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The Coalition Report **Wednesday, June 26, 2024**

Take Action!

[Coalition members are invited to sign](#) a letter by the Friends of Minidoka to President Joe Biden expressing concern with the Bureau of Land Management's recent decision to approve the Lava Ridge wind farm project adjacent to Minidoka National Historic Site (and in the historic footprint of the camp). The deadline to sign is July 10. (Editor note: The Coalition has actively opposed the Lava Ridge project from its inception. See our [recent announcement](#) condemning the BLM's plan.)

Coalition Actions

The Coalition joined with multiple organizations in submitting [detailed comments](#) on the Bears Ears National Monument Resource Management Plan Draft Environmental Impact Statement.

We joined with five partner organizations in submitting detailed [scoping comments](#) on the Bureau of Land Management's New Mexico Office FY 2025 First Quarter Competitive Oil and Gas Lease Sale. Among other things, the letter emphasizes that the BLM is not obligated to conduct sales and recommends deferring several parcels. We also submitted [comments](#) on the BLM's Wyoming Office 2024 Third Quarter Competitive Oil and Gas Lease Sale Draft Environmental Assessment and Draft Finding of No Significant Impact, urging them to defer parcels for the protection of wildlife and local residents and to provide further analysis related to climate change and groundwater impacts.

The Coalition issued [a statement of support](#) for the designation of the proposed 1908 Springfield Race Riot National Monument.

We issued a [press release](#) thanking the Department of the Interior for holding a community event regarding designation of the Chuckwalla National Monument and expressed its support for the designation.

Coalition Executive Council members Clara Wooden, Elaine Leslie, Sue Fritzke, and Linda Mazzu [discussed with *National Parks Traveler*](#) the difficulties people of color and women experience within the NPS and the lack of diversity among senior positions.

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.

- *Rosenwald School special resource study* - On June 13, the National Park Service transmitted a Special Resource Study to Congress about the legacy of Julius Rosenwald, particularly Rosenwald Schools. San Domingo School is identified as a candidate to become a national historic site, and the study also recommends that Congress establish a Rosenwald School Network Program to support community-driven preservation. Source: [National Park Service Office of Communications](#)
- *DOI receives award for phasing out plastics* - On June 25, the Department of the Interior received a Presidential Federal Sustainability Award for its ongoing efforts to phase out single-use plastics on DOI-managed lands, as well as its work strengthening climate resilience through private-public partnerships. Source: [Department of the Interior](#)
- *Navy and NPS donate land to Honolulu* - On June 20, the U.S. Navy and the National Park Service conveyed 400 acres of land in the Kalaeloa area of Oahu to the City and County of Honolulu. The land is located on the site of former Naval Air Station Barbers Point, which closed in 1999. The land was transferred for no fee under Public Benefit Conveyance regulations. Source: [The Flagship](#)
- *NPF "Share the Experience" winners* - On June 16, the National Park Foundation announced the winners of the 2023 Share the Experience photo contest. The winning image by Micheal Zheng, of a roseate spoonbill at Everglades National Park, will be featured on the America the Beautiful Annual Pass. Source: [Sierra Sun Times](#)
- *Sen. King honored by NPT* - On June 18, the National Park Trust bestowed the Bruce F. Vento Public Service Award on Senator Angus S. King, Jr. for his conservation efforts and leadership. Source: [National Park Trust](#)
- *Op-ed on reforming civil service* - *The Washington Post* published [an op-ed](#) that offers an roadmap for reforming federal civil service that avoids former President

Trump's Schedule F proposition that would make civil servants easily politicized, while also reforming a system that currently makes it difficult to remove poor performers. The proposal includes revising civil service laws to allow poorly performing employees to be removed with due process, protecting career civil servants in positions of national security from partisan influence, and to strike a mandatory balance of career civil servants with political appointees. Source: *The Washington Post*

[Around the Parks](#)

Reports are in alphabetical order by park/program name.

