



The Coalition Report

Wednesday, April 16, 2025

Editor note: Federal workforce news continues to be highly dynamic. This report goes out every two weeks. For more frequent updates, you may follow the Coalition on social media:



Coalition Actions

The Coalition published [a statement](#) in response to the Supreme Court ruling granting the federal government's request for a stay of the preliminary injunction against the Office of Personnel Management blocking the firings of thousands of federal workers on probationary status (see more in "National/Regional NPS Updates" below). We remain committed to holding the federal government accountable for these illegal firings and legal proceedings are ongoing.

The Coalition [expressed support](#) for legislation to create a unified Chesapeake National Recreation Area.

We joined the Association of National Park Rangers in [a letter](#) to Secretary of the Interior Doug Burgum asking for transparency around military activities and border security in Big Bend National Park, particularly a commitment to an already-established Memorandum of Understanding around border activities with regards to protection to resources, infrastructure, and the visitor experience.

The Coalition joined over 125 organizations in [a letter](#) to the U.S. Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources opposing the nomination of Kathleen Sgamma to be Director of the Bureau of Land Management. [Editor note: Kathleen Sgamma later withdrew her nomination. See "Other Department of the Interior and U.S. Forest Service News" below.]

We submitted [comments](#) to the Bureau of Land Management Montana/Dakotas State Office about the 2025 Fourth Quarter Oil and Gas Lease Sale, encouraging the deferment of three

parcels close to Theodore Roosevelt National Park. Coalition member Mark Motsko also wrote [an op-ed](#) published in *The Bismarck Tribune* asking Secretary of the Interior Doug Burgum arguing against the oil and gas leases adjacent to the park.

The Coalition published [a statement](#) in support of Colorado Senators Martin Heinrich and John Hickenlooper's authoring of an amendment that would have voided the sale of public lands to pay for budget reconciliation. The amendment was voted down by the Senate (see more in "National/Regional NPS Updates" below).

We continue to give interviews to many news media outlets related to recent executive orders that have been detrimental to the NPS. Recent articles include those in [SFGate](#), [National Parks Traveler](#), and [Grist](#).

On April 1, Emily Thompson began her new role as Executive Director for the Coalition. She was previously the Deputy Director. See a profile and Emily's priorities for the organization [here](#).

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.

- **Order to stay open** - On April 3, Secretary of the Interior Doug Burgum issued Secretary's Order 3426, mandating that NPS units remain "open and accessible to the American public during the specified hours of operation posted on the respective park units' public webpages." Closures or reductions in hours, seasons, or any "visitor services (including trails and campgrounds)" are to be reviewed by the NPS Director and Assistant Secretary for Fish and Wildlife and Parks. Source: [Department of the Interior](#)
 - **NPS memo tells parks to get creative** - On April 7, acting NPS Director Jessica Bowron sent an internal memo asking park leaders to shift staff away from other functions, borrow park rangers from other parks, lean on volunteers, seek help from state governments, and use volunteers and partner organizations in order to comply with S.O. 3426. Source: [E&E News](#), [National Parks Traveler](#)
- **Supreme Court pauses order to bring back probationary status workers** - On April 8, the Supreme Court found that the groups who challenged the federal government's firing of probationary-status employees (including the Coalition to Protect America's National Parks) did not have standing to make their challenges, and as a result, they issued a stay for the injunction given on the firings. On April 9, a federal court of appeals also paused one of the injunctions that had ordered rehiring the fired employees, citing the Supreme Court's ruling and stating that the district court likely did not have jurisdiction to issue the injunction. Both cases will still move forward with hearings on the merits of the claims. Source: [Government Executive](#), [SCOTUSblog](#)
- **New round of federal buyouts** - On April 4, the Department of the Interior offered anew a "deferred resignation" or early retirement. Employees were required to respond by April 9

to take the buyout. Source: [ABC News](#)

