



The Coalition Report

Wednesday, July 9, 2025

This report goes out every two weeks. For more frequent updates, follow the Coalition on social media:



Action Item!

The Coalition encourages Members to submit comments on the Department of the Interior's efforts to identify regulations that should be repealed, as well as the NPS' recent solicitation of feedback on existing interpretation in parks. Links and suggested language for your comments can be found [here](#), and you can find our comments about the regulatory reform below.

Coalition Actions

The Coalition submitted [comments](#) to the Department of the Interior in response to its misguided efforts to water down or rescind regulations, arguing that revisions should always be considered, but based on an agency's objective assessment of efficacy, not by the regulated industries.

We joined several dozen conservation organizations in [a letter](#) to Senate leaders John Thune and Chuck Schumer in opposition to language in the budget reconciliation bill that would elevate oil and gas leasing above all other land uses.

The Coalition joined 11 other organizations in submitting [a letter](#) to the acting director of the NPS, Jessica Bowron, urging the agency to complete a comprehensive environmental impact statement for the proposed permit request by Dominion Energy for an expanded right-of-way for transmission lines through Manassas National Battlefield Park.

The Coalition continues to bring media attention to the critical need to protect our parks and public lands, including [this E&E News article](#) about the proposal to put President Donald Trump's face on Mount Rushmore, [this New York Times article](#) about the effects of low staffing on parks, and [this National Public Radio article](#) about the signs asking folks to report on park interpretation that is "negative" about American history. See [other coverage highlights](#).

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.

- *Supreme Court allow RIFs, at least temporarily* - On July 8, the Supreme Court lifted a lower court's ruling that had blocked mass layoffs until a lawsuit challenging them makes its way through court. The Trump Administration can move forward with restructuring plans for now, with the Supreme Court writing that "the government is likely to succeed on its argument" that downsizing the government via Executive Order is legal. However, the court did not actually weigh in on the legality of specific layoffs or reorganizations by the Trump Administration. Source: [The New York Times](#)
- *24% decrease in NPS* - New data from the Department of the Interior workforce database indicates that the NPS has lost 24% of its permanent staff since President Donald Trump took office. Seasonal hiring has only managed to fill 4,500 seasonal positions rather than the "nearly 8,000 positions pledged by the administration." It is the lowest staffing level in over 20 years. Source: [National Parks Conservation Association](#), [CNN](#)
 - *NPS lifeguard shortages* - KFF Health News published [an article](#) about lifeguard shortages at several beaches managed by the NPS, due to the efforts to downsize the federal workforce. Beaches at Assateague Island National Seashore and Gateway National Recreation Area were given as examples. Source: [KFF Health News](#)
- *Formalizing relationships with gateway communities* - On June 25, Interior Secretary Doug Burgum signed a Secretary's Order requiring parks to "formalize" their relationship with neighboring gateway communities, including mandatory quarterly meetings, the assignment of a gateway community coordinator within the park, and the inclusion of gateway community liaising in superintendents' performance reviews. Source: [Jackson Hole News and Guide](#)
- *Higher fees & less favorable lotteries for foreign visitors* - On July 3, President Donald Trump signed an Executive Order instructing the Department of the Interior to "develop a strategy" to increase entrance fees and recreation pass fees for non-U.S. residents at all National Park Service units that currently charge for entry. The order also states that U.S. residents should have "preferential treatment" over foreign visitors for permitting or lottery rules. The order also rescinded a 2017 Obama Administration order to promote diversity and inclusion in public lands. Source: [CBS News](#)

