

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



## **The Coalition Report**

### **Wednesday, October 19, 2022**

---

#### **Coalition Actions**

The Coalition provided [detailed comments](#) on the Badlands National Park Air Tour Management Plan. These include supporting the plan's proposed environmental assessment and supporting Alternatives 2 (no air tours) or 4 (reduced number of tours). We also provided [extensive comments](#) on the Mount Rushmore Air Tour Management Plan alternatives. These include supporting the plan's proposed environmental assessment and supporting Alternatives 2 (no air tours) or 4 (reduced number of tours).

The Coalition issued a [press release](#) in support of the decision from the District Court of Alaska directing the NPS to rewrite its rule allowing destructive hunting practices on national preserves, but expressed disappointment that the ruling left in place Alaska's liberalized sport hunting practices.

We sent a [letter](#) to Department of the Interior Assistant Secretary for Fish and Wildlife and Parks Shannon Estenoz requesting action on the continued use of lead ammunition and fishing tackle within units of the National Park System.

Led by the Southern Environmental Law Center, the Coalition joined [comments](#) to the U.S. Bureau of Ocean Energy Management on the proposed outer continental shelf oil and gas leasing program and Draft Environmental Impact Statement.

The Coalition also provided [comments](#) to the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency on Round II of the Draft State Implementation Plan for Regional Haze. The joint letter

expressed concern that the state's proposal will not result in reasonable progress toward improving visibility at Class I areas.

We issued a [press release](#) celebrating the President's designation of the Camp Hale-Continental Divide National Monument (more below in National/Regional NPS Updates).

The Coalition published an introductory [background piece](#) providing a summary of the Antiquities Act.

The Coalition joined with five organizations in [letters](#) to the National Park Service and the Department of the Interior, requesting the agency file a pre-decisional referral to the Council on Environmental Quality for the James River Transmission Line.

### **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.*

- *Camp Hale designated a national monument* - On October 12, President Joe Biden designated Camp Hale-Continental Divide National Monument through presidential proclamation under the Antiquities Act. The site honors the training camp for the U.S. Army's 10th Mountain Division during World War II, as well as the birth of Colorado's ski and outdoor recreation industry. Source: [National Parks Conservation Association](#)
- *Blackwell School designated a national historic site* - On October 17, President Joe Biden signed The Blackwell School National Historic Site Act into law. The new site consists of a half-acre school campus in Marfa, Texas that will tell the American story of Latino children and school segregation in the Southwest. Source: [National Parks Conservation Association](#)
- *NAGPRA Revamp* - The Department of the Interior has announced proposed revisions to the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act's regulations with the intention of streamlining the requirements for museums and federal agencies to inventory and identify human remains and cultural items in their possession. Public comment on the proposed changes are open until January 12. Source: [Department of the Interior](#)
- *Formal consultation with Native Hawaiians* - On October 18, the Department of the Interior announced that, for the first time in the agency's history, it will require formal consultation with the Native Hawaiian community on a "government-to-sovereign" basis. Source: [Department of the Interior](#)
- *Cold War Sites Study* - On October 7, the NPS released a new theme study identifying 24 sites with significant connections to the Cold War that could be

considered for National Historic Landmark consideration. "Protecting America: Cold War Defensive Sites" was created in partnership with the National Conference of State Historic Preservation Officers and the Cold War Advisory Committee. Source: [National Park Service Office of Communications](#)

- *\$335K in grants for Lower Mississippi Delta* - On October 17, the NPS, in partnership with the Jefferson National Parks Association, announced \$335,166 in grants for 23 projects that promote cultural heritage preservation in the Mississippi Delta Initiative region. Source: [National Park Service Lower Mississippi Delta Region](#)
- *Algal blooms in parks* - *National Parks Traveler* published [an article](#) about the challenges of managing toxic algal blooms in national park units. The NPS and U.S. Geological Survey are currently in their second year of a three-year study sampling water from 21 parks across the country to measure harmful algal blooms. Source: *National Parks Traveler*
- *Politicians ask for entry lottery for veterans* - In a letter sent to National Park Service officials on October 7, a bipartisan group of 22 U.S. House Representatives requested that the NPS guarantee access to its sites for military members, veterans, and Gold Star families by allotting them separate lottery pools. Source: [Yahoo!](#)
- *Tie Sing video* - On October 12, The Wilderness Society published its latest 30-second animated video in their Public Lands Curriculum educational resource. It highlights Tie Sing, the Chinese backcountry chef who accompanied the Mather Mountain Party, which influenced the creation of the National Park Service. Source: [The Wilderness Society](#)
- *An interview with the NPS Instagram account* - *Whalebone Magazine* published [an interview](#) with the author(s) of the National Park Service Instagram account, and the answers are on brand for the account's style of mixing humor with education. Source: *Whalebone Magazine*

