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The Coalition Report
Wednesday, October 5, 2022

Coalition Actions

As a member of the National Parks Second Century Action Coalition, we signed two letters to Congress. The [first letter](#) expresses support for \$1.7 billion of disaster relief for national parks, which was included in the FY2023 Interior appropriations bill, but is not in the current draft of the continuing resolution. The [second letter](#) urges the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources to pass the National Park Foundation reauthorization.

The Coalition submitted extensive [comments](#) on the Big Cypress National Preserve Supplemental Draft Backcountry Access Plan, Wilderness Study, and Environmental Impact Statement.

We joined with 100 organizations in signing a [letter](#) to President Biden supporting the designation of Avi Kwa Ame as a national monument.

The Coalition also joined in a [letter](#) to U.S. senators and representatives from Virginia, expressing concerns over Prince William County's rapid process to approve construction of a data center adjacent to Manassas National Battlefield Park.

We also joined with the National Parks Conservation Association in a [letter](#) to the Bureau of Land Management, providing detailed recommendations on its development of the draft resources management plan for Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument, including a recommendation that the BLM adopt the most protective management

alternative for the monument.

Coalition Member (and former Executive Committee Member) Mark Butler wrote a [summary](#) on the U.S. District Court decision affirming the Bureau of Land Management's suspension of the Cadiz Water project permit, including the Coalition's efforts to support litigation in opposition to the project.

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 housing legislation may fall flat - National Parks Traveler published [an article](#) about the Lodging Options Developed for Government Employees Act, which would allow the Department of the Interior to enter into partnerships to create housing on federal lands, but has stalled out in the House Natural Resources Committee. It is unclear when or if the measure will come up again before the current session of Congress ends. Source: *National Parks Traveler**
- *MOU on equitable access to nature - On September 23, The White House celebrated the signing of the "United States Government Interagency Memorandum of Understanding on Promoting Equitable Access to Nature in Nature-Deprived Communities." The MOU seeks to identify and support communities with inequitable access to nature and its benefits through enhanced interagency collaboration, capacity-building, and expansion of federal programs. Source: [The White House](#)*
- *\$1.1 million in NPS transportation improvements - The NPS announced that \$1.1 million from the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law will go toward improving transportation in national parks and collaboration with the Department of Transportation to work on innovative solutions that give visitors real-time travel information. Source: [National Park Service Office of Communications](#)*
- *OIG finds agency lacking in body camera use, DOI responds - On September 14, the Office of the Inspector General for the Department of the Interior issued a report finding that the agency has not finalized its body camera policy. According to the report, its policy was never routed through the necessary approval process, and is not being tracked across the agency. Furthermore, several of its bureaus, including the National Park Service and U.S. Park Police, have not updated their policies to reflect the DOI policy, creating inconsistencies across those bureaus. On October 3, the Interior Department announced a set of new policies that will require body cameras, ensure the release of footage on critical incidents, and restricts the use of no-knock warrants. Source: [Nextgov](#), [Office of the Inspector General](#), [Associated Press](#)*

- *NPS hunting rule thrown out* - A federal district court in Alaska ruled that an NPS rule that allows hunting practices like baiting bears in national preserves in Alaska, which was opened up after a federal court ruling in favor of the State of Alaska in 2020, was "poorly reasoned and arbitrary." This ruling affirms the NPS' authority to regulate hunting within their borders to reach conservation goals. Source: [National Parks Conservation Association](#)
- *New Network to Freedom sites and awards* - On September 29, the National Underground Railroad Network to Freedom announced 17 new site designations, as well as awards to several sites for outstanding work. This year's award recipients included the Underground Railroad Coalition of Delaware, Marvin S. Robinson II for work advocating for Quindaro Ruins, and Cathy LaPointe for efforts founding the Underground Railroad Society of Cass County. Source: [National Park Service Office of Communications](#)
- *\$7.7 billion in GDP from historic preservation* - On September 28, the NPS announced that \$8 billion of private investments in historic rehabilitation projects certified by the Federal Historic Preservation Tax Incentives Program contributed over \$15 billion in goods and services to the economy, adding approximately \$7.7 billion in gross domestic product in FY2021. Source: [National Park Service Office of Communications](#)
- *Veterans call for park designations* - The Vet Voice Foundation, a nonprofit organization that represents U.S. military veterans and their families, has released a report called "Veterans and Public Lands" that encourages President Joe Biden and Congress to give stronger protections to the Castner Range, Avi Kwa Ame, Camp Hale, the 1908 Springfield Race Riot site, Black Wall Street, Badger-Two Medicine, Fort Monroe, the Grand Canyon, and Berryessa Snow Mountain. Source: [Red Lake Nation News](#)
- *Director Sams on NPR* - National Public Radio's "Short Wave" program conducted [an interview](#) with NPS Director Chuck Sams about the Department of the Interior's efforts to better consult and co-manage parks with Tribes. Source: *National Public Radio*
- *Intertwining of mining and public lands* - On September 25, the *Los Angeles Times* published [an op-ed](#) that outlines the history of mining on public lands in the U.S. and its connections to the establishment of national parks, arguing that reforms to the General Mining Law are needed to support reclamation of abandoned mines and keep equitable access open. Source: *Los Angeles Times*
- *Proposal to make trailheads safe from crime* - *High Country News* published an article about one individual's efforts to better track and deter car break-ins at trailheads around the greater Seattle area. The article highlights the difficulty of tracking and responding to these types of incidents in remote areas. Source: [High](#)