- *Economic report for higher foreign visitor fees* - The Property and Environment Research Center published a report by a University of Washington economist outlining different international “surcharges” that could be applied and how much revenue they would generate, as well as possible attrition by those deterred by fees. Source: [Idaho Capital Sun](#)
- *“Make America Beautiful Again Commission”* - On July 3, President Donald Trump signed an Executive Order to create a commission by this name, chaired by the Secretary of the Interior, and tasked with expanding access to recreation on public lands, “incentivizing voluntary conservation efforts,” and promoting “active forest management...while reducing bureaucratic delays that hinder effective environmental management and put our forests and rural communities at risk.” Source: [The White House](#)
- *Revised NEPA procedures* - On June 30, the Department of the Interior announced revised National Environmental Policy Act procedures, arguing that previous procedures had been “weaponized by past administrations to block American progress.” The procedures are being amended through an interim final rule, which is [open for public comment through August 4](#). Source: [Department of the Interior](#)
- *“Patriot Program” for 250th* - On July 3, the Department of the Interior announced the launch of the Patriot Program, a three-year pilot initiative to invest \$250 million in “critical infrastructure, preservation, and public access projects” on public lands. Projects will be matched 1:1 with private funding or in-kind contributions, and are expected to “provide hands-on training in skilled trades and faster pathways to sustainable career paths.” Source: [Department of the Interior](#)
- *Implementation of EXPLORE Act* - On June 25, Interior Secretary Doug Burgum signed Secretarial Order 3425 to officially establish the EXPLORE Act within the Department of the Interior. The act was signed in January, and is intended to expand outdoor recreation on public lands and waters. Implementation areas include interagency coordination, public-private partnerships, outdoor recreation and infrastructure, access improvements, permitting modernization, and stakeholder engagement. Source: [Department of the Interior](#)
- *“Garden of Heroes” in budget bill* - On July 3, the House of Representatives passed the budget reconciliation bill, which includes a provision for \$40 million for the National Endowment for the Humanities for the procurement of 250 statues for President Donald Trump’s proposed “National Garden of American Heroes.” Source: [Newsweek](#)
- *Visitor comments continue to defend NPS* - The mandatory posting of signs at NPS units asking visitors to report on interpretive materials that paint “past or living Americans” in a negative light have overwhelmingly garnered comments that defend the NPS’ depiction of history, or comments asking the federal government to stop defunding and understaffing the agency. Source: [Newsweek](#), [The Washington Post](#)

- *“Loyalty essay” downgraded for federal hiring* - In May, the Office of Personnel Management published a plan for reforming federal hiring, including a required series of essay questions that included “How would you help advance the president’s executive orders and policy priorities in this role?” In June, the Public Employees for Environmental Responsibility asked the U.S. Office of Special Counsel to rescind the questionnaire because it violates hiring laws that prohibit discrimination based on political affiliation. In late June, OPM issued guidance asking officials to not score or rate answers to these questions, but to use them as “an opportunity to provide additional information about themselves, their background, and dedication to public service.” Candidates that elect not to answer cannot be disqualified. Source: [Government Executive](#)
- *Mental health challenges for firefighters* - *Mountain Journal* published [an article](#) about the factors that have led to high levels of mental health struggles for wildland firefighters. Source: *Mountain Journal*
- *Spotlight on NPS volunteers* - *The New York Times* published [an article](#) featuring the work of six volunteers supporting national parks, including Hannah Murray at Fort Sumter and Fort Moultrie National Historical Park, Lupine Reifler in Denali National Park and Preserve (who is now a staff member, but has volunteered for many years with the park’s kennels), Becky MacKay at Cuyahoga Valley National Park, Nick Ybarra at Theodore Roosevelt National Park, David Titley at Grand Teton National Park, and Anne Kozak at Acadia National Park. Source: *The New York Times*
- *Spotlight on Santucci* - The NPS published [an article](#) about the efforts of Vince Santucci to better protect paleontological resources. Vince has worked for the NPS for 40 years, currently as a senior paleontologist for the agency. Source: National Park Service Office of Communications
- *Changes to Indigenous narratives in NPS* - On July 2, *Perspectives on History*, the newsmagazine of the American Historical Association, published [an article](#) called “Remember What the Parks Forgot: On Memory, Erasure, and the Return of Indigenous Presence,” by Ryan W. Booth. It documents changes in national park narratives about the roles and history of Indigenous people as Tribal consultation has changed. Ryan worked for the NPS for five years and is now an assistant professor of history at Washington State University. Source: *Perspectives on History*

Around the Parks

Reports are in alphabetical order by park/program name.