### **Around the Parks**

*Park reports are in alphabetical order.*

- *Apostle Islands National Seashore* - *Wisconsin Public Radio* published [an article](#) about efforts by the NPS and Friends of the Apostle Islands, with support from Wilderness Inquiry, to build an accessible ramp that slopes gradually down to Meyers Beach for people with mobility issues to access the water. The article also highlights other accessibility efforts within the park. Source: *Wisconsin Public Radio*
- *Assateague Island National Seashore* - The park is reconstructing sections of trail and overlooks on the Life of the Marsh Trail and Life of the Forest Trail. Both trails

were damaged by Hurricane Sandy in October 2012. Though parts of the trail were fixed at the time, the overlooks were not. The upgrade will also make the trails accessible and add more seating. Funding for the project comes from park entrance and pass fees. It is expected to be completed by March 2023, and both trails will be closed for the duration. Source: [Assateague Island National Seashore](#)

- *Bandelier National Monument* - The park is beginning a project to improve and install several bridges in Frijoles Canyon and to stabilize Alcove House. Temporary closures will take place during construction, which is expected to last several months. Source: [Bandelier National Monument](#)
- *Bryce Canyon National Park* - On October 18, the NPS and Federal Aviation Administration completed an air tour management plan for the park. The plan authorizes up to 515 air tours per year on defined routes, which is the average number of yearly flights conducted from 2017-2019. Source: [Bryce Canyon National Park](#)
- *Cape Cod National Seashore* - In partnership with AmeriCorps Cape Cod and the Friends of Cape Cod National Seashore, the park has begun a restoration project along the Herring River. Freshwater vegetation that has encroached since the installation of a road dike in 1909 will be removed to support the native salt marsh and restore tidal flow. The project will go through the winter. Source: [Cape Cod National Seashore](#)
- *Cape Hatteras National Seashore* - The park, in partnership with Outer Banks Forever, has announced the launch of a project to create new paved multiuse paths around Cape Hatteras Lighthouse over the next several years. The first path will connect the lighthouse to NC 12, a length of one mile. A new trailhead and improved entrance and educational signage will also be installed. The pathways will cost \$2 million, and are being funded through a federal grant and fundraising by Outer Banks Forever. The planning and design contracts were awarded to Croft & Associates and HealyKohler Design, respectively. Construction is tentatively planned to begin in 2023. Source: [Island Free Press](#)
- *Chattahoochee River National Recreation Area* - The park issued a Finding of No Significant Impact for the Paces Mill Unit Rehabilitation Environmental Assessment. The project will include site rehabilitation and reconfiguration to improve safety and the visitor experience, as well as creating a strong NPS identity. Source: [Chattahoochee River National Recreation Area](#)
- *Fort Monroe National Monument* - A Request for Proposals has been issued for adaptive use of the former officers' club at the park. The building includes a building, swimming pool, outdoor concession area, and beach frontage. The term of lease is for 10 years, beginning on April 1, 2023. Proposals are due on December 12. Source: [Fort Monroe National Monument](#)

- *Fort Vancouver National Historic Site* - The park, in partnership with The Historic Trust, has added a new display of a 1931 Fleet Model 7 biplane formerly owned by Leah Hing. Hing was one of the first Chinese American female pilots, and some of her early training was at Pearson Field. The exhibit is now part of the permanent collection at Pearson Air Museum. Source: [Fort Vancouver National Historic Site](#)
- *George Washington Memorial Parkway* - The park's Netherlands Carillon rehabilitation project won *Engineering News-Record's* 2022 Award of Merit for Specialty Construction in the Mid Atlantic region. Many contractors worked on the reconstruction and were named in the award. Source: [Engineering News Record Mid Atlantic](#)
- *Glacier Bay National Park* - A new study conducted in the park was published in *People and Nature*, showing that even a small presence of humans can have significant impacts on the behavior of wildlife. The study used motion-activated cameras over two summers to measure wildlife responses correlated against human presence in the area. Source: [Yahoo!News](#)
- *Glacier National Park* - *Hatch Magazine* published [an article](#) about the park's proposal to remove non-native fish and introduce native threatened fish to Gunsight Lake (see "Open for Comment" below), partially motivated by anticipated effects of climate change. Source: *Hatch Magazine*
- *Grand Canyon National Park* - A prospectus for a concession contract at the North Rim is open from now until January 9, 2023 and interested parties must notify the park by December 8, 2022. The concession includes lodging, restaurants, a gift shop, general store, public showers, laundry, and a gas station. Source: [Grand Canyon National Park](#)
- *Grand Teton National Park* - The park recently completed a project to install new signage at six biking hubs along the Grand Teton Pathway, including maps, biking regulations, safety messaging, and other information. Source: [Grand Teton National Park](#)
- *Grand Teton National Park* - The park will increase boat permit fees in 2023 to help offset the costs associated with waterway patrols and aquatic invasive species and education. Source: [Grand Teton National Park](#)
- *Great Sand Dunes National Park and Preserve* - 9,362 acres of the Medano Ranch were transferred from The Nature Conservancy to the park with funding from the Land and Water Conservation Fund. The Nature Conservancy will continue to operate a bison herd on the ranch property through a permit from the NPS for up to seven years. They will also continue to own and manage the 20,000-acre Zapata property that is adjacent to the park. An additional 3,192 acres of the Medano

