



The Coalition Report

Wednesday, September 17, 2025

You can take action right now:

We're collaborating with the National Parks Conservation Association to document park experiences that demonstrate the impacts of staffing cuts, the hiring freeze, and other recent actions devastating the National Park Service. Help us help the parks by [sharing your experience](#).

The National Park Service has opened public comment for "improving visitor services in national parks, including more efficient methods for delivering and managing those services." [Comment now](#).

Nominations for the Coalition's George Hartzog Award, honoring individuals or groups who demonstrate outstanding support for the mission of the National Park Service, are [due October 15](#).

Coalition Actions

On September 4, a federal court of appeals ruled to uphold Air Tour Management Plan guidance banning flight tours in Badlands National Park and Mount Rushmore National Memorial. The Coalition to Protect America's National Parks was an intervenor in the lawsuit, which was raised by three South Dakota tour companies.

The Coalition and three other conservation organizations submitted a series of letters to the Bureau of Land Management regarding its efforts to prioritize onshore oil and gas leasing via inappropriate processes:

- [Comments](#) on "revision to regulations regarding onshore oil and gas leasing, general"
- [Comments](#) on "revision to regulations regarding oil and gas leasing; stipulations and

information notices”

- [Comments](#) on “revision to regulations regarding competitive leases; expression of interest process”
- [Comments](#) on “revision to regulations regarding BLM onshore oil and gas leases”

We collaborated with six other organizations in submitting [comments](#) to the Bureau of Land Management New Mexico Office on its 2026 First Quarter Competitive Oil and Gas Lease Sale, urging it to align its plan with the Fluid Mineral Leases and Leasing Process rule and highlighting environmental effects that their analysis failed to include.

We continue to provide interviews and press releases, including [this one](#) arguing against Secretarial Order 3442, which weakens the Land and Water Conservation Fund (see more in “National/Regional NPS Updates” below).

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.

- *Firing probationary status employees deemed illegal* - On September 12, a federal court ruled that the Office of Personnel Management illegally required the firing of 25,000 federal employees on probationary status in February, saying the agency exceeded its powers in doing so. The judge ordered that the federal agencies must send letters to all fired probationary-status employees that state they were not terminated on the basis of performance. Agencies were also ordered to amend personnel records accordingly, and to no longer take direction from OPM on employee dismissals. Source: [Government Executive](#)
- *GAOA did not reduce maintenance backlog* - The Congressional Research Service recently completed an analysis showing that the maintenance backlog for federal public lands agencies has increased from \$17.4 billion to \$43.9 million since the Great American Outdoors Act was signed in 2020. The NPS represents half of that backlog, and transportation assets are the largest issue by category. The analysis also called into question agency data accuracy, and whether or not multi-year projects that are still in progress have been appropriately accounted for. Inflation, materials and labor costs, and new maintenance needs may affect these totals, as well. Source: [FEDweek](#)
- *U.S. Wildland Fire Service* - On September 15, the Departments of the Interior and Agriculture announced the establishment of the U.S. Wildland Fire Service, with a plan for implementation in January 2026. It is intended to “elevate and unify” federal wildland fire programs and “align operations with the Department of Agriculture through shared procurement, predictive services, research and policy reforms.” Source: [Department of the Interior](#)

- *Secretary's Order on science* - On September 4, Interior Secretary Doug Burgum issued Secretary's Order 3441 in response to the Trump Administration's Executive Order called "Restoring Gold Standard Science." The order "will ensure that federally funded research is transparent, rigorous, and impactful, and that federal decisions are informed by the most credible, reliable, and impartial scientific evidence available." Source: [Department of the Interior](#)
- *LWCF Secretary's Order* - On September 4, Interior Secretary Doug Burgum issued Secretary's Order 3442, which provides guidance to federal agencies and state governments around the method and prioritization for land purchases under the Land and Water Conservation Fund. (See more in "Coalition Actions" above.) Additionally, the Department of the Interior announced this year's disbursement of LWCF grant program, a record of \$437 million to all 50 states, U.S. territories, and the District of Columbia. Source: [Department of the Interior](#)
- *EPA considering weakening air quality monitoring in national parks* - The Environmental Protection Agency sent a "prerule" document to the White House regulations office for review, signaling its intention to change regional haze reduction requirements, including weakening air quality monitoring programs at the NPS. The proposal will be up for public comment when it is released (TBD). Source: [E&E News](#)
- *"Will the national parks survive Trump?"* - *Reveal News* published [a podcast](#) with this title, exploring the threats to conservation-focused goals and telling America's stories at national parks. Source: *Reveal News*
- *"The fight against Trump's 'war on history'"* - *National Public Radio's* program "On Point" interviewed Yale professor and historian David Blight about the Trump Administration's efforts to censor American history. Source: [WBUR](#)
- *"Trump is scrubbing slavery from our historical sites"* - *The New York Times* published [an op-ed](#) with this title, arguing that erasing slavery from historical narratives is detrimental to the unity of the United States and may lead to other types of propaganda and authoritarianism. Coalition Executive Council member Michael Allen is quoted in the op-ed. Source: *The New York Times*
- *Protecting buildings on National Register from fire* - *Headwaters Economics* published [a report](#) outlining strategies to protect buildings listed in the National Register of Historic Places from wildfires. The article argues that the Department of the Interior's standards for preserving historic properties are outdated and do not reflect modern fire regimes, that building code exemptions for historic buildings put towns at risk, and that changing landscaping designs can prevent catastrophic fire events. Source: *Headwaters Economics*
- *Conservative op-ed in favor of charging international visitors more* - *The American Conservative* published [an op-ed](#) by U.S. Representative Riley Moore (R-WV) in favor of the PATRIOT Parks Act, which would increase fees for international visitors and provide