- *Acadia National Park* - *The Mount Desert Islander* published [an article](#) about the Friends of Acadia’s efforts to bring “nearly 120” seasonal housing units for park staff to Mount Desert Island and Trenton, Maine. The \$31 million project is being funded by the Friends of Acadia, NPS, and the National Park Foundation. Source: *Mount Desert Islander*

- *Arches National Park* - On June 17, the Grand County (UT) Commission approved \$60,000 in funding for a study to evaluate the effects of the park's timed-entry reservation system on the local economy. Source: [Salt Lake Tribune](#)
- *Big Cypress National Preserve, Everglades National Park* - The National Parks Conservation Association published [an article](#) in opposition to "Alligator Alcatraz," a federal immigrant detention site being developed on a Dade County (FL)-owned inholding surrounded by Big Cypress National Preserve. A lawsuit against the project was filed by the Friends of the Everglades and Center for Biological Diversity due to the lack of environmental studies for the project. The inholding was originally intended to be "the Everglades Jetport" - a runway for supersonic airplanes. The project had fierce opposition and ultimately led to the creation of Big Cypress National Preserve. Source: National Parks Conservation Association, [National Parks Traveler](#), [CBS News](#), [AP News](#)
- *Blue Ridge Parkway* - On June 26, the NPS re-released a solicitation for a concession contract for food and beverage and retail services at Mabry Mill (milepost 176). The first solicitation took place in Summer 2024, but no bids were received. The NPS "revised some of the financial aspects of the prospectus" for this round. Proposals are due October 1. Source: [Blue Ridge Parkway](#)
- *Chesapeake and Ohio National Historical Park* - *HuffPost* published [an article](#) about the effects of worker shortages at the park due to incentivized retirement programs and the federal employee hiring freeze. Source: *HuffPost*
- *Great Smoky Mountains National Park* - The *Citizen Times* published [an article](#) about the rehabilitation of the access trail to the Enloe Cemetery near Mingus Mill, as well as the site's historical significance. The trail was completed in December 2024. The \$31,600 project was funded by the Friends of the Smokies. Source: *Citizen Times*
- *Kalaupapa National Historical Park* - *National Parks Traveler* published an article about the park's history, ecological resources, and management challenges. Source: [National Parks Traveler](#)
- *Lake Mead National Recreation Area* - On July 1, the NPS announced the selection of LMNRA Guest Services, LLC, for a 10-year concession contract operating visitor services at Willow Beach, including guided raft tours, marina operations, boat rentals, houseboat loading, food and beverage, retail, campground management, and fuel sales. Source: [Lake Mead National Recreation Area](#)
- *Mount Rushmore National Memorial* - On July 3, U.S. Representative Andy Ogles of Tennessee submitted a letter to Secretary of the Interior Doug Burgum asking to have President Donald Trump's face added to Mount Rushmore. Source: [Newsweek](#)
- *Pearl Harbor National Memorial* - On July 9, the park suspended the 56-day advance reservations to visit the *USS Arizona* Memorial. In September, the NPS and U.S. Navy will

begin a project to remove two World War II-era salvage platforms attached to the *USS Arizona*. First come, first served tour tickets still may be available for visitors, but it will depend on project timing. Source: [Pearl Harbor National Memorial](#)

- *Stonewall National Monument* - WB Engineers and Consultants received a 2025 Village Award from the Greenwich Village Society for Historic Preservation for its work on the park's new visitor center. Source: [PR Newswire](#)
- *U.S. Park Police - AirMed&Rescue* published [an article](#) about the U.S. Park Police's aviation unit and its efforts in supporting law enforcement activities. Source: *AirMed&Rescue*
- *Yosemite National Park* - On August 1, Tuolumne Meadows Campground will open after a three-year rehabilitation project. The \$26 million project was funded by the Great American Outdoors Act. It is "one of the largest campgrounds in the National Park System," with 336 sites. Source: [Yosemite National Park](#)

