



The Coalition Report

Wednesday, June 25, 2025

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



Coalition Actions

The Coalition joined two dozen other conservation organizations in [a letter](#) to Congress opposing the draft Fiscal Year 2026 budget bill that includes \$1.2 billion in cuts to the NPS.

We made [a statement](#) applauding the removal of a mandatory public lands sale provision from the Senate budget reconciliation package (see more in “National/Regional NPS Updates” below).

The Coalition joined the National Park Conservation Association and the Sierra Club in submitting [comments](#) on the Environmental Protection Agency’s proposal to approve South Dakota’s Regional State Haze Implementation Plan for the Second Planning Period, stating that the revision is arbitrary, capricious, and violates the Clean Air Act.

We joined over 40 conservation organizations in providing [comments](#) to the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management regarding the proposal for expanding drilling on the outer continental shelf, arguing that the Executive Branch cannot override the Outer Continental Shelf Lands Act.

The Coalition continues to give interviews and make statements about the state of the National Park Service for a variety of media outlets, including this article in [The Hill](#).

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.

- *Public lands sale removed from Senate budget package* - On June 23, the Senate parliamentarian ruled out a host of provisions in the Senate budget reconciliation package, including the proposed mandatory sale of millions of acres of public land, as well as mandatory permitting for the construction of Ambler Road, which would cross Gates of the Arctic National Park and Preserve. It is unclear whether another attempt at adding language around public land sales will be added to the draft bill. Source: [E&E News](#)
- *Signs up to give feedback on “negative” content* - Per Secretarial Order 3431, all National Park Service sites were required to post a sign by June 13 asking visitors to identify any “signs or other information that are negative about either past or living Americans.” In the first days of the signs, visitors’ comments focused solely on not erasing history and commending staff for their efforts in telling hard stories. Source: [National Public Radio](#), [National Parks Conservation Association](#), [Government Executive](#)
- *Attempts to fill NPS leadership void* - The NPS recently began “Operation Opportunity,” an effort to solicit applications for “openings at the superintendent, deputy superintendent, and chief of facilities level”, open only for lateral moves by internal applicants at the Department of the Interior. This would result in vacancies left in the wake of employees moving into these roles, which are justified as “high priority.” The National Parks Conservation Association estimates there currently are 100 total vacant superintendent positions across the NPS. Source: [Government Executive](#)
- *New categorical exclusions from environmental reviews for NPS* - On June 11, the National Park Service announced the adoption of 33 categorical exclusions under Section 109 of the National Environmental Policy Act, allowing the agency to bypass environmental impact statements. The exclusions “were adopted from other federal agencies” and include “a variety of routine actions, such as infrastructure upgrades, communications improvements, rights-of-way authorization, cultural and natural resource management, recreation access, and emergency response efforts.” Source: [Department of the Interior](#)
- *2025 Excellence in Volunteerism Awards* - The NPS announced its 2025 regional awards for volunteerism for innovation, impact (youth, adult, and team), and volunteer management. Source: [National Park Service Office of Communications](#)
- *Plan to raise NPS fees for international visitors* - In the Department of the Interior’s “Budget in Brief” document for Fiscal Year 2026, it states, “In 2026, NPS will establish a surcharge for foreign visitors that is estimated to generate more than \$90 million to keep national parks beautiful.” Source: [SFGate](#)
- *11% reduction to DOI through incentivized buyouts* - Department of the Interior data shows that 7,500 employees left in 2025 due to incentivized resignations and retirements, making up 11% of its staff. 1,645 of those were NPS staff. As of May, the NPS had 14,770 permanent/full-time employees. Source: [E&E News](#)

