

[View this email in your web browser.](#)



## **The Coalition Report**

### **Wednesday, May 4, 2022**

---

#### **Coalition Actions**

We [signed on to a letter](#) sent to the Department of the Interior, urging the department to advance DOI and National Park Service interests for substantial pollution reducing requirements to restore clean and clear air to national parks and wilderness areas nationwide.

We also issued a [statement](#) following the DOI's announcement that it will institute new reforms for its onshore oil and gas leasing program. While these new reforms to the onshore oil and gas leasing program are a positive step forward, there is still much work to be done to institutionalize meaningful reforms.

We joined a couple of actions related to regional haze concerns. We [signed on](#) to an open letter regarding Alabama's Regional Haze State Implementation Plan and signed on to [comments](#) submitted regarding Arkansas' Proposed Regional Haze Plan.

The Coalition also [worked closely](#) with House committee staff on appropriate language for a bill addressing NPS housing issues. The bill was introduced on Thursday.

Our Staff Assistant, Theresa Manthripragada, wrote [a blog post](#) in honor of National Park Week.

#### **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.

- *Executive order to protect old-growth forests* - On April 22, President Joe Biden signed an executive order directing the Departments of the Interior and Agriculture to define, inventory, and better protect old-growth trees. It does not ban the logging of old-growth trees. The inventory will include defining regional and ecological variation, identifying threats, and developing policies for the conservation and management of the forests, and the inventory will be made public within one year. Source: [Earth.org](#), [The White House](#)
- *Restoration of Honor Flight visit facilitation* - On May 2, the NPS and the Honor Flight Network announced the resumption of NPS and U.S. Park Police support of Honor Flight visits, starting on June 1. Previously, the NPS had announced it would no longer play a role in Honor Flight visits. A new agreement has been reached to greet veterans at memorials, facilitate parking, and give them ranger-led programs, as well as facilitating smooth flow of traffic and escorting from the Lincoln Memorial to Arlington National Cemetery. Source: [National Mall and Memorial Parks](#)
- *\$150K in grants for Underground Railroad resources* - On April 21, the NPS announced they will be giving \$150,000 in National Underground Railroad Network to Freedom Grants. Applications are due May 13. The opportunity is being funded by the 400 Years of African American History Commission, in collaboration with the Association for the Study of African American Life and History and the National Park Service. Source: [National Park Service Office of Communications](#)
- *\$3.27 million in civil rights history grants* - The NPS announced \$3.27 million in History of Equal Rights Grants, which support physical preservation and planning efforts related to civil rights sites. 10 sites in seven states received the grants. Source: [National Parks Traveler](#)
- *"National parks center colonizer histories through place names"* - *High Country News* published [an article](#) summing up recent research in *People and Nature* that shows that place names in 16 national parks frequently replaced indigenous names in ways that "perpetuate settler colonial mythologies." Source: *High Country News*
- *Best apps to visit national parks* - *The New York Times* published [an article](#) describing the best apps to visit the national parks, including the official NPS app, trail maps, and trip planning devices. Source: *The New York Times*
- *How the NPS prevents wildfires* - *Discover* published [an article](#) outlining the threats of wildfire in national parks and some of the techniques the NPS is using to better prevent them. Source: *Discover*
- *1/3 of tree cover loss from wildfire* - New research shows that wildfires were responsible for one-third of all global tree cover loss in 2021. However, 2021 also

saw a 2% decline in overall tree cover loss from 2020. Source: [The Washington Post](#)

