



The Coalition Report

Wednesday, December 11, 2024

****Happy holidays from all of us at the Coalition!****

Please NOTE: Our next Coalition Report will go out on Thursday, December 26.

Coalition Actions

The Coalition has joined Public Employees for Environmental Responsibility, Basin and Range Watch, and advocates John Hiscock and Mark Franklin in [a lawsuit](#) against the Bureau of Land Management for failing to create a comprehensive management plan for the Old Spanish National Historic Trail, allowing development projects to compromise the trail and its views.

The Coalition issued [a statement](#) applauding the U.S. Department of Agriculture's recent listening session about a proposed Sattitla National Monument, consisting of 200,000 acres in Northern California.

We joined two dozen stakeholders and conservation groups in submitting [comments](#) on proposed easements for the Johnson Tract mine within Lake Clark National Park and Preserve. It focuses on the draft Programmatic Agreement's inadequacies, including limited Tribal participation, unreasonably short timelines, a failure to include ethnographic resources in cultural surveys, and a poor definition of the area of potential effects.

The Coalition submitted [comments](#) agreeing with the Environmental Protection Agency's proposal to partially approve and partially disapprove the Texas Regional Haze State Implementation Plan for the second implementation period.

We joined with three other conservation groups in submitting [comments](#) on the Bureau of Land Management Nevada Office's 2025 First Quarter Competitive Oil and Gas Lease Sale Draft Environmental Assessment, recommending that at least 11 of the 12 nominated parcels are deferred due to low development potential.

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.

- *New National Monument* - On December 9, President Joe Biden signed a presidential proclamation establishing the Carlisle Federal Indian Boarding School National Monument in Carlisle, Pennsylvania, as the 432nd site of the National Park System. It was the first off-reservation boarding school for Native children in the continental U.S., established in 1879. The monument was designated at 24.5 acres, and will be co-managed by the U.S. Department of the Army, due to its location at the Army War College. Source: [National Park Service Office of Communications](#)
- *Utah's lawsuit against federal lands* - *National Parks Traveler* published [an article](#) about the legal argument behind the State of Utah's bid to the Supreme Court to have federal lands turned over to state jurisdiction, as well as the Department of the Interior's defense argument. Source: *National Parks Traveler*
- *Committee on women's history* - The University of Missouri-St. Louis (UMSL) published an article about the Department of the Interior's Committee on Recognizing Women's History, which seeks to improve recognition of women's history across federal parks, lands, and programs. The article also profiles Theresa Coble, the E. Desmond Lee Endowed Professor of Experiential and Family Education at UMSL, who is the co-chair of the committee, as well as a member of the National Park System Advisory Board. Source: [UMSL Daily](#)
- *Social media effects on parks* - The *Pennsylvania Capital-Star* published [an article](#) about the effects of social media on public lands, including influxes of visitation to specific landmarks and visitors who are unprepared for the risks and local regulations. Personnel from the NPS and park partners are quoted in the article. Source: *Pennsylvania Capital-Star*
- *STEM career fair* - In late October, representatives from the NPS and other federal agencies presented at the SACNAS (Academic and Career Expo for college students exploring careers in STEM [science, technology, engineering, math]). This year's conference was held in Phoenix, Arizona. Source: [Bureau of Land Management](#)

Around the Parks

Reports are in alphabetical order by park/program name.