- *6 monuments up for attempted withdrawal* - E&E News published [an article](#) about sites the Trump Administration is focused on withdrawing from national monument status due to mineral extraction prospects. They include Chuckwalla National Monument, Sáttítla Highlands National Monument, Baaj Nwaavjo I'tah Kukveni-Ancestral Footprints of the Grand Canyon National Monument, Ironwood Forest National Monument, Organ Mountains-Desert Peaks National Monument, Bears Ears National Monument, and Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument. [Editor note: The National Park Service does not manage any of these national monuments, but the reversal of their status under the Antiquities Act will have broad ramifications for public lands managed by the NPS. Furthermore, several of them provide contiguous ecosystems with adjacent NPS units.] Source: E&E News
- *Supreme Court ruling on NEPA negates chain of indirect effects* - On May 29, the Supreme Court overruled a lower court's decision to negate a Surface Transportation Board environmental impact statement related to an 85-mile rail line in Utah. The plaintiffs, Eagle County, Colorado, and the Center for Biological Diversity argued that indirect "upstream" effects (such as spurring other new oil drilling in the future), and indirect "downstream" effects (such as the use of the oil being transported) were not taken into account in the EIS. The Supreme Court ruled that environmental impact statements need not take into account possible future outcomes such as these. Source: [Utah News Dispatch](#)
- *Expanded mental health resources for firefighters and dispatchers* - On June 17, the Departments of the Interior and Agriculture announced an expanded mental health support network for federal wildland firefighters and dispatchers. The network has "expertise in addressing the mental health needs of emergency responders." Source: [Department of the Interior](#)
- *Burgum misspeaks about % of NPS employees in parks* - During a Congressional hearing about budget cuts at the Department of the Interior, Secretary Doug Burgum claimed that "barely half of the people [at the NPS]...actually work in a park." However, agency data indicates it is closer to 80%. Source: [E&E News](#)
- *Natural Sounds and Night Skies Division on chopping block* - The Guardian published [an article](#) about a provision in the current budget proposal for the NPS that would cut the Natural Sounds and Night Skies Division. Source: *The Guardian*

Around the Parks

Reports are in alphabetical order by park/program name.

- *Arches National Park, Canyonlands National Park, Hovenweep National Monument, Natural Bridges National Monument* - The headquarters for the four parks in Moab, Utah, will remain at its current location, reversing the Department of Government Efficiency proposal to cancel its lease. Source: [Moab Sun News](#)

- *Big Cypress National Preserve, Everglades National Park* - The *Miami Herald* published [an article](#) about the ongoing efforts to eradicate non-native Burmese pythons from the Everglades ecosystem. Since 2014, the Conservancy of Southwest Florida has captured and euthanized 20 tons of snakes, “including a record 6,300 pounds of pythons killed this past breeding season.” The largest snake was 18-feet-long and 215 pounds. Source: *Miami Herald*
- *Cape Cod National Seashore* - On July 1, the park will transition to a fully cashless system at fee entrance stations. Source: [Cape Cod National Seashore](#)
- *Death Valley National Park* - On June 19, the park completed a project to restore Furnace Creek to its natural channel by adding three culverts under Highway 190. This restores critical habitat for native species and removes a road hazard for visitors. The project was supported by the NPS, Timbisha Shoshone Tribe, Caltrans, Road and Highway Builders, Inc., and The Oasis at Death Valley. Source: [Mammoth Times](#)
- *Denali National Park and Preserve* - In May, the park began an interagency effort to reduce hazardous wildfire fuels in the park. The initial stage included personnel from the NPS, Bureau of Land Management Alaska Fire Service smokejumpers, the U.S. Forest Service Tongass Suppression Module, and a Student Conservation Association wildland fire crew. In early June, the Alaska Fire Service Midnight Sun hotshot crew supported the effort. Source: [Alaska Wildland Fire Information](#)
- *Denali National Park and Preserve* - On June 12, the Board of Geographic Names rejected a proposal to name a summit in the park after Carola June Young, “a Mat-Su mining pioneer.” It was rejected because it violated the policy for names in federal wilderness areas. The proposal had been supported by the Talkeetna Historical Society, Matanuska-Susitna Borough Planning Commission, the Alaska Miners Association, and the Alaska Historical Commission. The National Park Service did not support the renaming. Source: [Anchorage Daily News](#)
- *Dry Tortugas National Park* - The NPS has opened a prospectus for a 10-year concession contract providing interpretive passenger seaplane service in the park. Proposals are due by October 7. Source: [Dry Tortugas National Park](#)
- *Gateway National Recreation Area* - On June 9, U.S. Representative Frank Pallone, Jr., submitted a letter to Secretary of the Interior Doug Burgum to “demand answers” for staffing shortages at the park’s Sandy Hook unit, resulting in a lack of lifeguards and maintenance staff to provide for safety and sanitation. Source: [NJ.com](#), [Congressman Frank Pallone, Jr.](#)
- *Gateway National Recreation Area* - The Sandy Hook unit of the park has been selected as a 2025 Leave No Trace Spotlight site. From June 19-21, the non-profit Leave No Trace joined up with the NPS, the community, and other local land agencies to deliver