- *12.5% of NPS workforce has voluntarily left* - An estimated 2,500 NPS employees have taken offers to resign or retire this year, representing about 12.5% of the entire workforce of the National Park Service. Source: [National Parks Traveler](#)
- *Senate opens opportunity to sell public lands* - On April 6, the U.S. Senate voted against an amendment to the appropriations bill that would have blocked the sale of public lands to reduce the federal deficit. Source: [National Parks Traveler](#)
- *Possible consolidation of DOI functions* - *Government Executive* published [an article](#) about Department of the Interior plans to consolidate IT, communications, financing, human resources, and contracting into the central part of the department rather than having them on the agency-level. "The changes are expected to be announced within weeks," and was reported by insider staff familiar with the plans. Source: *Government Executive*
- *Grazing and ag in NPS units* - *Bay Nature* published [an article](#) about grazing and agriculture in National Park Service units over time, including the complexity of legislation and agency mandates. It includes mentions of John Day Fossil Beds National Monument, Point Reyes National Seashore, Golden Gate National Recreation Area, and Cuyahoga Valley National Park. Source: *Bay Nature*
- *Study on stress for current and retired rangers still open* - Researchers at Penn State's Department of Recreation, Park, and Tourism Management are conducting a study on mental health in the NPS. There are surveys for [current rangers](#) and [retired rangers](#). Responses are anonymous and \$10 electronic gift cards will be given for the 30-minute survey. Source: Elizabeth Himschoot

Around the Parks

Reports are in alphabetical order by park/program name.

- *Arches National Park* - On April 10, the park announced that permitted and ranger-guided hikes to the Fiery Furnace will resume in May. They had been discontinued since March 23 due to staffing shortages after the firing of probationary-status employees and a federal workforce hiring freeze. Source: [The Salt Lake Tribune](#)
- *Black Canyon of the Gunnison National Park* - On April 14, the park transitioned to a fully cashless fee system for entrance and camping fees. Source: [Black Canyon of the Gunnison National Park](#)
- *Blackwell School National Historic Site* - On April 8, the National Parks Conservation Association gave the 2025 Marjory Stoneman Douglas Award to the Blackwell School Alliance for its efforts establishing Blackwell School National Historic Site. Source: [National Parks Conservation Association](#)

- *Blue Ridge Parkway* - On April 14, the NPS began a road restoration project, including a full road closure and detour, from milepost 95.9 at Montavale Overlook to milepost 106, near U.S. Route 460, in the Roanoke, Virginia, area. This is the next phase in a \$75 million project funded by the Great American Outdoors Act, and jointly managed by the NPS and Federal Highway Administration. The next phase will include smaller closures between mileposts 106 and 121. Both phases are expected to be complete by Fall 2026. Source: [Blue Ridge Parkway](#)
- *Butterfield Overland National Historic Trail* - *The Big Bend Sentinel* published [an article](#) about efforts to develop the trail, including the expected completion of a draft comprehensive plan in July. Source: *The Big Bend Sentinel*
- *Death Valley National Park* - On April 15, the park released data from a semiannual survey of Devils Hole pupfish, which found only 38 fish. In Spring 2024, 191 fish were counted, a 25-year high for the species. Scientists believe that earthquakes in December and February may have disturbed algal food sources and fish eggs. As a result of this count, biologists consulted the strategic plan for the endangered species and added 19 captive-raised fish from the Ash Meadows Fish Conservation Facility to the wild population, the first time in the program's history. They also are providing food supplementation to the fish until algae can regrow. The pupfish program is supported by the NPS, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and the Nevada Department of Wildlife. Source: [Death Valley National Park](#)
- *Glacier National Park* - On April 9, the NPS and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service filed documents that they are voluntarily rescinding the approval for a plan to stock bull trout in Gunsight Lake. The project was being sued by Friends of the Wild Swan and the Council on Fish and Wildlife under the premise that the agencies failed to conduct a throughout enough review of potential impacts. Source: [Daily Inter Lake](#)
- *Glacier National Park, Grand Teton National Park, Yellowstone National Park* - On April 10, the Center of Biological Diversity published [a press release](#) that the Interagency Grizzly Bear Study Team is being considered for disbandment by the Department of the Interior. The team is made up of scientists from the NPS, U.S. Geological Survey, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, U.S. Forest Service, Eastern Shoshone and Northern Arapaho Tribal Fish and Game Department, and the States of Wyoming, Idaho, and Montana. There is also a proposal to close and sell off the Northern Rocky Mountain Science Center, which houses the Interagency Grizzly Bear Study Team. Source: Center for Biological Diversity
- *Grand Canyon National Park* - On April 1, the Phantom Ranch Canteen and Lodge reopened. On May 15, the park also reopened the Bright Angel Trail and Campground (small group sites only). They have been closed since Fall 2024 due to construction activities on the Transcanyon Waterline project. The River Trail between River Resthouse and the South Kaibab Trail junction, Silver Bridge, Plateau Point Trail, and Bright Angel Campground large group sites were originally also scheduled to open in May, but will now