Ranch is planned for transfer from TNC in the future. Source: [Department of the Interior](#)

- *Great Smoky Mountains National Park* - On October 15, the Look Rock Campground opened for the first time since being closed in 2013 due to a water utility system failure. The water system has now been replaced, the area was repaved, and all campsites were rehabilitated with new picnic rings, fire rings, and signposts that were constructed and hand-painted by a park volunteer. Some sites were also renovated to accommodate larger recreational vehicles, as well, and now offer the first electric and water hookups in the park. The project cost \$4.7 million, which came from federal funding, campground fees, and donations through the Friends of the Smokies. Source: [WATE](#)
- *Haleakalā National Park* - The park has developed new educational materials in 'Ōlelo Hawai'i (Hawaiian language) for Hawaiian immersion fourth grade students. The materials were created through a collaboration between the NPS and two local Hawaiian language teachers, with support from the National Park Foundation. The materials are available [online](#) for all to access. Source: [Haleakalā National Park](#)
- *Herbert Hoover National Historic Site* - The Herbert Hoover Presidential Library and Museum, which shares grounds with the park and is managed by the National Archives with support from the Hoover Presidential Foundation, received a \$5 million grant from Destination Iowa funding that was provided through the American Rescue Plan Act. The grant will go toward a \$20.3 million campaign for renovation of the library and museum. It was last renovated in 1992 and needs significant upgrades to technology and exhibits. Source: [Des Moines Register](#)
- *Lassen Volcanic National Park* - *National Parks Traveler* published [an article](#) about a park study that is testing pikas for plague. Source: *National Parks Traveler*
- *Longfellow House - Washington's Headquarters National Historic Site* - *Cambridge Day* published [an article](#) about the history of the Longfellow House, its preservation, and the ongoing restoration of the structure. Source: *Cambridge Day*
- *Mammoth Cave National Park* - On October 15, the park unveiled the a new monument in honor of the Bransford family, who have worked as tour guides at the cave for five generations, starting in 1838 with Mat Bransford, an enslaved Black man. Current ranger Jerry Bransford has worked at the park for 18 years. Source: [WBKO](#)
- *Manassas National Battlefield Park* - On October 11, the Prince William County Historical Commission voted unanimously to urge the board of supervisors to not approve the proposed "Prince William Digital Gateway," which would open up land adjacent to the park for industrial development for the first time. The county supervisors will vote on November 1. Source: [Prince William Times](#)

- *Manhattan Project National Historical Park* - On October 4, interpretive ranger Chris Person talked to the Los Alamos Kiwanis Club about the park and future plans, including efforts to expand access at the facility and open a visitor center for the park at the Women's Army Corps dormitory in Los Alamos. Source: [Los Alamos Reporter](#)
- *Nicodemus National Historic Site* - The Trust for Public Land, with support from the National Park Foundation, and Sony Pictures Entertainment, purchased and donated a parcel of land to the park. The site will be the future location of a permanent visitor center for the park. Source: [The Pratt Tribune](#)
- *President's Park (White House)* - WHEC published [an article](#) about the White House gardens, which are only open to the public twice each year. Source: WHEC
- *President's Park (White House)* - The NPS and National Park Foundation will celebrate the 100th lighting of the National Christmas Tree on November 30. In-person attendance will be by ticket lottery, and the ceremony will also be broadcast two weeks later on the *CBS Network*. Source: [President's Park \(White House\)](#)
- *Rocky Mountain National Park* - A new study in *Frontiers in Ecology and Evolution* by researchers from the Wildlife Conservation Society, Colorado State University and the NPS shows that mountain goats and bighorn sheep often compete over minerals uncovered by glacial melt due to human development pressures. Mountain goats, which are non-native, emerge victorious in 98% of the conflicts. Similar fights over limited resources have been observed in sub-Saharan Africa. Source: [KDVR](#)
- *Salem Maritime National Historic Site* - The park announced that they will repair the *Friendship of Salem* tall ship, starting this fall. They have awarded the \$1.3 million contract through funding from the NPS' Recreation Fee Program. The work will include replacing the deck, and much of the transom, bulwarks, and associated framing. All work will take place at the ship's home berth on Derby Wharf. The ship is a replica of a traditional 1797 Salem-built vessel. Source: [Salem Maritime National Historic Site](#)
- *San Juan Island National Historical Park* - The park unveiled two new elements to accompany their new American Camp Visitor Center, which opened in June 2022. The new elements are a bronze sculpture of a Berkshire boar to represent the subject of "The Pig War" that brought American and British forces to the brink of war in 1859, and a bronze relief map depicting the maritime Coast Salish world. Source: [San Juan Island National Historical Park](#)
- *Sand Creek Massacre National Historic Site* - On October 5, the park held a ceremony that included the announcement of 3,478 acres acquired for the site

