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The Coalition Report
Wednesday, January 26, 2022

Coalition Actions

Outgoing Coalition Chair Phil Francis spoke with *National Parks Traveler* about the funding imbalance in the National Park System:

<https://protectnps.org/2022/01/11/former-coalition-chair-comments-on-funding-imbalance-and-the-parks/>

The Coalition joined 360 groups in a petition asking the Biden administration to phase out federal oil and gas production on public lands and waters to near zero by 2035:

<https://protectnps.org/2022/01/19/petition-to-reduce-the-rate-of-oil-and-gas-production-on-public-lands/>

The Coalition joined a letter sent to NPS Director Chuck Sams urging the NPS to submit a pre-decisional referral to the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ), pursuant to 40 C.F.R. Part 1504, to resolve federal interagency disagreements concerning the major federal action at Dominion Energy's Surry-Skiffes Creek-Wheaton 500kV transmission line across the James River at Jamestown, Virginia:

<https://protectnps.org/2022/01/19/coalition-joins-request-for-pre-decisional-referral-for-historic-jamestown-transmission-lines-project/>

We signed on to a letter calling for swift approval of appropriations:

<https://protectnps.org/2022/01/20/coalition-joins-sign-on-for-strong-appropriations-bill/>

Finally, we joined a sign-on letter urging the Board of Supervisors to delay the planned in-person and remote option community meetings on the Data Center Opportunity Zone

Overlay District Comprehensive Review and Digital Gateway Comprehensive Plan Amendment (CPA), a plan that represents a major threat to Manassas National Battlefield: <https://protectnps.org/2022/01/14/coalition-joins-call-to-delay-community-meetings-over-proposed-data-center-near-manassas-battlefield/>

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.

- *Call for elimination of single-use plastics in national parks* - Oceana, a non-profit ocean advocacy organization, recently released the results of a new poll showing that 82% of American voters support the NPS ending the sale and distribution of single-use plastic in national park units. Source: [Common Dreams](#)
- *Indigenous landback movement gains momentum* - Grist published [an article](#) about ongoing efforts for landback initiatives, which seek to repatriate lands to Indigenous groups who were forcibly removed from both ownership and management of their ancestral homelands. Source: *Grist*
- *Most and least popular parks on TikTok* - ParkSleepFly, a travel blog site, recently ranked the popularity of national parks (by name, not all NPS units) around the world based on views on *TikTok*, a social media video platform. The top three were Yellowstone, Denali, and Yosemite, while the least viewed were Kobuk Valley, Gates of the Arctic, and Channel Islands. Source: [ParkSleepFly](#)
- *Federal Lands to Parks program making room for Miami water park* - Through the Federal Lands to Parks program, the National Park Service will amend deed restrictions within Miami County land so that a 67-acre parcel will allow for a water park adjacent to Zoo Miami. The Federal Lands to Parks Program transfers land to state and local governments for parks and recreation use, and is managed by the National Park Service, which ensures that the land is used in perpetuity for public parks and recreation. Source: [Miami Today](#)

Around the Parks

Park reports are in alphabetical order.

- *Big South Fork National River and Recreation Area* - The park [recently highlighted](#) a series of upgrades made to the Kentucky District, as well as a list of ongoing projects this year. Those upgrades consist of over \$4 million in improvements to a variety of visitor facilities. Source: Big South Fork National River and Recreation Area
- *Big South Fork National River and Recreation Area* - The NPS recently acquired 60 acres of land along North White Oak Creek from TennGreen Land Conservancy, which had acquired the property in a donation from the Allardt Land Company and

