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## **The Coalition Report**

### **Wednesday, May 18, 2022**

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#### **Coalition Actions**

Coalition Executive Committee members Don Neubacher and Russell Galipeau submitted [an op-ed](#) to the *Fresno Bee* urging President Joe Biden to create a Range of Light National Monument.

Coalition member Norm Hellmers wrote [an op-ed](#) for the *State Journal-Register*, urging the president to declare the 1908 Springfield Race Riot site a national monument.

We ran a new [blog post](#) about the 2021 Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey results, which were published by the Office of Personnel Management on April 28.

The Coalition joined the Public Land Conservancy in [comments](#) on the Tomales Point Area Plan at Point Reyes National Seashore.

Coalition Chair Mike Murray spoke with *National Parks Traveler* about the nearly \$22 billion NPS deferred maintenance bill, saying, "We are comfortable that the total cost is a more accurate and complete representation of deferred maintenance costs than previous estimates." Full story [here](#).

We have also started virtual Hill visits, meeting with staff from the offices of Senators Michael Bennet (D-CO), John Hickenlooper (D-CO), Jeff Merkley (D-OR), and Jack Reed (D-RI), and Representatives Barbara Lee (D-CA) and Chellie Pingree (D-ME). More meetings will be held in the next two weeks.

## 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.*

- *NPS doing better job of assessing maintenance needs* - The NPS has started implementing a new and improved assessment process that is in line with modern industry standards to better understand the deferred maintenance and repairs backlog. The new process better accounts for the truer gross cost estimates, including design and construction management. With this new assessment in place, up-to-date fact sheets for each NPS unit are [now available online](#). Current deferred maintenance is estimated at \$22 billion. Source: [Sierra Sun Times](#), [National Park Service Infrastructure](#)
- *President announces NPS support for ASEAN conservation areas* - President Joe Biden convened a U.S. - Association of South East Nations (ASEAN) Special Summit, in which he re-affirmed the U.S.' commitment to partnership. The White House statement stated that the NPS "will collaborate with their counterparts in Southeast Asia to expand conservation and reverse deforestation. U.S. rangers will travel to Southeast Asia to share best practices and improve protected area management across the region, emphasizing nature-based climate solutions, sustainable tourism and visitor management, traditional knowledge and access to resources, and transboundary habitat connectivity." Source: [The White House](#)
- *New pilot program for climate change education* - The Park for Every Classroom program, a collaboration between the NPS' Stewardship Institute and Shelburne Farms, has started a new national pilot program focused on bringing climate change education to more schools. The pilot is working with the following parks (and their local communities): African Burial Ground, César E. Chávez, Crater Lake, Cuyahoga Valley, Everglades, Great Smoky Mountains, Hawai'i Volcanoes, Saguaro. Source: [Big Island Now](#), [Park for Every Classroom](#)
- *\$68.4 million for ecosystem restoration* - On May 12, the Department of the Interior announced \$68.4 million for 125 ecosystem restoration projects in 20 states, with funding from the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law. Projects related to the NPS include closing or assessing abandoned mine hazards at a number of NPS units, improving trails at Acadia and Apostle Islands, restoring a boat launch in Buffalo National River, restoring watersheds in Zion, and enhancing visitor experiences in Guadalupe Mountains. Source: [Department of the Interior](#)
- *\$74 million in historic preservation grants* - On May 5, the NPS announced the distribution of \$57.7 million in historic preservation grants for states, territories, and partnering nations, as well as \$16 million to more than 200 Tribal historic preservation offices. Source: [National Park Service Office of Communications](#)

- *\$61 million for connecting underserved communities to parks* - On May 6, the Department of the Interior announced \$61.1 million in grant funds that to create new parks and trails or substantial renovations to existing parks in underserved communities through the Outdoor Recreation Legacy Partnership program. The program has been around since 2014 and is funded by the Lands and Water Conservation Fund. 27 projects in 17 states have been selected to apply for funding in the final round. Source: [National Park Service Office of Communications](#)
- *\$16.2 million for civil rights history* - The NPS announced \$16.2 million in African American Civil Rights grants for 44 projects in 15 states. NPS Director Chuck Sams made the announcement while visiting a 2018 grant recipient site, Hinchcliffe Stadium in Paterson, New Jersey, a National Historic Landmark as one of the few remaining Negro League baseball stadiums. Source: [National Park Service Office of Communications](#)
- *2022 Public Lands Alliance awards* - On April 20, the Public Lands Alliance announced the recipients of its 2022 Partnership Awards in a virtual celebration. NPS partners and staff who won awards included the Blue Bridge Parkway Foundation and Blue Ridge Parkway (Public Lands Partner Award), Zion Cycles and National Park Geek (both received a Corporate Stewardship Award), Victoria Mates, Chief of Interpretation and Partnerships with Grand Teton (Agency Leadership Award), Hawai'i Pacific Parks Association (Innovative Product Award), Golden Gate National Parks Conservancy and Great Smoky Mountains Association (both received an Outstanding Public Engagement Award), and the Eastern Sierra Interpretive Association and Great Smoky Mountains Association (both received Publication of the Year). Source: [Public Lands Alliance](#)
- *Plastics pollution at national parks* - *National Parks Traveler* published [an article](#) describing plastic pollution at coastal national park units across the country, and the work staff are doing to mitigate it. Source: *National Parks Traveler*
- *NPF announces 2022 service corps funding* - The National Park Foundation announced it will invest \$4.1 million in service corps funding with over 30 partner organizations across the country, with a particular focus on service corps that address climate change. Source: [PR News Wire](#)
- *Story of U.S.' 2nd national park that was disbanded* - *The Travel* published [an article](#) outlining the unique history of Mackinac Island, which was preserved as the U.S.' second national park in 1875, then decommissioned as a national park in 1895. The park today is a Michigan state park. Source: *The Travel*