added revenue to support the National Park System. Source: *The American Conservative*

- *NPS fossil inventory* - ESRI published [an article](#) about the NPS' efforts to streamline its fossil data collection through a variety of digital mapping tools. Source: *ESRI*
- *"Park Service programs you benefit from, but may not know about"* - The National Parks Conservation Association published [an article](#) with this title, highlighting the National Water Trails System, National Wild and Scenic Rivers, National Heritage Areas, the Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance Program, the Land and Water Conservation Fund, and the Tribal Historic Preservation Program. Source: [National Parks Conservation Association](#)

Around the Parks

Reports are in alphabetical order by park/program name.

- *Bering Land Bridge National Preserve* - On September 6, the NPS opened a new Heritage Center in Nome, Alaska, showcasing new exhibits developed with a Tribal Workgroup with members from Shishmaref, Wales, and Deering. The project was done in partnership with the Sitnasuak Native Corporation, and with support from the National Park Foundation and The Leona M. and Harry B. Helmsley Charitable Trust. Source: [Bering Land Bridge National Preserve](#)
- *Big South Fork National River and Recreation Area* - On September 2, the park announced that they partnered with the Back Country Horsemen of Big South Fork to replace 10 metal horse tie-stalls with pipe panel horse corrals at Station Camp Campground. A similar project will be enacted at Bear Creek Campground this winter. Source: [Big South Fork National River and Recreation Area](#)
- *Blue Ridge Parkway* - On September 9, the NPS began a rehabilitation of the James River Bridge, at milepost 63.7. The project is expected to be complete by Fall 2026. A closure will remain in place throughout the project from milepost 63.5 to 63.9. Source: [Blue Ridge Parkway](#)
- *Blue Ridge Parkway* - On September 9, the NPS reopened the parkway from milepost 241.1, just south of Doughton Park and The Bluffs restaurant, to milepost 248.1, at NC18 near Laurel Springs. This work was part of a major multi-year 75-mile infrastructure project being funded by the Great American Outdoors Act. The next section for rehabilitation will be milepost 261.2 to 280.9, with a detour in place. This section is expected to be complete later this fall, and the full project is expected to be complete in 2026. Source: [Blue Ridge Parkway](#)
- *Cape Hatteras National Seashore* - On September 4, the park put out a press release acknowledging the efforts of the North Carolina Beach Buggy Association and the local community for their efforts cleaning beaches after Hurricane Erin hit the area. NPS staff also utilized heavy equipment to remove a "significant amount of house debris and large

pieces of broken concrete and asphalt.” They filled nine dumpsters provided by Dare County (NC). Source: [Cape Hatteras National Seashore](#)