remain closed until October 1 to allow for additional work. Source: [Grand Canyon National Park](#)

- *Guilford Courthouse National Military Park* - The park is currently restoring the Coble Barn, with support from the Historic Preservation Training Center. Source: [National Park Service Office of Communications](#)
- *Isle Royale National Park* - On April 15, the park announced that it is implementing new food storage regulations to protect wildlife and visitors. Park staff have begun installation of food storage lockers at every campground in the park. Installation will be ongoing throughout the 2025 season. Source: [Isle Royale National Park](#)
- *Oxon Cove Park and Oxon Hill Farm* - On April 26, the NPS, Town of Forest Heights, and Potomac Riverkeeper will host a ribbon cutting ceremony for the reopening of the Oxon Cove Trail after a restoration project that included repaving, stormwater runoff features, and a new bridge to connect the trail to Forest Heights. Source: [National Capital Parks - East](#)
- *Piscataway Park* - On April 11, the NPS announced the opening of a long-term lease at Fort Washington Marina, including the possibility of boat slips, watercraft rental, boating goods retail, marina fuel, haul out services, laundry, showers, food and beverage, boat repair, and dry storage. Applications are due June 9. Source: [Piscataway Park](#)
- *Underground Railroad Network to Freedom* (an NPS-administered program) - On April 6, *The Washington Post* published [an article](#) articulating updates to the NPS website about the Underground Railroad, including the removal of a photo of Harriet Tubman, deleting references to slavery, and describing the Underground Railroad as an effort that “bridged the divides of race.” On April 8, due to public backlash, the NPS reversed edits and restored content to its website. An NPS spokesperson said that the changes to the page were made “without approval from NPS leadership nor Department leadership.” Source: *The Washington Post*, [Politico](#)
- *White Sands National Park* - Scientists from the NPS, Cornell University, the U.S. Geological Survey, the University of Alaska’s Museum of the North, and the University of Arizona found evidence of travois tracks dating to 20,000 BCE. A travois is a type of cargo-moving system with crossed logs or sticks. This discovery is considered the earliest-known evidence of “human transportation technologies.” Source: [SFGate](#)
- *Yosemite National Park* - An internal email to park division chiefs has asked them to designate employees from all divisions for cleanup shifts at 10 campground restroom facilities “at least from 4/15 through 5/4.” It also states that Yosemite Leadership Team staff will also be responsible for some restroom cleaning. Source: [SFGate](#)

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

- Midge Binnewies passed away on April 3, 2025. “She and her husband, Robert, shared a career journey” at Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks, Yellowstone National Park, Acadia National Park, Yosemite National Park, and at the NPS Southeast Regional Office. Source: Robert Binnewies
- James Greymountain, 61, passed away on April 4. James worked at Petrified Forest National Park for over 30 years. Source: [Owens Livingston Mortuary](#)
- Katherine Czernikow Hearn, 76, passed away on April 6. Katherine spent two years working in Yosemite National Park in the 1970s. Source: [Legacy/Crown Cremation Services](#)
- Janice Ann Newman, 80, passed away on March 25. Janice was a volunteer at Rocky Mountain National Park for 19 years “with over 4,000 hours of volunteer service.” Source: [Estes Park News](#)