### **Around the Parks**

*Park reports are in alphabetical order.*

- *Brown v. Board of Education National Historical Park* - President Joe Biden signed the Brown v. Board of Education National Historical Park Expansion and

Redesignation Act into law, which redesignates the park from a historic site to a national historical park, as well as adding two school sites in South Carolina to the park and several other schools in the region as NPS affiliated areas. Source: [National Park Service Office of Communications](#)

- *Bryce Canyon National Park* - The park has adjusted its horseback regulations to lessen and space out the number of groups due to user group conflicts on trail. The interim system will include dedicated times for each stock group. There has been a 650% increase in private rides and 35% increase in overall park visitation since 2015. The park is reviewing the existing management plan to determine how it will handle private and concession riders, and a public engagement process will inform the process. Source: [National Parks Traveler](#)
- *Capitol Reef National Park* - KSL ran [an article](#) about park and volunteer efforts to replant some of the historic orchards in the park. Source: KSL
- *Cuyahoga Valley National Park* - WKSU ran [an article](#) outlining tensions and ongoing resolutions between the park and the gateway community of Peninsula to resolve local infrastructure issues that are impacted by park visitation. Source: WKSU
- *Glacier National Park* - NBC Montana ran [an article](#) outlining the vast staffing vacancies at the park, including concession and NPS employees, as well as volunteer positions. The park's public information officer said there are over 90 positions that need to be filled. Housing is one of the main issues for hiring staff. Source: NBC Montana
- *George Washington Memorial Parkway* - On May 5, the park rededicated the Netherlands Carillon, after a 2-year restoration project. The carillon was given by the Netherlands to the U.S. for aid given during and after World War II. Three more bells were added during the restoration to commemorate General George C. Marshall, First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt, and Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Source: *Green and Grey Report*, [George Washington Memorial Parkway](#)
- *Glen Canyon National Recreation Area* - On May 1, the Macroinvertebrate Production Flow, also known as "Bug Flow" started at Glen Canyon Dam. This study is a collaboration between the Bureau of Reclamation, U.S. Geological Survey, NPS, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and Bureau of Indian Affairs. It will provide data about aquatic insects in order to improve egg-laying conditions and optimize ecological health, while still meeting water delivery and hydropower goals. The study will run through August 31. Source: [St. George News](#)
- *Glen Canyon National Recreation Area* - The park has amended the Compendium to prohibit the use of powered paragliding, paramotor/ultralight aircraft within the boundaries of the park "in proximity to developed and high visitor use areas."

Source: [Glen Canyon National Recreation Area](#)

- *Golden Gate National Recreation Area* - The Presidio Tunnel Tops project will open on July 17, 2022. The project will open up 14 acres of new parkland, including trails, picnic areas, play areas, gathering spaces, a transit center, a visitor center, a pavilion, and campfire circle. The project has been in the works for a decade and is being funded by a \$98 million capital campaign by the Golden Gate National Parks Conservancy. Source: [Presidio Tunnel Tops](#)
- *Grand Canyon National Park* - The Havasupai Tribal Council extended their suspension on tourism activity on their reservation through the end of 2022. The suspension has been in place since March 2020 to limit the spread of COVID-19 and has been extended to allow the Tribe to make necessary repairs and enhancements for the return of visitors. The NPS has requested that river trips on the Colorado River bypass Havasu Canyon. Source: [KTAR](#)
- *Grand Canyon-Parashant National Monument* - The NPS and Bureau of Land Management, in partnership with the University of Nevada Las Vegas, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and the state wildlife agencies in Nevada and Arizona, signed a decision to begin the reintroduction of relict leopard frogs in its historic range in the park. They will start this spring, with releases each spring until a self-sustaining population is established. Restoration at Pakoon Springs over the past two decades has been vital to the reintroduction project. The frog is a special status species. Source: [St. George News](#)
- *Grand Teton National Park* - The Snake River Gateways project has entered into its second phase. The NPS and Grand Teton National Park Foundation are partnering on this project to improve river access points along the Snake River. This phase will begin work on the north side of Jackson Lake Dam. Visitor access will remain in place until at least this fall or the spring of 2023, when a temporary closure will be announced. The first phase of the project improved river accessibility at the Pacific Creek Landing. Source: [National Parks Traveler](#)
- *Lake Mead National Recreation Area* - 8 News Now ran [an article](#) entitled, "What else is hidden underwater at Lake Mead?", following the recent discovery of human remains inside a barrel on the shoreline of the receding lake (reported in the 5/4/22 Coalition Report, with a follow-up in the Incidents section below). The article chronicles other known items below the surface, including a B-29 Superfortress plane from 1948, parts of a cement aggregate plant, two former Mormon settlements, and a Navy PBY Catalina flying boat. Source: 8 News Now
- *Lowell National Historical Park* - U.S. Representative Lori Trahan (D-MA) and Lowell City Manager Tom Golden met with Superintendent Julie Galonska and toured various sites of the park to better understand the park's offerings and its role in the community, as well as the pandemic's effect on the local economy, which is tied