through funding from the Land and Water Conservation Fund, Great Outdoors Colorado, and the National Park Foundation. Attendees included Interior Secretary Deb Haaland, NPS Director Chuck Sams, leaders from the North Arapaho, Northern Cheyenne, Cheyenne, and Arapaho Tribes, Senators Michael Bennet and John Hickenlooper (CO), Colorado Lieutenant Governor Dianne Primavera, and other community partners. Source: [Department of the Interior](#)

- *Saratoga National Historical Park* - In collaboration with the park, the family and friends of Bob Stokes, a long-time volunteer at the park, donated new historical furnishings for the Neilson House in honor of Bob's 80th birthday. Source: [Saratoga National Historical Park](#)
- *Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks* - The park has begun emergency actions to protect giant sequoias in 11 at-risk groves, many of which are in remote areas of the park. Their work will include manual thinning by hand and the stacking and burning of vegetation piles to reduce fire fuel loads. Source: [The Sun Gazette](#)
- *Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks, Yosemite National Park* - The *Los Angeles Times* published [an essay/op-ed](#) by University of Pennsylvania professor Jared Farmer that tracks fire suppression in relation to giant sequoias, as well as white supremacy and climate change. Source: *Los Angeles Times*
- *Statue of Liberty National Monument* - The park opened visits to the crown of the Statue of Liberty for the first time since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic in March 2020. Source: [National Public Radio](#)
- *Yellowstone National Park* - KSEN published [an article](#) about research by Montana State University students on hot spring microbes that may be able to break plastic down into useable chemicals. The research is through MSU's Center for Biofilm Engineering and Thermal Biology Institute, and supported by the research and development non-profit, Battelle. Source: *KSEN*
- *Yellowstone National Park* - *Big Horn Radio Network* published [an article](#) about the ongoing flood recovery in the park, including challenges and opportunities the park has come across. Source: *Big Horn Radio Network*
- *Yellowstone National Park* - *Wyoming Public Radio* published [an interview](#) with Superintendent Cam Sholly about the past, present, and future of the park. Source: *Wyoming Public Radio*
- *Yosemite National Park* - On October 4, Tuolumne County (CA) Supervisors passed a resolution asking that the NPS refrain from implementing visitation restrictions in 2023 and beyond due to lost tourism tax revenue in the county. Source: [MyMotherLode.com](#)



- *Yosemite National Park* - The park has announced that the Ahwahnee Hotel will be closed from January 2 to March 2, 2023 for a major seismic upgrade. The \$31.6 million project is being funded by the Great American Outdoors Act. Source: [The Mercury News](#)

### **Personnel Changes**

- *Wildland Fire Program* - Julie Bennett has been selected as the new specialist for the incident business program. Julie has many years of fire experience, including as a hot shot and engine crew member, as well as extensive administrative work with the Bureau of Land Management. Source: [National Park Service Wildland Fire Program](#)

### **Park People**

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

#### **Deceased**

- Shirley G. Koerber, 90, passed away on October 11. She worked for Yellowstone National Park in her younger years. Source: [Beacon Journal](#)
- Vic Van Ballenberghe, 78, passed away on September 22. He was a biologist for the U.S. Forest Service in Fairbanks for many years, and in agreement with the NPS, conducted a study on moose in Denali National Park for over 30 years, including well into his retirement. Source: [Anchorage Daily News](#)

#### **In the News**

- Christine Davis was recently selected to be the North Coast Project Manager for California Trout. Christine formerly worked as a research and restoration science technician in Kings Canyon National Park and Point Reyes National Seashore. Source: [California Trout](#)