## **Around the Parks**

*Park reports are in alphabetical order.*

- *Abraham Lincoln Birthplace National Historical Park* - The park has opened a new "Track Trail," which is aimed at engaging children and families in recreation and the outdoors. It is part of the Kids in Parks program, which has 229 other Track Trails across the country. There are a series of self-guided brochures with the trail, designed to make hiking fun for all. Source: [Commonwealth Journal](#)
- *Buffalo National River* - The Cherokee Nation has reached a new agreement with the NPS to allow citizens of the Tribe to gather plants with cultural and medicinal significance in the park. Source: [Smithsonian Magazine](#)
- *Buffalo National River* - The park purchased a 64-acre private inholding within the boundaries of the park on the south side of the Buffalo River in Searcy County, between Rocky Creek and the South Maumee River Access. This parcel will allow the park to complete a now-contiguous segment of the Buffalo River Trail/Ozark Highland Trail so that visitors can hike from Richland Creek to Dillard's Ferry. The park purchased the land from the Buffalo River Foundation, utilizing Land and Water Conservation Funds. Source: [Buffalo National River](#)
- *Glen Canyon National Recreation Area* - The park announced the release of a prospectus for a concession contract in the Hite area, providing gasoline, food and beverage, campground facilities, showers, and ATV rentals and tours. Proposals are due by June 28 and the concession contract will begin September 1. Source: [Glen Canyon National Recreation Area](#)
- *Grand Teton National Park* - The Interagency Grizzly Bear Study Team will be conducting pre-baiting and trapping operations in the park between May 1 and July 15 in order to monitor the species. The operations occur annually to monitor health and behavior of the animals, as part of Endangered Species Act protocols. Source: [Grand Teton National Park](#)
- *Guadalupe Mountains National Park* - Beginning on June 21, the park will require day hikers and overnight backpacking permit holders to pack out human waste using commercial toilet bag systems (aka "wag bags"). The park has had a large increase in visitation the last couple of years, including an increase in human waste and toilet paper in wilderness areas. Catholes are difficult to use due to the rocky soils and the dry environment. Source: [Guadalupe Mountains National Park](#)
- *Hagerman Fossil Beds National Monument* - On April 28, the NPS and the State of Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation dedicated their new visitor center, located in Hagerman, Idaho. The project cost \$2.3 million, which was funded by

IDPR. The NPS has committed to at least a 25-year lease in the building. The visitor center supports both Thousand Springs State Park and Hagerman Fossil Beds.

Source: [National Parks Traveler](#)

- *Joshua Tree National Park* - The Oasis Visitor Center will close permanently on May 2 so that staff and resources can be moved to the new Joshua Tree Cultural Center, located in the nearby town of Twentynine Palms. Source: [KESQ](#)
- *Kenai Fjords National Park* - Secretary of the Interior Deb Haaland spent several days in Alaska to honor Earth Week, including time at Kenai Fjords, where she met with staff and discussed the impact of climate change on the park. Source: [Department of the Interior](#)
- *National Mall and Memorial Parks* - The oldest surviving structure on the National Mall, the Lockkeeper's House, reopened to the public on April 23. The building has been closed for several decades, with the exception of a brief opening in 2018. The building was built in 1837 and served as an office and residence for the person who collected tolls and managed traffic along the C&O Canal. It has been restored and now houses a small museum that will be open every day between 11am and 3pm. The Trust for the National Mall funded the restoration effort. Source: [WTOP](#)
- *New Bedford Whaling National Historical Park* - The park recently finished renovating the visitor center on William Street in New Bedford. Parts of the historic building have been restored and new exhibits have been installed. Source: [South Coast Today](#)
- *New River Gorge National Park and Preserve* - The park's Cultural Resource Program Manager, Dave Fuerst, recently oversaw the restoration of an 80-year-old Michael Lensen mural in the Mount Hope post office. The mural depicts mining culture in Appalachia and hadn't been touched since its original painting in 1942. Source: [WVVA](#), [New River Gorge National Park and Preserve Facebook page](#)
- *North and South Dakota national park units* - The North Dakota Department of Environmental Quality has released a draft regional haze plan, which is open for public comment. The NPS has publicly commented that emissions across the state have negatively affected visibility and air quality in park units in both North Dakota and South Dakota. They also said that state regulators "generally inflated costs associated with controls" and did not consider viable options, such as reducing emissions from the oil and gas industry. Source: [Grand Forks Herald](#)
- *Ocmulgee Mounds National Historical Park* - From May 2-6, John John Brown of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation and Pedro Zepeda of the Seminole Tribe will be using traditional methods to construct a canoe out of a large log. The project is open for public viewing and the canoe will be incorporated into the museum at the park. The project is being funded and coordinated by the Ocmulgee Mounds Association and

