area* - On March 10, the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation announced that it is finalizing \$250 million in water-saving deals that should preserve 10 feet of Lake Mead's declining water levels. The deals will primarily pay Lower Colorado River Basin farmers to forego some of their 2023 deliveries. The BOR is also working to fund on-farm efficiency improvements, such as canal liners and drip irrigation systems. The funding comes from a \$4 billion drought-relief fund in the Inflation Reduction Act. Source: [Arizona Central/Arizona Republic](#)
- *Lake Mead National Recreation Area* - U.S. Senators Jacky Rosen (D-NV), Catherine Cortez Masto (D-NV), Mark Kelly (D-AZ), and Kyrsten Sinema (I-AZ) sent a letter to the NPS Director Chuck Sams and Office of Management and Budget Director Shalanda Young asking that Lake Mead receive disaster recovery funding to address infrastructure needs to both protect the lake and allow the lake to be more accessible to visitors under current record-low water conditions. Lake Mead's visitation dropped by 2 million visitors between 2021 and 2022. Source: [Las Vegas Review-Journal](#)



- *Lake Mead National Recreation Area* - *Courthouse News Service* published [an article](#) about Overton, Nevada, an unincorporated community near the lake that has been heavily affected by record low lake levels and the corresponding drop in tourism to the area. The nearby Echo Bay boat launch has been closed all winter and plans to reopen are unclear. Source: *Courthouse News Service*
- *Mesa Verde National Park* - In April, the park will begin a project to demolish and replace a visitor contact station in the Wetherill Mesa area. The existing structure was damaged by the Pony Fire in August 2000. The area will be closed for the 2023 season. An additional waterline replacement project may extend the closure through 2024. Source: [National Parks Traveler](#)
- *Mojave National Preserve* - On March 20, the park began a major road construction project along 17.6 miles of Cima Road, requiring its closure for about a year. The \$24 million project will improve visitor safety and reduce mortality of the federally listed desert tortoise by motor vehicle impacts. Source: [Mojave National Preserve](#)
- *Mount Rainier National Park* - The park will transition to a fully cashless fee system for entrance fees and campgrounds, starting on May 26. Passes may also be purchased in advance at *Recreation.gov*. Source: [Mount Rainier National Park](#)
- *National Mall and Memorial Parks* - *The Washington Post* published [an article](#) about how climate change affects the iconic cherry blossoms of Washington, D.C., Tidal Basin's blossoms bloomed almost two weeks earlier than average this year, and then many of them were wiped out by nightly frost. The cycles of bloom and frost may affect the trees' resilience and may result in mortality. Source: *The Washington Post*
- *National Register of Historic Places* (NPS-administered program) - The historic Duluth Harbor North Pierhead Light on Lake Superior was sold at no cost to a historic preservation non-profit, Rethos. The U.S. Coast Guard announced it no longer needed the lighthouse in 2021, and the National Historic Lighthouse Preservation Act allowed the NPS to donate it to a nonprofit. The Coast Guard continues to own the light at the top and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers owns the concrete pier that it sits on. Rethos plans to install interpretive signs around the lighthouse and open it for tours next summer. They said they hope to "turn the light structure into a focal point for the broader historic commercial district" of Duluth, Minnesota. Source: [MPR News](#), [m Live](#)
- *Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act* (NPS-administered program) - *The Atlanta Journal-Constitution* published [an article](#) about the attempts to repatriate funerary objects and human remains from Etowah Indian Mounds State Historic Site (GA), including efforts made to streamline NAGPRA processes. Source: *The Atlanta Journal-Constitution*