[Country News](#)

Around the Parks

Park reports are in alphabetical order.

- *Arches National Park* - The park concluded its temporary timed-entry pilot program on October 4. The program operated since April 3, 2022. The park announced that the program met many of its goals, and the park will hold discussions with partners and stakeholders this fall to determine a congestion management strategy for 2023. Traffic, high wait times, and closures are expected to ensue. Source: [Arches National Park](#)
- *Big South Fork National River and Recreation Area* - On October 3, the park, in cooperation with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, began removing and replacing the Mine-18 area septic system that serves the Blue Heron Visitor Center and Concession Stand. There will be temporary closures to parts of the facility until work is completed in Spring 2023. Source: [Big South Fork National River and Recreation Area](#)
- *Blackwell School National Historic Site (pending)* - On September 20, Congress passed the Blackwell School National Historic Site Act, which is pending a signature from President Joe Biden. *Texas Highways* published [an article](#) about the school's significance as a marker of school segregation in Texas, as well as the site's potential effects on future local tourism. Source: *Texas Highways*
- *Brown v. Board of Education National Historical Park* - On September 27, Secretary of the Interior Deb Haaland, NPS Director Chuck Sams, and Congressman James E. Clyburn (D-SC) visited several sites that will soon be added to the park, per the Brown v. Board of Education National Historical Park and Expansion and Redesignation Act that was signed into law in May 2022. Source: [Department of the Interior](#)
- *Channel Islands National Park* - *Sierra* published [an article](#) about University of California archaeologist Brian Holguin's work studying the history of Chumash people on the Channel Islands. Holguin is of Chumash descent. Source: *Sierra*
- *Cuyahoga Valley National Park* - The park has received \$14 million in Great American Outdoors Act funding to stabilize the riverbank at eight sites along the Cuyahoga River where erosion has impacted the Ohio and Erie Canal Towpath Trail and the tracks of the Cuyahoga Valley Scenic Railroad. The contract was given to a construction company located in Akron, Ohio. Work is expected to start this month and continue through early 2025. Temporary closures will be enacted as work is completed. Source: [Cuyahoga Valley National Park](#)
- *Cuyahoga Valley National Park* - The parking lot, road, and bridge at Brandywine Falls have reopened after a renovation, and the bathrooms will soon be complete,

- as well. The project was \$1.6 million. Source: [Akron Beacon Journal](#)
- *Death Valley National Park* - The annual survey of Devils Hole pupfish, one of the most endangered species in the world, revealed a 263 individuals, the most ever observed in the 19-year study. Source: [Death Valley National Park](#)
 - *Denali National Park and Preserve, Katmai National Park and Preserve - Alaska News Source* published [an article](#) about the parks' first-ever all-women fire crew. Source: *Alaska News Source*
 - *George Washington Memorial Parkway* - On September 24, the NPS and Friends of Mount Vernon Trail hosted a ceremony to officially reopen the reconstructed Bridge 12 on the Mount Vernon Trail (multi-use path). The bridge was relocated to allow for straighter alignment and reduced grade, and also was widened and given upgraded railings. The trail surface around the bridge was also replaced. The project started in February 2022 and was completed by the NPS, in partnership with the Federal Highway Administration and Virginia Department of Transportation. This bridge is the first of four major bridge improvements to be completed on the Mount Vernon Trail over the next five years. Source: [George Washington Memorial Parkway](#)
 - *Gettysburg National Military Park* - On September 30, the park reopened Devil's Den after a six-month rehabilitation project to address erosion issues, revegetate areas, increase accessible trails, and provide a better walking surface for visitors. Source: [Gettysburg National Military Park](#)
 - *Glacier National Park* - On September 25, the park announced the completion of its Air Tour Management Plan, which will allow up to 144 air tours per year on a defined route, with a plan to phase out tours through attrition and then completely cease all tours by December 31, 2029. There is also a wildlife avoidance provision. Source: [Missoula Current](#), [Glacier National Park](#)
 - *Glacier National Park* - The *Fremont News Messenger* ran [a profile piece](#) on Ranger Tina Penny and her journey to becoming a park ranger. Source: *Fremont News Messenger*
 - *Grand Teton National Park* - On September 22, the Jackson Hole Airport Board met to take public comment on proposals to address aircraft noise for the southern departure route. The airport is located inside Grand Teton, and the board is hoping to decrease the noise impacts on the park. Source: [Jackson Hole Radio](#)
 - *Gulf Islands National Seashore* - On September 30, the park, in partnership with the Federal Highway Administration, completed the first phase of construction on the Davis Bayou Bicycle and Pedestrian path. The phase included improvements to retaining walls, erosion control, new bike paths, guardrails, and fencing, as well as resurfacing and repairs to roads and campsite pads in the Davis Bayou