- *Acadia National Park - DownEast* published [an article](#) about the Maine Coast Heritage Trust's efforts to establish conservation easements and nature preserves in and around the park to create a more interconnected ecosystem for plants and wildlife. Other partners mentioned in the article are the Frenchman Bay Conservancy and The Nature Conservancy. Source: *DownEast*
- *Allegheny Portage Railroad National Historic Site, Flight 93 National Memorial, Johnstown Flood National Memorial* - On July 1, the NPS will hold a press conference to celebrate the completion of the 911 National Memorial Trail, a multi-use route that links the World Trade Center, Pentagon, and the three Pennsylvania national parks above. Source: [Johnstown Flood National Memorial](#)
- *Chesapeake and Ohio Canal National Historical Park, Harpers Ferry National Historical Park, Manassas National Battlefield Park, Monocacy National Battlefield, Rock Creek Park* - *WTOP* published [an article](#) about the parks' program to reduce deer populations and donate about 14,000 pounds of venison to food banks each year. Source: *WTOP*
- *Flight 93 National Memorial* - The U.S. Forest Service published [an article](#) about a collaborative effort to use silver flies as a biocontrol agent against hemlock woolly adelgid infestations. Partners on the project include the NPS, USFS, and Virginia Tech. Source: U.S. Forest Service Region 9
- *Fort Donelson National Battlefield* - On June 6, the NPS terminated a contract with AACON General Contractors, LLC, to rehabilitate the park's visitor center. The contractor was said to have failed to complete the work within the period of performance. The NPS "is working through next steps and remains committed to providing visitor services to the community and the public." Source: [Fort Donelson National Battlefield](#)
- *Fort McHenry National Monument and Historic Shrine, Hampton National Historic Site* - *The Baltimore Banner* published [an article](#) about the two parks' efforts to document and map trees in order to manage them more effectively. The mapping was done mostly by a group of interns working through the Cooperative Ecosystem

Studies Units Network and the Chesapeake Conservation and Climate Corps. Many of the trees are historic or are the largest of their kind in the state and/or country.

Source: *The Baltimore Banner*

- *Fort Sumter and Fort Moultrie National Historical Park* - On June 12, the NPS signed a Finding of No Significant Impact for the dock replacement project at the park. Source: [Fort Sumter and Fort Moultrie National Historical Park](#)
- *Fort Vancouver National Historic Site* - On June 12, the park announced the debut of a new self-guided tour of Vancouver Barracks, accessed through the NPS App. The tour was developed by an American Conservation Experience intern, Marie Hashimoto, with support from NPS staff. Source: [Fort Vancouver National Historic Site](#)
- *Gettysburg National Military Park* - On June 24, the park reopened Little Round Top. It had been closed since July 2022 for a \$12.9 million rehabilitation project. The project was funded by federal sources, the Gettysburg Foundation, the National Park Foundation, and the American Battlefield Trust. Source: [Evening Sun](#)
- *Glen Canyon National Recreation Area* - On June 18, the park reopened Bullfrog Main Ramp. An increase of water levels made the ramp accessible again for the first time since Summer 2023. Source: [Glen Canyon National Recreation Area](#)
- *Grand Canyon National Park* - On June 21, the park closed the Bright Angel Point Trail at the North Rim for "an extensive repair effort." Construction is expected to be complete by November. Source: [Grand Canyon National Park](#)
- *Hampton National Historic Site* - In July, the park will begin a project to rehabilitate many of its historic structures, including exteriors and interiors, accessibility, abatement of hazardous materials, and modernizing utilities, security, and fire detection and suppression. The project is expected to be completed in December. A [storymap](#) detailing the project is available. Source: [Hampton National Historic Site](#)
- *Historic Preservation Training Center* (an NPS-administered program) - A plan to move the HPTC to the western end of Westside Regional Park in Frederick, Virginia, has changed due to Project Open Space easement rules. The City of Frederick had hoped it could shift the easements to another section of park, but it will not be possible. Instead, the new facility will be moved to the eastern side of the park. The City approved a resolution supporting the change on June 6. The plan is for the City to sell 10 acres to the NPS for \$1 million, pending federal allocation of the funds. Source: [The Frederick News-Post](#)
- *Isle Royale National Park* - *Northern Express* published [an article](#) about the park's all-women ranger team. It is the second season in a row the team has been all