closely to visitation to the park. Source: [The Sun](#)

- *Manassas National Battlefield Park* - Preservation Virginia recently released its 2022 "Most Endangered Historic Places," which listed Manassas due to the recent rezoning of a parcel adjacent to the park that would allow for a 2,000-acre digital data center to be built. A Prince William County archaeologist said the construction would have "a high potential to adversely affect cultural resources." The Most Endangered Historic Places project has more than a 50% success rate at preserving places since the program began. Source: [National Parks Traveler](#)
- *Mesa Verde National Park* - *The Journal* published [an in-depth article](#) about historic and modern-day efforts to prevent the sandstone arch above Spruce Tree House cliff dwelling from collapsing on the structures. A construction budget of between \$2-3 million has been earmarked through the Federal Lands Recreation and Enhancement Act, should the NPS officially choose a stabilization option (its draft plan will be released in May and open for public comment). Source: *The Journal*
- *Minidoka National Historic Site* - The National Trust for Historic Preservation released its "11 Most Endangered Historic Places in America" for 2022, and Minidoka was listed due to its proximity to proposed wind farms on Bureau of Land Management land adjacent to the park, including within the historic footprint of the camp. Source: [National Wind Watch/Idaho Statesman](#), [National Trust for Historic Preservation](#)
- *National Capital Parks-East, National Mall and Memorial Parks, Rock Creek Park* - The NPS manages three municipal golf courses in the Washington, D.C. area that have unique history. In 2020, National Links Trust signed a 50-year lease with the NPS to manage the courses, and plans to oversee a privately-funded \$65 million overhaul of the courses. The organization is awaiting permitting approval, which has taken two years thus far. The NPS said that an Environmental Assessment for the Rock Creek Golf Course will begin soon. Some critics are frustrated that there is no timeline for upgrades to Langston Golf Course, which was originally set aside as a course for Black people, and had a role in the integration of sport during the civil rights movement. Source: [WUSA](#)
- *Pipestone National Monument* - A pipeline owned and operated by Magellan Midstream Partners, L.P. will be decommissioned by the end of 2022. The NPS and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, with input from local Tribes, are working with the company to abandon the pipeline, which includes a half-mile section that runs across the park and Northern Tallgrass Prairie National Wildlife Refuge. Magellan attempted to renew their right-of-way permit, but was denied due to the fragility of a number of cultural and natural resources in the area. Source: [Pipestone County Star](#)
- *Pullman National Monument* - Assistant Secretary for Fish and Wildlife and Parks

Shannon Estenoz toured several sites honoring the Civil Rights Movement, including Pullman. She discussed the ongoing work of the Department of the Interior to strengthen equity and social justice and tell more diverse American stories. Source: [Department of the Interior](#)

- *Redwood National Park* - On May 3, a pair of California condors was released into the park, which is the first time the species has flown in Northern California in over 100 years. The condors were raised at the Oregon Zoo and released by the Yurok Tribe's wildlife department. The Tribe has two other condors in their care that were raised at a recovery center in Idaho, which are to be released later this month. The Tribe will monitor the birds' movements. Source: [Jefferson Public Radio](#)
- *Rocky Mountain National Park* - The hiker shuttle will run this year for the first time since 2019, opening on May 27 and finishing service on October 10. Visitors will need a reservation ticket and a valid park pass. Source: [Rocky Mountain National Park](#)
- *Salem Maritime National Historic Site* - The park opened a new exhibit called "Dominican Faceless Dolls," which will run through June 30. The installation was co-created with the North Shore Community Development Coalition and offers content in both English and Spanish. The exhibit honors the cultural significance of Dominican faceless dolls and seeks to celebrate Salem's Dominican community and historic connections to the Caribbean. Source: [Salem Maritime National Historic Site](#)
- *Wupatki National Monument* - The park announced a Finding of No Significant Impact for the Backcountry Management Plan Environmental Assessment. Source: [Sedona.biz](#)
- *Yellowstone National Park* - The U.S. Geological Survey released its [Yellowstone Volcano Observatory 2021 Annual Report](#), which showed, among other data points, that there were 2,773 earthquakes located by seismograph stations in the region, 65% of all earthquakes were part of earthquake "swarms," and the Sawmill Geyser reactivated after 4.5 years of dormancy. Source: [Idaho Capital Sun](#)
- *Yellowstone National Park* - The Montana State University Library and the University of Wyoming Libraries will host a conference called "Conversations on Collecting Yellowstone" from June 5-8. It will focus on the collection and preservation of materials that document the history of the park. An exhibit will also open at the MSU Library that week and will run throughout the summer, with posters and poster-style illustrations from the 1870s to present. Source: [Montana State University News Service](#)
- *Zion National Park* - The park recently started construction on an expansion and accessibility improvements to the Kolob Canyons visitor center restrooms. The