In the News

- Chuck Sams will speak at Whitman College’s commencement ceremony on May 25. Chuck was the Director of the National Park Service from December 2021 to January 2025. He currently is serving as a representative for Oregon on the Northwest Power and Conservation Council. Source: [Whitman College](#)

Open for Comment

Items will stay on this list until public comment has closed. Listed alphabetically, except for items affecting entire NPS, which are listed on top.

- *Civil War Defenses of Washington* - Public comment [open from through May 9](#) on a management plan update, which will serve as an amendment to the 2004 Fort Circle Parks General Management Plan. Source: [Civil War Defenses of Washington](#)
- *George Washington Memorial Parkway* - Public comment is [open through April 16](#) on a project to rehabilitate and replace the Clara Barton Parkway cantilever structure and retaining walls, as well as to demolish an associated unused bridge. Source: [George Washington Memorial Parkway](#)
- *Great Dismal Swamp NHA Feasibility Study* - Public comment is [open through May 19](#) on a feasibility study for designating a Great Dismal Swamp National Heritage Area in North Carolina and the Commonwealth of Virginia. Source: [National Park Service Region 1](#)

- *Mojave National Preserve* - The NPS and the Federal Highway Administration have [opened public comment through May 8](#) on a plan to repair 41 miles of the Kelso-Cima and South Kelbaker roads, expand parking, add scenic pullouts, and install features to protect wildlife. Source: [Mojave National Preserve](#)
- *National Capital Parks - East* - Public comment will be [open through April 25](#) on a plan to extend the Suitland Parkway Trail and implement several intersection improvements for pedestrian safety and connectivity. Source: [National Capital Parks - East](#)
- *Rock Creek Park* - Public comment will be [open through May 2](#) on a multimodal safety and operational improvements plan for Rock Creek and Potomac Parkway. Source: [Rock Creek Park](#)

Other Department of the Interior and U.S. Forest Service News

- *Emergency logging order* - On April 3, the Department of Agriculture issued Secretary's Memorandum 1078-006, with an "Emergency Situation Determination" for 67 million acres of National Forest lands that are rated as very high or high wildfire risk, and 79 million acres experiencing declining forest health, representing 59% of all USFS lands. Under this declaration, authorized actions include tree harvesting, including via contracting, exemptions, and expediting mechanisms. The provision mandates that "at least 50 percent of the treatment areas supporting this authorized emergency action must be within the designated areas," allowing 50% of related actions to take place in non-risk regions (which represents the rest of all USFS lands). The order also asks the USFS to issue "new or updated guidance to increase timber production" and to streamline "all processes related to timber production." Source: [Department of Agriculture](#)
- *BLM Director candidate withdraws* - On April 10, Kathleen Sgamma withdrew her nomination to serve as the Director of the Bureau of Land Management. Though she did not give a reason for the withdrawal, media reports have linked the decision to the surfacing of a memo she wrote that criticized President Donald Trump's efforts to overturn the 2020 election and support for the attacks on the U.S. Capitol on January 6, 2021. Source: [Colorado Public Radio](#)
- *Oil and gas leases need no EIS* - On April 10, the Department of the Interior announced that the Bureau of Land Management will no longer require an environmental impact statement for oil and gas leasing decisions in Colorado, Montana, New Mexico, North Dakota, South Dakota, Utah, and Wyoming. "The Bureau is evaluating options for compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act for these oil and gas leasing decisions." Source: [Department of the Interior](#)
- *Coal expansion* - On April 8, the Department of the Interior announced several actions to increase coal mining, including ending its moratorium on federal coal leasing, pursuing amendments to the Buffalo and Miles City resource management plans in Wyoming and