educational messaging and complete a beach clean-up. Source: [Gateway National Recreation Area](#)

- *Great Smoky Mountains National Park* - The *Citizen Times* published [an article](#) about preventative search and rescue efforts in the park, a program started in 2023 and funded by the parking tag program and Friends of the Smokies. Source: *Citizen Times*
- *Glen Canyon National Recreation Area, Grand Canyon National Park* - KJZZ published [an article](#) about a proposal in the budget reconciliation package that would cut funding for the U.S. Geological Ecosystems Mission Area, including the Grand Canyon Monitoring and Research Center. The GCMRC provides data that informs the management and operation of Glen Canyon Dam, with an eye toward managing for the resources that Grand Canyon National Park protects. Source: *KJZZ*
- *Grand Canyon National Park* - On June 17, the U.S. Geological Survey released the Grand Canyon Alert System, a free, subscription-based service designed to send custom hazard-related alerts to satellite messaging devices or cell phones (when reception is available). Alerts may focus on boating hazards, missing people, flash flood warnings, and streamflow-related operations for the Colorado River. The system was developed by the USGS, with support from the NPS, Coconino County (AZ) Emergency Management department, and National Weather Service. Source: [U.S. Geological Survey](#)
- *Mount Rainier National Park* - *The News Tribune* published [an article](#) about shrinking glaciers within the park, the ways in which scientists are monitoring them, and the effects on local ecosystems and recreation. Source: *The News Tribune*
- *National Capital Region* - *WTOP* published [a video](#) about decorative fountains on Inlet Bridge in Southwest Washington, D.C., which have the face of former National Capital Region director Manus “Jack” Fish on fish heads sculpted into them. It was done as a “retirement gift” in the mid-1980s. Source: *WTOP*
- *Redwood National and State Parks* - In early June, U.S. Air Force personnel came to Wolf Creek Education Center, located in the park, to fix up cabins. The two-week stint was an exercise of the Innovative Readiness Training program, which gives soldiers the opportunity to learn infrastructure construction. Other groups of military personnel are expected to help with improvements at the Kuchel Visitor Center and Redwoods Rising restoration areas this summer. The Yurok Tribe is providing oversight, material, and specialized trade personnel needed to complete projects. Source: [Lost Coast Outpost](#)
- *River Raisin National Battlefield Park* - On June 20, the park celebrated the opening of a new visitor center in Monroe, Michigan. It is located a half-mile away from its previous visitor center. The new location is much bigger and includes expanded and updated exhibits. Source: [CBS News](#)
- *Rock Creek Park* - The NPS opened up a Request for Proposals for the Conduit Road

Schoolhouse, due by August 12. The lease is described as “long-term,” and business proposals must “use the property to benefit the local community” and “provide services and amenities,” in addition to repairs to enhance and preserve the property. Source: [Rock Creek Park](#)