- the Estate of Bruno Gernt. Source: [Big South Fork National River and Recreation Area](#)
- *Cane River Creole National Historical Park* - The NPS, in collaboration with the City of Natchitoches, Cane River National Heritage Area, and DSW Construction, broke ground on the Texas and Pacific Railway Depot Rehabilitation Project on January 13. The structure will be rehabilitated to house new park offices, a visitor center, and a community theater. Source: [Cane River Creole National Historical Park](#)
 - *Cape Cod National Seashore* - The park is working to revitalize and restore the interior of the 19th-century Penniman House, the home of whaling Captain Edward Penniman. The Friends of Cape Cod National Seashore and Eastern National have funded the project, which has already completed upgrades and repairs to the exterior of the building. Interior work is ongoing. Source: [National Parks Traveler](#)
 - *Cape Hatteras National Seashore* - The park has asked visitors to be on the lookout for "cold-stunned" turtles who have had their metabolism slowed so much by cold temperatures that they cannot migrate to warmer waters. Visitors can call a hotline that will send volunteers or rangers out to rescue the turtles. Source: [Island Free Press](#)
 - *Carlsbad Caverns National Park* - The *Carlsbad Current Argus* ran [a profile](#) on the park's new superintendent, Carmen Chapin. Source: *Carlsbad Current Argus*
 - *Cedar Creek and Belle Grove National Historical Park* - The park's Federal Advisory Commission met virtually on January 13 to review the park's short- and long-term goals, which were formed in 2018. The group also received an update on activities in the park, including a stabilization of a bridge abutment, demolition of old buildings, temporary closure of a boat launch, planting native grasses and wildflowers, and crafting a strategic plan. Source: [The Northern Virginia Daily/The Winchester Star](#)
 - *Clara Barton National Historic Site* - The park has invited the public to submit Requests for Expression of Interest to transfer some of the operations and maintenance of the site to a partner. Concepts and proposals for future use could include recreation, education, arts programming, or special events. [Submissions](#) are due on March 11 to the park superintendent via email or mail. Source: [WTOP](#), [Clara Barton National Historic Site](#)
 - *Cuyahoga Valley National Park* - The park has started a \$2 million project to remove vacant, unsafe structures and restore natural landscapes, a project funded by the Great American Outdoors Act. The project is expected to be completed this spring. Source: [Akron Beacon Journal](#)
 - *Denali National Park* - Interior Secretary Deb Haaland has announced that \$25

million from the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law will go toward fixing the Pretty Rocks Landslide at Polychrome Pass on the Denali Park Road. The landslide has become a significant hazard, resulting in several road closures. The park has released a plan for a steel bridge (see public comments below), and work would begin this summer if approved. Source: [U.S. Senator Lisa Murkowski](#), [Associated Press](#)

- *Everglades National Park* - *WLRN Public Media* published [an article](#) outlining the restoration of the Raulerson Canal, which will improve ecological function and provide storm defense for the region. The \$5-7 million project is being supported by Ducks Unlimited, the Audubon, the NPS, and state and federal wildlife agencies. Source: *WLRN*
- *Fort Raleigh National Historic Site* - On December 30, the park awarded a \$236,000 contract to Irwin Seating (Grand Rapids, MI) to fabricate and install new seating in the Waterside Theatre. Approximately 1,600 outdoor theater seats, including over a dozen wheelchair accessible seats, will be installed by May 1. Source: [Island Free Press](#)
- *Fort Vancouver National Historic Site* - The park has begun work on a \$2.9 million project to provide a new parking lot and other improvements to East 5th Street. The project is being managed by the NPS, City of Vancouver, and the Western Federal Lands Highway Division, and implemented by Westech Construction Inc. of Portland, Oregon. Part of the funding has come from a Federal Lands Access Program grant. Work is expected to be complete in Fall 2022. Source: [Fort Vancouver National Historic Site](#)
- *Glacier National Park* - The Pioneer League, which is independent and unaffiliated with Major League Baseball, has added two professional baseball teams this year, including one that will play in Kalispell, Montana, called the Glacier Range Riders. The team's identity and logos are meant to symbolize early park rangers and the National Park Service. Source: [SportsLogos.net](#)
- *Golden Gate National Recreation Area* - On January 18, the NPS released a Request for Proposals for the Lands End Restaurant Properties Lease, formerly occupied for 47 years by the popular Cliff House. Source: [ABC7](#), [Golden Gate National Recreation Area](#)
- *Grand Teton National Park* - The Caribou-Targhee National Forest is conducting an environmental impact statement assessing a proposal by the Grand Targhee Resort to expand its ski resort by 260 acres. Grand Teton and the Wyoming Game and Fish Department have requested that the Caribou-Targhee prioritize protection of the native bighorn sheep population rather than expand the ski resort. Meanwhile, on January 14, the Teton Range Bighorn Sheep Working Group released a map of Teton Range Bighorn Sheep Winter Zones and is asking backcountry skiers to voluntarily avoid these areas. The herd dates back to the last ice age and is a