The Muscogee Nation. Source: [Ocmulgee Mounds National Historical Park Facebook page](#)

- *Olympic National Park* - The NPS, Lower Elwha Klallam Tribe, and Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife announced an extension to a recreational and commercial fishing closure along the Elwha River and tributaries through June 30, 2023. The moratorium has been in place since the removal of two dams along the Elwha and is designed to let fish rebound sufficiently in the watershed before fishing may begin anew. Source: [Olympic National Park](#)
- *Ozark National Scenic Riverways* - The restoration of the historic Big Spring dining lodge and cabins will begin soon at the park. The contract was awarded to Blinderman Construction, Inc from Chicago, Illinois, and project managers have been scouting and developing the project schedule. The restoration will include rehabilitation of historic structures, updates to mechanical, electrical, and plumbing systems, safety upgrades, and accessibility improvements. There will also be work on the grounds and the boat dock. Source: [Ozark National Scenic Riverways](#)
- *Perry's Victory and International Peace Memorial* - The park is starting two projects to repair and restore the park's seawalls and the restore the upper plaza. The seawall project was awarded \$25 million in funding from line-item construction funds and will begin this spring, while the plaza project will cost \$20 million with funds from the Great American Outdoors Act and will begin in 2023. Source: [Perry's Victory and International Peace Memorial](#)
- *Rocky Mountain National Park* - The park will increase the one-day vehicle pass from \$25 to \$30, starting on May 27. It is one of the only parks in the system to have a one-day vehicle pass. The increases follow a Fall 2021 public input process and are tied to the need for high-quality visitor services. Source: [Rocky Mountain National Park](#)
- *Saguaro National Park* - The park has received a \$10,000 grant from Western National Parks Association to study the biological diversity of the Rincon Mountain District, which is considered a "sky island" of rare species that are vulnerable to climate change. Source: [Western National Parks Association](#)
- *Theodore Roosevelt National Park* - The North Dakota Department of Commerce Tourism and Marketing Division, in collaboration with More Than Just Parks, has released [a new short film](#) promoting the park in honor of its 75th anniversary, which took place on April 25. Source: [Newswires EIN](#)
- *Voyageurs National Park* - The park will implement decontamination protocols this summer at the Kettle Falls and Gold Portages to try to keep out zebra mussels from nearby lakes. The invasive mussels were found in Rainy Lake last summer. Source: [Quetico Superior Wilderness News](#)

- *Yellowstone National Park* - The park is partnering with Yellowstone Forever on new sustainability projects, including "smart building" controls, water loss audits and mitigation, electric vehicle charging infrastructure, and LED light fixtures. Source: [Explore Big Sky](#)
- *Yellowstone National Park* - Park biologists have noticed unusually high mating patterns among wolves this spring, which they suspect is due to the high numbers of individuals killed during hunting season outside the park this year. Source: [WyoFile](#)

### **Personnel Changes**

- *Andrew Johnson National Historic Site* - Aaron Shandor was selected as the new superintendent. He has 27 years of NPS experience, most recently as chief law enforcement ranger at Chickasaw National Recreation Area. In 2017, he received the U.S. Department of the Interior Valor Award for rescuing a family and their pets during a flood. Source: [Andrew Johnson National Historic Site](#)
- *Cape Code National Seashore* - Dan McCarthy was selected as the new chief of facilities. He has over 30 years of NPS experience, most recently as chief of facilities at Blackstone River Valley National Historical Park, New Bedford Whaling National Historical Park, and Roger Williams National Memorial. Source: [Cape Cod Times](#)
- *Fire and Aviation Management* - Kevin Hoffman was selected as the new information technology specialist - system administrator for the Division of Fire and Aviation's Information Technology & Resource Management branch. He has 13 years of federal government experience, most recently at the U.S. Forest Service Fire IT Branch Chief Information Office (CIO), supporting fire applications and the National Enterprise Support System. Source: [NPS Fire and Aviation Management](#)
- *First State National Historical Park* - Jordan Keiffer was selected as a new law enforcement ranger. He has seven years of NPS experience, most recently as a law enforcement ranger at Independence National Historical Park. He started his new role on April 24. Source: [First State National Historical Park](#)
- *Grand Canyon-Parashant National Monument* - Ben Roberts was selected as the new superintendent. He has over 20 years of NPS experience, most recently as interim superintendent of the park and chief of resources management and planning at Great Basin National Park. Source: [Grand Canyon-Parashant National Monument](#)
- *Guilford Courthouse National Military Park* - Aaron LaRocca was selected as the new superintendent. He has 16 years of NPS experience, most recently as the chief