- *Butterfield Overland National Historic Trail* - The *Cassville Democrat* published [an article](#) about the trail, which was established in 2023. It describes the current efforts by NPS personnel to do reconnaissance along the length of the trail in order to inform future management plans. Source: *Cassville Democrat*

- *Canaveral National Seashore* - Early this month, the park will begin a project to construct “more resilient and more sustainable boardwalks” throughout the park. Many of the boardwalks were destroyed in hurricanes in 2022 and 2024. It is estimated that the new materials and design will reduce the footprint of the boardwalks by approximately 40%. Source: [Canaveral National Seashore](#)
- *Cape Cod National Seashore* - On December 2, the park announced the selection of Johnson Golf Management, Inc., for a 10-year concession contract operating the Highland Links Golf Course in Truro, Massachusetts. They have operated the golf course since 2014. Source: [Cape Cod National Seashore](#)
- *Cumberland Gap National Historical Park* - On December 8, the park announced the installation of a new bridge over Gap Creek on the Wilderness Road Trail. The new bridge was constructed by Black Diamond Designs, Inc. Source: [Cumberland Gap National Historical Park](#)
- *Cuyahoga Valley National Park* - On December 16, the park will close the Ohio and Erie Canal Towpath Trail between Fitzwater Road and Pleasant Valley/Alexander Road in Valley View on weekdays through January 20, 2025, in order to complete riverbank stabilization. It will be open on weekends. This is one phase of a project that started in 2022, and is being funded by the Great American Outdoors Act. Source: [Cuyahoga Valley National Park](#)
- *First State National Historical Park* - On December 9, the NPS announced a Finding of No Significant Impact for the Brandywine Valley Trail Plan to establish a 27.8-mile multi-use trail network. Source: [First State National Historical Park](#)
- *Glen Canyon National Recreation Area* - On January 1, fees will go up at Lees Ferry Campground. Source: [Glen Canyon National Recreation Area](#)
- *Glen Canyon National Recreation Area* - A new book by Zak Podmore, *Life After Dead Pool: Lake Powell's Last Days and the Rebirth of the Colorado River*, was recently published by Torrey House Press. The book explores options for draining Lake Powell and its effects on local ecosystems, were it to reach “dead pool” status (below the dam release channels). Source: [National Parks Traveler](#)
- *Grand Teton National Park* - On December 9, Wyoming Governor Mark Gordon signed an agreement to sell the 640-acre state-owned Kelly Parcel to the NPS for \$100 million. The agreement will not be “certified” until the Bureau of Land Management signs a Record of Decision on its Rock Springs plan, which the state plans to contest. Source: [WyoFile](#)
- *Great Falls Park* - On January 1, 2025, the park will shift entirely to a cashless entrance fee system. Source: [Great Falls Park](#)
- *Great Smoky Mountains National Park* - The park announced a plan to conduct additional design work and technical studies for the Foothills Parkway Section 8D project, based on

“feedback from subject matter experts and public comments received during the 20-day public comment which ended August 21.” Source: [Great Smoky Mountains National Park](#)

- *Great Smoky Mountains National Park* - The *Citizen Times* published [a profile](#) of Jacki Harp, the new CEO of Smokies Life, the park’s philanthropic partner. Source: *Citizen Times*
- *Hawai’i Volcanoes National Park* - The park finished a project to drill and sample material below the Mauna Loa Road three weeks early. The road is now open seven days a week. Surveys will continue to work on the road, so visitors are advised to drive slowly. The rehabilitation of the road will start in late 2025. Source: [Hawai’i Volcanoes National Park](#)
- *Independence National Historical Park* - The park recently began a project to improve drainage on Independence Square. The public security screening tent has been relocated to the south. Work is expected to be complete in Spring 2025. Source: [Independence National Historical Park](#)
- *Indiana Dunes National Park* - On December 3, the park opened Commercial Use Authorization applications for concession stands at West Beach and Portage Lakefront and Riverwalk. Applications are due by January 9, 2025. Source: [Indiana Dunes National Park](#)
- *Jewel Cave National Monument* - The park recently completed a rehabilitation of the Roof Trail. The project was funded by the Great American Outdoors Act and executed by staff from the park and a Maintenance Action Team from the NPS’ Historic Preservation Training Center. Source: [Jewel Cave National Monument](#)
- *Lake Mead National Recreation Area* - On October 3, a group of SCUBA divers met with park staff to share changes they would like to see at the park, including more outreach and education to motorized boating communities and the reestablishment of a designated dive site that restricts motorized vessels. Source: [Las Vegas Review-Journal](#)
- *Lassen Volcanic National Park* - In early November, a pack of gray wolves was filmed on a wildlife camera roaming in the park for the first time in recorded history. It is thought to have been a breeding pair with two pups. It is considered the ninth wolf pack in Northern California, consisting of between 60-100 individuals statewide. Source: [National Parks Traveler](#)
- *Mill Springs Battlefield National Monument* - 92.86 acres were recently transferred to the park. It is the final acreage of the “core battlefield” to be protected in the park. The acquisition was facilitated by the American Battlefield Trust and the Mill Springs Battlefield Association. Source: [American Battlefield Trust](#)
- *Minidoka National Historic Site* - On December 6, the Bureau of Land Management published a record of decision for the Lava Ridge wind farm project, located in the historic footprint of the incarceration camp and adjacent to the park. The record of decision says