campground. Phase 2 will begin in 2024, and a third phase will take place afterward. Source: [Gulf Islands National Seashore](#)

- *Harpers Ferry National Historical Park* - Allegheny woodrats were rediscovered in the park for the first time in 20 years. A group of wildlife biologists documented, captured, tagged, and released several individuals. The woodrat survey is a collaborative research effort between the NPS, the West Virginia Division of Natural Resources, the Virginia Department of Wildlife Resources, and Radford University. Source: [WJLA](#)
- *Ice Age National Scenic Trail* - On September 27, the park approved the designation of the Marquette County Corridor Plan that may someday contain the Ice Age National Scenic Trail, upon agreement from willing private landowners. Source: [Ice Age National Scenic Trail](#)
- *Johnstown Flood National Memorial* - On September 16, the Cambria County Conservation and Recreation Authority approved its involvement in constructing the Path of the Flood Trail into the park. The groundbreaking will be held in the coming weeks. Source: [The Tribune-Democrat](#)
- *Lassen Volcanic National Park* - The park has reopened half of the Kings Creek Falls overlook for the first time since it was damaged by the 2021 Dixie Fire. The trail crew is continuing to work on the other half of the overlook, with a goal of finishing it by Summer 2023. Source: [Active NorCal](#)
- *Minute Man National Historical Park* - The park has received \$27 million in Great American Outdoors Act funding to address rehabilitation and preservation work, and maintenance upgrades to 16 historic structures, as well as landscape and trail improvements. Work will begin in late Fall 2022 and continue into 2025. Source: [Minute Man National Historical Park](#)
- *Natchez Trace Parkway* - The park will soon be conducting an environmental assessment to determine whether or not the John Coffee Memorial Bridge should be restored or replaced. The park is currently looking for historical information about the construction and use of the bridge from anyone who may have cultural or historical ties to the area so the planning effort can identify areas for preservation or avoidance. Source: [WHNT](#)
- *Ocmulgee Mounds National Historical Park* - On September 22, Macon-Bibb County announced a donation of 250 acres to the park, as outlined in the 2019 John D. Dingell, Jr. Conservation, Management, and Recreation Act. The parcel is located in the Ocmulgee Old Fields-Macon Reserve, an area of great significance to Muskogean people. The Ocmulgee National Park and Preserve Initiative and National Park Foundation helped facilitate the land transfer. The parcel will remain closed to the public until the NPS develops a management plan. Source: [Macon-](#)

[Bibb County](#)

- *Petrified Forest National Park* - On September 28, the paleontology program at the park published an article in the *Journal of Paleontology* that recognizes a new-to-science Triassic reptile, *Puercosuchus traverorum*. The species was discovered by park paleontologists in 2014 during a guided Girl Scout hike in the Blue Mesa area, and its closest prehistoric relatives have only been found previously in modern-day Madagascar and Morocco (which were adjacent during Pangea times). The reptile's name honors the nearby Puerco River, as well as Brad and Denise Traver, the former park superintendent and his partner, who provided much support to the paleontology program at the park. Source: [Petrified Forest National Park](#)
- *Pullman National Monument and State Historic Site* - The park and its partners have received the 2022 Landmarks Illinois Richard H. Driehaus Foundation Preservation Award for Rehabilitation for its efforts establishing the park and rehabilitating the Pullman Administration Clock Tower Building and the surrounding factory grounds for use as its visitor center. The NPS was recognized alongside the Illinois Department of Natural Resources, Chicago Neighborhood Initiatives, the National Park Foundation, the Positioning Pullman Project Team, the National Parks Conservation Association, and the Historic Pullman Foundation. Source: [Pullman National Monument](#)
- *Pu'uhoonua O Hōnaunau National Historical Park* - The Friends of Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park has received a \$70,000 grant from the National Park Foundation to support Pu'uhoonua O Hōnaunau in creating its own friends group to support the park. Source: [Hawai'i Public Radio](#)
- *Statue of Liberty National Monument* - The NPS has awarded a \$22 million construction contract to repair the historic fort that serves as the foundation for the Statue of Liberty, including drainage and safety improvements, as well as accessibility enhancements. The funding comes from the Great American Outdoors Act. Source: [Statue of Liberty National Monument](#)
- *Valles Caldera National Preserve* - Tom Ribe, the executive director of Caldera Action, had [an op-ed](#) published in the *Santa Fe New Mexican*, arguing for the U.S. Forest Service and NPS to do a better job of enforcing grazing rules to protect the preserve as it was intended. Source: *Santa Fe New Mexican*
- *Virgin Islands National Park* - The NPS and Friends of Virgin Islands National Park are rebuilding the playground in front of the Visitor Center in Cruz Bay. The playground was damaged by 2017 hurricanes. The playground is closed during the construction, which is expected to be completed by the end of the year. The playground will be managed by the Virgin Islands Department of Sports, Parks and Recreation under a special use permit. The \$800,000 project is supported by the Friends of Virgin Islands National Park, with a \$350,00 gift from Dr. Steven and Jann