- *North Country National Scenic Trail* - The National Park Trust has acquired a 3-acre parcel to expand the trail in Ross Township, Michigan. This parcel will allow hikers to avoid a section of highway with high vehicle traveling speeds. The Park Trust will manage the parcel in collaboration with the North Country Trail Association until the National Park Service can take over permanent ownership. Source: [National Park Trust](#), 3/20/23 *Green & Grey Report* (Vol. VI, Issue 29)
- *Pecos National Historical Park* - The park has installed new exhibits in the E.E. Fogelson Visitor Center. Exhibits are ADA-compliant and include diverse perspectives from local and Indigenous groups. Source: [Pecos National Historical Park](#)
- *Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance* (NPS-administered program) - Pierce County, with assistance from RTCA, has planned 10-year goals to improve the state of the Carbon River Corridor, a remote entry way to Mount Rainier National Park. The area has degrading infrastructure and has been inundated with trash and abandoned vehicles. Part of the revitalization plans include the NPS running a pilot program visitor contact center in Wilkeson, WA. Source: [The Courier-Herald](#)
- *Rocky Mountain National Park* - The Moraine Campground will close from May through Summer 2024 to replace the water and utility infrastructure, improve accessibility, change drainage and flooding patterns, and add electrical hook-ups for RV campsites. The project is being funded by the Great American Outdoors Act. Source: [ABC Denver 7](#)
- *St. Croix National Scenic Riverway* - *St. Croix 360* published [an interview](#) with Superintendent Craig Hansen that covered priorities and issues on the riverway. Source: *St. Croix 360*
- *Theodore Roosevelt National Park* - *InForum* published [an article](#) about the origins of the longhorn cattle inside of the park, a subject that has gained a lot of media attention due to the park's recent proposal to remove them (still undergoing planning processes with another round of public comments expected later this year). Source: *InForum*
- *Valles Caldera National Preserve* - The park and New Mexico Gas Company have announced the successful retirement of a natural gas pipeline in the park. Above-ground infrastructure was removed and the below-ground pipe was injected with concrete to prevent negative effects on groundwater. The pipeline was installed by the Department of Energy to transport natural gas from San Juan Basin to Los Alamos National Laboratory. A new pipeline has been installed between Albuquerque and Santa Fe, so the old line is no longer needed. Source: [Valles Caldera National Preserve](#)
- *Vicksburg National Military Park* - *The Vicksburg Post* published [an article](#) about the

park's efforts to do better outreach to local communities, particularly as it relates to the history of Black soldiers at Vicksburg. They have hired two consultants to support their efforts - Shawn Jackson, the District Warren County Supervisor, and Linda Fondren, executive director of the Catfish Row Museum. Source: *The Vicksburg Post*

- *Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve* - Scientists from the University of Arizona have published a study in the *Journal of Geophysical Research* that provides a 3-D radar scan of the Malaspina Glacier, revealing that the glacier is more vulnerable to seawater intrusion than previously understood. Source: [University of Arizona News](#)
- *Yellowstone National Park* - Yellowstone Park Service Stations, Inc., was selected as the new concessioner to provide automotive and retail services in the park. YPSS has held the concession since the 1980s. This contract will begin on November 1 and last for 10 years. Source: [Yellowstone National Park](#)
- *Yellowstone National Park* - A billboard was recently put up in Helena, Montana, by Roam Free Nation and the Alliance for Wild Rockies, criticizing the hunting of bison as they leave Yellowstone's boundaries as a violation of "fair chase" ethics. [An article](#) in the *Great Falls Tribune* chronicles the complexity of bison management in the region and the park's role within that. Source: *Great Falls Tribune*
- *Yellowstone National Park* - The *Bozeman Daily Chronicle* published [an op-ed](#) by Tom Woodbury, director of communications for Buffalo Field Campaign, arguing for bison to be restored to more of their natural habitat outside of the park. The op-ed called Yellowstone akin to a "national zoo" of bison due to the threats of hunting and management culls on genetic diversity. Source: *Bozeman Daily Chronicle*
- *Yosemite National Park* - On March 31, Simon and Schuster released a new book, *Guardians of the Valley: John Muir and the Friendship that Saved Yosemite*, by Dean King. The book seeks to "humanize Muir rather than further mythologize him," and highlights Muir's friendship with Robert Underwood Johnson. A tribute beer, "Guardians of the Valley IPA," was also created by Three Notch'd Brewery that incorporates water from the Tuolumne River and Sequoia Hops. Source: [Style Weekly](#)

### Personnel Changes

- *Chesapeake Office* - The NPS Chesapeake Office has hired Ian Austin as the director of administration, Eddie Gonzalez as the director of partnerships and grants, Brett Everitt as communications and visitor experience specialist, Aurelia Gracia as outdoor recreation planner, and Cherri Espersen as partnerships coordinator. Bios for each can be found [here](#). Source: [National Park Service Chesapeake Bay](#)