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

- Cleola Ammons Chism, 96, passed away on June 22. She and her husband Bob Chism volunteered as campground hosts for a time at Bryce Canyon National Park. Source: [Legacy/Forest Park Funeral Home - Shreveport](#)
- Christine Julia Hobbs, 75, passed away on July 4. Early in her federal service career, she worked for the NPS for a time, at Great Smoky Mountains National Park and Glacier National Park. Source: [The Mountain Press](#)
- Elizabeth Ann Weaks, 90, passed away on July 1. She worked "in the laundry room for the lodge" at Yellowstone National Park one summer "during her college years." Source: [Legacy/Clarksville Now](#)

Open for Comment

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

- *Bryce Canyon National Park* - Public comment is [open through July 23](#) on proposals to improve horseback riding in the park, in response to increased use. Source: [Bryce Canyon National Park](#)

- *Cape Cod National Seashore* - Public comment is [open through July 10](#) on a proposal to install a one-mile multi-use path from Nauset Road in Eastham, Massachusetts to Nauset Light Beach. Source: [Cape Cod National Seashore](#)
- *Castillo de San Marcos National Monument* - Public comment is [open through July 9](#) on a proposal to raise, repair, and rehabilitate seawalls on the Castillo. Source: [The St. Augustine Record](#)
- *Chattahoochee River National Recreation Area* - The NPS, Georgia Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration, and the City of Roswell (GA) have opened [public comment through July 31](#) on transportation improvement projects on State Route 9. Source: [Chattahoochee River National Recreation Area](#)
- *National Historic Landmarks Program* (an NPS-administered program) - The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has opened public comment through July 8 on a proposal to remove an obelisk structure from Brady Park in Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan, at the request of the Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians and Bay Mills Indian Community. The obelisk is part of the National Historic Landmark designation of the Soo Locks, and its construction destroyed a large part of an Anishinaabek burial ground. The proposal can be found [here](#), and comments can be submitted via email to LRE-NHPA-Comments@usace.army.mil. Source: [The Sault News](#)
- *Ross Lake National Recreation Area* - Public comment is [open through August 11](#) on a frontcountry and visitor use plan for the park and the State Route 20 corridor. Source: [North Cascades National Park](#)
- *Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks* - Public comment is [open through July 16](#) on a proposal to rehabilitate and replace employee housing and related infrastructure in the Lodgepole Housing District. Source: [Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks](#)

Other Department of the Interior News

- *Streamlined BOEM policies* - On June 25, the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management and Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement announced updates to policies “across all stages of development” to allow for more offshore mineral mining, including shorter environmental reviews and permitting, longer permits and leases, lower minimum bids, and waivers for some rental fees. Source: [Department of the Interior](#)
- *Polar bear harassment more permissible at Alaska oil facilities* - On June 24, a new U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service rule went into effect allowing “Level A harassment of polar bears at oil facilities on the Beaufort Sea in Alaska. The level of harassment is defined when an annoyance to deter bear behavior has the potential to injure the animal. Source: [Anchorage Daily News/Anchorage Beacon](#)

- *Onshore commingling proposal* - On July 7, the Bureau of Land Management announced it is proposing to make it easier for oil and gas operators to combine production from multiple leases (known as “commingling applications”) for onshore operations, thereby reducing infrastructure needed for each project. The proposed rule will soon be open for public comment. Source: [Department of the Interior](#)
- *MOU with Israel for energy AI* - On July 8, the Departments of the Interior and Energy signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Israel to collaborate on “energy and artificial intelligence.” Source: [Department of the Interior](#)
- *New coal mine in TN* - On July 8, the Department of the Interior issued a permit to Hurricane Creek Mining, LLC, to mine “specialty market and thermal use coal” on Bryson Mountain in Claiborne County, Tennessee. The permit was approved through the newly expedited environmental review procedures under the declared national energy emergency. Source: [Department of the Interior](#)
- *\$725 million for mine reclamation* - On June 27, the Department of the Interior awarded \$725 million to clean up abandoned coal mines in five states and the Navajo Nation. Source: [Department of the Interior](#)

Congressional Actions

Reports on legislation, 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, with support from Coalition intern Katie Moorer.