that it will require “compensatory mitigation” to the park due to the visual effects of the wind farm. Idaho Senator Jim Risch stated that he will work with the Trump administration to overturn the decision. Source: [E&E News](#)

- *Mississippi National River and Recreation Area* - On December 9, the park announced the award of \$1 million in grants for six projects in the Twin Cities (MN) area to expand river access, enhance safety, and improve the visitor experience. Source: [Mississippi National River and Recreation Area](#)
- *Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act* (an NPS-administered program) - On December 3, the Peabody Museum of Archaeology and Ethnography at Harvard University repatriated seven ancestors and associated funerary objects to the Oneida Indian Nation. They were originally removed from Brier Hill in St. Lawrence County, New York in May of 1878 and donated to the Peabody Museum the same month. Source: [Indianz.com](#)
- *Pictured Rocks National Seashore* - On December 4, the NPS signed a Finding of No Significant Impact for the Miners Falls viewing platform and steps replacement. Source: [Pictured Rocks National Seashore](#)
- *Point Reyes National Seashore* - The NPS has signed a Finding of No Significant Impact for its Tomales Point management plan, including the removal of a tule elk enclosure fence and all temporary water systems. Source: [Point Reyes National Seashore](#)
- *Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area* - New research published in *Biological Conservation* by scientists from the NPS, University of California, Davis, and Cal Poly Pomona shows that mountain lions living in areas with higher levels of human recreation are more nocturnal than their counterparts in remote regions, which are more active at dawn and dusk. This shows that wildlife adjust to the presence of humans to coexist. The study was done in the Santa Monica Mountains, utilizing mountain lion collars and publicly-sourced GPS tracks. Source: [UC Davis News](#)

Personnel Changes

- *Montezuma Castle National Monument, Tuzigoot National Monument* - Penny Wagner was selected as the new superintendent. Penny has over 15 years of NPS experience, most recently as the superintendent at Florissant Fossil Beds National Monument. She has also previously worked at Montezuma Castle and Tuzigoot. Penny began her new role on November 17. Source: [Journal AZ](#)
- *Stones River National Battlefield* - Benjamin Hayes was selected as the new superintendent. Benjamin has 18 years of NPS experience, most recently as the interpretation and education program manager at Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park. His career included a prior stint at Stones River. He begins his new role on January 12, 2025.

Source: [Stones River National Battlefield](#)

- *Wildland Fire Program* - ShihMing Huang was selected as the new smoke management specialist focused on technical support, serving in an interagency capacity. ShihMing has been an air quality scientist in the environmental consulting sector for the last 16 years, including projects funded by many government agencies focused on wildland fire and smoke 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 former park employees or volunteers. People are listed alphabetically by last name.