- *Cumberland Gap National Historical Park* - A new documentary, “[How We Fight](#),” chronicles a series of protests at the park in the first months of the Trump Administration. Coalition Executive Council member Russell Galipeau, Coalition Members Margie Steigerwald and Walt Dabney, and retired Cumberland Gap chief of interpretation Carol Borneman are featured in the short film. Source: [Vimeo](#)
- *Denali National Park and Preserve* - The Denali National Park Polychrome Area Improvements Project Team, consisting of NPS and Federal Highway Administration staff, were given the 2025 Partners in Excellence Award for their efforts repairing the Denali Park Road at the Pretty Rocks Landslide. Source: [National Park Service Office of Communications](#)
- *Fire Island National Seashore* - The NPS announced a Finding of No Significant Impact for its Off-Road Vehicle Management plan. Source: [Fire Island and Great South Bay News](#), [Fire Island National Seashore](#)
- *Glacier Bay National Park and Preserve* - The park has a “new island” after the retreating Alsek Glacier lost contact with a rock feature known as Prow Knob. It is now surrounded by the waters of Alsek Lake. NASA made the announcement after it was recorded in images taken by satellite Landsat 9 in August. Source: [Live Science](#)
- *Glacier National Park* - On October 1, the park will begin a project to replace a deep culvert on Two Medicine Road. The project is expected to be complete in November. The road will remain closed throughout the project, and may remain closed to vehicles for the winter, depending on snowfall. This project is part of a larger Two Medicine Road rehabilitation and utility replacement project that is expected to wrap up in Fall 2027. Source: [Glacier National Park](#)
- *Grand Teton National Park* - The Teton Science Schools have given Rob Wallace the Murie Spirit of Conservation Award for his efforts getting the Kelly Parcel preserved as part of the park. Rob worked for the NPS at Grand Teton for four seasons and as the head of congressional affairs, and served as the assistant secretary for fish and wildlife and parks for the Department of the Interior from 2019-2021. He is also a founding member of Grand Teton National Park Foundation. Source: [WyoFile](#)
- *Grand Teton National Park* - The National Park Service and Federal Highway Administration gave the Innovation and Development Excellence Award to a large team that included Grand Teton landscape architect Jessica Brown, Intermountain Region transportation coordinator Sena Wiley, and Intermountain Region civil engineer Michael Kulbacki. The award honors efforts to manage a “wide-ranging and complex portfolio in the park” and creating an adaptive pavement preservation program. Source: [National Park Service Office of Communications](#)

- *Independence National Historical Park* - The Naval Supply Systems Command Weapon Systems Support has been partnering with the NPS to help educate the public on the history and mission of the U.S. Navy and promoting the NPS' "Healthy Parks, Healthy People" initiative through a daily push-up challenge. The effort was in honor of the Navy and Marine Corps' 250th birthday. Source: [Defense Visual Information Distribution Service](#)
- *Independence National Historical Park - Hidden City* published [an article](#) outlining local efforts to continue to tell the history of slavery in the wake of the park being ordered to remove interpretive exhibits. Source: *Hidden City*
- *Harmony Hall* - On September 2, the NPS began a project to stabilize the Want Water Ruins near Harmony Hall. The project is expected to be complete at the end of the month. The site will remain closed throughout the project. Source: [National Capital Parks - East](#)
- *National Historic Landmarks* (an NPS-administered program) - On July 28, the former home of Dr. Isaac Moore, Sr., in Old Colorado City, Colorado, was listed as a National Historic Landmark. It served as a safe resting place for Black people, first listed in the "Green Book" in the 1930s. Source: [Rocky Mountain PBS](#)
- *New River Gorge National Park and Preserve* - On September 4, the park announced that availability of oral history recordings on the park's website. The park had collected over 350 recordings since the late 1970s, and was able to digitize them in 2024 with help from the National Archives Museum. Recordings can be searched alphabetically or by topic. Source: [New River Gorge National Park and Preserve](#)
- *Olympic National Park* - On September 9, contractor Geo Stabilization will begin a project to repair a section of the northern bank of the Quillayute River, which has been eroding for several years and endangering Mora Road. The project is expected to be complete by November 1. Traffic will be reduced to one lane for a quarter-mile during the project, incurring delays. Source: [Olympic National Park](#)
- *Point Reyes National Seashore* - *The Guardian* published [an article](#) about the ongoing closure of long-term dairy leases in the park, and the subsequent restoration efforts. Source: *The Guardian*
- *U.S. Park Police* - On August 25, the Interior Secretary Doug Burgum signed a Secretary's Order moving the United States Park Police under his role's purview. It was previously under the supervision of the NPS director and the Interior assistant secretary for fish and wildlife and parks. Source: [WTOP](#)
- *Valles Caldera National Preserve*- The NPS announced a Finding of No Significant Impact for its Fire Management Plan. Source: [Los Alamos Daily Post](#)
- *White Sands National Park* - *SFGate* published [an article](#) about a team of researchers and

NASA's Johnson Space Center that is designing a robot dog for exploration on Mars. The robot, called Legged Autonomous Surface Science in Analogue Environments, or LASSIE, was tested at White Sands, which has a powdery surface similar to Mars. Source: [SFGate](#)