Paul, as well as other donations from over 100 individuals and businesses. Source: [Virgin Islands National Park](#)

- *Yellowstone National Park - The Intercept* published [an article](#) about U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Director Martha Williams, and the conflicts between wolf preservation, hunting, States' rights, and the federal government. The article discusses the reintroduction of wolves to Yellowstone, as well as the park's advocacy this year to Montana game commissioners arguing that telemetry violates the fair chase principle. Source: *The Intercept*

Personnel Changes

- *Ozark National Scenic Riverways* - Stacey Griffin was selected as the new chief of administration, while William Terry was selected as the new chief of facility management. Stacey has 26 years of experience with the U.S. Forest Service, most recently as their Job Corps National Office administrative officer. William was most recently the chief of water resources for the Nashville District of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and is the son of a long-time park ranger at Ozark Riverways. Stacey began her role in May and William began his role in August. Source: [Ozark National Scenic Riverways](#)
- *Region 11 (Alaska Region)* - David Alberg has been selected as the new deputy regional director. David was most recently the head of resource management and compliance at Lake Mead National Recreation Area, as well as serving two months in an acting role to his new position prior to taking the permanent role. He starts his new role in October. Source: [National Park Service Region 11](#)
- *Wolf Trap National Park for the Performing Arts* - Ken Bigley was selected as the new superintendent. He has served many roles at national parks, including Carlsbad, Grand Canyon, Mammoth Cave, Chamizal, Bandelier, Big Bend, Prince William Forest, Manassas. His most recent role was as deputy superintendent and as acting superintendent at Wolf Trap. Source: [Wolf Trap National Park for the Performing Arts](#)

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

- Rob Bennetts passed away on June 14. Rob worked for the NPS' Inventory and Monitoring Division for over 15 years, retiring in March 2019. Source: Allyson Mathis, [Prairie Zephyr](#) (newsletter of the Southern Planes Inventory and Monitoring Network)
- Charles "Chas" Stewart Cartwright, 72, passed away on September 24. He worked

for the NPS for over 40 years, including superintendent positions at Hovenweep National Monument, Knife River Indian Villages National Historic Site, Devils Tower National Monument, Dinosaur National Monument, Shenandoah National Park, and Glacier National Park, as well as serving as the associate to the deputy director of the National Park Service. Source: [Daily Inter Lake](#)

- Susan E. Edlund, 72, passed away on September 9. She was a volunteer with the NPS "in Hagerstown." Source: [Herald-Mail Media](#)
- Robert "Bob" Clarence Heyder, 93, passed away on September 14. Bob worked for the federal government for 42 years, including jobs at Yosemite, Muir Woods, Grand Canyon, Chaco Canyon, Lake Mead, and Wilson's Creek, as well as superintendencies at Capitol Reef, Bryce Canyon, Zion, and Mesa Verde/Hovenweep/Yucca House. He retired from the NPS in 1993. Source: Annaliese Shaw, Kayci Cook, [Ertel Funeral Home](#)
- Patricia "Pat" T. McClelland, 87, passed away on July 15. Pat spent several summers in Yellowstone as the child of a seasonal naturalist. She and her partner Riley both worked for the NPS at Yellowstone, Carlsbad Caverns, and Glacier, including spending the winters of 1957-1960 in a historic log ranger cabin adjacent to Old Faithful Geyser (since razed). Source: [Legacy/The Missoulian](#)
- J. Steven "Steve" Soulier, 78, passed away on September 24. Steve worked for 12 summers at the Zion National Park Lodge, working his way up from dishwasher to manager. Source: [Cache Valley Daily](#)