The Senate and the House took up and passed H.R. 1, the “One Big Beautiful Bill,” concerning the long-term budget and the President’s signature piece of legislation regarding tax cuts, budget cuts, and program reforms throughout the federal government. The Senate made a number of changes to the bill passed by the House. The Senate passed the bill by 51 yea votes to 50 nay votes. The bill was sent back to the House, which passed the Senate’s version on July 3 by a recorded vote of 218 yea votes to 214 nay votes. The bill was then sent to President Donald Trump, who signed the bill into law on July 4, 2025.

Of note for the NPS:

- Section 50304 rescinds unspent balances provided in the Inflation Reduction Act of 2022 - specifically sections 50221, 50222, and 50223, including funding for conservation, ecosystem, and habitat restoration projects on lands administered by the NPS and Bureau of Land Management and funding for NPS staffing.
- Section 50305 also allocates \$150,000,000 to the Secretary of the Interior through the Director of the National Park Service to spend on events, celebrations, and activities commemorating the 250th anniversary of the United States.

Incidents

Listed alphabetically by park/program.

Acadia National Park

Climbing accident and two fatalities in one week

On June 23, a 20-year-old fell about 20 feet while climbing at the South Wall of Champlain Mountain. A group of other climbers carried the individual to the Park Loop Road, and personnel from Bar Harbor (ME) Fire Department and the NPS responded to the scene. The fire personnel transported the patient by ambulance to medical care.

On June 25, an individual collapsed and hit their head near the summit of Cedar Swamp Mountain. Personnel from the NPS and “local EMS” responded to the scene and found the individual not breathing and without a pulse. They were able to sustain the patient until transport by Life Flight of Maine to Eastern Maine Medical Center. The individual later passed away from their injuries.

On June 30, a 40-foot sailboat ran aground near Cape Ann Ledge on the southern side of Isle Au Haut. A 72-year-old and two other individuals were onboard. The boat broke apart on the rocks, and all three went overboard. They were all wearing life jackets and were in the water for over an hour. The two members of the party were able to drag the 72-year-old to the shore, but the individual was unresponsive. NPS personnel responded to the scene to support the Maine Marine Patrol. The 72-year-old was pronounced deceased, and their body was transported to Ellsworth for medical examination. The two survivors were transported to Stonington for medical attention, and were released later that day. Source: [Acadia National Park](#), [Maine Department of Marine Resources](#)

Big Bend National Park

Flooding

The week of July 1, the park received “significant amounts of rainfall,” causing localized flooding. The Rio Grande Village campground, as well as primitive roadside campsites have been evacuated, with campers moved to the Chisos Basin Campground. Unpaved roads were impassible, as of July 4, and many paved roads had debris, minor damage, and standing water. The paved road between Castolon and Santa Elena Canyon, and the Boquillas Port of Entry are both currently closed, as of July 4. Source: [Big Bend National Park](#)

Big South Fork National River and Recreation Area

Leaking well

On July 8, the park discovered a leaking well site near the Joe Branch area of the park. As a result, they closed the gas well maintenance access road where it splits from the Joe Branch Loop Trail to where it terminates near the bank of the Clear Fork River. The closure will remain in place until the leak can be fixed and the site cleaned up. Source: [Big South Fork National River](#)

[and Recreation Area](#)

Cape Hatteras National Seashore

Swimming fatality

On June 30, a 67-year-old was swimming just east of Ramp 49 in Frisco, North Carolina, when they became unresponsive. Bystanders observed the individual face down in the water, brought them to shore, and began CPR. Hatteras Island Ocean Rescue staff also performed CPR on site, and personnel from the NPS and Dare County Emergency Medical Services responded to the scene. Resuscitation efforts were unsuccessful. Source: [Cape Hatteras National Seashore](#)

Cape Lookout National Seashore

Grounded boat rescue

On June 30, a 34-foot trawler ran aground near Shackleford Banks, North Carolina. Tow crews were unable to secure a line to the distressed boat, and with conditions deteriorating, emergency assistance was requested. Several boats from the Coast Guard and the NPS responded, but shallow water, three-foot waves, and 30 MPH winds made it difficult to reach the boat safely. Ultimately, a “surface swimmer” reached the boat’s captain and guided them back to land. No injuries were reported. Source: [National Enquirer](#)