- *Shenandoah National Park* - On July 1, the park will transition to a fully cashless fee system. Source: [Shenandoah National Park](#)
- *Steamtown National Historic Site* - On July 5, the park will host a ceremony for the newly restored Bullard No. 2 locomotive. The project was supported by park staff, volunteers, and interns for “many years.” Source: [Steamtown National Historic Site](#)
- *U.S. Park Police* - The Department of the Interior published [an article](#) about the horse mounted patrol unit of the U.S. Park Police, which services the National Mall, Lincoln Memorial, Jefferson Memorial, Washington Monument, Rock Creek Park, Fort Dupont Park, Great Falls Park, Fort Washington Park, and Chesapeake and Ohio Canal National Historical Park. The mounted patrol helps with crowd control, event security, public safety training, and community outreach. Source: Department of the Interior
- *Yellowstone National Park* - *National Parks Traveler* published [an article](#) outlining claims by Public Employees for Environmental Responsibility that the park has waived over \$1 million in right-of-way fees to allow Diamond Communications to bury “nearly 200 miles” of fiber-optic cable. PEER argues that “national parks should not be subsidizing telecom companies” and that thermal features could be damaged by the trenching. Five days later, *National Parks Traveler* published [a follow-up article](#) with the park’s perspective, which argued the telecommunications are necessary to maintain communications in the park, that Diamond Communications has been billed over \$80,000 in cost recovery for monitoring and inspections, and that their right-of-way fees will kick in when they begin providing fiber-optic service to non-government entities in the park (such as the concessioner). Park staff also outlined the procedures in place to protect thermal resources. Source: *National Parks Traveler*
- *Yosemite National Park* - In May, the Superintendent’s Compendium was updated to prohibit flags bigger than 15 square feet unless authorized by permit. Yosemite has been the location of two high-profile flag protests this year - one in February of an upside-down American flag signaling distress for the nation, and one on May 20 of a large transgender pride flag. Source: [The Hill](#)
- *Yosemite National Park* - On July 17, *Netflix* will release a new miniseries telling a fictional story of a National Park Service special agent investigating a death in Yosemite. Source: [Mashable](#)
- *Yosemite National Park* - The Yosemite Conservancy published [an article](#) about the park’s efforts to restore amphibians and river otters. The work includes a collaboration with San Francisco Zoo to raise toads and frogs from eggs to adults, then release them in the park.

Source: *Yosemite Conservancy*

- *Zion National Park* - On June 12, the park commemorated the milestone of 100 million boardings of the Zion Canyon shuttle system, which has been running since 2000. The 100 millionth rider received a custom t-shirt and gift bag from the Zion National Park Forever Project, the park's non-profit partner. Source: [Zion 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

- Marshall Grant McCall, Jr., 84, passed away on June 10. Marshall and his partner Patricia volunteered for a time at Big Bend National Park in their retirement. Source: [FDL Reporter](#)
- Kim Landry, 48, passed away on June 8. She worked for a time at Yellowstone National Park. Source: [Seven Days](#)
- Daniel "Danny" W. Steed, Jr., 77, passed away on January 6. Danny worked for the NPS for many years, including time at Gateway Arch National Park, Chaco Culture National Historical Park, the Southwest Regional Office, and San Antonio Missions National Historical Park. Source: Karen Steed
- Phillip "Phil" George Winters, 84, passed away on June 20. Phil worked for a time at the "headquarters" of Yellowstone National Park. Source: [Legacy](#)

Retired

- Alexa Viets has retired after 23 years of NPS service, most recently as the superintendent at Petersburg National Battlefield. Source: [Richmond Times-Dispatch](#)
- Scott Teodorski has retired after 36 years of NPS service, most recently as superintendent at Maggie L Walker National Historic Site and Richmond National Battlefield Park. Source: [Richmond Times-Dispatch](#)

In the News

- The *Arizona Daily Sun* published [an op-ed](#) by Reginald Walden, arguing for the public to get involved in speaking out against the current attacks on the National Park Service in order to protect parks from privatization. Reginald is a Coalition Member and worked at many NPS units, including Theodore Roosevelt National Park, Death Valley National Park, Yellowstone National Park, and Cape Hatteras National Seashore. Source: *Arizona Daily Sun*

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.