- *Yellowstone National Park* - A new book, *Waking Up in the Wilderness*, by Natalie Ogbourne, was recently published. It is a memoir of Natalie's lifelong visits and one-time employment in Yellowstone. Source: [Radio Iowa](#)
- *Yellowstone National Park* - The U.S. Geological Survey published [an article](#) about the a specially-trained team that removes trash from Yellowstone's thermal features utilizing a variety of tools to protect themselves and the delicate formations. In 2025, the crew has collected over 13,000 pieces of trash, 4,000 rocks and sticks thrown in by visitors, and over 300 hats from hydrothermal areas. It is estimated that they have covered 1,300 miles of trails and boardwalks on foot and 11,000 miles by vehicle to do the work. The team also conducts a variety of scientific monitoring studies, installs signage, remediates footprints and graffiti, provides visitor education, and supervises maintenance work in geothermal areas. Source: U.S. Geological Survey
- *Yellowstone National Park* - [SFGate](#) published [an article](#) about the last manned fire lookout in the park, located on Mount Washburn. Source: [SFGate](#)
- *Yellowstone National Park* - On August 28, a new study was [published in Science](#), showing that bison in the Yellowstone region migrate over 1,000 miles a year, grazing on different habitats and enriching the soil and herbivores as they move. Source: [The New York Times](#)
- *Yosemite National Park* - Data collected from the NPS showed that the park had a 40% increase in rescues from January to August of 2024 to the same period in 2025, though it had only a 7% increase in visitation. Source: [Adventure](#)
- *Yosemite National Park* - [myMotherLode.com](#) published [an article](#) about the restoration of the ceremonial roundhouse in Indian Village, completed this summer with personnel from the NPS and Yosemite Ancestral Stewards Crew, and volunteers. Source: [myMotherLode.com](#)
- *Zion National Park* - On August 12, Utah's Congressional delegation sent a letter to Interior Secretary Doug Burgum urging the department to cancel any efforts by the park to enact a reservation-based visitor management plan. On September 2, the Washington County (UT) Commission unanimously passed a resolution opposing a reservation-based visitor management plan. The representatives argue that the local economy is tied to visitation and local government has invested millions to help the park deal with management issues associated with visitation increases. A draft Visitor Use Management plan is expected to be released later this year. Source: [St. George News](#)

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

- Chad Alan Bassett, 51, passed away on August 25. Chad worked for a time in the maintenance division at Yellowstone National Park. Source: [Gettysburg Connection](#)
- Ferel Lamar Campbell, 90, passed away on September 8. Ferel was the son of an NPS ranger and grew up in Bryce Canyon National Park and Zion National Park. He later went on to work for the NPS for several years in the late 1950s, including on a trail crew at Zion, and other stints at Bryce Canyon, Grand Canyon National Park, and Mesa Verde National Park. Source: [Legacy/Metcalf Hurricane Valley Mortuary](#)
- John P. Campbell, 89, passed away recently. John was involved with Friends of Virgin Islands National Park for a time. Source: [The Concord Bridge](#)
- Glenda M. LeClare, 77, passed away on September 13. Glenda “worked at Yellowstone National Park after her retirement”. Source: [News-Press Now](#)
- Joan “Jody” Magnuson, 94, passed away on August 22. Jody worked for the NPS at Rocky Mountain National Park, “serving in several administrative support positions,” as well as serving in “unofficial roles” supporting backcountry ranger stations, cabins, and summer residences while her partner Don worked as a seasonal ranger from 1957-1975. Source: [Estes Park News](#)

In the News

- Rob Wallace has joined the advisory board for the University of Wyoming’s Haub School of Environment and Natural Resources. Rob worked for the NPS, both as a seasonal park ranger at Grand Teton National Park, and as the assistant director for congressional affairs. Source: [University of Wyoming News](#)

Retired

- Jennifer Smith retired as the superintendent of New Bedford Whaling National Historical Park on August 29. Source: [SouthCoast Today](#)
- U.S. Park Police chief Jessica Taylor has retired from the force, and will take on a new role as the chief security and resiliency officer with the Social Security Administration. Source: [WTOP](#)

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.