Deceased

- David J. Colthorp, 69, passed away on November 7. David worked in Olympic National Park from 1978 to 2010, retiring as a supervisor in the maintenance division. Source: [Legacy/Peninsula Daily News](#)
- Beverly Estelle Fisher, 88, passed away on November 25. She spent most of her career working “various positions” at the Department of the Interior, including at the National Park Service. Source: [Legacy/The Washington Post](#)
- Robert “Bob” Joseph Freeland, 84, passed away on November 29. In his retirement, Bob volunteered for the NPS with his wife Sue for several summers in Katmai National Park and Preserve. Source: [Legacy/Mount Laurel Home for Funerals and Cremation Services, Inc.](#)
- Robert C. Geagan, 91, passed away on November 21. In his retirement, Robert “worked seasonally for many years at the welcome center at Acadia National Park.” Source: [Hartford Courant](#)
- Ellen DeMille Given, 77, passed away on November 13. Ellen worked at Zion National Park for several years, including as “executive secretary to the superintendent.” She was married to Roy Given, and followed his career to Big Bend National Park and Upper Delaware Scenic and Recreational River. They both later worked for the Bureau of Reclamation. Source: [The Spectrum](#)
- Susan Ann Hurst, 81, passed away recently. She worked at Rocky Mountain National Park “as a young woman.” Source: [The Denver Post](#)
- John Jensen, 90, passed away on October 31. John worked for the NPS for many years, including as the Skagit district manager at North Cascades National Park, chief ranger at Mount Rainier National Park, and “several superintendencies.” He retired in 1994. Source: [San Juan Islander](#)

- Ira Robert Lewis, 90, passed away on November 19. Ira “started his 43-year career as a railroader at Glacier National Park.” Source: [Legacy/The Columbian](#)
- Katrane “Kat” Pringle, 38, passed away on November 27. Kat was a law enforcement ranger for the NPS in several parks “throughout the country” before working at Sonoma County Regional Parks. Source: [The Press Democrat](#)
- Kenneth “Ken” E. Reed Sr., 90, passed away on November 16. In his retirement, he “worked as a seasonal park ranger for Acadia National Park.” Source: [Cape Cod Times](#)
- Madelon Muller Rubens, 84, passed away on November 27. Madelon volunteered “for decades” for the NPS doing mounted patrol at Saguaro National Park. Source: [Legacy/Arizona Daily Star](#)
- Margaret “Jeri” G. Shutters, 86, passed away on December 7. Jeri and her husband Hugh spent 14 summers working in Yellowstone National Park. Source: [Chattanooga Times Free Press](#)
- Richard “Dick” Toll, 79, passed away on November 20. He worked for the NPS for many years, including time at “a Civil War battlefield in North Carolina,” Abraham Lincoln Birthplace National Historical Park, and Arches National Park. Source: [Moab Sun News](#)
- Richard “Dick” David Wagner, 85, passed away on August 18. Richard packed mules in Yosemite National Park for a time. Source: [Mariposa Gazette](#)

Open for Comment

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

- *Gauley River National Recreation Area* - Public comment is [open through January 3](#) on a proposal to rehabilitate and expand the Gauley Tailwaters Campground. Source: [Gauley Tailwaters Campground](#)
- *Glacier National Park* - Public comment is [open through January 6](#) on a visitor use management plan, particularly focused on access and vehicle and pedestrian congestion. Source: [Glacier National Park](#)
- *Glen Echo Park* - Public comment is [open through January 24](#) on a management plan amendment focused on expanding programming, improving accessibility, exploring environmental sustainability, and addressing wayfinding and circulation issues. Source: [Glen Echo Park](#)
- *Grand Canyon National Park* - Public comment is [open through December 15](#) on a proposed increase for frontcountry camping. Source: [Grand Canyon National Park](#)