Montana, give more power to the states to handle complaints about coal mining violations, and lower coal mining royalty rates. Source: [Department of the Interior](#)

- *New data for Outer Continental Shelf* - On April 10, the Department of the Interior announced that new analysis by the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management reveals that there are an additional 4.77 billion barrels of oil and 7.15 trillion cubic feet of natural gas in the Outer Continental Shelf in the Gulf of Mexico, a 22.6% increase in recoverable reserves than was previously known. Source: [Department of the Interior](#)
- *Outer Continental Shelf oil and gas sale* - On April 4, the Department of the Interior announced that it will hold the next oil and gas lease sale in the Outer Continental Shelf. The Bureau of Ocean Energy Management will publish a proposed notice of sale in June 2025. Source: [Department of the Interior](#)
- *\$13 million for abandoned mine lands* - On April 9, the Department of the Interior announced the disbursement of \$13 million in Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement grants for abandoned mine land reclamation projects. Source: [Department of the Interior](#)
- *Grand Staircase Inter-Tribal Coalition formed* - On March 25, six Tribes announced the formation of the Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument Inter-Tribal Coalition, which will “focus on advocating for the conservation of their aboriginal lands and for the continued protection and preservation of the cultural and environmental resources found within the monument. The coalition is also committed to defending Grand Staircase-Escalante from any attempts to modify the monument boundaries or reduce protections for the monument.” The coalition is patterned off the already-existing Bears Ears Inter-Tribal Coalition, and includes representatives from the Hopi Tribe, Navajo Nation, Kaibab Band of Paiute Indians, Paiute Indian Tribe of Utah, Ute Mountain Ute Tribe, and the Zuni Tribe. Source: [Paiute Indian Tribe of Utah](#), [Los Angeles Times](#)
- *Permit revoked for wind project* - On March 14, the Environmental Appeals Board called for a re-review of an Environmental Protection Agency air quality permit, issued in September 2024, for the Atlantic Shores wind project located offshore of New Jersey. The appeal was filed in October 2024 by a group called Save Long Beach Island, a group of local residents who oppose the project, and furthered by the January 2025 Executive Order to temporarily withdraw all Outer Continental Shelf offshore wind leasing until the permitting practices could be reviewed. Source: [offshorewind.biz](#)
- *REI apologizes for backing Burgum* - On April 9, outdoor retailer and co-op REI issued an apology for signing onto a January letter by the Outdoor Recreation Roundtable endorsing the candidacy of Doug Burgum for Secretary of the Interior (which he now holds). REI co-op members and the REI Union heavily criticized the endorsement. REI hired a new CEO, Mary Beth Laughton, on March 31. She stated that REI retracts its endorsement and takes “full accountability” moving forward, and the company has joined a new group called Brands for Public Lands that is working to prevent large-scale sales of public lands.

Source: [Seattle Times](#)

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.

Summary

The primary action of Congress the past two weeks that will have a short- and long-term impact on the National Park Service was the adoption by the House and Senate of the budget resolution for Fiscal Years 2026 through 2034 that sets spending targets for the federal government. The discussions over the next several months will center around spending caps for individual departments, agencies, and programs and establish policy directives regarding tax cuts, federal debt limits, and spending, specifically on major programs such as Defense, Social Security and Medicare/Medicaid, as well as management of the national debt. The FY26 budget for the Department of the Interior and the NPS will be developed as part of these discussions.

New Public Laws

None to report.

Senate Actions

April 4 - The Senate agreed to H. Con. Res. 14, establishing the Congressional budget for the United States Government for Fiscal Year 2025 and setting forth the appropriate budgetary levels for Fiscal Years 2026 through 2034, after adopting the following amendments: the Sullivan Amendment No. 2035 (to Amendment No. 1717), to establish a deficit-neutral reserve fund to protect Medicare and Medicaid, and the Graham Amendment No. 1717, in the nature of a substitute.