- women. The article gives a small biography on several of the staff. Source: *Northern Express*
- *Lewis and Clark National Historical Park* - From June 13 through July 8, the park is hosting a special traveling exhibit called "The Black Pioneers" in the Fort Clatsop Visitor Center lobby. The exhibit focuses on early discriminatory practices that made it difficult for Black Americans to settle in Oregon and documents those did. The exhibit was created by the Oregon Black Pioneers, a non-profit organization. Source: [Lewis and Clark National Historical Park](#)
 - *Little Bighorn Battlefield National Monument* - The park will soon begin a project to replace the current visitor center with a new facility. On June 26 and 27, the visitor center will be closed to move services and items to a temporary visitor center trailer, which will open on June 28. Source: [Little Bighorn Battlefield National Monument](#)
 - *Mount Rainier National Park* - The park announced that it will open Commercial Use Authorization applications on September 1 and Special Use Permits in lieu of Commercial Use Authorizations on October 1. This fall, open CUAs include shuttles, guided backpacking, guided bicycle tours, drive-in campground use, and guided day hiking. In March, CUA applications for guided winter day and overnight use will open. In 2025, CUA applications for guided climbing and photography/art classes will open. The October open application period for Special Use Permits in lieu of Commercial Use Authorizations, which is for non-profit organizations, will include all of the activities listed in the three application periods for CUAs above. Source: [Mount Rainier National Park](#)
 - *Reconstruction Era National Historic Network* (an NPS-administered program) - On June 17, the NPS announced the addition of seven new sites in six states and the District of Columbia to the network. Source: [Reconstruction Era National Historical Park](#)
 - *Rocky Mountain National Park* - This summer, the park is wrapping up a project to make utility, accessibility, and resource protection improvements in the Moraine Park Campground. The campground will remain closed through the summer and fall. The park also recently began construction on the new housing complex on the west side of the park that will replace housing destroyed in the 2020 East Troublesome Fire. Source: [Estes Park News](#)
 - *Stonewall National Monument* - On June 28, the park's first visitor center will open, located in the same building as the former Stonewall Inn. It will be managed by Pride Live, in partnership with the NPS. The visitor center has been in the works for six years. Many organizations, corporations, and individuals funded the project (listed in the article). Source: [PR Newswire](#)

- *Yellowstone National Park* - On June 18, the Federal Highway Administration announced a \$22 million grant to modernize and reconstruct a 0.7-mile segment of the Norris-to-Golden Gate roadway. Source: [Yellowstone National Park](#)
- *Yellowstone National Park* - On June 20, the Montana Fish and Wildlife Commission unanimously approved a tri-state agreement with Wyoming and Idaho to cooperatively manage grizzly bears in the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem, should they be removed from the Endangered Species List. Source: [The Spokesman-Review](#)

Personnel Changes

- *George Rogers Clark National Historical Park* - Martin Christiansen was selected as the new superintendent. Martin has over 12 years of NPS experience, most recently as the supervisory training specialist and program manager at the NPS Fundamentals Program at the Horace Albright Training Center. He will begin his new role later this summer. Source: [George Rogers Clark National Historical Park](#)
- *Manzanar National Historic Site* - Jeremy Scheier was selected as the new superintendent. Jeremy has several years of NPS experience, most recently as the administrative officer at Shenandoah National Park. He will start his new role on July 14. Source: [Manzanar National Historic Site](#)
- *Mojave National Preserve* - Ray McPadden was selected as the new superintendent. Ray has many years of NPS experience, most recently as superintendent at Cape Krusenstern National Monument, Kobuk Valley National Park, and Noatak National Preserve. He starts his new role on July 28. Source: [Mojave National Preserve](#)

Park People

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

Deceased

- Carl Arvid Fredrickson, 95, passed away on June 7. Carl worked for several summers at the Old Faithful Lodge in Yellowstone National Park. Source: [Marin Independent Journal](#)
- John Shirosa Handley, 65, passed away recently. John worked as an EMT at Gateway National Recreation Area for a time. Source: [Legacy/FairHaven Funeral Home and Cremation Services](#)
- Virgil Gerald Leimer, 92, passed away on June 23. Virgil worked for the NPS from

1962 to 1987, including time at Colonial National Historical Park, as chief ranger and superintendent at Whiskeytown National Recreation Area, and as superintendent at Antietam National Battlefield. Source: [Legacy/The Columbus Telegram](#)

- Marion Keating, 93, passed away on April 26. Marion worked at Glacier National Park for several years, starting in 1957. Source: [Legacy/Coeur d'Alene/Post Falls Press](#)
- Patricia Jean "Jeannie" (Steele) Mohri, 84, passed away on June 12. Jeannie served as a "docent" at San Antonio Missions National Historical Park for a time. Source: [Hays Post](#)
- Patricia "Pat" Anne Phelan, 79, passed away on May 23. Pat worked for the NPS for 30 years, including time at Glacier Bay National Park and Preserve, Everglades National Park, Grand Canyon, the Denver Service Center, as the assistant regional director of the Northeast Region, and as the first woman superintendent at Tumacacori National Historical Park. Source: [Legacy](#), Robert Binnewies
- Edna Bradford Ratner, 95, passed away on May 31. Edna was involved in the establishment of Cuyahoga Valley National Park and efforts to integrate arts into its programming. Source: [Akron Beacon Journal](#)