of staff at George Washington Memorial Parkway. Source: [Guilford Courthouse National Military Park](#)

## **Park People**

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

### **Deceased**

- Jean B. Bennett, 87, passed away on April 17. Jean and her husband Arthur lead the 8-year effort to establish New Bedford Whaling National Historical Park, for which she received the *Standard Times*' 1996 Woman of the Year award. Source: [South Coast Today](#)
- Julie Haeussler, 66, passed away on April 26. She worked for 13 seasons at Yellowstone National Park. Source: [Legacy/Daily Herald](#)
- Clark Lupton, 87, passed away on April 7. He was a volunteer at Rocky Mountain National Park in his retirement. Source: [Estes Park News](#)
- Martin "Marty" Alan Sterkel, 73, passed away on April 17. Marty worked for the NPS for 33 years, and his final role before retirement was the Associate Director of Natural Resources, Science and Partnerships in the Midwest Region. Source: [Brown's Cremation & Funeral Service](#)

### **Retired**

- Kathy Brazelton, district ranger for interpretation at Rocky Mountain National Park, has retired. *Next 9 News* did [a short video segment](#) about her reflections on working for the NPS. She has been a ranger since 1986. Source *Next 9 News*

### **In the News**

- Jonathan and Destry Jarvis have co-authored a new book called *National Parks Forever, Fifty Years of Fighting and a Case for Independence*. The two are brothers. Jonathan was the former Director of the National Park Service during the Obama administration and Destry was the former NPS Assistant Director during the Clinton administration and a long-time conservation non-profit leader. The authors will speak with *National Parks Traveler* editor Kurt Repanshek about the book and their thoughts on making the NPS an independent federal agency in [a live webinar](#) on May 17 at 7pm EDT. Source: [National Parks Traveler](#)
- Lahela Lee Park, a ranger in Haleakalā National Park, won the inaugural Carmen Hulu Lindsey Leo Ha'iha'i Falsetto Contest on April 16. The contestants were judged on their vocals and music, Hawaiian language, and overall presentation. Source: [Maui News](#)

- Robert Stanton, former NPS Director and 35-year NPS employee, has been appointed scholar-in-residence at the University of Missouri - St. Louis College of Education. He will work with a doctoral cohort in the Heritage Leadership for Sustainability, Social Justice and Participatory Culture program, which focuses on natural and cultural heritage. Source: [University of Missouri - St. Louis Daily](#)

### **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](#)
- *Chesapeake and Ohio Canal National Historical Park* - Public comment will open soon for a Development Concept Plan for White's Ferry, which is aimed at improving recreation in the area. [Comments](#) will be open from May 11 through June 11. Source: [Chesapeake and Ohio Canal National Historical Park](#)
- *Chickasaw National Recreation Area* - Public comment is now open on proposed increase to parking, camping, and pavilion fees. Comments may be submitted by mail or email, and are open until May 15. Source: [Chickasaw National Recreation Area](#)
- *Death Valley National Park* - Public comment is now open on a right-of-way permit application for continued operation and maintenance of an existing microwave relay facility on Mormon Peak that provides landline and cell phone connection in the park. [Comments](#) are open until May 10. Source: [Death Valley National Park](#)
- *Everglades National Park* - Public comment is now open on a proposed site plan for the Gulf Coast district, including a new public entryway off the roadway, elevating areas to address tidal impact and flooding, dredging the marina basin and boat channels, and a new visitor center. [Comments](#) are open until May 13. Source: [Everglades National 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](#)