- *Cumberland Gap National Historical Park* - Lisa Baldwin has been selected as the new superintendent. Lisa has 17 years of NPS experience, most recently as superintendent at Salinas Pueblo Missions National Monument. Source: [Cumberland Gap National Historical Park](#)
- *National Interagency Fire Center* - Angela Egizi has been selected as the new human resources assistant. Angela has worked with the NIFC as a contractor since 2016. Source: [National Park Service Fire and Aviation Management](#)
- *Student Conservation Association* (park partner) - Lidia Soto-Harmon has been selected as the organization's new president and chief executive officer. Lidia was most recently worked for the Girl Scouts Nation's Council for 18 years as CEO and chief operating officer. Source: [Student Conservation Association](#)
- *Wildland Fire Program* - Dana Lee has been selected as the new mental health and wellness coordinator. Dana has over a decade of federal service, including at the Naval Medical Center San Diego, Health Resources and Services Administration, and Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services. Source: [National Park Service Wildland Fire Program](#)

## **Park People**

*Here we honor deceased park employees, as well as important news about Coalition Members and other former park employees or volunteers. People are listed alphabetically by last name.*

### **Deceased**

- Joan Shumate Baity, 85, passed away on March 18. Joan received a National Park Service Certificate of Recognition in 1994 for history reenactment at Kings Mountain National Military Park and was instrumental in the historic preservation the Old Wilkes Jail, part of the Blue Ridge National Heritage Area. Source: [Wilkes Journal-Patriot](#)
- Kenneth Stuart Beck, Sr., 98, passed away on March 4. He worked for the NPS for several decades, including as the administration officer of Glacier National Park and a stint in Washington, D.C. Source: [Legacy/Hungry Horse News](#)
- Sherri Ann Simpson Behunin, 80, passed away on March 14. Sherri worked for a time at Capitol Reef National Park. Source: [St. George News](#)
- James "Jim" N. Haskett, 92, passed away on March 11. Jim worked for the NPS for 39 years, including stints at Petersburg National Battlefield, Appomattox Courthouse National Historical Park, Fort Smith National Historic Site, Fort McHenry National Monument and Historic Shrine, and Colonial Historical National Park. He was given the Meritorious Service Award from the Department of the Interior upon his retirement. Source: [Williamsburg Yorktown Daily](#)

- Barbara "Bunny" Emerson McMahon, 91, passed away on February 21. Bunny worked at a hotel in Glacier National Park for a time in the 1950s. Source: [The Lincoln County News](#)
- Robert H. Tucker, Jr., 82, passed away on March 1. Robert was "one of the first African Americans to integrate the National Park Service," working at Yosemite National Park for a time in the 1960s. Source: [Legacy/The Times-Picayune](#)

### **Retired**

- Darla Sidles, current superintendent of Rocky Mountain National Park, will retire in June. Darla has been the superintendent there for seven years. Estes Park Mayor Wendy Koenig wrote [a letter](#) in the *Estes Park News* honoring Darla's work and thanking her for her efforts. Source: *Estes Park News*, [Loveland Reporter-Herald](#)
- Robin Zanotti, President and CEO of the C&O Canal Trust for the last eight years, will retire on March 31. The organization published [a closing interview](#) with Robin. Source: C&O Canal Trust

### **Open for Comment**

*Items will stay on this list until public comment has closed.*

- *Alaska Region* - Public comment has [been extended through March 27](#) on a proposal to reverse the 2020 Alaska Hunting and Trapping rule on national preserve lands in Alaska. The rule currently allows specific sport hunting practices, including bear baiting across the state of Alaska, and this reversal of the regulation would only apply to national preserves. [See the [Coalition's comments](#).] Source: [National Park Service Alaska Region](#)
- *Amache National Historic Site* - Public comment is [open until June 23](#) on a foundation document to guide the new national park unit. Source: [Amache National Historic Site](#)
- *Cape Hatteras National Seashore* - Public comment is [open until March 28](#) on the environmental assessment and wetland statement of finding for construction of a multi-use pathway along Lighthouse Road. Source: [WITN](#)
- *Death Valley National Park* - Public comment is [open until March 25](#) on a proposed replacement of the Salt Creek Boardwalk Trail. The trail was damaged in flashfloods in August 2022. Public comment is required because some infrastructure debris is in designated Wilderness, and the new boardwalk will need a new alignment due to changes in the creek. Source: [Inyo Register](#)
- *Denali National Park and Preserve* - Public comment is [open until March 30](#) on a

proposal to build 17 miles of trails in the non-Wilderness area of the park between George Parks Highway and the Nenana River on the eastern end of the park.