Retired

- Craig Kenkel retired as the superintendent at Point Reyes National Seashore on June 1. He worked for the NPS for 41 years. Source: Point Reyes National Seashore Association 6/18/24 edition of *Your Park, Your Place: Mapping a Park for All*

In the News

- On July 1, Darcie MacMahon will retire after 35 years at the Florida Museum of Natural History. She retires as the director of exhibits and public programs. Prior to her time at the museum, she worked for the National Park Service for a time. Source: [Alachua Chronicle](#)

Open for Comment

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

- *Anacostia Park* - Public comment is [open through August 30](#) on revised design concepts for the park, including better transportation access, flood resilience, and visitor amenities. Source: [Anacostia Park](#)
- *Andersonville National Historic Site* - Public comment is [open through July 5](#) on a plan to update the park's Fire Management Plan. Source: [Andersonville National](#)

[Historic Site](#)

- *Aniakchak National Monument and Preserve, Glacier Bay National Park and Preserve, Kenai Fjords National Park, Klondike Gold Rush National Historical Park, and Sitka National Historical Park* - Public comment is [open through July 21](#) on a fire management plan for the five park units. Source: [Glacier Bay National Park and Preserve](#)
- *Blackwell School National Historic Site* - Public comment is [open through July 12](#) on a foundation document for the park. Source: [The Big Bend Sentinel](#)
- *Castillo de San Marcos National Monument* - Public comment is [open through July 17](#) on a plan to raise and rehabilitate failing sea walls at the park. Source: [Castillo de San Marcos National Monument](#)
- *Chattahoochee River National Recreation Area* -The NPS, Federal Highway Administration, and the Georgia Department of Transportation are proposing to construct two additional bridges at the I-285/Chattahoochee River crossing to accommodate new express lanes. Public comment to the Georgia Department of Transportation is [open through July 29](#). Source: [Chattahoochee River National Recreation Area](#)
- *Chiricahua National Monument* - Public comment is [open through June 30](#) on a plan to increase fees at Bonita Canyon Campground. Source: [Chiricahua National Monument](#)
- *Christiansted National Historic Site* - Public comment is open through July 6 on the reimplementing of a daily parking fee at the visitor parking lot. Parking fees were collected from "the early 2000s to 2010," then paused after a restructure of staffing. After a review at the NPS Regional level in 2022, it was found that the cost of maintenance and inflation made it difficult to maintain the parking lot without a fee. The new operation would include an automated fee machine. Comments can be made via email. Source: [Christiansted National Historic Site](#)
- *Everglades National Park* - Public comment is [open through July 5](#) on a project to rehabilitate parkwide water and wastewater systems, including the proposed demolition of two small utility buildings that are historic resources near the Shark Valley Observation Tower. Source: [Everglades National Park](#)
- *Golden Gate National Recreation Area* - Public comment is [open through August 15](#) on a plan to rehabilitate the parking lots at Stinson Beach. Source: [Golden Gate National Recreation Area](#)
- *Jewel Cave National Park* - Public comment is [open through July 7](#) on a Draft Accessibility Self-Evaluation and Transition Plan. Source: [Jewel Cave National Park](#)

- *Joshua Tree National Park* - Public comment is [open through June 30](#) on a plan to increase fees for camping and Key's Ranch tours. Source: [Joshua Tree National Park](#)
- *Kennesaw Mountain National Battlefield Park* - Public comment is [open through July 12](#) on a proposal to redesign use patterns on Kennesaw Mountain Drive, including expanded shuttle bus operations, specified hours for bicycle use, and a wide pedestrian lane. Source: [Kennesaw Mountain National Battlefield Park](#)
- *Klondike Gold Rush National Historical Park* - Public comment is [open through July 24](#) on a Chilkoot National Historic Trail Comprehensive Management Plan. Source: [Klondike Gold Rush National Historical Park](#)
- *Lassen Volcanic National Park* - Public comment is [open through July 1](#) on a Manzanita Lake Design Concept Plan for improving facilities and infrastructure. Source: [Lassen Volcanic National Park](#)
- *Reconstruction Era National Historical Park* - Public comment is [open through June 30](#) on the park's first General Management Plan. Source: [Reconstruction Era National Historical Park](#)
- *Saint Croix National Scenic Riverway* - Public comment is [open through July 16](#) on a proposed site plan for the Fairy Falls Day Use Area. Source: [Saint Croix National Scenic Riverway](#)
- *Shiloh National Military Park* - Public comment is [open through July 4](#) on a Development Concept Plan for the management of new lands added to the park since 2000. Source: [Shiloh National Military Park](#)
- *Voyageurs National Park* - Public comment is [open through June 28](#) on a proposed Frozen Lake Use Plan. Source: [Voyageurs National Park](#)