- generically isolated population of 100 individuals that has a variety of habitat pressures that have caused their numbers to decline. Source: [Sublette Examiner](#), [Grand Teton National Park](#)
- *Grand Teton National Park* - *Mountain Journal* ran [an essay](#) outlining the history and possible futures of the Jackson Hole Airport, which is located within the park. Source: *Mountain Journal*
 - *Haleakalā National Park* - The NPS, in collaboration with the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa Center for Oral History has recently transcribed and [made publicly available](#) 13 new oral histories about early stewardship of the park's environment. More interviews will take place this spring. Source: [Haleakalā National Park](#)
 - *Hot Springs National Park* - The Gulpha Gorge Campground will begin accepting online reservations starting on February 1. The campground had previously been first-come, first-served, but its popularity has increased enough to necessitate a reservation system. Source: [Hot Springs National Park](#)
 - *Indiana Dunes National Park* - The park will begin charging an entrance fee starting on March 31. The new fee revenue will help fund the Marquette Greenway Bike Trail, parking and transportation improvements, and visitor services in the park. The park has had almost double attendance since changing its name to "National Park." Source: [Indiana Dunes National Park](#)
 - *Mesa Verde National Park* - The park has received a grant from the Desert Fish Habitat Partnership to rebuild its riparian corridor this summer by constructing simulated beaver dams to create strategic blockages. Scientists hope this will bring beavers from nearby to move in and that the effects will bolster native fish populations. Source: [Durango Herald](#)
 - *Mount Rushmore National Memorial* - *Slashfilm.com* ran [an article](#) detailing the controversy over the film permit utilized to produce Alfred Hitchcock's famous film, *North by Northwest*. Source: *Slashfilm.com*
 - *National Park of American Samoa* - A marine ecology researcher from Oregon State University has taken 18,000 hours of sound data from a 12-station hydrophone area maintained by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and the NPS at the park to track underwater fish calls. In order to process the data, a machine learning model was created to recognize the calls. This device will greatly speed up scientists' ability to process large amounts of sound data. The findings were recently published in the journal *Marine Ecology Progress Series*. Source: [ABC News](#)
 - *New River Gorge National Park and Preserve* - On January 12, Adventures on the

Gorge hosted a virtual panel discussion with representatives from the park, local businesses, academics, and politicians to discuss the opportunities and challenges the park has faced, following a 30% increase in visitation after becoming a "National Park" in name. Businesses have benefitted, but there have been concerns about overcrowding, understaffing, and adequacy of visitor amenities. Source: [The Herald Dispatch](#)