### **Open for Comment**

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

- *Cedar Creek and Belle Grove National Historical Park* - Public comment is now open on proposed updates and expansion to the Cedar Creek Battlefield and Belle Grove Plantation National Historic Landmark district. [Comments](#) are open until November 30. Source: [Cedar Creek and Belle Grove National Historical Park](#)
- *Channel Islands National Park* - Public comment is now open on the park's Fire Management Plan. [Comments](#) are open until November 5. Source: [Channel Islands National Park](#)

- *Chesapeake and Ohio Canal National Historical Park* - Public comment is now open on a revised Development Concept Plan for White's Ferry. [Comments](#) are open until November 12. Source: [Chesapeake and Ohio Canal National Historical Park](#)
- *Gates of the Arctic National Park and Preserve* - The Bureau of Land Management opened public comment on September 20 for a proposed Ambler Mining District Industrial Access Road, which would cross over 200 miles of lands, including the Western (Kobuk River) Unit of the Gates of the Arctic. [Comments](#) are open until November 4. Source: [Bureau of Land Management](#)
- *Glacier National Park* - Public comment is now open on an environmental assessment to remove non-native rainbow trout from Gunsight Lake and translocate bull trout and westslope cutthroat trout into the lake. [Comments](#) are open until October 26. Source: [Glacier National Park](#)
- *Glacier National Park, North Cascades National Park, Olympic National Park* - The U.S. Forest Service has opened public comment on a proposal to develop a trail-wide plan and environmental analysis for the Pacific Northwest National Scenic Trail. It is one of the country's newest national scenic trails, a route of approximately 1,200 miles from the Continental Divide to the Pacific Ocean, including seven national forests and three national parks: Glacier, North Cascades, and Olympic. [Comments](#) are open until October 29. Source: [Okanogan Valley Gazette-Tribune](#)
- *Golden Gate National Recreation Area* - Public comment is now open on a proposal to remove an earthen dam and restore native habitat in lower Tennessee Valley to improve visitor safety and access. [Comments](#) are open until November 17. Source: [Golden Gate National Recreation Area](#)
- *Grand Canyon National Park* - The Arizona Department of Environmental Quality has opened public comment on a proposal to issue an Arizona Pollutant Discharge Elimination System permit to the park for its North Rim Wastewater Treatment Plan. The permit is a renewal of an already-existing system. Comments can be made via email or mail until October 28. Source: [Arizona Department of Environmental Quality](#)
- *Grand Canyon National Park* - The Arizona Department of Environmental Quality has opened public comment on a significant amendment to an Aquifer Protection Permit for the Phantom Ranch Water Reclamation Facility. Comments may be made by email or mail until November 12. Source: [Arizona Department of Environmental Quality](#)
- *Kalaupapa National Historical Park* - Public comment is now open on a replacement and upgrade of nine miles of fencing at the park that prevents damage from invasive, non-native animals. [Comments](#) are open until November 10. Source:

### [Kalaupapa National Historical Park](#)

- *Lincoln Home National Historic Site* - The NPS has announced a Request for Expressions of Interest for creative use of the Henson Robinson House for the future. [Proposals](#) are open until November 3. Source: [Lincoln Home National Historic Site](#)
- *National Capital Parks - East* - Public comment will open on October 20 for design ideas for a 1.25-acre park known as Parkland, located in Congress Heights. [Comments](#) are open until November 20. Source: [National Capital Parks - East](#)
- *Pipestone National Monument* - Public comment is now open on the construction of a pedestrian access trail into the park. [Comments](#) are open until October 27. Source: [Pipestone National Monument](#)
- *Pu'uuhonua o Hōnaunau National Historical Park* - Public comment will soon be open on a plan to remove maintenance facilities at the park. The facility was intended to be temporary and are poorly located, both due to weathering and the presence of cultural resources. The proposal would remove the facility, restore the site, and assign a site for new facilities. Comments can be made at a virtual meeting on November 9 or an in-person meeting on November 10. Source: [Big Island Video News](#)
- *Valles Caldera National Preserve* - Public comment is now open on a infrastructure improvements in the Valle Grande District, including new parking areas, electric vehicle charging stations, accessibility modifications, new traffic patterns, trailhead upgrades, and interpretive walking trails. [Comments](#) are open until November 9. Source: [Valles Caldera National Preserve](#)
- *Yosemite National Park* - Public comment is now open on a big wall climbing permitting system. [Comments](#) are open until November 13. Source: [Gear Junkie](#), [Yosemite National Park](#)