Glacier Bay National Park and Preserve

Injured whale

On June 27, a biologist documented a humpback whale near Willoughby Island (AK) with a one-foot-deep cut behind its dorsal fin, likely from a boat propeller on a “medium to large vessel.” The wound appeared to be just hours old, but was not bleeding and the whale appeared to be behaving normally. The park is looking for any information the public may have regarding the incident. This is the second vessel strike on whales in the park this year. Source: [Glacier Bay National Park and Preserve](#)

Glacier National Park

3 hikers rescued from river

While hiking on the Avalanche Lake Trail, four individuals gathered for a photo on the rocks above Avalanche Gorge, when one slipped and fell into the water. Two others in the party attempted to rescue them and also went into the creek. Two of the three individuals were swept through the gorge, while the third was able to grab onto tree branches in the gorge to await rescue. Several satellite devices were used to initiate an emergency response, with personnel from the NPS and Whitefish (MT) Fire Department responding. Bystanders began performing CPR on the two that had been swept through the gorge and were successful in resuscitation. A ranger was able to rappel to the individual on the tree branches and secure them until a rope rescue team could be used to bring them both out of the gorge. One patient was airlifted by ALERT to Logan Health Medical Center in Kalispell, Montana, while the other two were taken there by Three Rivers Ambulance and Whitefish Ambulance. All three were said to be in stable

condition. Source: [Daily Inter Lake](#), [Glacier National Park](#)

Glen Canyon National Recreation Area

Algal blooms

On July 2, the park reported the presence of cyanotoxins “at the high end of safe exposure levels” in the mouth of Antelope Canyon on Lake Powell. They recommend boaters use caution and avoid unnecessary exposure to the lake in this area, as well as caution throughout the lake.

Source: [Glen Canyon National Recreation Area](#)

Grand Canyon National Park

Hantavirus

On June 20, a concessioner employee started experiencing symptoms of hantavirus pulmonary syndrome, a often-fatal disease transmitted through rodent droppings. It is theorized that they were exposed to the virus while working at the mule barn. The individual drove to Flagstaff Medical Center for treatment, has since returned home, and “is expected to make a full recovery.” Source: [SFGate](#)

Grand Teton National Park

Reckless driving

On June 24, visitors reported “multiple high-end luxury sports cars” racing down both lanes of Teton Park Road. Traffic stops were made at several locations in the park, resulting in the arrest of four individuals and the impoundment of two vehicles. The incident remains under investigation and further charges may be pending. Source: [Grand Teton National Park](#)

Grand Teton National Park, Yellowstone National Park

Assault and high-speed chase

On June 19, an employee at Yellowstone National Park sought out law enforcement personnel stating that they were getting repeated texts and voicemails from their ex-partner, telling them not to talk to their coworkers, threatening violence, instructing them to send them passwords to their accounts, and telling them to send money to their bank account. On June 21, the ex-partner went to an employee dorm in Old Faithful Village, and when the victim refused to leave, grabbed and assaulted the victim, then left. Law enforcement searched all night for the individual, eventually finding their car. The suspect stole an unattended rental car in the Old Faithful Inn parking lot and took off at “high speed” toward Grand Teton National Park. Law enforcement rangers at Grand Teton were able to use tire deflation devices to stop the individual early in the morning of June 22. They were captured on foot nearby. On June 23, the individual was charged with interstate stalking and misdemeanor simple assault. Source: [SFGate](#)

Great Smoky Mountains National Park

Hit-and-run

On June 10, a vehicle was going eastbound near mile marker 23 on Foothills Parkway West when it partially entered the westbound lane and side-swiped a motorcycle going west, and continued driving. The motorcycle's passenger was injured in the incident. Blount County (TN) deputies stopped the vehicle in Alcoa, Tennessee. When questioned about the crash, the driver stated that they were not in the wrong lane and they thought the motorcycle driver had "purposefully punched" their driver's side mirror. They also claimed they stopped further up the road at a pullout to wait for the motorcycle, then left the area. The driver was test-driving the car, and the car's owners gave law enforcement GPS data for the vehicle that showed the individual had driven at a top speed of 98 MPH during their outing. The driver was charged with causing an accident involving personal injury, reckless driving, driving with a suspended license, speeding, and failure to maintain control of the vehicle. Source: [WATE](#)