- *Black Canyon of the Gunnison National Park and Curecanti National Recreation Area* - Public comment is [open through June 27](#) on a grazing management plan for the two jointly-managed parks. Source: [Curecanti National Recreation Area](#)
- *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 from June 26 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](#)
- *Chesapeake and Ohio Canal National Historical Park* - Public comment is [open through July 28](#) on a development concept plan for the Great Falls area of the park in Montgomery County, Maryland. Source: [Chesapeake and Ohio Canal National Historical Park](#)
- *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

- *Key Okefenokee parcel purchased for conservation* - On June 20, the Conservation Fund announced that it purchased about 8,000 acres, as well as the underlying mineral rights, in an area known as “the Trail Ride,” located adjacent to Okefenokee National Wildlife Refuge. The parcel had been part of a controversial proposed titanium mine by Twin Pines Minerals. The price point was \$60 million, and was supported by the James M. Cox Foundation, the Holdfast Collective, and other private philanthropy. Source: [E&E News](#)
- *USGS report on undiscovered oil and gas* - On June 18, the Department of the Interior released a U.S. Geological Survey report on undiscovered oil and gas on U.S. public lands. The report estimates “there are technically recoverable resources of 29.4 billion barrels of oil and 291.6 trillion cubic feet of gas.” Source: [Department of the Interior](#)
- *Expansion to Alaska oil leasing* - On June 17, the Department of the Interior released a proposal to reopen 82% of Alaska’s National Petroleum Reserve. The plan is [open for public comment through July 1](#). Source: [Department of the Interior](#)
- *Biden memo protecting Columbia River fish rescinded* - On June 12, President Donald Trump took actions to withdraw a Biden Administration memo intended to restore salmon, steelhead, and other native fish populations on the Columbia River to resolve longstanding lawsuits with Native groups about treaty rights. It would have included an environmental impact statement considering the alteration of dam operations. Source: [The White House](#), [Department of the Interior](#)
- *Proposal to rescind coal mining oversight rule* - On June 12, the Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement announced a proposed rule to rescind the 2024 “Ten-Day Notices and Corrective Action” rule, arguing that it “added unnecessary and confusing definitions, created rigid deadlines, and ignored the clear intent of the Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act of 1977.” Public comment will be open for 30 days. Source: [Department of the Interior](#)
- *Judge orders review of AK mine permits* - On June 9, a federal judge ordered the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the Bureau of Land Management to conduct an analysis of the possibility of catastrophic dam failure, putting permits for a mine issued to Donlin Gold, LLC, on hold. The decision comes after a lawsuit filed by six Kuskokwim region Tribal governments concerned that dam failure can dump mercury and cyanide into local watersheds. The 2018 Environmental Impact Statement did not adequately consider the risks of small tailing spills. Source: [Alaska Beacon](#)
- *American Samoa mineral leasing exploration* - On June 12, the Department of the Interior announced a proposal to explore seabed mineral leasing offshore of American Samoa. A 30-day public comment period will follow. Source: [Department of the Interior](#)
- *\$645 million in PILT* - On June 24, the Department of the Interior announced the award of \$644.8 million in Payments in Lieu of Taxes for local governments to offset the costs associated with having federal land within their jurisdiction. Since PILT payments began in

1977, the DOI has distributed over \$12.6 billion to states, counties, the District of Columbia, and U.S. territories. 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

Nothing to report.

Senate Actions

June 3: The President sent a letter to the Senate regarding the rescission of Appropriated funds for FY2025. The Senate has yet to take an action on the President's rescission request.