In the News

- Eric Haugland gave a presentation for the Headwaters Center for Lifelong Learning in Park Rapids, Minnesota, called "Eight First Weeks in a 30+ Year Career in the National Park Service." He worked for the NPS at eight parks for 34 years, retiring in 2014. He is currently the chair of the Itasca-Heartland Connection Trail. Source: [Park Rapids Enterprise](#)
- Richard "Glen" Melville has been selected as the deputy bureau director of the Office of Justice Services at the Bureau of Indian Affairs. He worked for the NPS' Investigative Services Branch as a special agent at Olympic National Park from 2002 to 2008. Source: [Peninsula Daily News](#)
- Sheridan Steele spoke about his NPS career and new book, *From Bear Dens to the Oval Office*, at the Bass Harbor Memorial Library on September 22. He worked at seven national parks over 38 years, including superintendencies at Acadia, Saint Croix Island, Black Canyon of the Gunnison/Curecanti, and Fort Scott. Source: [Mount Desert Islander](#)
- *News Center Main* published [an article](#) about the recently retired trails maintenance

foreman for Acadia National Park, Gary Stellpflug. Gary worked at Acadia for 35 years. Source: *News Center Maine*

Open for Comment

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

- *Badlands National Park* - The NPS and Federal Aviation Administration are seeking public comments on an air tour management plan. [Comments](#) are open until October 6. Source: [Badlands National Park](#)
- *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](#)
- *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 will open 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](#)
- *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](#)
- *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. Site visits will run through September 30 and [proposals](#) are open until November 3. Source: [Lincoln Home National Historic Site](#)
- *Mount Rushmore National Memorial* - The NPS and Federal Aviation Administration are seeking public comments on an air tour management plan. [Comments](#) are open until October 6. Source: [Mount Rushmore National Memorial](#)

- *Timucuan Ecological and Historic Preserve* - Public comment is now open on a Development Concept Plan for the Kingsley Plantation site. [Comments](#) are open until October 14. Source: [Timucuan Ecological and Historic Preserve](#)
- *Virgin Islands National Park* - Public comment is now open on a Draft Engineering Evaluation and Cost Analysis Report Addendum for the Cannel Bay Resort site at the park. The addendum supplements the report completed in 2021 to address data gaps. [Comments](#) are open until October 12. Source: [Virgin Islands National Park](#)
- *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

- *Colorado River symposium* - Interior Secretary Deb Haaland and Bureau of Reclamation Commissioner Camille Calimlim Touton attended a Colorado River symposium in Santa Fe last week. They said their priority is to focus on evaporation and transit loss, which accounts for around 10% of the river's water. Upper Basin states are already charged for this loss, while Lower Basin states are not. Forcing Lower Basin states to account for these losses would tighten water budgets by about 1 million acre-feet. Touton said that the federal government may intervene if users are unable to commit and follow-through on conservation measures. Source: [KUNC](#)
- *Wildlife council members announced* - On September 23, the Departments of the Interior and Agriculture announced 18 members of the Hunting and Wildlife Conservation Council.. This Federal Advisory Council was chartered in February 2022 and is managed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to provide policy recommendations around wildlife and habitat conservation, fair-chase hunting, shooting sports, and wildlife-related recreation and economic benefits. Source: [Department of the Interior](#)
- *\$31 million in bird habitat grants* - On September 21, the Department of the Interior announced the approval of \$31 million in Migratory Bird Conservation Commission grants to conserve or restore 116,305 acres of bird habitat in 18 states. The grants are made through the North American Wetlands Conservation Act and are matched by over \$60 million in partner funds. Source: [Department of the Interior](#)
- *CA solar project up and running* - On September 21, the Department of the Interior announced that the Blythe Solar Power Project is now fully operational, consisting of a four-unit, 485-megawatt photovoltaic facility and 387-megawatt battery energy storage system in Riverside County, California. The project is permitted on Bureau of Land Management Land under the Desert Renewable Energy Conservation Plan Land Use Plan Amendment. 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.