- *National Park Service* - Public comment is open through October 9 on efforts to improve visitor services in national parks, “including more efficient methods for delivering and managing those services.” The request for information is in response to Executive Order 14314, “Making American Beautiful Again by Improving Our National Parks.” Source: [National Park Service Office of Communications](#)
- *Cape Hatteras National Seashore* - Public comment is [open through September 29](#) on a proposal to repair the southernmost jetty in Buxton, North Carolina. Source: [Cape Hatteras National Seashore](#)
- *Freedom Riders National Monument* - Public comment is [open through September 24](#) on a master plan for the Bus Burning Site in Calhoun County, Alabama. Source: [Freedom Riders National Monument](#)
- *George Washington Memorial Parkway* - Public comment is open through [October 9](#) on a plan to replace the cantilever structure and retaining walls between Cabin John Parkway and the Macarthur Boulevard exit ramp, and demolishing the unused Glen Echo Overpass. Source: [George Washington Memorial Parkway](#)
- *Grand Teton National Park* - Public comment is [open through September 23](#) on proposed improvements at Taggart Lake, including a larger parking lot, new toilets, a potable water station, a redesigned trailhead and trail linkages, an accessible trail bridge, shoreline improvements, and facility improvements to the Cottonwood Creek picnic area. Source: [Grand Teton National Park](#)
- *National Mall and Memorial Parks* - Public comment is [open through October 8](#) on the location for the proposed Women’s Suffrage Memorial. Source: [National Mall and Memorial Parks](#)
- *National Mall and Memorial Parks* - Public comment is [open through October 12](#) on the design for the Fallen Journalists Memorial, to be located in Washington, DC. Source: [WUSA9](#)
- *Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument* - The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has opened public comment through September 29 on a draft recovery plan for the Sonoyta mud turtle, which is found only in the U.S. at Quitobaquito Springs in the park. The plan can be reviewed [here](#) and comments can be submitted by mail or email. Source: [Daily Independent](#)
- *Pearl Harbor National Memorial* - Public comment is [open through October 4](#) on a Ford Island NPS Sites Management Plan. Source: [Pearl Harbor National Memorial](#)

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

- *Proposal to rescind BLM Public Lands Rule* - On September 10, Interior Secretary Doug Burgum proposed canceling the Public Lands Rule, which was established in 2024 to give conservation uses equal status with commercial uses in land management decisions by the Bureau of Land Management. [Public comments](#) are being accepted until November 10. Source: [Associated Press](#)
- *New DOI appointees* - On September 3, Interior Secretary Doug Burgum announced the appointment of two new positions at the Department of the Interior: Michael Boren, as acting principal deputy assistant secretary of policy, management and budget; and Janel Broderick, as acting principal deputy assistant of Indian Affairs. Source: [Department of the Interior](#)
- *WY mine change approval* - On September 9, the Department of the Interior approved a change in the Black Butte Mine plan, allowing it to expand into two new areas and recover 9.2 million more tons of coal. The mine expansion was expedited through new “alternative arrangements under the National Environmental Policy Act,” including a 10-day public comment period. Source: [Department of the Interior](#)
- *Coal lease sales move forward* - On September 2, the Department of the Interior announced it is moving forward with coal lease sales on Bureau of Land Management lands in Alabama, Montana, and Utah this fall, totaling just over 15,000 acres. Source: [Department of the Interior](#)

Congressional Actions

New Public Laws

Nothing to report.

Senate Actions

Nothing to report.

House of Representatives Actions

September 2:

The Committee on Rules held a hearing on a number of House actions, including H.J. Res. 106, providing for Congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of the rule submitted by the Bureau of Land Management relating to “Central Yukon Record of Decision and Approved Resource Management Plan.” Testimony was heard from Chairman Comer, and Representatives Fleischmann, Kaptur, and Garcia of California. The Central Yukon Resource Management Plan includes actions that would affect Ambler Road project, which is an issue of concern for the National Park Service and The Coalition to Protect America’s National Parks for its potential effects of Gates of the Arctic National Park and Preserve.

September 3:

The House filed a report providing for consideration of House Joint Resolution 106 (see above), then passed it by a ye-and-nay vote of 215 yeas to 210 nays.

September 10:

The Committee on Natural Resources held a hearing on the following:

- H.R. 573, the “Studying NEPA’s Impact on Projects Act,” which would direct the Council on Environmental Quality to report on litigation related to National Environmental Policy Act reviews, “the length and costs of the environmental impact statements and environmental assessments prepared,” and the amount of time NEPA reviews take;
- H.R. 4503, the “ePermit Act,” which seeks to “improve environmental reviews and authorizations through the use of interactive, digital, and cloud-based platforms;”
- H.R. 4776, the “SPEED Act,” which would amend NEPA “to clarify ambiguous provisions and facilitate a more efficient, effective, and timely environmental review process.”

Testimony was heard from Chairman Westerman and Representatives Yakym and Johnson of South Dakota; and public witnesses.

Incidents

Listed alphabetically by park/program.