Other Department of the Interior News

- *WA official speaks out against owl plan* - Washington Public Lands Commissioner Hilary Franz recently sent a letter to Interior Secretary Deb Haaland voicing opposition to a U.S. Fish and Wildlife proposal to kill about 500,000 barred owls in California, Oregon, and Washington in order to protect the threatened northern spotted owl. Source: [The Spokesman-Review](#)
- *Columbia River dams report* - On June 18, the Department of the interior published a report that documents the impacts of the Columbia River dams on Columbia River Basin Tribes and recommendations for the federal government to honor its treaty and trust responsibilities to the Tribes. Source: [Department of the Interior](#)

- *Greenlink West analysis complete* - On June 11, the Bureau of Land Management announced that the final environmental analysis of the proposed Greenlink West Transmission Project is complete. The project would cross 470 miles of BLM land between Reno and Las Vegas, providing energy to 1.2 million homes. The 30-day protest period for the analysis will end on July 15 and a 60-day governor's consistency review will end August 13. A record of decision is expected later this year. Source: [Department of the Interior](#)
- *\$142 million for drought resilience* - On June 13, the Department of the Interior announced the award of \$85 million for six water recycling projects in five states and \$57.5 million for four desalination projects in southern California. The funding comes from Bipartisan Infrastructure Law and annual appropriations. Source: [Department of the Interior](#)
- *\$43 million for rural water projects* - On June 20, the Department of the Interior announced the award of \$43 million for six projects in five states to improve access to clean, reliable drinking water. The funding comes from the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law. 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 of legislative and congressional affairs for the National Park Service, and Chris Soller, former superintendent of Fire Island National Seashore and legislative specialist for the National Park Service.

Senate Actions

June 11: The Senate agreed to S. Res. 727, designating June 2024 as "Great Outdoors Month."

June 12: The Committee on Energy and Natural Resources: Subcommittee on Public Lands, Forests, and Mining concluded a hearing to examine several bills, including:

- S. 3123, to provide for the standardization, consolidation, and publication of data relating to public outdoor recreational use of federal waterways among federal land and water management agencies
- S. 3346, to amend the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act to designate certain streams in the greater Yellowstone ecosystem and Smith River system in the state of Montana as components of the Wild and Scenic Rivers System.

June 18: The Senate filed a report for S.1254, a bill to designate and expand wilderness areas in Olympic National Forest in the state of Washington, and to designate certain rivers in Olympic National Forest and Olympic National Park as wild and scenic rivers, with an amendment.

June 20: The Senate agreed to S. Res 747, recognizing the importance of pollinators to ecosystem health and agriculture in the United States by designating June 16 through June 22, 2024, as "National Pollinator Week."

House Actions

June 12: The Committee on Natural Resources held a markup meeting on several bills including H.R. 1647, the "Salem Maritime National Historical Park Redesignation and Boundary Study Act." The Committee reported the bill without amendment. The bill redesignates the Salem Maritime National Historic Site in Massachusetts as the Salem Maritime National Historical Park and directs the Department of the Interior to conduct a boundary study and report to Congress.

June 13: The Committee on Natural Resources: Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations held a hearing entitled "Destroying America's Best Idea: Biden's Border Crisis, Desecrating National Park Lands and Damaging Communities." Testimony was heard from Jaime Williams, Assembly Member, 59th District, New York State Assembly, Brooklyn, New York; and public witnesses.

Incidents

Incidents are listed in alphabetical order by park.

Acadia National Park

Climber rescue

On June 24, a 24-year-old was climbing on South Bubble Mountain when they fell about 50 feet and became stuck. Personnel from the NPS and Mount Desert Island Search and Rescue responded and evacuated the individual through the use of high-angle rope rescue techniques. The individual was then able to hike down to their vehicle alongside rescuers and drove themselves to a local hospital. Source: [Bangor Daily News](#)

Alaska Region

Bear baiting litigation continues

In 2015, several hunting and trapping techniques, including baiting bears and killing cubs and pups in their dens, were outlawed on NPS preserves in Alaska. In 2018, officials moved to repeal those rules, which has been under litigation ever since. In March of 2023, a draft rule was created to restore 2015 rules, which led to a long stay of litigation. However, the draft rule has not been approved by the White House Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs, which would be the last step in finalization. As a result of the delay, a federal appeals court refused to extend the stay and has ordered that briefing begin on July 29. Source: [Public Employees for Environmental Responsibility](#)