Senate Actions

Sept. 21 – The Committee on Energy and Natural Resources: Subcommittee on National Parks concluded a hearing to examine the following:

- S. 305, to establish the Springfield Race Riot National Monument in the state of Illinois.
- S. 1211, to establish the Cahokia Mounds Mississippian Culture National Historic Park in Collinsville, Illinois, Monroe, Madison, and St. Clair Counties, Illinois, and St. Louis City County, Missouri.
- S. 3447, to authorize the National Service Animals Monument Corporation to establish a commemorative work in the District of Columbia and its environs.
- S. 3579, to authorize the Embassy of France in Washington, DC, to establish a commemorative work in the District of Columbia and its environs to honor the extraordinary contributions of Jean Monnet to restoring peace between European nations and establishing the European Union.
- S. 3873, to designate the outdoor amphitheater at the Blue Ridge Music Center in Galax, Virginia, as the "Rock Boucher Amphitheater."
- S. 4122, to amend the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act to designate certain segments of the Housatonic River in the State of Connecticut as components of the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System.
- S. 4168, to amend title 54, United States Code, to reauthorize the National Park Foundation.
- S. 4222, to establish the St. Croix National Heritage Area.
- S. 4371, to establish the Cesar E. Chavez and the Farmworker Movement National Historical Park in the states of California and Arizona.
- S. 4377 and H.R. 4380, to designate the El Paso Community Healing Garden National Memorial. S. 4464 and H.R. 1908, to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to conduct a study to assess the suitability and feasibility of designating certain land as the Ka'ena Point National Heritage Area.
- S. 4693, to amend the National Trails System Act to include national discovery trails and designate the American Discovery Trail.
- S. 4784, to modify the boundary of the Katahdin Woods and Waters National Monument in the state of Maine, to improve public access to the National Monument.
- S.J. Res. 57, redesignating the Robert E. Lee Memorial in Arlington National Cemetery as the "Arlington House National Historic Site."

Testimony was heard from Senator Padilla; Michael A. Caldwell, Associate Director, Park Planning, Facilities, and Lands, National Park Service, Department of the Interior; Will Shafroth, National Park Foundation, Washington, D.C.; and Steve Richardson, Friends of

Katahdin Woods and Waters National Monument, Patten, Maine.

Sept. 28 – The Senate agreed to [S. Res. 807](#), designating November 5, 2022, as "National Bison Day."

Sept. 28 – The Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs ordered favorably reported the following business items, among several others: S. 3531, to require the federal government to produce a national climate adaptation and resilience strategy, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute.

Sept. 29 – The Senate passed H.R. 6833, making continuing appropriations for Fiscal Year 2023, by a vote of 72 yeas to 25 nays. The bill extends funding for all federal agencies, including the National Park Service, through December 16, 2022.

Sept. 29 – The Committee on Energy and Natural Resources concluded a hearing to examine the following, among other bills:

- S. 4729, to amend the Agricultural Credit Act of 1978 to waive the cost share requirement under the emergency forest restoration program for land damaged by the Hermit's Peak/Calf Canyon Fire,
- S. 4833, to improve the health and resiliency of giant sequoias,
- S. 4835, to provide for the removal of small-diameter trees in fire hazard areas,
- S. 4877, to amend Public Law 91–378 to authorize activities relating to Civilian Conservation Centers,
- S. 4884, to require the Secretary of the Interior, in coordination with the Secretary of Agriculture, to establish a joint natural infrastructure science program,
- S. 4891, to amend the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 to authorize certain construction activities on public lands,
- S. 4904, to address the forest health crisis on the National Forest System and public lands,
- S. 4935, to require the Secretary of the Interior and the Secretary of Agriculture to implement measures to better prepare for and more quickly respond to wildfires on certain public land and in certain national forests,
- S. 4942, to amend the Southwest Forest Health and Wildfire Prevention Act of 2004 to require the establishment of an additional Institute under that Act,
- S. 4944, to provide for the operation and establishment of, and procurement of supplies for, firewood banks, and
- S. 4945, to require the Secretary of Agriculture to establish a pilot program for the establishment and use of a pre-fire suppression stand density index.

Testimony was provided by John Crockett, Associate Deputy Chief, State and Private Forestry, Forest Service, Department of Agriculture; Jeffery Rupert, Director, Office of Wildland Fire, Department of the Interior; James W. Hourdequin, The Lyme Timber Company, Hanover, New Hampshire; and Patrick O'Toole, Family Farm Alliance, Savery, Wyoming.

House Actions

Sept. 19 – The House passed the following:

- H.R. 6353, amended, to authorize the National Service Animals Monument Corporation to establish a commemorative work in the District of Columbia and its environs.
- H.R. 7618, 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 and federal funds could not be expended for the memorial.
- H.R. 820, amended, to establish the New Philadelphia National Historical Park in the State of Illinois as a unit of the National Park System.
- H.R. 4009, amended, to authorize the Georgetown African American Historic Landmark Project and Tour to establish a commemorative work in the District of Columbia and its environs.
- S. 2490, to establish the Blackwell School National Historic Site in Marfa, Texas.
- H.R. 4358, amended, to amend the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act to designate segments of the Little Manatee River as a component of the Wild and Scenic Rivers System.