June 11: The Committee on Energy and Natural Resources concluded a hearing to examine the President's proposed budget request for Fiscal Year 2026 for the Department of the Interior, after receiving testimony from Doug Burgum, Secretary of the Interior.

June 16: The Senate agreed to Senate Resolution 279, designating June 2025 as "Great Outdoors Month."

June 18: The Senate issued a report on S.1463, a measure to allow the Secretary of the Interior to enter into memoranda of understanding for the purpose of scientific and technical cooperation in the mapping of critical minerals and rare earth elements, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute.

June 18: The Senate passed the following measures:

- S. 282, the Katahdin Woods and Waters National Monument Access Act, an act to provide greater regional access to the Katahdin Woods and Waters National Monument in the state of Maine;
- S 1112, the Big Bend National Park Boundary Adjustment Act, an act to adjust the boundary of Big Bend National Park in the state of Texas;
- H.R. 2215, the Salem Maritime National Historical Park Act, an act to re-designate the Salem Maritime National Historic Site as the "Salem Maritime National Historical Park."

During this reporting period the Senate took up the House-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 Finance Committee released recommendations for numerous tax cuts and cuts to programs. Senator Mike Lee of Utah introduced legislation to be considered as part of the budget reconciliation that would direct the sale of extensive amounts of federal land in 11 western states. Senator Lee's proposal has since been ruled out of the bill. (See

“National/Regional NPS Updates” above.) The Senate has yet to take an official action on the House-passed version of the “One Big Beautiful Bill” or the Senate Finance Committee’s recommendations. The Senate goal is to pass their budget reconciliation bill before July 4.

House of Representative Actions

June 12:

The House passed H.R. 4, the “Rescissions Act of 2025,” a bill that rescinds \$9.4 billion in unobligated funds that were provided to the Department of State, the U.S. Agency for International Development, various independent and related agencies, and the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, as was proposed to be rescinded in special messages transmitted to Congress by the President on June 3, 2025, by a yea-and-nay vote of 214 yeas to 212 nays.

The Committee on Natural Resources held a hearing entitled “Examining the President’s FY26 Budget Request for the Department of the Interior.” Testimony was heard from Doug Burgum, Secretary, Department of the Interior

Incidents

Listed alphabetically by park.

Blue Ridge Parkway

Motorcyclist and bicyclist fatalities

On June 1, a 60-year-old was driving a motorcycle, heading north near Milepost 162, when they collided with a deer crossing the road. The individual was ejected and sustained serious injuries. Personnel from the NPS and Floyd County (VA) Fire and EMS responded to the scene. The individual was transported by helicopter to Carilion Roanoke Memorial Hospital. The individual died due to their injuries on June 14. Source: [Blue Ridge Parkway](#)

On June 20, a 44-year-old was driving a motorcycle northbound near Milepost 126 when they struck a car turning left into an overlook. Personnel from the NPS and Roanoke County (VA) EMS, Fire, and Police responded to the scene. The motorcyclist was deceased when emergency responders arrived, and the driver and passenger of the turning car sustained minor injuries. Source: [Blue Ridge Parkway](#)

On June 21, a 67-year-old was bicycling near Milepost 7 when they got into an accident with a vehicle. Personnel from the NPS and Waynesboro (VA) Fire and EMS responded to the scene. They provided “medical care” to the cyclist, but they passed away from their injuries at the scene. An investigation is underway to determine the cause of the accident and no further details have been released as of June 24. Source: [Blue Ridge Parkway](#)

Canyonlands National Park

River rescue of public officials

On May 11, an official from the Utah Department of Natural Resources took a U.S. Senator, one

of the Senator's advisors, and three others rafting on the Colorado River through Cataract Canyon when the raft got pinned to two boulders on a Class IV rapid called Satan's Gut/Big Drop 3. The DNR guide "struggl[ed] for 11 hours to free the boat," but was unsuccessful, eventually calling for emergency support as night fell. A Utah Department of Public Safety helicopter lifted the passengers to shore, then shuttled them to Bullfrog Marina. The DNR guide stayed on the boat overnight. The following day, an NPS staff member joined them and "worked until nightfall, still unable to free the raft." The following day, three additional NPS staff brought 1,500 feet of rope and rigging equipment, and were able to dislodge the boat by late afternoon. The three boats traveled down river to Bullfrog Marina. Source: [Salt Lake Tribune](#)