### **[Other Department of the Interior News](#)**

- *Climate Progress Report* - On October 6, the Department of the Interior released its Climate Adaptation and Resilience Plan Progress Report, which outlined the agency's efforts to mitigate climate change, including offshore wind leasing, funding for drought and wildfire preparedness and mitigation, and youth-driven conservation leadership training. Source: [Department of the Interior](#)
- *DOI moves forward with oil and gas leasing under new provisions* - The Bureau of Ocean Energy Management and Bureau of Land Management will move forward on oil and gas leasing that was outlined in the Inflation Reduction Act, including the modernization of the oil and gas leasing program, increasing the minimum royalty,

minimum bid, and rental rates, assessing fees for Expressions of Interest, and eliminating non-competitive leasing. Scoping for 254 leases in New Mexico and Wyoming will move forward under these terms. Source: [Department of the Interior](#)

- *Colorado River drought funding* - On October 12, the Department of the Interior announced new drought mitigation funding opportunities through the Lower Colorado River Basin System Conservation and Efficiency Program, newly created through the Inflation Reduction Act and managed by the Bureau of Reclamation. The BOR will select projects for funding by Colorado River water delivery contract or entitlement holders that mitigate drought, protect important natural resources, or ensure a reliable source of water and power for communities in the West. Source: [Department of the Interior](#)
- *\$10 million for legacy pollution clean up* - On October 18, the Department of the Interior announced nearly \$10 million from the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law for 17 sites across the U.S. to address legacy pollution and conserve ecosystems. Source: [Department of the Interior](#)
- *Snail darter delisted as threatened* - On October 4, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service celebrated the recovery and delisting of the snail darter from the Federal List of Threatened and Endangered Wildlife. It is the fifth fish species delisted due to recovery, and the first in the eastern United States. The snail darter became the subject of a Supreme Court ruling and temporarily halted the building of the Tellico Dam in Tennessee. Translocations, subsequent discovery of other natural populations, and water quality improvements associated with local dams and watersheds allowed the species to recover, moving from "endangered" to "threatened," and now, removed from the list. Source: [Department of the Interior](#)
- *DOI meets with Mexico about conservation* - Deputy Secretary of the Interior Tommy Beaudreau traveled to Mexico to meet with Mexican government officials and community leaders and U.S. Ambassador Ken Salazar, regarding cooperative efforts in wildland fire management, wildlife conservation, offshore energy, and seismic activity monitoring. Source: [Department of the Interior](#)
- *First Pacific wind lease* - On October 18, the Department of the Interior announced that the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management will hold its first-ever offshore wind energy lease on the west coast. It will be located on the Outer Continental Shelf off central and northern California. Source: [Department of the Interior](#)
- *New DOI appointees* - The Department of the Interior announced five new appointees: Matthew Dutko, Special Assistant to the Senior Advisor and Infrastructure Coordinator, Peter Gallagher, Advisor on Orphaned Wells, Office of Policy, Management, and Budget, Brendan Jackson, Deputy Director of Advance, Malcom McGeary Senior Advisor, National Park Service, and Iqra Nasir, Advisor, Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement. Source: [Department of the Interior](#)

## [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**

**Sept. 30** – The president signed into law H.R. 6833, making continuing appropriations for Fiscal Year 2023 (Public Law 117–180). The law extends funding for all federal agencies, including the National Park Service, through December 16, 2022.

### **Senate and House Actions**

The Senate and the House conducted no formal business the past two weeks, as they are in recess until after the November elections.

### **Incidents**

*Incidents are listed in alphabetical order by park.*

#### **Acadia National Park**

##### **Human remains found**

On October 7, human remains were found near the Fabbri Picnic Area. On October 13, the NPS announced that the cause of death was suicide. The investigation was conducted by the NPS and the Maine State Police's Major Crimes Unit. Source: [WABI](#), [WGME](#)

#### **Blue Ridge Parkway**

##### **Union files unfair labor charge**

On October 3, the American Federation of Government Employees filed an unfair labor practice charge with the Federal Labor Relations Authority against the National Park Service. The alleged violation is knowingly permitting an agency manager to file a petition seeking to decertify the AFGE local representing NPS employees at the Blue Ridge Parkway. A group of employees represented by a different union had changed their affiliation to AFGE, and that unit had been consolidated with another local unit in September 2021. The National Right to Work Legal Defense Foundation backed an individual in trying to decertify the newly consolidated unit, which was denied by the FLRA. An appeal for a full review by the FLRA was granted in July 2022, but the individual had been promoted to a management position during that time and no longer considered a member of the union. Source: [American Federation of Government Employees](#)

## **Buffalo National River**

### **Motorcycle crash**

On October 2, a 71-year-old was traveling northbound on Highway 7 near Pruitt when they crossed the center lane and struck a trailer being towed by a vehicle going southbound. Personnel from the NPS and Newton County Deputies responded. The individual was transported to North Arkansas Regional Medical Center, but eventually died of injuries incurred in the crash. Source: [KATV](#)