Source: [Denali National Park and Preserve](#)

- *Dry Tortugas National Park* - Public comment is [open until April 10](#) on a plan to repair the Fort Jefferson counterscarp and dredge the moat. The counterscarp was damaged by Hurricanes Irma and Ian. Construction funds for the project have been allocated through Public Law 115-123 for hurricane recovery. Source: [Dry Tortugas National Park](#)
- *Glen Canyon National Recreation Area, Grand Canyon National Park* - The Bureau of Reclamation has opened public comment on [a draft environmental assessment](#) for flow strategies to mitigate the threat of smallmouth bass on ecosystems below Glen Canyon Dam. Comments can be sent in via email. Source: [St. George News](#)
- *Joshua Tree National Park* - The California State Parks Off-Highway Motor Vehicle Recreation Division has [opened public comment through May 1](#) for 2023 restoration grant applications. Joshua Tree has prepared an application requesting funds to mitigate illegal off-road driving activities in the park, including monitoring, law enforcement patrols, educational products, and fencing. Source: [Joshua Tree National Park](#)
- *Kennesaw Mountain National Battlefield Park* - Public comment is open until March 31 on a Traffic and Safety Assessment to improve safety and operations for road and trail users in the park. Draft concepts are available for review and comments can be submitted via email. Source: [Kennesaw Mountain National Battlefield Park](#)
- *Medgar and Myrlie Evers Home National Monument* - Public comment is [open until June 30](#) on a draft Cultural Landscape Report and Environmental Assessment that will guide park operations and planning. Source: [Medgar and Myrlie Evers Home National Monument](#)
- *Mesa Verde National Park* - Public comment is [open until April 10](#) on a plan to stabilize the Spruce Tree House alcove arch. Spruce Tree House has been closed since October 2015 and has undergone previous arch stabilization treatments in 1962 which are starting to fail. Source: [The Journal](#)
- *Minidoka National Historic Site* - The Bureau of Land Management has [extended public comment until April 20](#) on their draft Environmental Impact Statement for the Lava Ridge Wind Project, which is located adjacent to Minidoka and within the historic footprint of the camp. [See the [Coalition's stance on the project](#).] Source: [Northwest Asian Weekly](#)
- *National Mall and Memorial Parks* - Public comment is [open until April 5](#) on a plan to rehabilitate the Tidal Basin and West Potomac seawalls. Source: [National Parks](#)

### [Traveler](#)

- *National Mall and Memorial Parks* - Public comment is [open until April 14](#) on the design for the Global War on Terrorism Memorial, to be located within the Reserve in Washington, D.C. Source: [National Parks Traveler](#)
- *Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area* - Public comment is [open until March 30](#) on an Accessibility Self Evaluation and Transition Plan. Source: [Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area](#)
- *Sitka National Historical Park* - Public comment is [open until April 9](#) on proposed changes to the park's Compendium. Source: [Sitka National Historical Park](#)
- *Valles Caldera National Preserve* - The park is inviting public comment about the unique character and value of its rivers and creeks in order to be considered for Wild and Scenic River status. Comments can be submitted via email or mail. Source: [Valles Caldera National Preserve](#)

### **Other Department of the Interior News**

- *Supreme Court declines bear bait appeal* - The U.S. Supreme Court has decided not to hear an appeal by the State of Alaska and Safari Club International against a ban on bait-assisted hunting of brown bears in Kenai Wildlife Refuge. The rule was put in place in 2016 by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; it was affirmed by a district court in 2020 and court of appeals in 2022. Source: [Alaska Public Media](#)
- *Willow oil project approved, lawsuit initiated* - On March 13, the Biden administration approved the Willow Project, a 600 million-barrel oil drilling venture in the National Petroleum Reserve in Alaska. Upon approval, the Department of the Interior announced that it had reduced the size of the project by denying two of the five drill sites. They also announced that ConocoPhillips, who owns the leases to drill, has relinquished rights to 68,000 acres, which will reduce freshwater use and impacts to caribou migration and subsistence users. On March 14, six conservation groups filed a lawsuit against the project, claiming a violation of the National Environmental Policy Act because it failed to recognize impacts to sensitive Arctic environments, subsistence users, and climate change. The plaintiffs are The Wilderness Society, Sovereign Iñupiat for a Living Arctic, the Alaska Wilderness League, Environment America, Northern Alaska Environmental Center, and the Sierra Club. Source: [CNN](#), [Alaska Public Media](#), [Department of the Interior](#)
- *Arctic protections* - President Joe Biden has withdrawn 2.8 million acres of the Beaufort Sea in the Arctic Ocean nearshore to the National Petroleum Reserve - Alaska as indefinitely off limits to future oil and gas leasing. The Department of the Interior also has proposed a rule that would consider additional protections for 13 million acres in the reserve as "Special Areas" for their natural and historical values.