- *Natchez Trace Parkway* - Public comment is [open through January 6](#) on a plan to replace the John Coffee Memorial Bridge over the Tennessee River. Source: [Natchez Trace Parkway](#)
- *National Historic Landmarks* (an NPS-administered program) - Public comment is [open through December 20](#) on a landmark study of American Beach, a historic African American resort community in northern Florida, for possible National Historic Landmark designation. The study is expected to run through Spring 2026. Source: [Timucuan Ecological and Historic Preserve](#)
- *Richmond National Battlefield* - Public comment was [extended through December 15](#) on the Engineering Evaluation/Cost Analysis Report Addendum for the selection of a removal action at the Fort Darling Landfill Site. Source: [Richmond National Battlefield Park](#)
- *Saint Croix National Scenic Riverway* - Public comment is [open through December 31](#) on a comprehensive river management plan. Source: [Saint Croix National Scenic Riverway](#)
- *Wupatki National Monument* - Public comment is [open through December 12](#) on a draft wilderness study and environmental assessment. Source: [Wupatki National Monument](#)

Other Department of the Interior News

- *Federal support for climate relocation* - On December 9, the Department of the Interior, Federal Emergency Management Agency, White House Council on Environmental Quality, and Office of Science and Technology Policy released a report and guide to federal supports for community-driven relocation due to catastrophic climate impacts. Source: [Department of the Interior](#)
- *\$849 million for water infrastructure* - On December 3, the Department of the Interior announced \$849 million for upgrades to water infrastructure on 77 projects in 11 states. Source: [Department of the Interior](#)
- *\$122 million for landscape-scale conservation* - On December 2, the Department of the Interior and the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation announced the award of \$122.4 million in “America the Beautiful Challenge” funding for 61 projects related to conserving and restoring public lands across 42 states, 19 Tribal Nations, and three U.S. territories. Source: [Department of the Interior](#)
- *\$65 million for Indigenous water rights* - On December 9, the Department of the Interior announced \$65 million in Bipartisan Infrastructure Law funding for implementing long-standing Tribal water rights settlements. Source: [Department of the Interior](#)
- *\$20 million for wildfire response* - On December 4, the Department of the Interior announced \$20 million in Bipartisan Infrastructure Law funding for a program to help small,

remote emergency response agencies expand their wildfire response capacity through slip-on tanker units for trucks. Source: [Department of the Interior](#)

Congressional Actions

Reports on legislation, upcoming hearings, and new public laws of relevance to the national parks, prepared by Chris Soller, former superintendent of Fire Island National Seashore and legislative specialist for the National Park Service.

New Public Laws

No new Public Laws to report.

Senate Actions

No Senate Actions to report.

House Actions

December 2: The House filed reports on:

- H.R. 8219, to require the Secretary of the Interior to conduct a study to assess the suitability and feasibility of designating certain land as the Lahaina National Heritage Area, and for other purposes, with an amendment (H. Rept. 118–770); and
- H.R. 390, to amend the Hudson River Valley National Heritage Area Act of 1996 (Public Law 104–333; 54 U.S.C.320101 note) to include all of Saratoga and Washington Counties in the boundaries of the Hudson River Valley National Heritage Area, with an amendment (H. Rept. 118–771).

December 3: The House agreed to suspend the rules and pass the following measures:

- H.R. 6826, to designate the visitor and education center at Fort McHenry National Monument and Historic Shrine as the Paul S. Sarbanes Visitor and Education Center;
- S. 3791, amended, to reauthorize the America's Conservation Enhancement Act, by a 2/3 yea-and-nay vote of 366 yeas to 21 nays; and
- H.R. 6843, to expand the boundaries of the Atchafalaya National Heritage Area to include Lafourche Parish, Louisiana.

The House debated the following measures under suspension of the rules. Further proceedings were postponed:

- H.R. 8219 (see above), amended
- H.R. 390 (see above)

December 4: The House agreed to suspend the rules and pass the following measures. Consideration began Tuesday, December 3:

- H.R. 390 (see above), amended , by a 2/3 yeas-and-nays vote of 378 yeas to 16 nays; and
- H.R. 8219 (see above), amended, by a 2/3 yeas-and-nays vote of 378 yeas to 25 nays.