- *Great Smoky Mountains National Park* - Public comment is now open on a parking fee program in the park, as well as increased fees for campgrounds and backcountry camping. [Comments](#) have been extended to remain open through May 11. Source: [Knox News](#), [Great Smoky Mountains 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](#)
- *Tallgrass Prairie National Preserve* - Public comment is now open on a Draft Accessibility Self-Evaluation and Transition Plan. [Comments](#) are open until May 6. Source: [Tallgrass Prairie National Preserve](#)
- *Yukon-Charley Rivers National Preserve* - Public comment is now open on a Special Use Permit application for non-exclusive use of Slaven's Roadhouse from October 1, 2022 through February 1, 2023. Comments must be submitted by mail by May 5. Source: [NPS Region 11](#)

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

- *More Native hires at DOI* - *E&E News* ran [an article](#) that outlines the Department of the Interior's efforts to hire more Native people into leadership positions and the effects that has had on agency decision making. Source: *E&E News*
- *3 new transmission projects* - On April 28, the Department of the Interior and Bureau of Land Management announced environmental reviews for three transmission projects featuring renewable energy across New Mexico, Arizona, Nevada, and Utah. Source: [Department of the Interior](#)
- *\$95 million in wetland projects* - On April 27, the Department of the Interior announced \$95 million in grants from the North American Wetlands Conservation Act and Migratory Bird Conservation Fund, matched by \$116 in partner funds, to conserve or restore wetland and other bird habitat. Source: [Department of the Interior](#)
- *Interior Museum reopens* - On May 2, the Interior Museum in Washington, D.C. reopened for the first time since the pandemic began. 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.*

## **New Public Laws**

**April 19** – The president signed into law H.R. 3197, to direct the Secretary of the Interior to convey to the City of Eunice, Louisiana, certain federal land in Louisiana (Public Law 117–112). The law removes some parcels of land from the Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve.

## **House Actions**

**April 26** – The House passed:

- S. 270, to amend the Act entitled "Act to provide for the establishment of the Brown v. Board of Education National Historic Site in the State of Kansas, and for other purposes" to provide for inclusion of additional related sites in the National Park System. The bill now goes to the president to be signed into law.
- H.R. 3525, to establish the Commission to Study the Potential Creation of a National Museum of Asian Pacific American History and Culture.
- H.R. 6201, to extend the authority for the establishment of a commemorative work to honor enslaved and free Black persons who served in the American Revolution.

**April 28** – The Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies held a budget hearing on the Department of the Interior. Testimony was heard from Denise Flanagan, Director of Budget, Department of the Interior; and Deb Haaland, Secretary, Department of the Interior.

**April 28** – The Committee on Natural Resources: Subcommittee on National Parks, Forests, and Public Land held a hearing on:

- H.R. 4878, to amend the National Trails System Act to include national discovery trails and designate the American Discovery Trail.
- H.R. 6589, to increase amounts deposited in the Historic Preservation Fund.
- H.R. 6805, to establish within the National Park Service the United States African-American Burial Grounds Preservation Program.
- H.R. 7002, to authorize the Gateway Arch in St. Louis, Missouri, to be illuminated by blue and yellow lights in support of Ukraine.
- H.R. 7075, to designate Ukrainian Independence Park in Washington, District of Columbia.
- H.R. 7218, to reauthorize the Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area, Cache La Poudre National Heritage Area, and South Park National Heritage Area in the State of Colorado.

Testimony was heard from Representatives DeSaulnier, Leger Fernández, Wagner, Spartz, and Neguse; Joy Beasley, Associate Director, Cultural Resources, Partnerships, and Science, National Park Service, Department of the Interior; Angela M. Thorpe, Director, North Carolina African American Heritage Commission, Department of Natural and Cultural Resources, North Carolina; and public witnesses.

