



The Coalition Report

Wednesday, February 18, 2026

Coalition Actions

The Coalition joined several other organizations in [filing a lawsuit](#), represented by Democracy Forward, against the Department of the Interior to challenge the censorship of American history and science in parks.

The Coalition joined two dozen other organizations in submitting [a letter](#) to the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee opposing S. 446, a bill that would prohibit Big Cypress National Preserve from being designated as national wilderness.

We joined the Environmental Defense Center and several dozen other organizations in submitting [formal comments](#) to the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management opposing the draft proposed 11th National Outer Continental Shelf Oil and Gas Leasing program, citing its conflicts with existing law, disregard for prior withdrawals, and threats to marine ecosystems.

The Coalition joined the National Parks Conservation Association and the Badlands Conservation Alliance in submitting [comments](#) to the Bureau of Land Management Montana-Dakotas Office on its 2026 Q3 oil and gas lease sale, recommending they designate nine parcels for deferral due to proximity to Theodore Roosevelt National Park wilderness areas and the Maah Daah Hey Trail, a recreation corridor that connects the park's three units.

We continue to provide statements and interviews to the media highlighting challenges to the National Park System. Recent work includes:

- [One year after the Valentine's Day firings, America's national parks remain in crisis](#), press release
- [National Park Service Director must champion parks](#), press release
- [New lawsuit challenges Trump order to remove 'corrosive ideology' from national parks](#),

PoliticoPro

- [More history exhibits pulled from national parks, including Grand Canyon](#), *The Washington Post*

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.

- *NPS Director nominated* - On February 11, Scott Socha was nominated to be the Director of the National Park Service. Scott is the president for parks and resorts at Delaware North Australia. The nomination will next go to the Senate for confirmation. Source: [National Parks Traveler](#)
- *Non-agency flags to be taken down* - On January 21, the Department of the Interior published [a memo](#) dictating that flags flown in public spaces that DOI agencies manage (including the NPS) must be “only the U.S. flag, flags of the DOI, and the POW/MIA flag,” with a number of exemptions for Tribal or interagency partners, historical context flags, and others. Source: *Department of the Interior*
- *Foreign language translations taken down or altered* - Several NPS websites have been scrubbed of foreign language translations entirely, while others have added the statement, “English is the official language and authoritative version of all federal information.” It has included the removal of Spanish-language translation tools from *Recreation.gov*. The Department of the Interior made a statement that the move was in alignment with a May 2025 Presidential Executive Order designating English as the official language of the U.S. The order is not a law and is only applicable to the Executive Branch of the U.S. government. Source: [National Parks Traveler](#)
- *Censorship updates* - News of censorship at a variety of NPS units continues to trickle in, including a successful injunction at one park. The following is a selection:
 - *Grand Teton National Park* - A sign at the Craig Thomas Discovery and Visitor Center adjacent to a statue of explorer Gustavus Cheyney Doane describing his role in the 1870 massacre of Piegan Blackfeet people has been removed. Source: [The Travel](#)
 - *Hubbell Trading Post National Historic Site* - One of the interpretive panels at the visitor center, describing Ganado Mucho, a Navajo leader known for helping settle disputes with rangers, was removed for its reference to his incarceration at Fort Sumner after the Long Walk. Source: [AZCentral](#)
 - *Independence National Historical Park* - On February 16, a federal judge granted a preliminary injunction in favor of the City of Philadelphia, reinstating the exhibits about enslaved peoples at the President’s House. In its decision, the court’s opinion

compared the federal government's actions to those of the Ministry of Truth in the book 1984. Source: [FOX29](#)

- *Little Bighorn National Monument* - The park recently removed signage “describing broken promises to Native American Tribes and references to the loss of Indigenous culture and language under boarding schools.” The week of February 2, the Northern Cheyenne Tribal Council unanimously voted 11-0 to prevent changes and removals of markers, monuments, and signage at the park. Source: [Military Times](#)
- *Medgar and Myrlie Evers Home National Monument* - On February 5, *Mississippi Today* published an article documenting the removal of brochures from the park due to references to racism and violence. Hours after the article was published, the brochures were returned to the park. There is evidence to suggest that new brochures with edited language will be released soon. The site commemorates the lives of civil rights activists Medgar and Myrlie Evers; Medgar was assassinated by a vocal white supremacist, who was not convicted until 31 years later. Source: [The Travel](#), [Mississippi Today](#)
- *Questionable ethics practices at Freedom250* - The Center for Western Priorities published an article reporting on the movement of funds from America250, an organization formed by Congress through a bipartisan bill, to Freedom 250, President Donald Trump's new organization, which has partnered with right-wing political and Christian nationalist groups and is selling access to President Trump. The National Park Foundation is acting as a pass-through for money going to and from Freedom 250. Source: [Center for Western Priorities](#)
- *NPS external communications policies* - *SFGate* published [an article](#) outlining, in-depth, the ways in which the Department of the Interior is consolidating and monitoring all external communications from NPS units, except for safety issues. Source: *SFGate*
- *International travel down to national parks* - *USA Today* published [an article](#) documenting the decline in international visitation to the United States, including a segment about national parks. Intrepid Travel, an Australian company that offers over 300 U.S. national park tours, said bookings are down 42% for 2026, including Canadian bookings down 93%. Source: *USA Today*
- *Water shortages at parks* - *Rocky Mountain PBS* published [an article](#) about a group of scientists working with the NPS to identify opportunities to increase water supply and limit water system issues. A number of parks have faced water shortages in recent years, including Big Bend National Park, Glacier National Park, and Grand Canyon National Park. Source: *Rocky Mountain PBS*
- *“Most disappointing parks”* - The outdoor clothing brand KÜHL published a “National Parks ‘Paris Syndrome’ Report,” identifying the most disappointing parks through an analysis of 96,000 reviews on TripAdvisor and Google. Their top three most disappointing