project is expected to wrap up in Fall 2022. Source: [Zion National Park](#)

## **Personnel Changes**

- *César E. Chávez National Monument* - Anne Doherty-Stephan was selected as the new superintendent. She has 35 years of NPS experience, most recently as the director of resources and curation at Chamizal National Monument. She will begin her new role in late May. Source: [César E. Chávez National Monument](#)
- *Glacier National Park* - Dave Roemer was selected as the new superintendent. Dave has many years of NPS experience, most recently as deputy superintendent at Redwood National and State Parks. He will start his new position in July. Source: [Glacier National Park](#)
- *Manzanar National Historic Site* - Brenda Ling was selected as the new superintendent. She has 19 years of federal service, most recently as the director of the public affairs division at Gateway National Recreation Area. She will begin her new role in June. Source: [Manzanar National Historic Site](#)
- *Point Reyes National Seashore* - Anne Dubinsky Altman was selected as the new deputy superintendent. She has over 20 years of NPS experience, most recently as a senior member of the Business Management Group in the Washington Office. She will begin her new role in late May. Source: [Point Reyes National Seashore](#)
- *Yellowstone National Park* - Chris Flesch has been selected as the new chief of visitor and resource protection. He has 17 years of NPS experience, most recently as the deputy chief ranger in Yellowstone. He started his new role on May 1. Source: [Montana Outdoor Radio Show](#)

## **Park People**

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

### **Deceased**

- John L. Bailey, 72, passed away on May 1. John had a long career as a law enforcement ranger at Chesapeake and Ohio Canal National Historical Park. Source: [Kimble Funeral Home](#), Rick Erisman
- Mike Corbett, 68, passed away on May 8. Mike was a highly accomplished rock climber, best known for leading Mark Wellman in the first paraplegic ascent of El Capitan in 1989. He and friend/climbing partner Ken Yager founded the Yosemite Climbing Museum in Mariposa, CA in 2019. Source: [Climbing](#)
- Dr. Fern Duvall, 68, passed away on February 23. He spent 40 years working as a conservation biologist on the Hawaiian islands to protect rare endemic birds. The



Friends of Haleakalā have established an annual \$1,000 scholarship in his honor for college students in a field related to the biology, ecology and/or conservation of Haleakalā National Park's ecosystem. Source: [Honolulu Civil Beat](#), [Maui News Now](#)

- Kaelynn Johnson, 67, passed away on May 3. She worked at Grand Teton, Sequoia, Yellowstone, and the San Francisco field office. Source: [Legacy/Berg Mortuary](#)
- Thomas "Tom" James Peterman, 75, passed away on April 21. Tom worked for two years at Haleakalā National Park in the early 2000s after a 25-year career with the U.S. Forest Service. Source: [Legacy/The Statesman Examiner](#)
- Annette Spearman, 84, passed away on May 1. She and her husband James volunteered with the Corps of Engineers for several years in the late 1980s, including work at Padre Island National Seashore. Source: [Legacy/Dennard First National Funeral Home - Winnsboro](#)
- Jean Carol Ziesak, 83, passed away on April 28. She spent a summer working as a park ranger at Yosemite National Park. Source: [Lost Coast Outpost](#)

### **In the News**

- Retired superintendent Rolf Diamant and University of Massachusetts professor of Landscape Architecture Ethan Carr have co-authored a new book, *Olmsted and Yosemite: Civil War, Abolition, and the National Park Idea*, that explains how anti-slavery activism, war, and the remaking of government gave rise to the American public park. The book argues that the system of public lands, including national parks, could only be created and sustained by a renewed and enlarged federal government that was not engaged in slavery and disunion. Source: Rolf Diamant (via web submission), [University of Massachusetts Amherst](#)
- Olivia Krum, a student from Penn State University, was recently awarded a Udall Scholarship, which are given to college sophomores and juniors for leadership, public service, and commitment to Native American issues or the environment. Olivia has worked with the NPS as a research assistant at Grand Teton and Yellowstone, gathering visitor data on how to encourage safer wildlife viewing experiences, and she is currently working with the NPS on night sky pollution research. Source: [Penn State University](#)