## **Incidents**

*Incidents are listed in alphabetical order by park.*

### **Assateague Island National Seashore Habituated horse relocated**

On May 2, a highly food conditioned and aggressive horse, named Delegate's Pride (and known as "Chip"), was removed from the park and relocated to Cleveland Amory Black Beauty Ranch in Murchison, Texas, which is a wildlife sanctuary. Since 2017, the horse had been involved in more than 50% of all incidents that have resulted in visitor injury. He is also resistant to techniques used by the NPS staff to move horses out of potentially risky situations. The park is also working on updating food storage regulations, facilities, and education to avoid future food habituation among wild horses. Source: [Assateague Island National Seashore](#)

### **Bandelier National Monument, Valles Caldera National Preserve Fire closes parks**

On April 22, an unknown cause started the Cerro Pelado Fire just south of the Valles Caldera. Valles Caldera closed right away, while Bandelier closed on May 1. As of May 1, both parks remained closed and the fire was at 17,885 acres, 10% contained, and had 486 personnel assigned. Source: [Valles Caldera National Preserve](#), [Inciweb](#), [Bandelier National Monument](#), [New Mexico Fire Information](#)

### **Big Bend National Park Wildfire in backcountry**

On April 20, an unknown cause started a wildfire on the remote South Rim of the Chisos Mountains. Los Diablos firefighters and NPS personnel were able to take advantage of cool conditions and high humidity, as well as a previous burn scar, to contain the fire by the following day at just 30 acres. Backcountry campsites in the area were closed for a couple days to conduct fire operations. Source: [Big Bend National Park](#)

### **Carlsbad Caverns National Park, Guadalupe Mountains National Park All backcountry campsites closed**

On April 19, due to high to extreme fire danger conditions, the Southwest Agency Coordination Center moved from Preparedness Level 3 to Preparedness Level 4. Guadalupe Mountains also observed several instances of illegal fire activity in the backcountry. Thus, both parks have closed all backcountry campsites until further notice. Source: [KOSA](#), [Carlsbad Caverns National Park](#)

### **Colorado National Monument Climber passes away from fall**

On April 30, a 67-year-old took a fall while climbing Independence Monument. Personnel from the NPS, Mesa County Sheriff's Office, Mesa County Search and Rescue, and Lower Valley Fire District responded to the incident. The climber passed away from injuries related to the fall and the incident is under investigation. Source: [Colorado National Monument](#)

### **Fort Union National Monument** **Nearby fire closes park**

Several fires near the park caused the park to close April 24-25, due smoke impacts and the uncertainty of evacuations. Source: [Los Alamos Daily Post](#), [Fort Union National Monument](#)

### **Grand Canyon National Park** **Backcountry guide pleads guilty to illegal guiding**

On April 8, a person pled guilty to conducting business operations without a permit in the park. The individual had been contacted and warned about operating without a permit and continued to conduct business guiding backpacking trips into the canyon. The individual is banned from the Grand Canyon and Glen Canyon National Recreation Area for two years and will serve two years of supervised probation. Source: [Grand Canyon National Park](#)

### **Great Smoky Mountains National Park** **Hiker with medical emergency rescued**

On April 22, a 74-year-old was hiking on the Appalachian Trail north of Fontana Lake, when they experienced severe chest pains. The NPS, North Carolina Helo-Aquatic Rescue Team, Graham County EMS, Swain County Search and Rescue, and the North Carolina Forest Service responded. The hiker was carried by rescuers to a location where they were taken out by helicopter and flown to Mission Hospital in Asheville. Source: [WNCT](#)

### **Haleakalā National Park** **Person missing**

On May 2, a 61-year old was reported missing by family after failing to return from a morning jog. The individual was last seen at Kīpahulu Valley farm, and was reportedly going jogging in the Pīpīwai Trails area of the park. A search began that evening and, as of May 2, is ongoing. Source: [Maui Now](#)

### **Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park** **Fatal motorcycle crash**

On April 19, a motorcycle headed north on Highway 11 crashed into the side of an SUV that was turning left into the park. The 21-year-old motorcyclist passed away from injuries

sustained in the crash. Source: [Big Island Video News](#)