- *North Cascades National Park* - *Goskagit.com* published [an article](#) profiling Superintendent Don Striker, who started in that position in late 2021. Source: *goskagit.com*
- *Padre Island National Seashore* - \$300,000 in funding from the U.S. Geological Survey has been allocated to the park for research on the decline of the island's Kemp's ridley sea turtle. Source: [Corpus Christi Business News](#)
- *Petrified Forest National Park* - In 2008, a phytosaur skull was excavated from the park. After years of study and preparation, the skull, affectionately nicknamed "Gumby," will soon be on display at the Rainbow Forest Museum. Source: [Petrified Forest National Park](#)
- *Rocky Mountain National Park* - On January 12, the park announced that timed reservations will return to the park for a third consecutive year, from May 27 through October 10. Source: [The Denver Gazette](#)
- *Rocky Mountain National Park* - The park is implementing a new wilderness backcountry camping permit reservation system through *recreation.gov*, starting on March 2. All permits for the season from May 1 to October 31 will be available at that time. Source: [Rocky Mountain National Park](#)
- *Saint Croix National Scenic Riverway* -The park recently held public comments and virtual open houses to gather input and ideas for the future of Fairy Falls Day Use Area. They have [summarized these comments](#) and will next be forming alternatives, which will again be open to public comment. Source: Saint Croix National Scenic Riverway
- *Shenandoah National Park* - The park is asking the public for family stories of people who stayed at the Lewis Mountain Campground, designated for Black people from 1939-1950. They are working on an interactive online history project that hopes to better tell the stories of life in the campground, as well as segregation and de-segregation in the park. Source: [WHSV](#)
- *Shenandoah National Park* - The park announced details for its Old Rag pilot reservation program. Starting March 1, 800 daily tickets will be issued via reservation on *recreation.gov*. Half will be available 30 days in advance and half will be available five days in advance. The reservation fee during this one-year pilot will

be \$1. Source: [Shenandoah National Park](#)

- *Yellowstone National Park* - A federal judge ordered the Fish and Wildlife Service to re-examine whether the Yellowstone bison should be listed as endangered or threatened, citing that the previous determination that they did not merit listing was applied to an incorrect standard, failed to address fundamental questions, and failed to adequately explain its decision. Source: [E&E News](#)
- *Yellowstone National Park* - *Wyoming Public Radio* ran [a segment](#) on the 150th anniversary of the park, including remarks by Superintendent Cam Sholly about changes in park management over the years. The park will host a variety of activities, beginning on March 1. Source: *Wyoming Public Radio*, [Yellowstone National Park](#)
- *Yellowstone National Park* - The NPS, in collaboration with the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, State of Montana, and Fort Peck Assiniboine and Sioux Tribes, transferred 28 Yellowstone bison to the Fort Peck Indian Reservation through the Bison Conservation Transfer Program. Yellowstone Forever, the Greater Yellowstone Coalition, Defenders of Wildlife, and the InterTribal Buffalo Council have also supported the program. All animals undergo brucellosis quarantine and final assurance testing. 80-120 new animals will be transferred this winter. Source: [Yellowstone National Park](#)

Personnel Changes

- *Cuyahoga Valley National Park, James A. Garfield National Historic Site, First Ladies National Historic Site* - Karen Dorn was selected as the new deputy superintendent. Karen has 36 years of NPS experience, most recently as superintendent at Hopewell Culture National Historical Park. She will start her new role in mid-February. Source: [Chillicothe Gazette](#)
- *First State National Historical Park* - Joshua Boles was selected as the new superintendent. Joshua has 15 years of NPS experience, most recently as chief of interpretation and education at Big Cypress National Preserve. He will start his new role on February 27. Source: [First State National Historical Park](#)
- *Homestead National Historical Park* - Betty Bokyo was selected as the new superintendent. Betty has 37 years of National Park Service experience, most recently as superintendent at Fort Scott National Historic Site and Fort Larned National Historic Site. Source: [News Channel Nebraska](#)

Park People

Here we honor deceased park employees, as well as important news about Coalition Members. People are listed alphabetically by last name.