Source: [Department of the Interior](#)

- *Alaska land swap revoked* - On March 14, Interior Secretary Deb Haaland revoked a land swap that would have allowed for a road through the Izembek National Wildlife Refuge to the Indigenous community of King Cove. A new environmental analysis will be conducted to determine if the exchange complies with federal laws and regulations. The land swap had been approved under the Trump administration and was in the midst of many years of legal battles. A [recent op-ed](#) in *The New York Times* chronicled the precedent it would set if Interior Secretaries were allowed to approve projects unchecked by legislation or process. Source: [The New York Times](#)
- *\$417 million from SNPLMA* - On March 16, the Department of the Interior announced \$417 million for 47 projects focused on recreation, habitat conservation, fuel reduction, and wildfire prevention in the state of Nevada and within the Tahoe Basin (both Nevada and California). The funding comes from the sale of public lands under the Southern Nevada Public Land Management Act. Source: [Department of the Interior](#)
- *\$135 million for coal communities* - On March 9, the Department of the Interior announced that the Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement will award \$135 million for Abandoned Mine Land Economic Revitalization grants. Six states and three Tribes with abandoned mine land issues are eligible for the grants to return those lands to productive uses and support economic and community development. Source: [Department of the Interior](#)
- *\$120 million for weather-affected wildlife areas* - On March 7, the Department of the Interior announced \$120 million from the Inflation Reduction Act to rebuild and restore units of the National Wildlife Refuge System and State Wildlife Management Areas that have been adversely affected by weather events. Source: [Department of the Interior](#)
- *\$80 million for conservation and rec near military sites* - On March 21, the Departments of the Interior and Defense announced a new partnership and \$80 million in funding to preserve land and increase outdoor recreation opportunities around military installations, called the Readiness and Recreation Initiative. \$40 million comes from the Land and Water Conservation Fund and \$40 million in matching funds comes from the Defense Department's Readiness and Environmental Protection Integration Program. Source: [Department of the Interior](#)
- *\$50 million for wildfire management* - On March 17, the Department of the Interior announced \$50 million from the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law for collaborative wildfire risk management efforts. \$24 million will go toward 24 fuel reduction projects on private lands adjacent to federal lands in 13 states through the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program and Coastal Program. Funding also will be allocated to the Bureau of Indian Affairs for Reserved



Treaty Rights Land projects and to special pay supplements for federal wildland firefighters. Source: [Department of the Interior](#)

- *Glass treatments to protect birds* - The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has implemented a nationwide policy mandating that all new USFWS buildings be bird-friendly to prevent glass collision mortality. The Migratory Birds Program Collisions Team also is identifying high risk buildings to retrofit with bird-friendly glass treatments. The U.S. Forest Service and NPS also are working toward preventing bird mortality, based on the USFWS' efforts. Source: [U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service](#)
- *New DOI appointees* - On March 13, the Department of the Interior announced the following new appointees: Annalise Blum as deputy assistant secretary for Water and Science, Maria Camila Gomez Osorio as special assistant to the Assistant Secretary for Fish and Wildlife for Parks, Rebecca Jablonski-Diehl as advisor for the Office of Policy, Management and Budget, and Henry Wykowski as advisor to the Bureau of Land Management. Source: [Department of the Interior](#)

### **Congressional Actions**

*Reports on legislation, upcoming hearings, and new public laws of relevance to the national parks, prepared by Don Hellmann, former assistant director of legislative and congressional affairs for the National Park Service, and Chris Soller, former superintendent of Fire Island National Seashore and legislative specialist for the National Park Service.*

**Editor Note:** *In the March 8, 2023 Coalition Report, a misedit was made in Don Hellman's summary of House Resolution 164 on February 27. It should have read, "The House agreed to H. Res. 164, which elected several members to standing committees of the House of Representatives, including Rep. Susie Lee (D-NV) to the Committee on Natural Resources." (Rep. Lee replaced Rep. Costa [D-CA], who resigned from the committee on February 27, which was also reported on in the [3/8/23 Coalition Report](#).)*

### **Senate Actions**

**March 15** – The Senate Budget Committee concluded its hearing on the President's Fiscal Year 2024 budget request, receiving testimony from Shalanda D. Young, Director, Office of Management and Budget.