Incidents

Listed alphabetically by park.

Bandelier National Monument

Fire

On December 5, “fire activity” was detected in one of the buildings in the park’s historic district. Personnel from the NPS, Los Alamos Fire Department, and Los Alamos Police Department responded to the scene. The building was vacant at the time. Out of an abundance of caution, the park’s visitor center was closed and evacuated. The cause is under investigation. Source: [Bandelier National Monument](#)

Big Bend National Park

Suicide

On November 27, a group of hikers called 911 after they heard a gunshot and encountered a seriously injured 35-year-old on the summit of Emory Peak. Personnel from the NPS, U.S. Customs Air and Marine Operations, and Texas Department of Public Safety responded and located the individual, who was deceased. Due to diminishing daylight, an NPS staff member remained on scene through the night until a team was able to recover the body by helicopter the following morning. The cause of death was determined to be self-inflicted gunshot. Source: [Big Bend National Park](#)

Chickamauga and Chattanooga National Military Park

Wildfire

On December 7, a fire was reported on the eastern slope of Lookout Mountain south of the Incline Railway near the Hardy Trail. Personnel from the NPS, Lookout Mountain Fire and Police (TN, GA), Chattanooga Fire and Police Department, Tennessee Division of Forestry, East Ridge Police Department, Catoosa County Fire Department, West Brow, Hamilton County Rehab, Walker County Fire Department, Red Bank Fire Department, and the Tri Community Fire Department responded to the incident. The tracks/rails of the Incline Railway caught fire. The fire was 100% contained at 10 acres. The Mountain Beautiful Trail on Lookout Mountain is closed until further notice. The cause of the fire is unknown and under investigation by the NPS. Source: [Chickamauga and Chattanooga National Military Park](#)

Cuyahoga Valley National Park

Lost hikers rescued

On December 4, three hikers were exploring near Brandywine Falls when they got lost in a ravine, and one individual, age 18, became injured. The other individuals were able to climb high enough

to call for help. The Macedonia (OH) Fire Department and Summit County Technical Rescue Operations Team responded. The individual with injuries was extracted by the rope rescue team, then taken to a trauma center for treatment. Source: [Akron Beacon Journal](#)

Death Valley National Park

Truck fire

On November 21, a semi-truck had its brakes overheat while descending Daylight Pass and Mud Canyon Road, which is closed to commercial truck traffic. The brakes caused the truck to ignite, and the truck driver pulled over upon hitting flat terrain on CA-190. Personnel from the NPS, Caltrans, and California Highway Patrol responded to the scene. The cargo, 44,000 pounds of dried chickpeas, was destroyed in the incident. Two Star Towing removed the wreckage and cleaned up the remaining detritus. Source: [Death Valley National Park](#)

Death Valley National Park

Earthquake shakes Devils Hole

On December 5, a 7.0 magnitude earthquake occurred off the coast of Northern California. About two minutes later, water in Devils Hole, about 500 miles away, began to slosh. It disrupted the water on the shallow shelf that serves as the spawning ground for the endangered Devils Hole pupfish. Many of the adult pupfish swam deeper into the cave during the incident. Park scientists suspect pupfish eggs were lost in the incident, but they expect a high spawning season to come, per prior earthquakes. Source: [Death Valley National Park](#)

Fire Island National Seashore

Beach driving closure

On December 3, the park closed beach driving from Bellport Beach to Long Cove due to the narrowing of the beach in that area and sensitive dune areas. Permitted driving access to Fire Island communities from Smith Point is also currently suspended. They may be accessed from the west at the Fire Island Lighthouse. Source: [Fire Island National Seashore](#)

Golden Gate National Recreation Area, Joshua Tree National Park, Yosemite National Park