## **Cape Hatteras National Seashore**

### **Jellyfish swarm lands on beach**

On October 12, thousands of cannonball jellyfish washed up on Ocracoke Island, literally covering a large section of beach. The NPS posted photos of the jellyfish on their social media and advised beachgoers to avoid touching them, even though this species does not sting. Source: [KNOE](#)

## **Gauley River National Recreation Area**

### **Rafter drowning**

On October 3, a 46-year-old individual on a commercial rafting trip drowned in the Lower Staircase area on the Gauley River. The state Division of Natural Resources is handling the investigation. Source: [The Register-Herald](#)

## **Golden Gate National Recreation Area**

### **Person tumbles 150 feet**

An individual fell 150 feet down a cliff at the former Battery Spencer, a popular overlook to view the Golden Gate Bridge. Personnel from the Southern Marin Fire District responded and were able to rescue the individual through a rope system. The individual was then flown by helicopter to the hospital for treatment of minor injuries. Source: [The News & Observer](#)

## **Grand Teton National Park**

### **Illegal event organizer sentenced**

An individual pled guilty to counts of property damage and operating a motor vehicle off road for holding what is believed to be nine years of illegal motorbike races in the Mormon Row area of the park. The individual was sentenced to 18 months of unsupervised probation and over \$8,000 in fines. A witness video from July 2020 was the primary evidence. Source: [Powell Tribune](#)

## **Great Smoky Mountains National Park**

### **Bear rescued after struck by car**

On October 1, a black bear cub was struck by a vehicle on River Road at Elkmont Road. Rangers responded to the scene and the cub was observed to be still breathing. Rangers clapped their hands, and the cub got up, staggered to the side of the road, and climbed a few feet into the crook of a tree. A ranger was able to use an infrared scope to spot the cub's mother and two other cubs on a nearby hill, but the cub was no longer alert and unable to call to its mother. The cub was taken to the University of Tennessee College of Veterinary Medicine and staff from the Appalachian Bear Rescue took the individual into its custody. X-rays on the cub revealed that there were no fractures, only a bloody nose and blood in the back of its throat. The individual appears to be recovering well. It is unclear whether the bear will be released or stay in captivity. Progress on the bear's recovery (nicknamed "Myrtle") can be found on the Appalachian Bear Rescue [website](#). Source: [WAGM](#), Appalachian Bear Rescue

## **Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park**

### **Elevated seismic activity**

On October 5, the park closed the Mauna Loa summit backcountry due to elevated seismic activity. Mauna Loa Road and Lookout remain open to the public. The alert level remains at advisory and the closure is a precautionary measure. Source: [Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park](#)

## **Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park**

### **Fire**

On October 9, a fire was observed in the park's newly acquired Kahuku-Pōhue parcel. Personnel from Hawai'i County Fire Department and the NPS responded and were able to contain the fire. The fire came close to two active *honu'ea* (Hawaiian hawksbill turtle) nests, but did not harm them. The cause of the fire is unknown and under investigation by the park. Public access to the area is currently restricted. Source: [Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park](#)

## **Lake Mead National Recreation Area**

### **Drowning victim recovered**

On October 15, a 39-year-old went missing in the water from the "back bay area" of Katherine Landing Marina. The individual was not wearing a personal flotation device. A witness called 911 to report it, and rangers began a search effort. The search continued through the next day with support from Mohave County dive personnel. The individual was found deceased that afternoon and their body was recovered. The incident is being investigated as a drowning. Source: [AP News](#)

## **Katmai National Park and Preserve**

### **Fat Bear Week fake votes**

On October 9, the park announced that their popular "Fat Bear Week" was spammed by

fraudulent votes. The annual celebration on social media consists of an elimination-style tournament bracket in which members of the public can vote on the fattest bear/their favorites, as a way for the park to educate the public about bears as they fatten up for the winter. The fake votes were apparently cast by spam bots, and were easily identifiable by the park to readjust the totals for Bear 435 ("Holly") in its match against Bear 747 in the semifinals, resulting in a win for 747. 747 went on to win the championship, which was his second. Source: [USA Today](#), [ABC News](#)

### **North Cascades National Park**

#### **Closures due to fire**

On October 7, the park closed the Desolation Trail and the portion of the East Bank Trail from Lightning Creek to Desolation Trail, and Desolation, Lightning Creek Hiker, and Cat Island Camps due to fire activity in the Desolation area of east Ross Lake. Source: [North Cascades National Park](#)

### **Olympic National Park**

#### **Fishing closed due to drought**

On October 6, the park enacted an emergency closure of recreational fishing due to "severe low-flow conditions." The closure will continue until river conditions have improved. Source: [Olympic National Park](#)