Black Canyon of the Gunnison National Park

Storm damage

On June 21, the park announced that 10 walk-in campsites at East Portal Campground have been closed due to damage from recent storms. Source: [Denver Gazette](#)

Cape Hatteras National Seashore **Erosion causes beach hazards**

On June 25, the park closed a small section of beach adjacent to G.A. Kohler Court in Rodanthe, NC, due to exposed hazards, including septic systems, wires, pipes, and broken concrete parking pads. Source: [Cape Hatteras National Seashore](#)

Colorado National Monument **Hiker fatality**

On June 10, a 54-year-old hiker collapsed and lost consciousness two miles up the Lower Monument Canyon Trail. Staff from the NPS, Lower Valley Fire, Colorado Parks and Wildlife, and Mesa County Search and Rescue responded to the scene. CPR was initiated, but resuscitation efforts were unsuccessful. The individual was pronounced deceased at the scene. Classic Air, Mesa County Coroner's Office, and the Mesa County Sheriff's Office Victim Assistance Program also provided support. The Mesa County Coroner's Office will investigate the fatality and determine the cause of death. Source: [Colorado National Monument](#)

Fire Island National Seashore **Diminished beach**

On June 12, the park announced that the narrowing of the beach during winter storms, combined with piping plover nesting, has made access to Barrett Beach/Talisman very limited. As a result, the beach will have only "limited services" this summer. Source: [Fire Island National Seashore](#)

Gateway National Recreation Area **Swimmers missing**

On June 21, two individuals, ages 16 and 17, disappeared under ocean waves while swimming at Jacob Riis Park. New York City Police Department Harbor Unit divers went into the water, and rescue boats and U.S. Park Police drones were dispatched to search for the individuals. As of June 23, the two individuals had not been found. Source: [Daily News](#)

Glacier National Park **Drowning**

On June 23, a 26-year-old fell into the water above St. Mary Falls. The individual was washed over the 35-foot waterfall and then became trapped under water for several

minutes. Bystanders pulled the individual from the water, began CPR, and called emergency responders. NPS staff and an ambulance team from Babb, MT, responded to the scene, as well as a helicopter from A.L.E.R.T. Resuscitation efforts were unsuccessful and the individual was declared deceased at the scene. The individual's body was flown to the 1913 Ranger Station near St. Mary, and the Glacier County coroner transported the individual to the medical examiner in Missoula for an autopsy. U.S. Border Patrol also supported the incident. Source: [CBS News](#), [Daily Inter Lake](#)

Grand Canyon National Park

Hiker fatality

On June 16 at about 6:45 AM, a 41-year-old hiker was found unresponsive on the Bright Angel Trail, about a half-mile east of the Pipe Creek River Resthouse. They were hiking out of the canyon after an overnight stay at the Bright Angel Campground. Bystanders and NPS staff attempted to resuscitate the individual but were unsuccessful. The NPS and Coconino County Medical Examiner are investigating the incident. Source: [Grand Canyon National Park](#)

Grand Canyon National Park

Cat rescue

On June 21, a cat was spotted stuck in a tree near Mather Campground on the South Rim. NPS staff responded and were able to safely extract the cat from the tree. The NPS has asked the public if anyone can identify its owners. Source: [News3LV](#)

Grand Teton National Park

Missing kayaker

On June 15, a 43-year-old was paddling with a friend on Jackson Lake from Elk Island towards Waterfalls Canyon when they went missing. The friend lost sight of the individual around 2 PM and had to turn around due to high winds on the lake. They reported the individual missing to NPS staff at Leeks Marina. Rescuers found the individual's kayak, paddle, and dry bag floating off Moose Island. As of June 23, the individual had not been located. Source: [Grand Teton National Park Facebook page](#), [FOX9](#)

Great Smoky Mountains National Park

Hiker rescue

On June 12, the Tennessee National Guard responded by Blackhawk helicopter to rescue a hiker experiencing cardiac distress at the Double Spring Gap Shelter. A paramedic was lowered to the shelter, then both were lifted and the individual was brought to the hospital for further treatment. Source: [WATE 6 \(YouTube\)](#)