Cape Cod National Seashore

Dolphin pod rescue

On September 13, seven dolphins became stranded at low tide at Wellfleet. They were rescued by a team of staff and volunteers from the International Fund for Animal Welfare and personnel from the NPS. The rescued animals were transported to veterinarians for treatment, including IV fluids, then released off Herring Cove Beach in Provincetown, Massachusetts. Source:

[International Fund for Animal Welfare](#)

Cape Hatteras National Seashore

House collapse

On September 16, an unoccupied house collapsed onto the beach in Buxton, NC. Visitors are advised to stay out of the water and off the beach in the area. A pre-existing beach safety closure from the north end of Buxton to off-road vehicle ramp 43 “may need to be expanded, depending on the extent of the debris field.” It is the 12th house collapse on the beach in the last five years. Source: [Cape Hatteras National Seashore](#)

Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area

Drowning

On September 3, a 30-year-old was swimming with family members near the Kittatinny Point picnic area when they got tired while attempting to swim across the river and went under the

water. They were not wearing a life jacket. Personnel from the NPS, New Jersey State Police, and Portland (PA) Volunteer Fire Department responded to the call. The individual died in the incident. The water rescue teams were able to locate the recover the individual's body. Source: [Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area](#)

Fire Island National Seashore

Riptide fatality

On August 23, a 59-year-old was swimming offshore at Sailors Haven when they got caught in a rip current and pulled westward. Lifeguards and NPS staff were able to rescue the individual and provide medical support until they could be airlifted to South Shore University Hospital in Bay Shore, New York. The individual was pronounced deceased at the hospital. Source: [Fire Island and Great South Bay News](#)

Fire Island National Seashore

Suspected suicide

On August 29, an individual jumped off the observation deck at the Fire Island Lighthouse and died in the fall. Personnel from the NPS, Marine Bureau, and Suffolk County (NY) Police responded to the incident. It is suspected to be a suicide. Suffolk County is investigating the incident and looking for any information the public can provide. Source: [Suffolk County Police Department](#)

Gettysburg National Military Park

Vandalism

On September 14, an individual etched their initials on the 44th New York Infantry Monument. Pictures were captured of the individual and the NPS is asking for any information the public can provide. Source: [WGAL](#)

Golden Gate National Recreation Area

Separated child found

On September 6, the Marin County (CA) Search and Rescue team was wrapping up a rope rescue training when an individual said that their 10-year-old child had run ahead of them on the Coastal Trail above Rodeo Beach, and they were now missing. The team contacted the NPS and coordinated a search of trails in the area. An NPS staff member on a dirt bike located the individual, who had climbed "several hundred feet in elevation and traveled more than a mile." They were transported back to their parent. Source: [San Francisco Chronicle](#), [Marin County Search and Rescue Facebook page](#)

Grand Canyon National Park

Vehicle goes off rim

On September 7, a vehicle with a single occupant, aged 27-years-old, went over the rim near the

South Kaibab Trailhead. The individual's body was found 300 feet below the rim and responders utilized technical rope rescue techniques to access them. Their body was then transported to the rim by helicopter and transferred to the Coconino County (AZ) Medical Examiner's Office. An investigation into the incident is being conducted and no further information was given, though the park did provide a link and phone number for the suicide and crisis lifeline in its press release. Source: [Grand Canyon National Park](#)

Grand Canyon National Park

Firefighter death

On September 8, a firefighter was doing suppression repair near the North Rim Entrance Station as part of the crew on the Dragon Bravo Fire (more details on fire in "Wildfires" below), when they suffered a heart attack. A paramedic attempted resuscitation, but was unsuccessful. Source: [AZ Family](#)

Isle Royale National Park

Medical emergency

On September 9, a 63-year-old had a "medical emergency" at the park. The U.S. Coast Guard conducted a nighttime hoist rescue to extract the individual. They transported the individual to emergency services. No other information was disclosed about the individual's condition. Source: [mLive](#)

Joshua Tree National Park

Flooding

On September 8, the park announced that the Oasis of Mara trail was hit by summer monsoonal rains, causing erosion of the paved trail and impacts to the cultural site. The trail will remain closed until repairs can be made. Repairs will be made in consultation with the associated Tribes. Source: [Joshua Tree National Park](#)

Lake Mead National Recreation Area

Assault

On September 2, a park visitor camping at Las Vegas Bay Campground reported that they were assaulted "with a deadly weapon," by another camper, an identified 57-year-old. When the visitor called 911, the suspect ran away. The suspect is said to have "an extensive criminal history." The NPS has asked the public for any information they can provide. Source: [KTNV](#)

Mount Rainier

Storms disable water system

On September 13, the park announced that the water system at Paradise and Narada Falls was affected by a recent rain event, necessitating the closure of potable water and restrooms in the area. The park is working to restore the water. Source: [KIRO7](#)