April 10 - The Senate agreed to S. Res. 180, designating the week of April 19 through April 27, 2025, as “National Park Week.”

House of Representative Actions

April 10 - The House concurred in the Senate amendment to H. Con. Res. 14, establishing the Congressional budget for the United States Government for Fiscal year 2025 and setting forth the appropriate budgetary levels for Fiscal Years 2026 through 2034, by a yea-and-nay vote of 216 yeas to 214 nays.

Incidents

Listed alphabetically by park.

Abraham Lincoln Birthplace National Historical Park Flooding

In early April, the park experienced “a multi-day storm outbreak, resulting in widespread flooding, and other hazardous conditions.” As a result, the Memorial Building, Sinking Spring, the picnic area, the accessible boardwalk and all trails at the Birthplace Unit, and the entire Boyhood Home Unit were closed. As of April 11, some of these areas reopened, while the trails at the Birthplace Picnic Area and the Overlook Trail at the Knob Creek Unit remained closed. Source: Abraham Lincoln Birthplace National Historical Park ([press release](#), [current conditions](#))

Cape Lookout National Seashore

Sandbar danger

On April 8, the NPS warned beach-goers that there is a sandbar “starting to connect near the Point of Cape Lookout, known as Shark Island.” Visitors are warned to be aware that there is increased risk of getting stuck. Source: [Spectrum News 1](#)

Chesapeake and Ohio Canal National Historical Park

Hiker injury

On April 12, an individual “sustained non-life-threatening injuries” while hiking on Billy Goat Trail A. Personnel from the NPS and Montgomery County (MD) Fire and Rescue Services responded. The individual was carried from the trail to an NPS all-terrain vehicle and transported to an EMS staging area (no further details about medical care were divulged). Source: [The MoCo Show](#)

Colorado National Monument

Dog rescue

In late March/early April, a visitor pulled over at a viewpoint, and when they opened the door, their dog leapt out of the vehicle and dashed toward the edge. The dog fell “over 100 feet” and landed on a shelf. A deputy from Mesa County (CO) Sheriff’s Office responded with a dog catching pole, but found the distance too great. The Mesa County Search and Rescue team utilized rope rescue techniques to extract the dog. The dog was brought to an emergency vet and was found to have only minor scrapes and bruises. Source: [WAPT](#), [Mesa County Search and Rescue Facebook page](#)

Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area

Semi-truck accident

On April 2, a semi-truck carrying oranges overturned while traveling northbound on U.S. Route 209 between mile markers 5 and 6 just north of Toms Creek. The highway was closed between Bushkill Falls Road and Brisco Mountain Road while the accident was cleaned up and the investigation and damage assessments were conducted. No one was injured in the incident. Semi-trucks are prohibited on park roads, and “multiple charges are expected.” Source: [Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area](#)

Everglades National Park

Shark bite

On April 12, an individual was bitten on the hand by a shark while inside the park. The individual was transported by Miami-Dade Fire Rescue to a local hospital. No further details have been released about the incident. Source: [Miami Herald](#)

Fire Island National Seashore

Ice damage

On April 3, the park announced that the Talisman-Barrett Beach dock was damaged by winter ice flows on the Great South Bay, and will remain closed to all public use this summer. There is no timeline yet for restoration. No temporary floating dock will be installed. Additionally, there will not be any lifeguards at the Talisman-Barrett Beach this season and public restroom facilities will be limited. The NPS is assessing the extent of the damage will is working to “explore possible solutions.” Source: [Fire Island National Seashore](#)

Lake Mead National Recreation Area

33 individuals rescued, one fatality in two days

On April 10, a group of 28 individuals required rescue after running out of water during hot conditions on the Arizona Hot Springs Trail. The group was from a K-12 private school, and media reports have varied on the number of adults and high school students (either 3 adults and 25 students or 10 adults and 18 students), and whether the students had “special needs.” Multiple agencies responded, including the NPS and Mohave County (NV) Sheriff’s Office. A helicopter was utilized during the rescue. One child was hospitalized and was discharged that night. The school later made a statement that a student made the call for help, and they wished they had had the opportunity to handle it internally. The school received citations from the NPS for “creating a hazardous condition,” and for leading a group with over 20 people without a permit.