Joshua Tree National Park

Dog rescued

On June 8, an unleashed dog was "spooked by his surroundings" and ran off in the early morning. The owners reported the pet missing that day. The following day, NPS staff received report of a dog stuck on rock formations near Jumbo Rocks Campground. NPS staff and Joshua Tree Search and Rescue members responded to the dog's location. It was stuck on a ledge and "in poor condition due to dehydration." The rescue team was able to give the dog water and lift it off the ledge. It was picked up by the Riverside County Department of Animal Services, who were able to reunite the dog with its owners. The owners were issued a violation notice by the park. Source: [Joshua Tree National Park](#)

Joshua Tree National Park

Hikers rescued

On June 9, two individuals were hiking the Ladder Canyon Trail in 103-degree heat when they ran out of water. Shortly thereafter, one of the individuals called emergency services asking for help because the other was weak with dehydration. Riverside County (CA) Sheriff's Aviation flew a helicopter to their location. An EMT was lowered to assess the situation, then they hoisted both individuals out of the area. The one who was dehydrated was "rushed to the hospital due to [their] severe condition." The other received unspecified medical care from an ambulance. Source: [Backpacker](#)

Lake Mead National Recreation Area

Shooting

On June 16, a shooting took place near Lakeshore Drive and Sunset Overlook. "Officials said the incident started out with a crash." No other details were given. The NPS Investigative Services Branch is looking for any information the public can provide.

Source: [News3LV](#)

Shenandoah National Park

1996 double-murder case solved

On June 20, the Federal Bureau of Investigation announced they have identified a now-deceased individual as the person responsible for killing two visitors, ages 24 and 26, in a campground in the park in 1996. The cold case had been taken up by a new investigative team in 2021. Recently, a private lab was able to pull DNA from evidence collected at the crime scene. It was analyzed by the FBI's Combined DNA Index System, which came back with a positive match to an individual who died in prison in 2018. The individual had been imprisoned for kidnapping and multiple rapes and assaults. Retesting of evidence from the 1996 crime also revealed the two victims had been sexually assaulted. The FBI has stated that they are working with other law enforcement agencies to determine if the perpetrator was responsible for other unsolved crimes. Source: [AP News](#)

Stonewall National Monument

150+ Pride flags damaged

Between the evening of June 13 and the morning of June 14, over 150 rainbow Pride flags were broken or stolen from both the perimeter of Christopher Park and inside a fenced area. Source: [Daily Beast](#)

Theodore Roosevelt National Park

Nuisance horse removal

The park recently captured a 5-year-old wild stallion after receiving a complaint from a park visitor that the horse was bothering the mare they brought into the park for trail riding. Park staff relocated it once, then it found its way back to the horse camp the next day. Park staff have called it a "nuisance animal that can potentially harm visitors or their animals." They stated that they will hold it in a pen until it can be sold or transferred to a Tribal partner or other government agency. An advocacy group called Chasing Horses Wild Horse Advocates has rallied over 500 people to contact the park and Congressional representatives to let the horse stay in the park, arguing that the stallion was exhibiting normal behaviors to recruit mares to form a band, and that it should be treated like other wildlife. They argue that a fence could be erected around the horse camp's corral. Source: [The Jamestown Sun](#)

Yosemite National Park

Hiker rescue

On June 9, a hiker was injured after falling "20 to 30 feet down granite stairs" on the Mist Trail. A California Highway Patrol helicopter was able to hoist the individual out. They landed at Ahwahnee Meadow, loaded the patient on board the helicopter, then took the individual to a trauma facility in Fresno for treatment. Source: [ABC30](#)

Yosemite National Park

Concession employee attacks co-worker

On June 20, a 36-year-old concession employee in the park was indicted on the charge of one count of aggravated sexual abuse. The individual is accused of raping, beating, and strangling a co-worker on May 31. They were arrested on June 12. Source: [The Fresno Bee](#)

Yellowstone National Park

Sentencing for trespassing

On June 4, a federal court sentenced a 21-year-old to seven days in jail, two years of unsupervised release, a two-year ban from Yellowstone, and a \$1,500 fine for "thermal trespass." The individual was convicted for crossing a fence and walking up the hillside within 15-20 feet of the steam vent at Steamboat Geyser. An on-duty employee observed the individual in the closed area, took a photograph, and called for law enforcement. When contacted, the individual said they left the boardwalk to take photos. Source:

[Yellowstone National Park](#)