### **Open for Comment**

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

- *Big Bend National Park* - Public comment is now open on initial concepts for the replacement of the Chisos Lodge. On April 21, the park and the Architectural Resources Group hosted a "first look" presentation that is [now available online](#). Comments may be submitted by email and are open until May 21. Source: [Big](#)

### [Bend National Park](#)

- *Chattahoochee River National Recreation Area* - Public comment is now open on an Environmental Assessment for the rehabilitation of the Paces Mill site. [Comments](#) are open until June 8. Source: [Chattahoochee River National Recreation Area](#)
- *Chesapeake and Ohio Canal National Historical Park* - Public comment is now open on a Development Concept Plan for White's Ferry, which is aimed at improving recreation in the area. [Comments](#) will be open until June 11. Source: [Chesapeake and Ohio Canal National Historical Park](#)
- *Fire Island National Seashore* - Public comment is now open on an Off Road Vehicle Management program for the park. [Comments](#) are open until May 20. Source: [Fire Island National Seashore](#)
- *Gateway National Recreation Area* - Public comment is now open on a Stewardship Plan for the East and West Pond area of the Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge. [Comments](#) are open until June 7. Source: [Gateway National Recreation Area](#)
- *Grand Teton National Park* - Public comment is now open on an environmental assessment for the protection and management of winter habitat for bighorn sheep. [Comments](#) have been extended to remain open through June 20. Source: [Wyoming Public Radio](#), [Grand Teton National Park](#)
- *National Mall and Memorial Parks* - The NPS and District of Columbia Department of Transportation have opened public comment on conversion of part of Ohio Drive into bicycle and pedestrian lanes. [Comments](#) are open until May 19. Source: [WJLA](#)

### **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.*

#### **New Public Laws**

**April 29** – The president signed into law H.R. 3113, to require the Secretary of the Interior, the Secretary of Agriculture, and the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works to digitize and make publicly available geographic information system mapping data relating to public access to federal land and waters for outdoor recreation (Public Law 117–114).

#### **Senate Actions**

**May 3** – The Committee on Energy and Natural Resources ordered favorably reported the following, among other business items:

- S. 1942, to standardize the designation of National Heritage Areas (NHA), with an amendment in the nature of a substitute. Sections 1-6 of the bill establish a

National Heritage Area System for all existing national heritage areas, along with any future ones established by Congress. Additionally, the bill would do the following:

- Sec. 7 authorizes studies of the Great Dismal Swamp area in VA and NC, and part of the island of Guam as potential national heritage areas.
  - Sec. 8 designates the Alabama Black Belt NHA in AL; the Downeast Maine NHA; the Northern Neck NHA in VA; the Southern Campaign of the Revolution National Heritage Corridor in NC/SC; and the Southern Maryland NHA.
  - Sec. 9 extends and standardizes the expiration of appropriations for 45 existing national heritage areas to September 30, 2037.
  - Sec. 10 increases the authorization of appropriations ceiling for 11 existing national heritage areas.
  - Sec. 11 redesignates the America's Agricultural Heritage Partnership in Iowa as the Silos & Smokestacks National Heritage Area and redesignates the Great Basin National Heritage Route in Utah as the Great Basin National Heritage Area.
- S. 2438, to modify the boundary of the Cane River Creole National Historical Park in the State of Louisiana, with an amendment. The bill would add the 46.1-acre Magnolia Plantation to the boundary of the park.
  - S. 3266, to improve recreation opportunities on, and facilitate greater access to, federal public land, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute. Among other provisions, the bill would do the following:
    - Title I – Sec. 111 would require the identification of at least 10 current long-distance bike trails and 10 areas where they could be developed, consistent with the management requirements for federal recreational lands involved. Sec. 131 would require agreements to foster the development of broadband internet infrastructure on federal recreational lands. Sec. 132 would require the exploration of extension of seasonal recreational opportunities on federal recreational lands. Sec. 133 would encourage collaboration and partnerships among local gateway communities to accommodate visitors to federal recreational lands. Sec. 134 would require the secretaries of federal recreational lands to increase parking opportunities for visitors.
    - Title II and III would make some changes to fees charged for various activities by visitors to federal recreational lands, including the use of online services.
    - Title IV – Sec. 401 would make changes to fee provisions for filming in national parks and other public lands. Sec. 404 would authorize the National Park Service, among other land management bureaus, to inspect and decontaminate vessels for aquatic nuisance species within a river basin that has a Bureau of Reclamation project. Sec. 406 codifies the Outdoor Recreation Legacy grants program for low-income communities in qualified urban areas.