Deceased

- Wanda Jane Knotts Castle, 74, passed away on January 4. She worked for the NPS in Yosemite. Source: [Mariposa Gazette](#)
- Rodney H. Blanton, 84, passed away on January 10. Rodney worked as an NPS ranger and also volunteered in several national parks. Source: [Harlan Enterprise](#)
- Mary A. Hanson, 66, passed away on January 11. Mary was a trail planner for the Rivers and Trails Department of the Midwest Region. Source: [Legacy/Wahoo Newspaper](#)
- Bibb G. Longcrier, 87, passed away on January 12. He worked as a computer program analyst and specialist at Boston National Historical Park. Source: [Seacoastonline](#)
- Kenneth H. Neagle, 67, passed away on January 13. He worked at Mammoth Cave National Park doing maintenance and historic preservation. Source: [Legacy/Chapman Funerals and Cremations](#)
- Rick Reese, 79, passed away on January 9. Rick was a climbing ranger at Grand Teton in the 1960s, ran the Yellowstone Institute (now Yellowstone Forever) from 1980-1984, and founded and ran The Greater Yellowstone Coalition for many years. Source: [KBZK](#)
- Edward S. Peetz, 96, passed away on October 28, 2021. Ed was an NPS employee for 32 years and was notably involved in the planning and creation of Virgin Islands National Park, as well as managing Gateway National Recreation Area. Source: [Legacy/The Washington Post](#)
- Howard Yanish, 85, passed away on October 29, 2021. He was born in Yosemite and later worked in the park as a forestry worker and law enforcement ranger. He worked a total of 38 years with the NPS, including time at Delaware Water Gap and Olympic. Source: [Mariposa Gazette](#)

In the News

- John Waters has been hired as the news editor of the *Valley Courier*, of Alamosa, Colorado. He previously worked in a variety of national parks as a biological science technician and interpretive ranger. Source: [Alamosa News](#)

Open for Comment

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

- *National Park Service* - Public comment is now open on proposed regulations that would modernize and streamline concessions contracting under the new Visitor Experience Improvements Authority given to the NPS by Congress. [Comments](#) are open until March 28. Source: [NPS Office of Communications](#)

- *Blackstone River Valley National Historical Park* - Public comment is now open on the development of a General Management Plan. [Comments](#) are open until February 15. Source: [The Valley Breeze](#)
- *Blue Ridge Parkway, Great Smoky Mountains National Park* - Public comment is now open on a right-of-way permit for Dominion Energy North Carolina to construct, operate, and maintain a natural gas pipeline that would cross beneath the Parkway near Milepost 393.3. [Comments](#) are open until February 5. Source: [Mountain Xpress](#)
- *Blue Ridge Parkway* - Public comment is now open on a temporary full closure of the Blue Ridge Parkway for a special use permit by The IRONMAN Group to utilize the road for an event from June 4-5, 2022. [Comments](#) are open until February 1. Source: [The Roanoke Star](#)
- *Catoctin Mountain Park* - Public comment is now open on an Environmental Assessment to improve the trail system at the park. [Comments](#) are open until February 3. Source: [The Frederick News-Post](#)
- *Crater Lake National Park* - Public comment is now open on a plan to close and rehabilitate the Cleetwood Cove Trail for two years. [Comments](#) are open until February 15. Source: [KTVZ](#)
- *Denali National Park* - Public comment is now open on an Environmental Assessment to install a 400-foot steel bridge over the Pretty Rocks landslide at Polychrome Pass. [Comments](#) are open until February 13. Source: [Associated Press](#)
- *Dry Tortugas National Park* - Public comment is now open on a plan to repair the counterscarp (moat wall) at Fort Jefferson, which was damaged in Hurricane Irma. [Comments](#) are open until February 14. Source: [National Parks Traveler](#)
- *Joshua Tree National Park* - Public comment is now open on a draft Climbing Management Plan. Extensive background information and interactive maps are available in [a Story Map](#). [Comments](#) are open until February 27. Source: [Joshua Tree National Park](#)
- *Katmai National Park and Preserve* - Public comment is now open on changes to the Superintendent's Compendium to prohibit generator use in Brooks Camp Campground. [Comments](#) are open until February 19. Source: [Katmai National Park and Preserve](#)
- *Mesa Verde National Park, Yucca House National Monument* - Public comment is now open on a Fire Management Plan. [Comments](#) are open until February 5. Source: [The Journal](#)