Wildfires

- *Denali National Park and Preserve*
 - On June 21, the Foraker Fire was discovered burning near the Foraker River drainage on the south side of the Alaska Range. It was believed to have started with a lightning strike. On June 22, the fire entered park boundaries. As of June 24, the fire was five acres. The fire is being monitored. There currently are no "identified values" designated for protection. Source: [Alaska News Source](#), [Alaska Wildland Fire Information](#)

- *El Malpais National Monument*
 - The Encerrita Fire is located approximately 15 miles south-southwest of Grants, New Mexico. It was caused by lightning on June 15. As of June 25, the fire is 2,496 acres with 107 personnel assigned. Rainfall in the area on June 24 has slowed the spread. The Continental Divide Trail and Zuni-Acoma Trail in the park are both closed. Source: [Inciweb](#), [El Malpais National Monument](#)

- *Katmai National Park and Preserve*
 - The American Creek Fire is located in the hills south of Nonvianuk Lake and north of Lake Coville near American Creek. As of June 17, it is estimated at five acres. It was likely lightning-caused.
 - The Naknek Lake Fire is located approximately nine miles west of Dumpling Mountain and two miles south of Naknek Lake. As of June 17, it is estimated at five acres. It was likely caused by lightning.
 - Smoke has been reported in the area eight miles north of the confluence of American Creek and Lake Coville, and is being investigated by Southwest Area Forestry and Fire Protection to determine whether it is part of the American Creek Fire or an independent blaze. Source: [Katmai National Park and Preserve](#)

- *Noatak National Preserve* - On June 13, two fires were observed in the park by the Galena Fire Management Zone Office:
 - The Tututalak Fire is located 32 miles northeast of Noatak Village and 4 miles of the Kelly River and Noatak River confluence. As of June 17, the Tututalak Fire was about 7,000 acres.
 - The Urgoon Fire is located 22 miles northeast of Noatak Village and 8 miles south of the Kelly River and Noatak River confluence. As of June 17, the Urgoon Fire was 4,264 acres.
 - Both fires are being monitored by the Alaska Interagency Coordination Center by aviation overflights. There currently are no threats to people, property, or Native allotments. Smoke is present in the Lower Noatak River area, Eand the Eli and Agashashok River drainages. Source: [Noatak National](#)

[Preserve](#)

Follow-ups on Previously Reported Incidents

- *Badlands National Park* - Due to the spread of plague among prairie dogs (see [6/12/24 Coalition Report](#)), the park temporarily closed the Sage Creek Campground on June 25. During that time, prairie dog mounds were treated for fleas. Source: Badlands National Park
- *Big South Fork National River and Recreation Area* - On June 21, the park was able to reopen the southern end of Divide Road, all of Fork Ridge Road, and the Salt Pine Horse Trail, Yellow Cliff Horse Trail, Station Camp Creek Horse Trail, and Charit Creek Horse Trail. About seven trail and two road sections still remain closed due to the damage sustained in a major weather event on May 26 (see [6/12/24 Coalition Report](#)). Source: [Big South Fork National River and Recreation Area](#)
- *Cape Hatteras National Seashore* - The *Island Free Press* published [an article](#) highlighting efforts to push for immediate remediation of Buxton Beach. The article gives a short history of the contamination at the site, a [a joint letter](#) to Congress sent by "nearly a dozen" organizations (including the Coalition), and also offers future opportunities for the public to engage. Source: *Island Free Press*
- *Grand Teton National Park* - On June 18, the 78-year-old well-known photographer accused of operating a vehicle so slowly as to interfere with traffic in order to take pictures of a grizzly bear (see [6/12/24 Coalition Report](#)) was found guilty in federal court. The individual is scheduled to be sentenced on June 27. The individual has stated that they will appeal the decision. Source: [Nebraska Examiner/WyoFile](#)
- *Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park* - On June 18, the Ka'ū Desert Trail and Maunaiki Trail reopened. They had been closed since a fissure eruption on Kīlauea volcano on June 3. Visitors are warned to stay on trail due to hazards and pay attention for new cracks that may have bisected the Maunaiki Trail. Source: [Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park](#)
- *Lake Mead National Recreation Area* - The Las Vegas Metro Police have released images of the clothing found with human remains inside a barrel in May 2022 (see [5/4/22](#) and [5/18/22 Coalition Reports](#)). They hope that the images might allow a family member to identify them. Detectives have also requested DNA from multiple families with unsolved missing persons cases from the late 1970s and early 1980s. Source: [Carolina's Own Queen City News/KLAS](#)

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- Regular Correspondent: Don Hellmann, Chris Soller
- Issue Contributors: Robert Binnewies, Mike Murray, Bill Walters

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

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

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