Additionally, the following three bills were considered by the committee, but the motion to report the legislation resulted in a tied vote. Chairman Manchin will notify the Secretary of the Senate of the tie vote, after which the Senate Majority Leader may move to discharge the legislation from the committee so that, if agreed to, the bills can be placed on the Senate Executive Calendar for consideration by the full Senate. Those bills are:

- S. 173, to provide for the designation of certain wilderness areas, recreation management areas, and conservation areas in the state of Colorado, as amended. Sec. 110 of the bill removes a 15.5-acre tract of land from potential wilderness in Rocky Mountain National Park. Title IV of the bill authorizes in statute the establishment of the Curecanti National Recreation Area, which currently is being managed by NPS under an agreement with the Bureau of Reclamation.
- S. 182, to withdraw certain federal land in the Pecos watershed area of the state of New Mexico from mineral entry, as amended. The bill would help protect the Pecos River, a portion of which runs through Pecos National Historical Park.
- S. 455, a bill to designate and expand wilderness areas in Olympic National Forest in the state of Washington, and to designate certain rivers in Olympic National Forest and Olympic National Park as Wild and Scenic Rivers, as amended.

**May 4** – The Committee on Environment and Public Works ordered favorably reported among other business items, an original bill entitled, "Water Resources Development Act." This is the committee's biennial bill that provides for improvements to the rivers and harbors of the United States, and provides for the conservation and development of water and related resources. Some water projects in the legislation could impact various national park units due to their location within or along the waterways affected by the project.

**May 10** – The Senate agreed to S. Res. 628, designating May 21, 2022, as "Kids to Parks Day."

**May 11** – The Committee on Energy and Natural Resources: Subcommittee on National Parks concluded a hearing to examine the following after receiving testimony from Michael A. Caldwell, Associate Director, Park Planning, Facilities, and Lands, National Park Service, Department of the Interior:

- S. 557, to establish a pilot program for native plant species.
- S. 1344, to redesignate the Pullman National Monument in the State of Illinois as the Pullman National Historical Park.
- S. 1718, to amend the Rosie the Riveter/World War II Home Front National Historical Park Establishment Act of 2000 to provide for additional areas to be added to the park.
- S. 1814 and H.R. 3531, bills to authorize the Women Who Worked on the Home Front Foundation to establish a commemorative work in the District of Columbia and its environs.
- S. 2367, to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to acquire land in Frederick County, Maryland, for the Historic Preservation Training Center of the National Park Service.

- S. 2964, to clarify the status of the North Country, Ice Age, and New England National Scenic Trails as units of the National Park System.
- S. 3141, to establish the New Philadelphia National Historical Park in the state of Illinois as a unit of the National Park System.
- S. 3185, to amend the Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area Improvement Act to extend the exception to the closure of certain roads within the recreation area for local businesses.
- S. 3240, to waive the application fee for applications for special use permits for veterans' special events at war memorials on land administered by the National Park Service in the District of Columbia and its environs.
- S. 3307, to modify the boundary of the Wilson's Creek National Battlefield in the state of Missouri.
- S. 3334, to extend the authority for the establishment of a commemorative work to honor enslaved and free black persons who served in the American Revolution.
- S. 3338, to revise the boundary of the Ste. Genevieve National Historical Park in the state of Missouri.
- S. 3519, to amend the National Trails System Act to designate the Butterfield Overland National Historic Trail.
- S. 3551, to require the Secretary of Agriculture and the Secretary of the Interior to carry out certain activities to enhance recreational opportunities for gateway communities.
- S. 3667, to amend title 54, United States Code, to establish within the National Park Service the United States African-American Burial Grounds Preservation Program.
- S. 3685, to direct the Secretary of the Interior to conduct a special resource study to determine the suitability and feasibility of establishing the John P. Parker House in Ripley, Ohio, as a unit of the National Park System.
- S. 4114, to amend Public Law 99–420 to provide for the conveyance of certain federal land in the state of Maine for use for affordable workforce housing.
- S. 4121, to designate the Kol Israel Foundation Holocaust Memorial in Bedford Heights, Ohio, as a national memorial. The memorial would not be a unit of the National Park System.
- H.R. 268, to provide for the boundary of the Palo Alto Battlefield National Historic Park to be adjusted, to authorize the donation of land to the United States for addition to that historic park.
- H.R. 1931, to provide competitive grants for the promotion of Japanese American confinement education as a means to understand the importance of democratic principles, use and abuse of power, and to raise awareness about the importance of cultural tolerance toward Japanese Americans.

### **House Actions**

**May 11** – The House passed:

- H.R. 2499, to amend chapter 81 of title 5, United States Code, to create a presumption that a disability or death of a federal employee in fire protection activities caused by any of certain diseases is the result of the performance of such

- employees duty, by a vote of 288 yeas to 131 nays.
- S. 66, to require the Interagency Task Force on Harmful Algal Blooms and Hypoxia to develop a plan for reducing, mitigating, and controlling harmful algal blooms and hypoxia in South Florida, by a vote of 412 yeas to 7 nays. The bill now goes to the president to be signed into law.