On April 9, one hiker passed away at Arizona Hot Springs, “likely due to a heat-related incident.” Five other hikers in the same party experienced heat distress and were rescued by helicopter.

The trail is currently closed due to high heat. Goldstrike Trail is also closed. The trails may reopen if temperatures drop, but will close for the summer season if temperatures become hazardous again. Source: [KTNV](#), [Las Vegas Review-Journal](#), [SFGate](#), [Las Vegas Review-Journal](#)

Lake Mead National Recreation Area

Missing person

The week of March 31, someone filed a criminal complaint against a 56-year-old veterinarian for mistreatment of their horse. A video of the veterinarian kicking the horse and wrapping a lasso three times around its neck went “viral,” receiving backlash from viewers. On April 6, the veterinarian was reported missing by their parent. The parent stated that they were concerned about the individual’s safety because of the video, and that they didn’t think the individual would harm themselves. The individual’s pickup truck was found at Hemenway Harbor with their wallet,

keys, and phone inside. The NPS is leading the search, with support from Las Vegas (NV) Metropolitan Police Department and Red Rock Search and Rescue volunteers. They are looking for any help the public can provide. As of April 14, the individual still had not been found. Source: [Las Vegas Review-Journal](#), [8 News Now](#),

Mammoth Cave National Park

Flooding

Due to anticipated high water levels in the Green River, the park closed river access on April 4 and 5, including ferries, campgrounds, and roads. As of April 11, closures were still in place due to flooding. Source: Mammoth Cave National Park ([press release](#), [current conditions](#))

Rocky Mountain National Park

Reckless Driving

On February 17 and March 1, NPS staff received reports of a vehicle “driving recklessly with disregard to the safety of others.” The NPS is investigating the reports and asking for any information the public can provide, such as photographs or video. They have not released any details about the car’s make or model or the behavior exhibited. Source: Rocky Mountain National Park. Source: [Rocky Mountain National Park](#)

Rocky Mountain National Park

White Nose Syndrome

On April 3, the NPS announced that lab tests by the U.S. Geological Survey confirmed the presence of the fungus (*Pseudogymnoascus destructans*, also known as “Pd”) that causes white-nose syndrome in bats. It was detected in the Holzwarth Historic Site area, and is the first confirmed case of Pd in Grand County, Colorado. White-nose syndrome is usually fatal to bats and can spread rapidly. It generally does not cause illness in humans, though humans have been known to be a vector of the fungus. Source: [Rocky Mountain National Park](#)

Shenandoah National Park

Hiker rescue

On March 31, a 67-year-old hiker took a fall on Old Rag Mountain. A Virginia State Police helicopter responded and was able to extract the individual via hoist. The individual was transferred to a local hospital with “non-life-threatening injuries.” Source: [WZRV](#)

Yellowstone National Park

Recent sentencings

On March 25, the U.S. Attorney’s Office: District of Wyoming announced three sentencings for crimes committed in the park:

- A 49-year-old was sentenced to a 10-day term of incarceration, 3 years of unsupervised

probation, 3-year ban from Yellowstone, and \$3,050 in fines for driving a motor vehicle while under the influence and possession of an open container of alcohol.

- A 44-year-old was sentenced to a 7-day term of incarceration for leaving the boardwalk near Old Faithful geyser.
- A 25-year-old was sentenced to a 7-day term of incarceration, five years of unsupervised probation, a five-year ban from Yellowstone, and \$1,050 in fines for driving a motor vehicle off-road to park near a thermal area in the park.