San Juan Island National Historical Park

White-nose syndrome

On September 2, the park announced that U.S. Geological Survey lab tests detected the presence of *Pseudogymnoascus destructans* (Pd), the fungus that causes white-nose syndrome, in three bats in a colony at English Camp. It is the first documented case of the fungus in San Juan County, Washington. White-nose syndrome is often fatal in bats. It does not cause illness in humans, but humans can spread Pd to new locations. Source: [San Juan Island National Historical Park](#)

The White House and President's Park

44-year peace demonstration removed

On September 5, a journalist from *Real America's Voice* asked President Donald Trump about the presence of a pro-peace demonstration that has been staged around the clock outside the White House since 1981, calling it "anti-America sometimes, anti-Trump at many times." On September 7, law enforcement dismantled the tent. The site's longest-serving demonstrator said that the incident was likely to end up in court. Source: [The Guardian](#)

U.S. Park Police

OIG complaint over seizure of personal property

On September 9, Public Employees for Environmental Responsibility filed an official complaint to the Office of Inspector General, arguing that the U.S. Park Police violated its own regulations when it discarded materials from 48 encampments of unhoused individuals rather than impounding and inventorying the property. Source: [Public Employees for Environmental Responsibility](#)

Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve

Plane crash

On September 8, a two-seat airplane with two people aboard crashed in the Wrangell Mountains. The two individuals, who were on a hunting trip, survived the crash and utilized a personal locator beacon satellite device to call for help. The NPS requested support from the Alaska Army National Guard, which was able to transport the two individuals to Gulkana, "where they were released to the National Park Service." No further details on the individuals' status was disclosed. Source: [Vertical](#)

Yellowstone National Park

Bear-inflicted injury

On September 16, a 29-year-old was hiking alone on the Turbid Lake Trail, about 2.5 miles from the Pelican Valley Trailhead, northeast of Mary Bay in Yellowstone Lake, when they had a "surprise encounter" with the bear. The individual began to deploy bear spray just as the bear

made contact with them. The individual “sustained significant but non-life-threatening injuries” to the chest and arm. NPS personnel responded to the scene and walked out with the hiker. They were then transported by ambulance to the Lake Medical Clinic, then flown to a nearby hospital for further treatment. The park has closed the Turbid Lake Trail until further notice. Due to the nature of the incident being a defensive reaction during a surprise encounter, the park will not be taking management action against the bear. It is the first bear-inflicted injury since 2021 in the park. Source: [Yellowstone National Park](#)

Wildfires

- *Grand Canyon National Park* - On July 4, lightning struck south of an area known as the Basin near the W1 Road, causing the Dragon Bravo Fire. It was originally allowed to burn, with fire crews monitoring its progress. It grew slowly to 120 acres after seven days. On July 11, winds shifted and increased dramatically, headed toward the North Rim facilities. All facilities were evacuated. On July 12, the fire jumped several fire containment lines, and personnel detected a potential chlorine gas leak from the water treatment facility, requiring the evacuation of firefighters, grounding of aircraft, and evacuation of the North Kaibab Trail, South Kaibab Trail, and Phantom Ranch area. Early on July 13, the fire burned over the developed area of the North Rim, destroying or damaging 235 structures, including the historic Grand Canyon Lodge and an NPS visitor center. On August 15, the park posted a photo of the popular “Brightly the Burro” bronze statue, which was safely removed from the remains of the lodge, with a small amount of damage. It is unclear whether the statue will be restored or replaced when the lodge is rebuilt. On August 20, the park reopened the South Kaibab Trail from the trailhead to the Tipoff, the Tonto Trail from the Tipoff to Havasupai Gardens, and the Bright Angel Trail from the trailhead to Pipe Creek Resthouse. All three have been closed since July 13 due to safety concerns related to the Dragon Bravo Fire. On August 24, an interagency Burned Area Emergency Response team [published](#) a Soil Burn Severity map for the fire. As of September 14, the fire was 145,504 acres and 86% contained, with 605 personnel assigned. Source: *Watch Duty* (app), [AZ Central](#), [Inciweb](#), [Grand Canyon National Park Facebook page](#), [KJZZ](#), Grand Canyon National Park ([8/20](#), [8/24](#))
- *Mount Rainier National Park* - On September 5, the park announced the closure of the Naches Peak Loop Trail, Pacific Crest Trail south to Laughingwater Creek/Three Lakes Trail, Shriners Peak Trail, Deerk Creek Trailhead, and Owyhigh Lakes Trailhead due to heavy smoke and hazardous air quality caused by the Wildcat Fire, which is burning outside the park on the Okanogan-Wenatchee National Forest. Source: [Mount Rainier National Park Facebook page](#)
- *North Cascades National Park, Ross Lake National Recreation Area*:

 - Perry Fire - On August 28, lightning struck the area near Little Beaver at Ross Lake. As of September 14, it was estimated at 1,763 acres and 30% contained, with 21 personnel assigned. Trails and camps in the Little Beaver area of Ross Lake are currently closed.
 - Arctic Fire - On September 10, lightning struck the area near Mount Prophet west of

Ross Lake. As of September 14, the Arctic Fire was 0.5 acres

- Neve Fire - On September 10, lightning struck the area between Thunder Creek and Fourth of July Trails. As of September 14, the Neve Fire was 0.75 acres and 100% contained.
- Source: North Cascades National Park ([8/28](#), [9/1](#), [9/8](#), [9/11](#), [9/12](#), [9/14](#)), [Cascadia Daily News](#), [Inciweb](#) (Perry Fire)
- *Olympic National Park* - On July 6, a human-caused fire began on the Olympic National Forest near the Mt. Rose Trailhead, southeast of the Staircase area of the park. On July 30, the Staircase Campground and “areas across the causeway on the north side of Lake Cushman” were evacuated. Many trails and wilderness camps around the Staircase area and in the North Fork Skokomish Drainage remain closed. As of September 14, the Bear Gulch Fire was 10,843 acres and 9% contained, with 43 personnel assigned. Source: Olympic National Park ([7/7](#), [7/8](#), [Fire Conditions and Updates](#)), Watch Duty (app), [Inciweb](#), [Mason County \(WA\) Sheriff’s Office Facebook page](#), [Olympic National Park Facebook page](#)
- *Olympic National Park* - On September 6, lightning started a fire about a half-mile southeast of the Sunnybrook Wilderness Campsite. As of September 10, the Sunnybrook Meadow Fire was estimated at 0.1 acres. Crews are monitoring fire behaviors, which has been minimal thus far due to “high humidity recoveries at night.” Source: [Olympic National Park](#)

Follow-ups on Previously Reported Incidents

- *Blue Ridge Parkway*- On September 15, the park reopened a 26-mile section of road from milepost 355.3 at Ridge Junction Overlook to milepost 382 at Asheville, North Carolina. The Section of road has been closed since Hurricane Helene hit the area and triggered landslides in September 2024. Source: [Blue Ridge Parkway](#)
- *Grand Teton National Park* - On September 2, the 32-year-old charged with a misdemeanor for cutting a switchback while attempting a climbing/running record on the Grand Teton in September 2024 (see [10/30/24](#) and [5/28/25 Coalition Reports](#)) was found guilty. A sentencing hearing will take place at a later date. Lawyers for the defendant have stated they plan to appeal. Source: [GearJunkie](#)
- *Grand Teton National Park* - The 43-year-old kayaker who went missing while paddling in high winds on Jackson Lake in June 2024 (see [6/26/24 Coalition Report](#)) was found by a non-profit search and recovery organization called “Bruce’s Legacy,” utilizing sonar. The deceased individual was found at a depth of 420 feet. Source: [Grand Teton National Park](#)
- *Great Smoky Mountains National Park* - On September 12, the park fully reopened US 441/Newfound Gap Road for the first time since it was hit by a landslide and washed out during a storm in early August (see [8/6/25](#) and [8/18/25 Coalition Reports](#)). The repairs were completed 18 days ahead of schedule. Source: [Great Smoky Mountains National Park](#)

- *Yellowstone National Park* - On September 8, the park announced a full retraction of fishing restrictions that had been put in place in mid-July and partially lifted in late August (see [7/23/25](#) and [9/3/25 Coalition Reports](#)). They were able to lift the restrictions due to cooling temperatures, precipitation, and favorable weather forecasts for the foreseeable future, which will put far less strain on wild trout fisheries. Source: [Yellowstone National Park](#)
- *Zion National Park* - On September 5, the park reopened the Weeping Rock Trail and Shuttle Stop 7 for public use for the first time since a November 2023 rockfall (see [11/29/23 Coalition Report](#)). The park has repaired trail tread, railings, and stairs, and geologists assessed the site. Visitors are reminded that Zion is a geologically active area and they should remain alert. Source: [Zion National Park](#)

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- Regular Correspondent: Chris Soller
- Issue Contributors: Mike Murray, Chris Olijnyk, Bill Walters

If you see something that might be of interest to Coalition members, send it to:
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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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