- *Mount Rainier National Park* - Public comment is now open on a proposed rule change to move all fishing regulations to the Superintendent's Compendium and to eliminate restrictions on taking nonnative fish. [Comments](#) are open until March 14. Source: [Mount Rainier National Park](#)
- *Ozark National Scenic Riverways* - Public comment is now open on proposed amendments to special regulations for motorized vehicles. [Comments](#) are open until March 7. Source: [Ozark Radio News](#)
- *Petersburg National Battlefield* - Public comment is now open on a plan to preserve historic buildings at the Appomattox Plantation at the General Grant's Headquarters Unit. [Comments](#) are open until February 12. Source: [Petersburg National Battlefield](#)
- *Rock Creek Park* - Advisory Neighborhood Commission 3F, made up of elected officials from four neighborhoods in Washington, D.C., voted 6-0-0 in favor of a resolution urging Mayor Muriel Bowser and the National Park Service to suspend permitting on the Soapstone Valley sewer rehabilitation project. The commissioners are opposed to the use of thermal cured-in-place pipe due to the potential release of toxic contaminants into the air and water. They stated that they would like to see risk analysis documents on the three cured-in-place pipe methods, and that those documents should have been included in the environmental assessment done by the NPS. A representative from DC Water said that they will return to the community with more detailed information on those methods and how they made their decision. Source: [Forest Hills Connection](#)
- *Southeast Regional Office* - Public comment is now open on an integrity and condition study of the Beaufort National Historic Landmark District. [Comments](#) are open until March 4. Source: [National Park Service Office of Communications](#)
- *Virgin Islands National Park* - Public comment is now open on an initial set of concepts for the redevelopment of Caneel Bay. [Comments](#) are open until February 17. Source: [The St. Croix Source](#)
- *Wupatki National Monument* - Public comment on a backcountry management plan remains open. The [comment](#) period was extended until January 30. Source: [Arizona Public Radio](#)
- *Yukon-Charley Rivers National Preserve* - Public comment is now open on a proposed change to the Superintendent's Compendium to allow select cutting of standing dead trees in the park for the heating of public use cabins and temporary shelters, September through April. [Comments](#) are open until February 18. Source: [Yukon-Charley Rivers National Preserve](#)

Other Department of the Interior News

- *DOI launches foundation for BLM lands* - On January 19, the Foundation for America's Public Lands officially launched. The non-profit foundation was authorized and chartered by Congress in 2017 to support public lands managed by the Bureau of Land Management, much as the National Park Foundation has done for the NPS. Interior Secretary Deb Haaland has named four founding Board members: Steve Bullock, Maite Arce, Neil Kornze, and Stacy Leeds. Source: [Department of the Interior](#)
- *DOI and other agencies streamline clean energy project process* - On January 12, the Departments of the Interior, Agriculture, Defense, and Energy, as well as the Environmental Protection Agency, announced a Memorandum of Understanding to streamline reviews for clean energy projects on public lands, including establishing interagency coordination teams and utilizing experienced staff to prepare environmental reviews. Source: [Department of the Interior](#)
- *DOI moves to allow coal leasing on BLM land* - On January 17, the Department of the Interior asked federal court to allow the Bureau of Land Management to continue the coal leasing program while the program is under review and declined to reinstate a moratorium until environmental review is completed. The coal leasing program has been under legal scrutiny for several years and lawsuits are still pending. Source: [Wyoming Public Radio](#)
- *DOI extends abandoned mine program* - On January 13, the Department of the Interior announced that the Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement is extending the Abandoned Mine Reclamation Fund program through 2034. This program allows states and Tribes to reclaim hazardous abandoned mines, replace polluted water supplies, and reduce legacy pollution in coalfield communities. The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law also invests \$11.3 billion to accelerate and expand Abandoned Mine Land projects throughout the country. [Public comments](#) on a reduction in fee rates for this program due to the additional funding will be accepted until February 14. Source: [Department of the Interior](#)
- *DOI establishes new orphaned well program* - The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law has allowed the Department of the Interior to establish a new federal program to address orphaned oil and gas wells, coordinated by the Departments of the Interior, Agriculture, and Energy, the Environmental Protection Agency, and the Interstate Oil and Gas Compact Commission. Capping wells is expected to address safety and natural resource concerns, as well as establish jobs in rural communities. Source: [Department of the Interior](#)
- *3 new funding opportunities for desalination, water reclamation and reuse projects* - The Department of the Interior announced three funding opportunities to help drought-impacted communities through Bipartisan Infrastructure Law programs. \$1