Katmai National Park and Preserve

Plane crash

On July 5, a small float plane with a pilot and three passengers, crash landed near Brooks Camp. All four were transported to a hospital in Anchorage, Alaska, with "non-critical injuries." The cause of the incident is under investigation. Source: [Katmai National Park and Preserve](#)

National Mall and Memorial Parks

Joyride

On June 21, a vehicle went "joyriding" down the pedestrian area of the National Mall, causing about \$10,000 in damage and causing several visitors to fear for their safety. The incident was recorded on camera by a visitor. The driver fled the area. Officers connected the vehicle's owner, who was later arrested and denied driving on the Mall. The individual was charged with destruction of federal property, assault with a dangerous weapon, disorderly conduct, fleeing from law enforcement in a motor vehicle, reckless driving, and operating a vehicle off-road in a way that damaged protected land. Under the conditions of the individual's release, they are not allowed to drive any motor vehicles, must avoid the National Mall, and are required to wear a GPS monitor with a curfew between 9 PM and 5 AM. Their next court appearance is July 17. Source: [WUSA9 \(6/30, 7/3\)](#)

Pictured Rocks National Seashore

Possible suicide

On July 3, park visitors observed an individual face down in the water near Chapel Beach. They called 911, and personnel from the NPS and Alger County (MI) responded to the scene. They initiated life-saving efforts, but they were unsuccessful, and the individual was pronounced deceased at the scene. "Preliminary information indicates the death was the result of an apparent suicide." Source: [Pictured Rocks National Seashore](#)

Rock Creek Park

Sinkholes

On July 2, the NPS announced the closure of the P Street NW ramp to northbound Rock Creek and Potomac Parkway due to the discovery of two sinkholes. They have requested assistance from the Federal Highway Administration for assessment and remediation. Source: [Rock Creek Park](#)

Rocky Mountain National Park

Swift water incidents

The last week in June, park staff and personnel from the Estes Valley (CO) Fire Protection District responded to three separate swift water rescue incidents in the St. Vrain River in the Wild Basin area of the park. Source: [Rocky Mountain National Park](#)

Rocky Mountain National Park

White-nose syndrome

On June 26, park staff announced the confirmation of white-nose syndrome in three long-legged bats in the park, including the first time it has been found on both sides of the continental divide in the park and the first documented case in Grand County, Colorado. White-nose syndrome is often fatal in bats. The park encourages visitors to never touch or pick up bats, and to report dead and injured bats to park staff. Source: [Rocky Mountain National Park](#)

Rocky Mountain National Park

Hiker fatality

On July 1, a 66-year-old was reported overdue after going for a day hike to Chasm Lake. The following morning, the individual was found deceased on the south side of Chasm Lake in a scree slope. It appeared the individual had taken a fall and died from their injuries. Personnel from the park's search and rescue team and Mesa Verde Interagency Helitak supported the recovery of the individual's body, which was taken via long line operation to Upper Beaver Meadows, then transferred to the Boulder County (CO) Coroner's Office. Source: [Estes Park News](#)

Shenandoah National Park

Hiker found deceased

On July 5, a 61-year-old went hiking, last seen off-trail near Lewis Falls. They were reported overdue that evening, and a search was launched. Agencies involved in the search included the NPS, Virginia Department of Emergency Management, Virginia State Police, Virginia Department of Wildlife and Recreation, Rockingham Fire Department, Harrisonburg Fire Department, Rappahannock County Sheriff's Office, Shenandoah Mountain Rescue Group, Maryland State Police, United States Park Police, United States Customs and Border Protection, Potomac Appalachian Trail Club, and Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation. On July 7, the individual was found deceased near the waterfall. No other details were released. Source: [CBS19 News](#), [WJLA](#)