### **House Actions**

**March 8 and 9** – The House Appropriations Committee's Subcommittee on Interior, Environment and Related Agencies held two days of testimony from public witnesses regarding American Indian and Alaska Native issues.

**March 8** – The Committee on Natural Resources' Subcommittee on Federal Lands held an oversight hearing on "Promoting Conservation with a Purpose on America's Federal

Lands and Forests." Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

The Committee on Natural Resources' Subcommittee on Water, Wildlife and Fisheries held an oversight hearing on the "Benefits of Access; The Necessity for Multiple Use of Water Resources." Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

**March 9** – The Committee on Natural Resources, full committee, reported H.R. 1335, the “Transparency, Accountability, Permitting, and Production of American Resources Act,” an act “to restart onshore and offshore oil, gas, and coal leasing, streamline permitting for energy infrastructure, ensure transparency in energy development on federal lands, and for other purposes.”

**March 17** – The Appropriations Committee's Subcommittee on Interior, Environment and Related Agencies: The Coalition to Protect America's National Parks submitted [written testimony](#) for the record to the Subcommittee regarding the President's 2024 budget request for the National Park Service.

## **Incidents**

*Incidents are listed in alphabetical order by park.*

### **Arches National Park**

#### **Hiker fatality**

On March 12, a 56-year-old went into cardiac arrest on the Devils Garden Trail. CPR was performed by others on scene. Personnel from Grand County Sheriff's Department, Grand County EMS, and Classic Air Medical also responded. The individual was unable to be resuscitated and was pronounced deceased at the scene. Source: [Arches National Park](#)

### **Big Bend National Park**

#### **Hiker fatality**

On March 6, a 64-year-old collapsed on the Hot Springs Canyon Trail. Emergency assistance was requested. A team of NPS rangers and a U.S. Border Patrol Agent responded and attempted CPR, but resuscitation efforts were not successful. The NPS said they cannot definitively link heat to the incident, but temperatures were in the upper 90s that day. Source: [Big Bend National Park](#)

### **Bryce National Park**

#### **Retaining wall failure**

On March 16, the park closed the Navajo Loop Trail temporarily due to multiple retaining wall collapses along the trail. Storms and melting snow caused the collapses. Source: [National Parks Traveler](#)

## **Buffalo National River Illegal guide sentenced**

A 47-year-old was sentenced to a two-year ban from Buffalo National River, two years of probation, and over \$3,000 in restitution, fines, and fees. In 2022, the individual received payments for guiding hikes at the Eye of the Needle in the Indian Creek area of the national river. One hike involved the carryout of an injured hiker and another resulted in the death of a 46-year-old on May 7, 2022 (see [5/18/22 Coalition Report](#)). The rescue and recovery involved a multi-agency effort with 47 responders. The guide was convicted in federal court in December 2022 for operating a business in the park without a permit.

Source: [Springfield News-Leader](#)

## **Cape Hatteras National Seashore Another house collapse**

On March 13, an unoccupied house in Rodanthe on East Point Drive collapsed onto the beach. On March 14, the park began cleaning up debris in a proactive effort to protect park resources and visitors. A public volunteer clean-up was held on March 16. Debris has been spotted as far away as 21 miles. The owner has not developed a plan to clean up the debris, as advised by the NPS. Visitors have been advised to use caution when visiting the area. In early 2022, three houses in Rodanthe collapsed into the ocean.