billion will be available over five years for water reclamation and reuse projects, and \$250 million for water desalination projects. 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, legislative and Congressional affairs for the National Park Service.

House Actions

January 19 – *The Committee on Natural Resources* held a markup on the following, among other bills, and ordered them reported to the full House:

- H.R. 268, to provide for the boundary of the Palo Alto Battlefield National Historical Park to be adjusted, to authorize the donation of land to the United States for addition to that historical park, and for other purposes.
- H.R. 2512, to amend the National Trails System Act to designate the Chisholm National Historic Trail and the Western National Historic Trail.
- H.R. 2872, to establish an integrated national approach to respond to ongoing and expected effects of extreme weather and climate change by protecting, managing, and conserving the fish, wildlife, and plants of the United States, and to maximize government efficiency and reduce costs, in cooperation with state, local, and Tribal governments and other entities. The Director of the National Park Service would be one member of the Working Group established to carry out the purposes of this Act.
- H.R. 4009, to authorize the Georgetown African American Historic Landmark Project and Tour to establish a commemorative work in the District of Columbia and its environs.
- H.R. 4358, to amend the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act to designate segments of the Little Manatee River, FL as a component of the Wild and Scenic Rivers System.
- H.R. 4380, to designate the El Paso Community Healing Garden National Memorial, TX. The bill specifies that the memorial shall not be a unit of the National Park System, nor be eligible for any federal funds.
- H.R. 4404, to amend the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act to designate segments of the Kissimmee River in the state of Florida as a component of the Wild and Scenic Rivers System.

Incidents

Incidents are listed in alphabetical order by park.

Cape Hatteras National Seashore

Yacht runs aground

On January 25, a 55-foot yacht called the *Vivens Aqua* grounded near the southern end of Ocracoke Island. The NPS is working with the U.S. Coast Guard and the owner to have the vessel removed from the beach. It is the third vessel to become grounded in the park in the last two months. Both of the other vessels were successfully freed and able to return to the water. Source: [Island Free Press](#)

Joshua Tree National Park Climber dies while free soloing

On January 17, a 35-year-old was found dead by two hikers at the base of the Sentinel Wall near Hidden Valley Nature Trail. The Riverside County Coroner's office said the rock climber likely died the evening before, and a friend stated that the individual was free soloing (climbing without rope or harness) on a route that he had climbed several times previously, both with and without a rope. The incident is still under investigation. Source: [Desert Sun](#)

Glen Canyon National Recreation Area Dangling Rope Marina closes due to drought

On January 24, the park announced that Dangling Rope Marina will remain closed throughout 2022 due to lowering lake levels. Dangling Rope has been the only place to obtain boat fuel between the northern and southern ends of Lake Powell, and the park is working with the concessioner Aramark to consider other mid-lake fuel service options. With the lake continuing to drop in level, the park has not yet come up with an infrastructure option that will be safe and sustainable. While the marina is closed, the park will retire several components that were damaged or beyond their lifecycle. Source: [Glen Canyon National Recreation Area](#)