### **Olympic National Park**

#### **Clam harvest canceled**

On October 12, the park announced that the recreational razor clam harvest at Kalaloch beach will not be held this year due to the continued small size of the clams. Biologists from the park, Quinault Indian Nation, Hoh Indian Tribe, and Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife conducted surveys that found that the clam population has very few clams over 4 inches long due to poor adult survivorship. Biologists suspect this may be due to a bacterial gill pathogen called NIX. The last full harvest season at Kalaloch was 2009, with either full or partial harvest closures since then. Source: [Olympic National Park](#)

### **Ozark National Scenic Riverways**

#### **Sentences for two separate possession charges**

On April 20, 2020, a 64-year-old individual was observed consuming alcohol in a vehicle near Parker Hollow. The individual was found to be in possession of a firearm and had been previously convicted of more than one felony offense. The individual pled guilty to one felony count of conspiracy to possess a firearm and was sentenced to 18 months in federal prison, followed by two years of supervised release.

On July 16, 2021, a 55-year-old was driving a UTV on Highway 19 near Round Spring



when they were contacted by a law enforcement ranger for a traffic stop. The individual was arrested for driving under the influence, and during a search, they were found to be in possession of methamphetamine and a loaded firearm. The individual had previously been convicted of more than one felony offense. The individual was sentenced to 41 months in federal prison and two years of supervised release. Source: [Ozark National Scenic Riverways](#)

### **Point Reyes National Seashore Elk given water due to drought**

On October 12, the park announced it will provide supplemental water and mineral licks at the Tomales Point Tule Elk Reserve in response to drought conditions. They have done so only once before, in 2021. The practice will continue until fall and winter rains return to recharge local water sources. Source: [Point Reyes National Seashore](#)

### **Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area Missing person found deceased**

On October 3, a 35-year-old person was found deceased "in a hiking area" of the park near Malibou Lake. The individual had been last seen on July 27 and was reported missing on July 30. The cause of death is unknown, though it is under investigation as a homicide. An autopsy is being performed by the Los Angeles County coroner's office and the incident is being investigated by the Ventura County Sheriff's Major Crimes Bureau. Source: [VC Star](#), [SFGate](#)

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

- *Arches National Park* - The person whose body was found and recovered from the Devils Garden area of the park on October 1 was successfully identified. The cause of death is still unknown, and details of the investigation, such as whether foul play is suspected, have not been released. Source: [KUTV](#)
- *Death Valley National Park* - In the aftermath of the flash floods over the summer, the park has reopened Texas Springs Campground, Stovepipe Wells Campground, and Furnace Creek Campground, and expect to open Sunset Campground on October 24. Overnight camping along backcountry roads and trails is also available, though a free permit is required for particular areas. Some backcountry roads remain closed. Part of Highway 190 between Emigrant Junction and Panamint Valley remains closed, likely through mid-November. Source: [Death Valley National Park](#)
- *Dry Tortugas National Park* - Engineers were able to inspect the dock on Garden Key after it was damaged by Hurricane Ian, and they determined that it was safe to partially reopen for concession-operated ferry service. However, Garden Key and Loggerhead Key remain closed indefinitely to private vessels due to damage to the visitor courtesy slips and docks. No camping in the park is currently open. The

NPS' Eastern Incident Management team is assisting park staff with storm cleanup and emergency assessments of Fort Jefferson's damaged infrastructure. Source: [National Parks Traveler](#)

- *North Cascades National Park* - The McAllister Creek Fire has grown and has the potential for rapid spread due to record breaking temperatures and low relative humidity. As a result, the park has closed the Thunder Creek Trail from the trailhead to Neve Camp, the Panther Creek Trail from the trailhead to Neve Camp, and the Thunder Knob Trail, as well as many campgrounds, day use areas, picnic areas, and beaches in the area. Source: [North Cascades National Park](#)
- *Olympic National Park* - As reported in the [September 8, 2021 Coalition Report](#), a 42-year-old individual was accused of appearing at a stranger's house while high on methamphetamine, handing that person a letter with concerns about the government and belief in an imminent revolution, then driving with their partner into the park, starting a fire, felling a tree to block a road, throwing a can of soup at their partner when they called 911, heading into the woods with several guns and 3,500 rounds of ammunition, then disabling the park's Blue Mountain radio repeater. The incident lasted several days and required the closure of that section of the park. The incident ended without further violence, with the individual surrendering to law enforcement. On October 7, 2022, the individual was sentenced in U.S. District Court to three years of probation for interfering with a federal communications system during an armed standoff. The individual has agreed to make restitution to those harmed, including individuals who were affected by the closure of the park. The restitution will be determined at a later hearing. Source: [The United States Attorney's Office: Western District of Washington](#)

## 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: 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.

--- ### ---

**Support the Coalition By Donating Today**

**Change Your Contact Info**



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