The dates of the incidents were not disclosed. Source: [U.S. Attorney's Office: District of Wyoming](#)

Zion National Park

2 hikers rescued

On April 11, a 30-year-old and 29-year-old got stuck on a ledge while hiking Cowboy Ridge on Mount Kinesava. They ran out of water while stuck and requested emergency assistance. A helicopter from the Utah Department of Public Safety utilized GPS coordinates collected from the 911 call to locate them. The helicopter utilized hoist techniques to extract them, and they were brought to their vehicle at the trailhead. The NPS and Washington County (UT) Sheriff's Office also supported the incident. Source: [St. George News](#)

Follow-ups on Previously Reported Incidents

- *Great Smoky Mountains National Park* - On April 4, the park reopened parts of the Cataloochee Valley for the first time since the area was hit by Hurricane Helene in September 2024. After significant work to address hazard trees, stabilize the Hiram Caldwell Barn, re-gravel several roads, and address erosion around structures, they have now reopened the Cataloochee Entrance Road up to Beech Grove School, Cataloochee Creek Road to the Old Cataloochee Entrance Road Bridge, and Old Highway 284. The Upper Cataloochee Valley Entrance Road is not accessible to motor vehicles, but pedestrians may access it with caution. Most trails in the area have also reopened to pedestrians, but several remain closed to horses due to hazards. Source: [Great Smoky Mountains National Park](#)
- *Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park* - On April 3, the NPS released body camera footage from the officer-involved shooting on March 4 (see [3/19/25 Coalition Report](#)). The suspect was accused of fatally shooting the sibling of their ex-partner, and evaded authorities all day before being located that evening near some rental cabins in the Namakanipao Campground area. Officers from the NPS and Hawai'i Police Department ordered the suspect to exit the vehicle, and they fled on foot. A passenger that was in the vehicle warned officers the individual was armed. Officers located the individual "in the woods" and spent eight minutes asking them to surrender. The suspect eventually reached for a weapon and officers deployed a TASER. The suspect opened fire and two officers returned fire, hitting the suspect. Officers rendered medical aid and called paramedics. The individual was transported to a hospital, and they passed away an hour later. The incident

is still under investigation by the Federal Bureau of Investigation. Source: [Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park, Police 1](#)

- *Lake Mead National Recreation Area* - On April 9, two individuals were each found guilty of one count of injury and depredation of government property for toppling many boulders off of the Redstone Dune rock formation in April 2024 (see [4/17/24](#) and [9/4/24 Coalition Reports](#)). A visitor filmed the incident and sent it to the NPS, who investigated and eventually identified and arrested the two individuals in August 2024. The individuals will be sentenced on July 8. Source: [SFGate](#)
- *Mojave National Preserve* - On April 8, the Bureau of Land Management issued [a press release](#) that it is allowing the resumption of rare earth minerals extraction at Colosseum Mine (see [3/5/25 Coalition Report](#)) under its existing mine plan of operations with the Bureau of Land Management, approved before lands were transferred to Mojave National Preserve. The NPS has argued that the mine is illegal and has issued at least two cease-and-desist orders and over \$200,000 in fines for damages rendered. Source: Bureau of Land Management California Office, [National Parks Traveler](#)
- *Yellowstone National Park* - The parent of the 22-year-old that went missing after hiking Eagle Peak in September 2024 (see [10/2/24](#) and [10/30/24 Coalition Reports](#)), has told media outlets that searches for the missing individual will continue, starting around July 20, condition dependent. The search parties are expected to include "six or seven search and rescue groups," "five to six canine groups," and "horses, mules, and helicopters." The search in Fall 2024 lasted 11 days, and included over 100 people, dog teams, helicopters, and drones. Source: [Post Bulletin](#)

Acknowledgments

This newsletter is supported through Coalition staff and invaluable volunteers:

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- Tech and Production Support: Steve Pittleman, Debbie Reed, Emily Thompson
- Regular Correspondent: Chris Soller
- Issue Contributors: Robert Binnewies, Frank Buono, BJ Dunn, Teresa Ford, Ann Walters, 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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