Death Valley National Park

Loose ostriches

In early June, several ostriches escaped from a farm in the Amargosa area and entered in the park. They were seen at Death Valley Junction, near the park entrance sign on Highway 190, and in Echo Canyon. They were eventually rounded up and returned to the farm. Source: *Death Valley Natural History Association E-Newsletter - June 2025*

Death Valley National Park

Semi-truck fire

On June 19, a semi-truck was descending Towne Pass on Highway 190 when it caught fire. The driver protected the cargo by unhitching it from the truck before the fire spread. Personnel from the NPS, Lone Pine (CA) Fire, Olancho Cartago Fire, and California Highway Patrol responded to the scene. The truck was destroyed in the fire, and the cargo was spared. No injuries were reported in the incident. A cause was not listed, though the article referenced that most fire incidents on Highway 190 have been due to overheated brakes on the steep grades. Source: [Death Valley National Park](#)

Death Valley National Park

Vehicle fatality

On June 13, a 46-year-old crashed their vehicle in a rollover accident on Highway 190 just east of North Highway. The individual passed away in the incident. Source: [Death Valley National Park](#)

Denali National Park and Preserve

Avalanche fatality

On June 10, a party made up of a 29-year-old skier and a snowboarder were descending below Rescue Gully above Camp 14 on the Denali West Buttress Route, when an avalanche was triggered by the snowboarder. Two mountaineering rangers were just minutes away "on an acclimatization climb" and they spotted the snowboarder on the surface. They did a quick assessment of the snowboarder, then initiated a beacon search to locate the skier, who was "mostly buried" in avalanche debris. The rangers dug the individual out and began CPR, but resuscitation efforts were unsuccessful. The individual's body was flown to Talkeetna (AK), and

transferred to the state medical examiner. The snowboarder sustained “minor injuries” and flew off the mountain on June 11. The deceased individual is the 13th recorded avalanche fatality in the park. Source: [Powder](#), [Denali National Park and Preserve](#)

Glacier National Park

Hiking fatality

On June 19, a 45-year-old passed away while hiking in the park. No further details were available. Source: [KRTV](#)

Glen Canyon National Recreation Area

River fatality

On June 8, a 40-year-old was swept away by river currents downstream of Paiute Farms Wash on the San Juan River. The Navajo Nation Police Department performed a search and found the individual deceased, likely due to drowning. Other agencies involved in the recovery included the NPS, San Juan County (UT) Sheriff’s Office, Bureau of Land Management Canyon Country District - Monticello Field Office, Intermountain Health/Classic Air Medical, and the Utah Department of Public Safety. Source: [Glen Canyon National Recreation Area](#)

Hawai’i Volcanoes National Park

Cliff rescue

On June 11, a 30-year-old attempted to get a closer look at the Kīlauea volcano eruption on the Byron Ledge Trail when they fell off a sheer cliff edge. A tree broke their fall about 30 feet down, preventing a fall another 100 feet to the caldera floor. Park staff were nearby managing eruption traffic, and were able to respond to the scene and perform a high angle rope rescue. The individual suffered “minor facial injuries” from the fall. Source: [Hawai’i Volcanoes National Park](#)

Indiana Dunes National Park

3 rescued from water

On June 19 or 20 (conflicting reports), an individual found themselves “in trouble” while in the water at West Beach. Two family members went into help, and “also went under the water.” The three were rescued by “National Park lifeguards,” and transported to a nearby hospital. Their condition was not released. Source: [Yahoo!news](#), [FOX32](#)