Grand Teton National Park Skier caught in avalanche

On January 22, a snowboarder started an small avalanche in Silver Couloir, above where two skiers were climbing up. One of the skiers was washed down the couloir and injured an ankle. Teton Interagency Dispatch Center received word of the incident via an InReach satellite device. The skier was able to scoot to a landing zone in Shadow Peak Cirque and a Teton County Search and Rescue helicopter was able to transport rangers there to help load the patient. The patient was flown to Windy Point Turnout on Teton Park Road, where a friend of the skier was able to pick them up. Source: [Grand Teton National Park](#)

Great Smoky Mountains National Park Hiker rescued in deep snow

On January 18, the park's Emergency Communications Center received notification that a

28-year-old hiker had become disoriented and lost due to heavy snow while hiking on the Appalachian Trail. They were able to use location data to identify the hiker's location well off-trail in a ravine. The hiker reported signs and symptoms of hypothermia. A medical UH60 Army Blackhawk was deployed by the Tennessee Emergency Management Agency, and two medics were lowered to the hiker, who was found waist-deep in snow. The medics and patient were hoisted to the helicopter and the hiker was brought to the University of Tennessee Medical Center for treatment. Source: [Smoky Mountain News](#)

Haleakalā National Park

Rocks mailed back to park

A visitor returned three rocks back to the park via mail with a letter stating, "I dearly apologize for taking these off of Native land. I wanted to return them to where they belong." The park posted about the incident on its social media, encouraging people to leave things where they find them. Source: [Sacramento Bee](#)

Yellowstone National Park

Visitor sentenced for attacking officers

On September 25, 2021, at the Lake Yellowstone Hotel, a 27-year-old visitor became highly intoxicated, harassed guests, ran through the halls, broke thousands of dollars worth of equipment, and acted in a threatening manner to a security guard. A law enforcement officer approached the individual, which ensued in utilization of a taser. An ambulance was called to help treat both the intoxication and other injuries the individual received during the incident. While in the ambulance, the individual broke out of restraints and began fighting with an officer, requiring the driver (also an officer) to pull over and assist. Both officers sustained injuries. The individual pleaded guilty to three counts of assaulting, resisting, or impeding officers, and one count of depredation against property of the United States. The individual was sentenced to nine months imprisonment, one year of supervised release with no entry to the park, \$2,865 in restitution, and restrictions on alcohol use. Source: [KRTV](#)

Follow-ups on Previously Reported Incidents

- *Blue Ridge Parkway* - More details have been released for the 33-year-old victim found dead near milepost 289.8 on October 9, 2021. The victim traveled with two other people in a 2018 silver Chevrolet Equinox from Rhode Island to North Carolina. The FBI and NPS are asking the public to contact them if they saw any of the people involved between October 6-7. Source: [WSPA](#)
- *George Washington Memorial Parkway* - Attorneys general from nine states and the District of Columbia are asking a federal appeals court to reverse the October 2021 dismissal of manslaughter cases against two U.S. Park Police officers who fatally shot unarmed motorist Bijan Ghaisar in 2017. Source: [The Washington Post](#)

- *Grand Teton National Park* - The Federal Bureau of Investigation released final details of the murder of Gabby Petito, who was last heard from while visiting the park and later found in the nearby Bridger-Teton National Forest. Her fiancée Brian Laundrie alluded authorities for almost a month until found dead of a self-inflicted gunshot wound in Myakkahatche Creek Environmental Park in Florida. Laundrie was determined to be the only suspect in the case, and a notebook found near his body revealed statements claiming responsibility for Petito's death. Source: [Yellowstone Insider](#), [Federal Bureau of Investigation](#)

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- Regular Correspondent: Don Hellmann
- Issue Contributors: Barbara and James W. Stewart, Bill Walters

If you see something that might be of interest to Coalition members, send it to 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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