Source: Cape Hatteras National Seashore ([3/13](#), [3/14](#)), [OBX Today](#)

## **Glacier National Park Illegal house to be torn down**

On March 13, the Flathead Conservation District board determined that a house on private property in the Apgar area within Glacier National Park had not applied for the necessary 310-law permit to build directly onto the stream bank of McDonald Creek. The district received 17 complaints about the location with regards to the 310-law permit, which is required for any work that might impact the bed or banks of perennial flowing streams in Montana. The district and a representative from Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks conducted a field investigation that showed that an excavation of the McDonald Creek streambank had been made to create a pad for the home's construction. The building has been ordered to be removed and the area remediated after the creek recedes from the high-water point and before November 1, 2023. The owners of the property have shown documentation that they tried to get all the correct permits and Flathead County officials had said they were under the park's jurisdiction, while the park communicated that they did not need any special permits. Source: [KPAX](#), [Flathead Beacon](#)

## **Great Smoky Mountains National Park Sentencing for fraud**

On March 3, two individuals, aged 55 and 49, were sentenced to federal prison terms of 48 months and 24 months, respectively, for three charges: wire fraud, conspiracy to

commit wire fraud, and major fraud against the U.S. government. A money judgment will also come at a later date. From 2005 to 2013, the individuals fraudulently obtained federal contracts through the Department of Veterans Affairs' Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned Small Business program and the Small Business Administration's 8(a) Business Development program, even though their businesses were not eligible for these programs. They misrepresented the involvement of friends of theirs in the businesses, sub-contracted work in violation of program requirements, and utilized government money for "extravagant" non-business-related expenses. At Great Smoky Mountains, they falsely represented subcontractor costs by over \$400,000. The couple was found guilty of their charges on July 29, 2022 after a two-week jury trial in U.S. District Court. Source: [U.S. Attorney's Office: Eastern District of Tennessee](#)

### **New River Gorge National Park and Preserve**

#### **Train derailment next to park**

On March 8, a train pulling empty coal cars hit a landslide covering the track and derailed along the New River downstream from Sandstone Falls on property adjacent to the park. Four of the locomotives and nine empty coal cars jumped the track. One locomotive caught fire. Diesel fuel and oil were spilled. There were three crew members aboard; they were all taken to the hospital with non-life threatening injuries. The West Virginia Departments of Environmental Protection, Health and Human Resources, and Homeland Security and Emergency Management were involved in the response. Other train service was canceled through that area, including Amtrak service on the Cardinal Line. As of March 10, the train owner had removed all 22 cars and four locomotives from the tracks, and repairs were underway. Crews also removed the landslide from the tracks. As of March 10, two of the three crew members had been released from the hospital. The NPS, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, and the West Virginia Department of Environmental Protection were involved in efforts to excavate and remove soil or rock that came into contact with diesel fuel and replace it with clean material. The amount of fuel and oil spilled is unknown. Mitigation efforts will continue until the area is fully restored. Source: *MetroNews* ([3/8](#), [3/11](#))

### **Rock Creek Park**

#### **Fatal car crash**

On March 15 around 1:40 am, U.S. Park Police initiated a traffic stop with an SUV on Rock Creek Parkway, south of Virginia Avenue. The SUV did not stop, and per agency policies, the officers did not pursue the vehicle. Several minutes later, the fleeing SUV collided with another vehicle, a sedan, near P Street NW. Others on scene attempted to help those involved in the crash. U.S. Park Police responded to the accident and declared three individuals from the sedan deceased upon arrival, aged 42, 23, and 22. The two individuals from the SUV were transported to the hospital - one with injuries considered life-threatening and the other with non-life threatening injuries. An inquiry by *Fox 5* to the Washington, D.C., Department of Motor Vehicles revealed that the SUV had 44 outstanding tickets worth \$12,300, with 43 of those for speeding violations. The U.S. Park

Police is working with the U.S. Attorney's Office for the District of Columbia on the investigation, and they have asked the public for any information they may have regarding the incident. Source: [United States Park Police](#), [Fox 5](#)

### **Rocky Mountain National Park Interagency "swatting" incident**

On March 13, the Estes Park Emergency Communications Center received a call from an unidentified source saying there was an active shooter inside a downtown business and multiple casualties. Gunshots were heard in the background. Estes Park Police responded, with backup support from the NPS, Larimer County Sheriff's Office, Colorado Parks and Wildlife, Estes Valley Fire, and Estes Park Health EMS. Upon arrival, officers observed there was no evidence of an active shooter or casualties at the scene. Officers contacted the owner of the business, who verified the call was a hoax. "Swatting," in which a prank call is used to cause an emergency services response, is on the rise in the U.S. Source: [Estes Park News](#)