Sept. 20 – The Committee on Natural Resources: Subcommittee on Energy and Mineral Resources held a hearing on H.R. 8802, to require the Secretary of the Interior and the Chief of the Forest Service to align management of public lands and waters with the President’s greenhouse gas emission reduction goals. Testimony was heard from Rosemary Ahtuanguak, Mayor, Nuiqsut, Alaska; and public witnesses.

Sept. 28 – The House passed H.R. 6364, 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.

Sept. 29 – The House passed H.R. 8466, amended, to require the head of each agency to establish a plan relating to the safety of federal employees and contractors physically present at certain worksites during a nationwide public health emergency declared for an infectious disease, by a 2/3 vote of 351 yeas to 73 nays.

Incidents

Incidents are listed in alphabetical order by park.

Arches National Park Hiker found deceased

On October 1, NPS staff found an individual's body in the Devils Garden area. Personnel from the NPS and Grand County recovered the individual's body and took them to the Utah Office of Medical Examiner for identification and to determine the cause of death.

Source: [Salt Lake Tribune](#)

Blue Ridge Parkway, Biscayne National Park, Canaveral National Seashore, Carl Sandburg Home National Historic Site, Charles Pinckney National Historic Site, Congaree National Park, Cumberland Island National Seashore, De Soto National Memorial, Dry Tortugas National Park, Everglades National Park, Fort Frederica National Monument, Fort Pulaski National Monument, Fort Sumter and Fort Moultrie National Historical Park, Gulf Islands National Seashore, Timucuan Ecological and Historic Preserve

Hurricane closures

From September 25-30, many parks around the southeastern United States enacted closures due to the forecasted path of Hurricane/Tropical Storm Ian. Biscayne, Fort Pulaski, Gulf Islands, and Timucuan have reopened for normal operations. Canaveral National Seashore, Carl Sandburg, Everglades and Dry Tortugas partially reopened some areas. Other parks remain closed and have not yet publicly disclosed the effects of the storm, as of October 2. Source: [WALA](#), [Everglades National Park](#), [Blue Ridge Parkway](#), [Congaree National Park](#), [Gulf Islands National Seashore](#), [Charles Pinckney National Historic Site](#), [Fort Frederica National Monument](#), [Cumberland Island National Seashore](#), [Canaveral National Seashore](#), [Fort Pulaski National Monument](#), [Timucuan Ecological and Historic Preserve](#), [National Parks Traveler](#)

Cape Hatteras National Seashore

Boat goes aground

On September 29, an unoccupied 30-foot catamaran grounded near the north end of Oregon Inlet. Prior to grounding, multiple passengers were rescued by the U.S. Coast Guard. The NPS is working with the Coast Guard and owner to remove the vessel from the beach. Source: [Cape Hatteras National Seashore](#)

Chickasaw National Recreation Area

RV starts Fire

On September 18, a recreational vehicle being towed by a vehicle ignited on the Goddard Youth Camp Road near Catfish Bottoms. They called for help and responders were on scene within 12 minutes. The fire had spread onto the tow vehicle, as well as grass on both sides of the road. Responders from the NPS, Sulphur Fire Department, Dougherty Fire Department, and Rock Prairie Volunteer Fire Department were able to stop the spread at three acres. Both vehicles were destroyed. No structures were harmed, nor was anyone injured. Source: [Chickasaw National Recreation Area](#)

Death Valley National Park

Earthquake in Mexico hits park

On September 19, a magnitude 7.6 earthquake on Mexico's Pacific coast created 4-foot tall waves inside Devils Hole, the geothermal pool that is home to the highly-endangered Devils Hole pupfish. No dead fish were found after the incident, though the incident

displaced algae that are part of the pupfish's food source. The park's bi-annual pupfish survey occurred several days later, and indicated a record-high number of individuals (see "Around the Parks" above). Source: [CBS News](#)

Lake Mead National Recreation Area

Emergency landing on water

On October 1, a single engine Cessna carrying two passengers was headed from Las Vegas to Arizona. The plane landed in the waters of the lake. No passengers were injured. Personnel from the Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department and the NPS responded, and the National Transportation Safety Board is investigating. Source: [KTNV](#)

Mesa Verde National Park

Wild horses captured

On September 24, the park successfully captured a band of 16 feral/trespass horses, utilizing "low-stress capture and handling methods." The herd had been conditioned for eventual capture through offering them food and water for almost three years. The livestock are currently being cared for by park staff and veterinarians and they will be available for future adoption through the National Mustang Association Colorado Chapter. Source: [Mesa Verde National Park](#)

Mount Rainier National Park

Emergency road closure

On September 26, the Federal Highway Administration reported structural damage to one of the bridges on Stevens Canyon Road, deeming it unsafe for two-lane travel. Stevens Canyon Road between Stevens Creek and Box Canyon is now closed to all vehicle, foot, and bicycle traffic for the remainder of the season. Source: [Mount Rainier National Park](#)