Isle Royale National Park

NPS boat runs aground

On June 14 at 12:30 AM, the *Peregrine*, a 25-foot NPS boat, was transporting a visitor with a medical emergency to the mainland when it ran aground on the break wall at the north end of the Keweenaw Upper Entrance in Hancock, Michigan. The U.S. Coast Guard responded and was able to rescue all aboard the vessel. The *Peregrine* was towed to Houghton later that day. There was no fuel or oil discharge into Lake Superior. Source: [Isle Royale National Park](#)

Mount Rainier National Park

River rescue

On June 9, an individual was standing on rocks just off the Silver Falls Trail taking pictures when they “fell at least 100 feet” into the Ohanapecosh River. The individual grabbed onto a branch to lift themselves onto a ledge close to the river, where they were stranded. Due to a lack of phone signal on the trail, a bystander drove the individual’s friends to the Stevens Canyon entrance station to request a rescue. The individual was extracted by an NPS team utilizing rope rescue techniques, then transported by ambulance to Arbor Health Morton Hospital. The extent of the individual’s injuries was not released. Source: [Nisqually Valley News](#)

Rocky Mountain National Park

Human remains found

On June 18, human remains were found near the Alpine Ridge Trail. The NPS is investigating. As of June 24, the individual had not been identified. Source: [Colorado Sun](#), [Rocky Mountain National Park](#)

Yellowstone National Park

Smokejumper rescue

On June 10, Custer Gallatin National Forest smokejumpers were conducting a training exercise deploying from an aircraft, when strong winds from an incoming storm caused one of the smokejumpers to be blown off course, landing about a mile within the west boundary of the park, about seven miles north of the town of West Yellowstone. The individual “sustained a significant leg injury.” Personnel from the NPS, Gallatin County (MT) Search and Rescue, and Hebgen Basin Rural Fire District responded to the scene and utilized a wheeled litter to transport the individual to a landing zone. They were then airlifted by an Idaho Air Methods helicopter and transported to Eastern Idaho Regional Medical Center for evaluation and treatment. Source: [KBZK](#)

Yosemite National Park

Climbing fatality

Earlier this month, an employee of the park concessioner fell while climbing on Royal Arches, resulting in their death. The park’s search and rescue team recovered the individual’s body. No further details have been released. Source: [Mariposa Gazette](#)

Wildfires

- *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 June 24, the fire was estimated at 2,278 acres and 0% contained. Source: [Glen Canyon National Recreation Area](#), *Watch Duty* (app)

- *Yukon-Charley Rivers National Preserve* - On May 25, the Kathul Fire was discovered burning across the Yukon River from Kathul Mountain, east of Washington Creek. Smokejumpers were deployed to protect the Washington Creek Cabin, and have since demobilized. As of June 7, the fire was estimated at 1,009 acres and “no significant activity was observed.” Source: [Yukon-Charley Rivers National Preserve](#), [Alaska Wildland Fire Information](#)

Follow-ups on Previously Reported Incidents

- *Fort Union Trading Post National Historic Site* - Further details about the May incident in which an individual barricaded themselves inside the park’s museum (see [6/11/25 Coalition Report](#)) have been released, including the individual’s mental health issues, as well as the removal of a fire poker and gun from museum displays, and attempted theft of the donation box. Source: [InForum](#)
- *Isle Royale National Park* - The park has released further details about two individuals found deceased at a remote backcountry campground (see [6/11/25 Coalition Report](#)). The two individuals were found at South Lake Desor campground on June 8. A fixed-wing aircraft and a helicopter were used in the investigation and transport of the individuals’ bodies. The individuals have been identified and next of kin notified. The cause of death was not identified, and the park stated, “there is no known threat to the public at this time.” Source: [Detroit Free Press](#)

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- Editor: Katie Wallace
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- Regular Correspondents: Chris Soller
- Issue Contributors: Mike Murray, Noel Poe, Karen Steed

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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