### **Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks Weather closes park**

Due to a forecasted atmospheric river event, the park closed both entrances on the evening of March 9. Due to the impacts of flooding and ongoing storms, the park has remained closed. Kings Canyon's closure is expected to last at least through March and Sequoia will not open prior to April 15, "and likely much later than that date." Source: Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks ([3/8](#), [Current Conditions page](#))

### **Springfield Armory National Historic Site Return of artifact from 1971 theft**

In 1971, the Springfield Armory Museum was among 16 collections and museums hit by a string of thefts of historic firearms across the eastern United States. The Armory lost a rare percussion cap pistol, believed to be one of only 12 of its kind in existence. The "pattern" pistol was utilized as a blueprint for Model 1842 pistols that were manufactured on a large scale for Civil War cavalry troops. At the time of the theft, the Armory was managed by a non-profit, prior to becoming a unit of the National Park Service. A 73-year-old antiques dealer pleaded guilty in August 2022 to possessing some of the stolen property from the thefts and was sentenced to one day in jail due to the amount of time that had passed since the theft and the individual's cooperation with returning the items. There was no evidence linking the individual to the actual thefts, only the possession. Source: *Mass Live* ([3/11](#), [3/17](#))

### **U.S. Park Police Officer shooting**

On March 18, two U.S. Park Police officers responded to a request for assistance by

Metropolitan Police Department officers at 34th Street and Baker Street NE for a vehicle reported as stolen. While officers attempted to detain the 17-year-old driver, the car fled from the scene with one officer inside the car and the other being dragged from outside the vehicle. The officer inside the car gave verbal commands to stop driving, and the driver did not comply. The officer discharged their firearm, and the car crashed into a home on 36th Street NE. Officers rendered aid to the driver, but the individual died at the scene. Both officers were transported to an area hospital for treatment. No one in the home was injured. The investigation is being conducted by Metropolitan Police Department Internal Affairs Division, and both officers were placed on paid administrative leave during the investigation, per agency policy. Source: [United States Park Police](#), [NBC Washington](#)

## **Yosemite National Park**

### **Sentencing for sexual assault**

On March 8, a 52-year-old was sentenced to seven years and one month in prison for one count of attempted sexual abuse and one count of abusive sexual conduct. The sentencing was for an incident in Summer 2019 in which the individual sexually assaulted their roommate while they were sleeping. The perpetrator was working as a cook "for a private company in Yosemite" at the time. The individual was found guilty after a six-day trial. Source: [U.S. Attorney's Office: Eastern District of California](#)

### **Follow-ups on Previously Reported Incidents**

- *Carlsbad Caverns National Park* - On March 19, family of a deceased 25-year-old held a march in Montrose, CO, pushing for awareness of the death by officer shooting in Carlsbad Caverns and calling for an end to qualified immunity. The deceased individual was pulled over in the park for speeding and striking a sign on March 21, 2020. An altercation with law enforcement ensued, resulting in an officer discharging a firearm, causing the individual to die. The State of New Mexico declined to bring criminal charges against the officer. The family is suing the Department of the Interior, which claims the officer acted in self defense and is eligible for qualified immunity. The case is ongoing, with the officer sitting for a deposition on March 29. Source: [Montrose Press](#)
- *National Capital Parks - East* - On March 10, the NPS reopened hiking trails and picnic areas in Greenbelt Park. They were closed after a severe windstorm in July 2022 that reached speeds of over 80 miles per hour and damaged trees throughout the park. NPS staff and contractors have removed over 100 fallen or hazardous trees with the assistance of the NPS Arborist Incident Response team. One section of the Perimeter Trail will remain closed to repair a trail washout. Source: [National Capital Parks - East](#)
- *Yosemite National Park* - On March 18, the park reopened Highway 140 access to Yosemite Valley, as well as Hetch Hetchy. "Very limited services" are available. The

rest of the park remains closed due to ongoing storm clean-up and repairs. Further predicted storms may reclose the park. Source: [Yosemite National Park](#), [CBS News](#)

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If you see something that might be of interest to Coalition members, send it to [report@protectnps.org](mailto:report@protectnps.org).

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The Coalition is a non-profit organization of past and current NPS employees and their allies that "studies, educates, speaks, and acts for the preservation and protection of the National Park System and mission-related programs of the National Park Service."

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