## **Incidents**

*Incidents are listed in alphabetical order by park.*

### **Assateague Island National Seashore Storm damages off-road area**

A storm and wind event has damaged the Oversand Vehicle area in the Maryland section of the park, creating large scarps that are difficult to pass or completely impassable. Boundary markers for the area were also lost or displaced. The area is closed until crews can safely access and fix damage. Source: [Assateague Island National Seashore](#)

### **Blue Ridge Parkway Car crash causes fatality**

On April 30, a vehicle was traveling northbound near Milepost 1 on the Parkway when it left the roadway in a curve and traveled down an embankment before striking a large tree and flipping several times. A 23-year-old passenger in the car passed away from the collision. The driver was transported to the University of Virginia Medical Center in Charlottesville, Virginia with serious, but non-life-threatening injuries. Further investigation about the cause of the accident is underway. Source: [WSET](#)

### **Buffalo National River Guided visitor dies from fall**

On May 7, a 46-year-old visitor was hiking with an "illegal and unlicensed guide" and a group of people when he fell about 20 feet near the Eye of the Needle rock formation, located in the Indian Creek drainage of the Ponca Wilderness area. Witnesses and first responders conducted CPR, but lifesaving efforts were unsuccessful. The Newton County Sheriff is working with the NPS and U.S. Attorney's office to determine whether there will be local or federal charges for the guide. Source: [Arkansas Democrat Gazette](#)

### **Cape Hatteras National Seashore 2 more houses collapsed into ocean**

On May 10, two houses along Ocean Drive in Rodanthe collapsed into the Atlantic Ocean. They are the second and third houses to collapse into the surf in Rodanthe this year. Debris from one of the houses has spread widely. The NPS closed off the areas around the houses and is working with the homeowners and volunteers to coordinate cleanup

activities. Source: [Associated Press](#)

## **Capitol Reef National Park**

### **Fossils stolen**

A segment of reptile tracks dating back ~200 million years has been stolen from the park. The park recently posted a picture of the tracks on Facebook and a visitor, who is a paleontologist familiar with the site, said that some of the tracks were missing. An investigation by the NPS revealed that some of the tracks had been stolen some time between August 2017 and August 2018. The NPS is offering \$1,000 for anyone who comes forward with information related to the theft and vandalism. Source: [KSL News Radio](#)

## **Canyonlands National Park**

### **Visitor found deceased**

After an abandoned vehicle was reported, a search and rescue team made up of personnel from the NPS and San Juan County, found a 63-year-old deceased below the rim at Grand View Point on May 12. Source: [The News and Observer](#)

## **Chesapeake and Ohio Canal National Historical Park**

### **Flooding causes 2 barges to break free and closes trails**

On May 7 and 8, a floodwater surge on the Potomac River caused two construction barges to break free from their moorings and float downstream. One barge traveled four miles before becoming stuck on debris, while the other floated 25 miles before it also got stuck. The barges were part of a project to rehabilitate a retaining wall and towpath along the canal. The contractor has been monitoring the barges around-the-clock and the NPS is working with officials in Maryland, Virginia, and West Virginia to secure and remove them. The first barge was pulled to shore on May 12, where it will be disassembled for transport. Meanwhile, the Great Falls Overlook, Olmsted Island Boardwalk and Section A of the Billy Goat Trail were closed temporarily due to the flooding. Source: [Associated Press](#), [WTOP](#), [US News](#)

## **Denali National Park**

### **Solo climber found deceased**

On April 30, a 35-year-old left camp at 14,000 feet on the West Buttress, intending to summit Denali and return to camp the same day. The climber called a friend on a satellite phone with about 2,000 feet left to climb, mentioning fatigue, but no distress. After several days of not hearing from the climber, the friend alerted the NPS on May 3. Searches began on May 4 and the climber was found via aerial search below Denali Pass. The climber likely died due to a fall on the traverse between Denali Pass and the plateau below, which is "a notoriously treacherous stretch." The climber's body will be recovered after the rescue team acclimates to the high altitude. Source: [KTOO](#), [Sacramento Bee](#)

## **Golden Gate National Recreation Area**

### **Plane crash leaves two deceased**

On May 6, a Vans RV-10 personal aircraft crashed into a hillside in the Marin Headlands near Slacker Hill. The plane's emergency beacon was activated two minutes later. First responders were hindered in search efforts by heavy fog and condensation, which obscured visibility. The plane was located and the pilot and passenger were declared deceased at the scene. The crash is being investigated by the NPS, Federal Aviation Administration, and National Transportation Safety Board. Source: [CNN](#)

## **Great Smoky Mountains National Park**

### **Deceased person found in river**

On May 9, a 72-year-old was found deceased, half-submerged, in the middle of the Little River, about one mile west of Metcalf Bottoms. A swiftwater team recovered the victim's body. A vehicle registered to the victim was found in a road pull-out 600 feet upriver. Authorities said there was no obvious evidence of foul play and the investigation is ongoing. Source: [WPDE](#)