Sexual assault accusation

A 38-year-old who is well-known in the rock climbing community as an athlete, brand ambassador, and instructor has been charged with nine felony sexual assault charges with three victims. The incidents were said to take place between 2019 and 2023, in Pacifica, California, the Presidio (GGNRA), at Joshua Tree, and in Yosemite. On November 27, the individual pleaded “not guilty” to all charges and was released on \$500,000 bail. The suspect will have their next court appearance on December 16. Source: [ABC7](#)

Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park

Hit-and-run

On December 3, a 70-year-old bicyclist was “severely injured” by a vehicle in a hit-and-run incident at the intersection of Highway 11 and the road to Namakanipaio Campground. The park is looking for any information the public can provide. Source: [Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park](#)

Indiana Dunes National Park

Lead poisoning

A common loon at Mt. Baldy Beach was recently found lethargic and unable to return to the water, with swelling around its throat and neck. The loon was rescued by NPS staff and taken to a wildlife rehabilitation center, but it did not survive. An exam revealed high lead toxicity, likely due to ingesting lead fishing tackle. Source: [Country Herald](#)

Olympic National Park

Fishing closed

On December 16, the park will close sport fishing on the Queets River due to the low forecast of wild steelhead return. It is expected to reopen on June 1, 2025. This is the eighth straight year that wild steelhead have failed to reach the Washington state and NPS escapement goal. Hatchery steelhead fishing on the Salmon River will remain open through February 28, 2025. Source: [Olympic National Park](#)

Ozark National Scenic Riverways

Illegal hunting practices

On December 2, the park announced that they arrested two individuals for “road hunting,” which is when a hunter shoots from a public roadway. It is illegal because it is often done hastily and without regard for the individual’s surroundings or local traffic. One individual shot a deer on M Highway near Van Buren, Missouri. A witness called law enforcement. The deer was piebald, a rare genetic abnormality that causes white fur, and another hunter was pursuing the deer through a nearby field. The incident involved an individual that shot directly from their vehicle at a decoy deer placed by law enforcement on KK Highway near Akers, Missouri. NPS personnel made an arrest on site. Source: [Ozark National Scenic Riverways](#)

Point Reyes National Seashore

Lawsuit and halt to tule elk plan

On December 3, the California Cattlemen’s Association requested a preliminary injunction against the park’s Tomales Point management plan (see “Around the Parks” above), which would remove the 2-mile elk enclosure fence currently in place. On December 4, in response to crews already tearing the fence down, the association filed a request for a temporary restraining order. On December 9, a federal judge ruled that the NPS must temporarily halt the removal of the fence. Ranchers are concerned the elk will harm cattle, both through fighting and scaring them away from food and water sources. They argue the NPS failed to include data about potential damage to pasture in its environmental assessments. Source: [Petaluma Argus-Courier](#), [National Parks Traveler](#)

Vanderbilt Mansion National Historic Site

Suspicious death

On December 6, a hiker found a deceased individual, aged in the “mid-50s to mid-60s”, lying face down near the east shore of the Hudson River south of Bard Rock. The death is considered “suspicious,” and is being investigated by the New York State Police in Rhinebeck and the Hyde Park Police Department. Source: [Times Union](#)

Follow-ups on Previously Reported Incidents

- *Grand Canyon National Park* - On December 6, the park experienced another break in the Transcanyon Waterline. On December 7, they instituted further water restrictions, including closing Delaware North-operated camper services and water spigots in Mather Campground. Source: [Grand Canyon National Park](#)
- *Pictured Rocks National Seashore* - The body that washed ashore on November 8 (see 11/13/24 *Coalition Report*) was positively identified through DNA analysis as a 65-year-old that went missing in September. No one was sure of his whereabouts, but there had been a guess that he was kayaking on Lake Superior. Source: [The Daily News](#)

Acknowledgments

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- Editor: Katie Wallace
- Tech and Production Support: Steve Pittleman, Debbie Reed, Emily Thompson
- Regular Correspondent: Chris Soller
- Issue Contributors: Bill Walters, Mike Murray

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."

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.

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