North Cascades National Park

New wildfire

A series of lightning strikes the week of September 12 ignited the McAllister Creek Fire in the Thunder Creek drainage of the park. There are no trail or camp closures related to the fire and it is being monitored for growth. Source: [Interior Newswire](#), [North Cascades National Park](#)

Petrified Forest National Park

Government vehicle shot

On September 20, an unmarked government vehicle with two employees inside was struck by a bullet in the Blue Mesa area. On September 27, a 21-year-old was arrested in connection with the shooting, and is being charged with aggravated assault and endangerment. Source: [Sacramento Bee](#), [Fox 10 Phoenix](#)

Rocky Mountain National Park

Hiker fatality

On September 23, a 25-year-old was hiking Longs Peak via the Keyhole Route, when they got lost in winter-like conditions. They reached out to a friend via cellphone, informing them about the deteriorating conditions and their lack of gear for the conditions. The friend relayed the information to the park, and the park was able to reach the individual via text message. The individual stated that they were going to attempt to move toward the Agnes Vaille Shelter, and no more communication was made thereafter. NPS staff began a search that afternoon from the Boulder Field to the Keyhole, and reached the Agnes Vaille Shelter, amid snow, ice, 35 mph winds, and sub-freezing temperatures. The individual was not found. The search continued into the night, and the following morning, a Northern Colorado Med Evac ambulance was able to support the search. Park visitors found the individual deceased, about 80 feet above the Ledges section, just past the Keyhole on the way to the summit. The individual's body was recovered by park staff and a Trans Aero helicopter on September 25. Source: [Coloradoan](#)

Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area

Mountain lion dies of mange

In March 2022, the mountain lion known as P-65 was found deceased near a stream with hair loss and skin encrustation. A necropsy recently confirmed notoedric mange, making it the first puma in the 20-year NPS study on mountain lions to succumb to the disorder. Mange has been observed in other mountain lions, but the animals all recovered. P-65 had also been exposed to five different rodenticides. Source: [KCRA](#)

Upper Delaware Scenic and Recreational River

Angler found deceased

On September 8, a boat with two anglers capsized near Cherry Island in the Delaware River. One of individuals made it to shore. An 11-day search ensued, with personnel from the New York State Police, Sparrowbush, Port Jervis, and Matamoras Fire Departments, Swift Water Rescue Teams from New York, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania, and the NPS. A New York State Police helicopter crew located the individual's body in the river on September 19. Source: [Upper Delaware Scenic and Recreational River](#)

Washington Monument

Anti-government graffiti

On September 20, a 44-year-old individual was arrested and charged with trespassing, tampering, and vandalism in connection with vulgar, anti-government graffiti made in red paint on the west side of the monument. The clean-up was expected to take several days. The monument remained open, except for the area directly around the clean-up efforts. Source: [The New York Times](#)

Yellowstone National Park

Wildfire

On September 27, individuals in Tom Miner Basin, Montana reported seeing smoke in a remote section of the park. A park helicopter crew flew over the area and spotted a new fire, which is suspected to have started due to lightning a few days earlier. Fire crews are monitoring the Big Horn Fire, which is expected to be slowed significantly by forecasted snow and rain. Backcountry campsite WE4 was closed for the rest of the season due to its proximity to the fire. Source: [NBC Montana](#)

Follow-ups on Previously Reported Incidents

- *Death Valley National Park* - On September 21, the park opened parts of Badwater Road and Wildrose. Artists Drive and Golden Canyon Trail are also open. Most roads in the park remain closed for repair after record flooding. Source: [Death Valley National Park](#)
- *Grand Canyon National Park* - Parkwide water restrictions were lifted after water storage tanks on both the North and South Rims reached sustainable levels. Source: [Grand Canyon National Park](#)
- *Yellowstone National Park* - The NPS, in conjunction with the Federal Highway Administration, announced that the Old Gardiner Road will open to regular traffic no later than November 1. The road has typically been a limited-access road, and will require the FHA to build a new 1/4-mile approach road to avoid a 12-15% grade on the original road, as well as an expansion to the road widths to prevent vehicle restrictions. Source: [Yellowstone National Park](#)
- *Yosemite National Park* - As of September 23, all safety closures associated with the Red and Rodgers fires were lifted. The Red Fire was at 8,364 acres, the Rodgers Fire at 2,790 acres, and the Chiquito, Empire, and Alder Fires were all under patrol status at less than a quarter-acre. Source: [Yosemite National Park](#)

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:

If you see something that might be of interest to Coalition members, send it to report@protectnps.org.

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

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