### **Indiana Dunes National Park** **Park receives land donation in settlement**

In 2019, the Burns Harbor Works steel mill discharged ammonia and cyanide into the the Burns Waterway that resulted in a massive fish kill in Lake Michigan, threats to drinking water, and beach closures. The steel mill was then owned by ArcelorMittal USA, which has since been acquired by Cleveland-Cliffs. The company reached a consent decree with the Environmental Law and Policy Center, Hoosier Environmental Council, the State of Indiana, and the federal government to pay \$3 million in fines, fix equipment to prevent a recurrence, do better monitoring, and donate 127 acres of land valued at \$2 million to the Shirley Heinze Land Trust. The land is located on Boo Road just south of the Marquette Trail. The trust will restore the land and eventually donate it to the park for public use.

Source: [NWI Times](#)

### **Kings Canyon National Park** **Rockslide blocks access road**

A rockslide occurred during the winter closure of State Route 180 in Sequoia National Forest (the main access to Kings Canyon), leaving a 600-foot debris field, 15 trees, and boulders weighing up to 200 tons. It is located near Boyden Cavern. Caltrans crews are working to clear the roadway. Access to the canyon was scheduled to open on April 22, but has been delayed until the slide can be cleared. Caltrans estimates that it will reopen on May 9. Source: [National Parks Traveler](#), Caltrans Facebook page ([4/20](#), [5/2](#))

### **Lake Mead National Recreation Area** **Receding lake causes body discovery**

On May 1, a metal barrel containing the remains of a person was found by people walking along the shore of the receding lake. Based on items recovered inside the barrel, investigators from the Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department believe the victim was killed in the 1980s. The department is working with experts at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas to identify the remains and determine the age of the barrel's metal. Source: [New York Times](#)

### **National Mall and Memorial Parks** **Climate activist dies from self-immolation**

On April 22, a 50-year-old set himself on fire in front of the Supreme Court in protest against global climate change. A National Park Service helicopter responded to the incident and airlifted the individual to a nearby hospital. The individual passed away from injuries sustained in the incident on the following day. Source: [New York Times](#)

### **National Mall and Memorial Parks**

## **NPS plans to clear homeless encampment**

On March 24, the NPS announced to the deputy mayor for the District of Columbia Health and Human Services its decision to evacuate unsheltered encampments at Union Station/Columbus Circle due to "imminent threats to public health and safety." The NPS stated that it would work closely with the deputy mayor and other agencies to ensure the well being of the individuals involved, and would give at least 14-days written and verbal notice. They are expected to begin moving people out at the beginning of May. Source: [WJLA](#)

## **Ozark National Scenic Riverways Water crossing damaged in flood**

The park has closed several access points to Round Spring day use area until further notice due to flood damage on the concrete river crossing. It was originally damaged in floods on Spring Valley Creek in 2020 and then further damaged during recent rains. When the water drops low enough, the NPS will attempt to stabilize the crossing enough to allow for temporary one-lane traffic, and Federal Highway Administration funding is in place for a 2023 permanent replacement. Source: [Ozark National Scenic Riverways](#)

## **Ozark National Scenic Riverways Several felony defendants plead guilty**

Recently, four individuals pled guilty to federal felony charges related to separate incidents in the summers of 2020 and 2021, including drug possession, evading arrest, driving under the influence, and unlawful possession of firearms. Source: [Ozark National Scenic Riverways](#)

## **Petersburg National Battlefield Sinkhole closes road**

On April 21, the park closed the Eastern Front Unit tour road due to a sinkhole that has developed near tour stop 4. It is closed until further notice. Source: [Petersburg National Battlefield](#)

## **Pinnacles National Park Injured hiker rescued**

On April 17, a hiker suffered a leg injury. H-70, a helicopter with the California Highway Patrol Coastal Division Air Operations, was able to hoist the hiker from the trail and deliver them to a ground ambulance crew. Source: [KSBW](#) (including video from the helicopter)

## **Sequoia National Park Death on Mt. Whitney**

On April 18, a body was discovered just below the 99 switchbacks leading to the Mt. Whitney summit. Due to unstable conditions, including high winds, helicopters were unable to make a recovery until April 23. A rescue crew that included personnel from California Highway Patrol and the Inyo County Sheriff's Office recovered the body. This is the fourth confirmed death of hikers attempting to summit Mt. Whitney. Several of these deaths were due to improper skill or gear for dealing with winter and spring snow conditions. Source: [KOLO](#)