## **Kenai Fjords National Park**

### **Wildlife celebrity charged with illegal hunting**

On May 6, federal prosecutors filed two misdemeanor counts of violating the Lacey Act against a 55-year-old who produces and stars in a wildlife television show called "The Bear Whisperer." The individual is accused of illegally shooting and transporting a bear at Pilot Harbor, which is located in Kenai Fjords. Footage from that hunt was included in an episode of the show. The individual is accused of also filing a false sealing certificate with the Alaska Department of Fish and Game, stating the bear was shot in a different place altogether. The individual will attend a virtual arraignment hearing next month. Source: [Anchorage Daily News](#)

## **Lake Mead National Recreation Area**

### **More human remains found**

On May 7, the NPS responded to a call of human remains found in Callville Bay. It is the second incident of found human remains this week due to dropping lake levels (see Follow-Ups below). The investigation is ongoing. Source: [Lake Mead National Recreation Area](#)

## **Mount Rainier National Park**

### **2 climbers rescued**

On May 11, two climbers were on the Kautz Glacier when they ran into foul weather. They called 911 that evening to let them know their location near Wapowety Cleaver, though



they said they did not need support yet. The following morning, they called in to let officials know their plan to descend the glacier. Several hours later, one of the climbers called to report that the other climber had fallen into a crevasse, hurt their arms and legs, and was unable to self-rescue. A rescue team could not deploy that day due to inclement weather. The following morning (May 13), it took several attempts through the windy conditions for a helicopter to hoist the uninjured climber. That afternoon, four NPS staff were dropped off near the crevasse, where they were able to lift the injured climber up and out, and the crew was able to be evacuated by helicopter. Source: [Fox 13](#)

## **National Mall and Memorial Parks**

### **U.S. Rep presses NPS on 2021 car crash**

U.S. Representative Eleanor Holmes Norton (D-DC) issued an official statement on May 2 asking the NPS for information related to an April 2021 car crash that resulted in two pedestrian fatalities. The NPS has not given the victims' family members the name of the driver, which the families need for insurance claim filings. Rep. Norton said that "NPS has a track record of stonewalling requests for information regarding their investigations, including information to which families of victims are entitled. I have requested a response by May 6, 2022, which is a reasonable timeline to answer these basic questions." Source: [WJLA](#)

## **Yellowstone National Park**

### **Forest Fenn treasure location may become public through lawsuit**

The famous treasure hidden by wealthy art dealer Forrest Fenn in 2010 was found by a searcher, Jack Stuef, in 2020. Forrest Fenn and Jack Stuef had met with Yellowstone chief ranger Sarah Davis shortly after the treasure was found to disclose its location in the park. After scouting the location, Sarah Davis concluded the spot was not set up to handle the increased foot traffic that revealing the location might bring. One of the other treasure seekers is now suing the Fenn Estate with claims that Forrest Fenn moved the treasure, and Jack Stuef may be called to publicly discuss where it was found. Assistant U.S. attorney Kimberley Bell filed a motion to intervene in the case to attempt to avoid publicizing the exact location, but a judge denied the motion because it would cause undue delay. The deposition with Jack Stuef will proceed and the location may be revealed through those proceedings. Source: [Outside](#)

## **Yellowstone National Park**

### **Earthquake**

On May 11, a 4.2 magnitude earthquake occurred in the park, about 23 miles south of Silver Gate, Montana. It is the first earthquake of a 4.0 magnitude or higher since 2017. No damage was reported. Source: [KRTV](#)

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

- *Bandelier National Monument, Valles Caldera National Preserve* - The two parks remain closed due to the Cerro Pelado Fire. As of May 14, the fire was 45,591 acres, with 23% containment and 1,018 assigned personnel. Source: [New Mexico Fire Information](#)
- *Colorado National Monument* - The park released further details about the 67-year-old who died while climbing Independence Monument (from the Coalition Report from 5/4). The climber was on the Ottos Route with two friends, leading the first pitch. The victim fell about 30 feet to a ledge about halfway up the pitch. The victim was wearing a helmet. Rescuers from the NPS, Mesa County Sheriffs Office, Mesa County Search and Rescue, and Lower Valley Fire District found the victim deceased upon their arrival, due to blunt force trauma. Source: [Colorado National Monument](#)
- *Kings Canyon National Park* - Highway 180 reopened to the public on May 9. Its spring reopening was delayed by several weeks due to a massive rockslide blocking the road (from the Coalition Report from 5/4). Source: [National Parks Traveler](#)
- *Lake Mead National Recreation Area* - The human remains found in a barrel along the shoreline of the lake on May 1st (from the Coalition Report from 5/4) have revealed more clues about the incident. Las Vegas police now believe the person was shot and that the shoes worn by the person were manufactured in the middle and late 1970s, indicating the death occurred between the middle 1970s and early 1980s. Source: [CBS News](#)
- *Sunset Crater Volcano National Monument, Wupatki National Monument* - As of May 12, the Tunnel Fire was 19,088 acres, 95% contained, with 36 personnel assigned. Sunset Crater Volcano remains closed in the aftermath of the fire. Wupatki reopened and is accessible from the northern entrance. Source: [Inciweb](#), [Sunset Crater Volcano National Monument](#), [Wupatki National Monument](#)

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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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