Wildfires

- *Dinosaur National Monument* - On July 1, a wildfire was reported in Lodore Canyon, about a half mile south of the Lodore Canyon Ranger Station. On July 3, the park announced the Lodore Camp Fire 100% contained. The cause of the fire is unknown and is still under investigation. Source: Dinosaur National Monument *Facebook* page ([7/2](#), [7/4](#))
- *Glen Canyon National Recreation Area* - On June 13, the Bridge Creek Fire started outside the park on Navajo Nation land, along the slopes of Navajo Mountain. On June 18, the park put out a press release advising boaters on Lake Powell to remain toward the south wall between Dangling Rope and Rainbow Bridge, and to avoid Oak Bay, as firefighting aircraft are using the lake to refill buckets and tanks for the fire. Park staff are supporting the aviation operation with vessel support on the lake. As of July 6, the fire was estimated at 2,588 acres and 0% contained, with “minimal fire activity.” Source: [Glen Canyon National Recreation Area](#), *Watch Duty* (app)
- *Kobuk Valley National Park* - On July 6, “nearly 1,600 lightning strikes” took place in the Galena Zone. Several fires were started. As of July 7, their status was as follows:
 - Jade Fire, located 17 miles northwest of Ambler and 1.5 miles north of the Kobuk River at river mile 61: 4 acres
 - Karet Fire, south of the Kobuk River adjacent to the Jade Fire: 9 acres
 - Hunt, Kaliguricheark, and Kobuk Fires, burning close to one another in Kobuk Valley National Park 7 miles north of the Kobuk River at river mile 37 and 1.5 miles east of the Kaliguricheark River at river mile 11: 9 acres, 97 acres, and 31 acres, respectively.
 - Source: [Kobuk Valley National Park](#), [Alaska Wildland Fire Information](#)
- *Olympic National Park* - On July 6, a fire began on the Olympic National Forest near the Mt. Rose Trailhead, southeast of the Staircase area of the park. As of July 7, the Bear Gulch Fire was 327.8 acres and 0% contained. Several U.S. Forest Service and Olympic National Park sites are closed, including the Staircase Area and Campground. Source: [Olympic National Park](#), *Watch Duty* (app)
- *Rocky Mountain National Park* - On July 2, lightning struck the park, starting a small fire northwest of the Holzwarth Historic Site along the east side of the Grand Ditch. As of July 3, the Baker Gulch Fire was 0.1 acres and 100% contained. Source: [Estes Park News](#)

Follow-ups on Previously Reported Incidents

- *Isle Royale National Park* - The two individuals found deceased at South Desor Lake Campground on June 8 (see [6/11/25](#) and [6/25/25 Coalition Reports](#)) are suspected to have died due to a murder-suicide, according to the Keweenaw County (MI) Medical Examiner. The two deceased individuals are a parent and adult child, and it is not clear who died first. The incident is under investigation by the Federal Bureau of Investigation. Source: [MLive](#)

- *Lake Chelan National Recreation Area, North Cascades National Park* - The manhunt for the 32-year-old suspected in killing their three children at a campground in the Okanogan-Wenatchee National Forest (see [6/11/25 Coalition Report](#)) is ongoing. The National Park Service is supporting the search, including the closure of many trails in the park (which have since reopened), and utilizing their swift water search and rescue team to search bodies of water around the crime scene. Source: [Lake Chelan Mirror](#)
- *Yosemite National Park* - The 36-year old concession employee accused of raping, beating, and strangling a co-worker in the park in May 2024, has been missing since June 27. The individual said they were going to ride their dirt bike “near a mine and a tower,” and then never resurfaced. The Mariposa County (CA) Sheriff’s Office conducted a search for several days over 500 miles, originally thinking they were searching for an “at risk missing person.” However, upon learning the individual had an active federal warrant out for their arrest, the sheriff’s office now considers the individual “an absconding fugitive from federal law enforcement.” Surveillance footage confirmed that the individual’s truck and dirt bike have been seen in the Fresno, California, area. The individual is awaiting trial for their charges and it is unclear if the individual is out on bail. Source: [Los Angeles Times](#)

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- Issue Contributors: Teresa Ford, Mike Murray, Bill Walters

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

The Coalition to Protect America’s National Parks 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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