### **Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore** **2 visitors rescued from steep dune**

On April 24, it was reported that two people needed rescue after getting "cliffed out" on the face of a steep dune between Treat Farm Trail and Empire Bluff Trail. Glen Lake firefighters and NPS personnel responded, rappelling 200 feet down the dune and assisting them to ascend. Source: [m live Michigan](#)

### **Steamtown National Historic Site** **NPS contractor convicted of fraud and employee endangerment**

On April 13, a federal grand jury found a 47-year-old and his company, Wasatch Railroad Contractors (Cheyenne, WY), guilty of five counts of wire fraud and one count of knowing endangerment. The company was contracted to restore one of the park's historic railcars. The company failed to complete the restoration, knowingly exposed employees to asbestos without proper safety measures, did not pay its laborers minimum wage, and invoiced the NPS for the full amount (\$828,871). Sentencing will take place on July 5. The company is closed and has filed for bankruptcy. Source: [Wyoming Tribune Eagle](#), [Railfan and Railroad Magazine](#)

### **Sunset Crater Volcano National Monument, Wupatki National Monument** **Fire burns entire park**

On April 17, an unknown cause sparked the Tunnel Fire, about 14 miles northeast of Flagstaff. High winds causes rapid spread to the northeast. Staff were able to evacuate culturally important items from the visitor center. Sunset Crater Volcano "has burned in its entirety." Some buildings and vehicles were lost. Both parks remain closed. As of May 1, the fire is 19,075 acres, 95% contained, with 82 personnel assigned. Source: [Sunset Crater Volcano National Monument Facebook page](#), [Inciweb](#), [National Parks Traveler](#)

### **Yellowstone National Park** **Contractor sentenced for assault**

On April 18, a former construction contractor was sentenced for assault with the intent to commit a felony. On October 1, 2021, the individual assaulted someone with the intent to commit a kidnapping at the Fishing Bridge RV Park, where the perpetrator was a resident.

The individual was sentenced to 44 months of imprisonment and three years of supervised release, as well as a \$500 fine and \$100 assessment. Source: [Buckrail](#)

## **Zion National Park**

### **Injured hiker rescued**

On May 1, a 35-year-old solo hiker scrambled up a cliff face adjacent to Kolob Canyon Road near the curve at Lee Pass. Upon descent, the hiker fell about 30 feet and caught himself on a 6-inch-wide ledge and a small bush. A family member alerted NPS officials, who attempted to rescue him, but were unable to reach him. The hiker ended up spending 12 hours standing on the small ledge before being rescued at first light by a helicopter from the Utah Department of Public Safety Aero Bureau. The hiker sustained injuries to his ankle and abrasions on his body. Family members took him to a local hospital. Source: [St. George News](#)

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

- *Rocky Mountain National Park* - The poached skull and antler from the highly-photographed elk sometimes known as "Kahuna" was left at an undisclosed location in the park after it was publicly announced that the NPS was investigating the poaching. Source: [Sky-Hi News](#)

### **Acknowledgments**

This newsletter is supported through Coalition staff and invaluable volunteers:

- Editor: Katie Wallace
- Tech and Production Support: Steve Pittleman, Emily Thompson
- Regular Correspondent: Don Hellmann
- Issue Contributors: JT Townsend, Bill Walters

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

\* \* \* \* \*

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."

To receive a copy of this free publication, [join or support the Coalition](#). Any current, retired, or former-salaried (GS, Wage System, Seasonal, Temporary, or SES) National Park Service employee or volunteer who served under a signed volunteer agreement can join the Coalition. Coalition supporters who do not qualify under those criteria [may also join](#) and receive the newsletter.



--- ### ---

**Change Your Contact Info**

**Support the Coalition By Donating Today**

---



*Copyright © 2022 Coalition To Protect America's National Parks, All rights reserved.*