parks (includes only “National Parks” in name, not all NPS units) were Death Valley, Petrified Forest, and Zion. The study also noted that the most common complaints were “packed” and “disappointed,” and that remote Alaska parks “consistently exceed expectations.” Source: [KÜHL](#)

- *Op-ed about loss of outdoorsy Republican leadership* - *The New York Times* published [an op-ed](#) documenting the Republican Party’s shift away from leadership invested in outdoor recreation, such as hunting and fishing, and how that has affected environmental policy. Source: *The New York Times*

Around the Parks

Reports are in alphabetical order by park/program name.

- *Apostle Islands National Lakeshore* - On February 16, the park reopened its ice caves for the first time since 2015. The caves only open when ice is thick and stable enough for visitor safety. Source: [Milwaukee Journal Sentinel](#)
- *Appalachian National Scenic Trail* - The Appalachian Trail Conservancy has started a new initiative, the Appalachian Trail Community Conservation Collaborative, which will engage an inaugural group of seven community teams in workshops to consider opportunities and strategies to support conservation. Source: [National Parks Traveler](#)
- *Bent’s Old Fort National Historic Site* - On February 12, Colorado Preservation published its annual list of Colorado’s “Most Endangered Places,” which included the main adobe building at the park. Structural problems have closed the building to visitor access for over a year now. The NPS stated that it “is working to complete a concept study of alternative treatments that prioritize sustainable operations and improved visitor experience.” Source: [KRCC](#)
- *Big Bend National Park* - On February 12, the park began a two-week project to remove invasive tamarisk trees along the Rio Grande and at the Langford Hot Springs area. Herbicide will be used to treat the stumps. Closures may be in effect at times. Source: [The Hill](#)
- *Blue Ridge Parkway* - On February 12, the NPS announced the selection of Southern Highland Craft Guild, Inc., to operate visitor services at the Folk Art Center. They are the current concessioner and the new contract will last ten years. Source: [Blue Ridge Parkway](#)
- *Cape Cod National Seashore* - On February 3, the park began demolition of the Bartlett House, a 1960 1,200-square-foot cottage on the dunes near the Coast Guard Life Saving Station. The cottage was subject to frequent storm damage throughout its history, and especially in recent years. In 2024, the park offered the house to any interested government agency or nonprofit serving unhoused populations that was willing to move it from its location. The demolition is being executed by Apex Abatement and Demolition,

and is expected to take two to three weeks. Source: [The Provincetown Independent](#)

- *Chesapeake and Ohio Canal National Historical Park* - On February 5, the NPS announced the completion of the Great Falls Area (MD) Development Concept Plan. Source: [Chesapeake and Ohio Canal National Historical Park](#)
- *Death Valley National Park* - On February 11, the park announced the reopening of the Salt Creek Boardwalk, which was destroyed by flash flooding in August 2022 and August 2023. The restoration project included reconstruction of the boardwalk, improved parking and trailhead, new vault toilets, flood cleanup, and new signage. The new facilities were designed to better resist flooding. Interpretive signs will be installed in “a few months.” The project was funded by the NPS, Federal Highway Administration, Federal Lands Transportation Program, and donations from Death Valley Natural History and The Fund for People in Parks. Source: [Death Valley National Park](#)
- *Glacier National Park* - New research by scientists from the NPS and U.S. Geological Society was published in *Ecosphere*, finding that the number of native mountain goats in the park declined from 2008-2019. Research for the projects was collected through a citizen science project utilizing many volunteers at 37 sites across the park each summer. Source: [KPVI](#)
- *Grand Teton National Park* - In Summer 2026, three major, multi-year projects will take place in the park, including a renovation at Mormon Row, trail project at Taggart Lake, and construction on Death Canyon Road. Source: [Jackson Hole News and Guide](#)
- *Haleakalā National Park* - On February 16, the park closed the Headquarters Visitor Center for an interior remodel. It is expected to remain closed through February 27. On February 19, the Haleakalā Visitor Center will also close for remodeling, with a reopening date of April 10. Source: [Haleakalā National Park](#)
- *Lake Clark National Park and Preserve* - *Alaska Public Media* published an article about a proposed mine on a 20,000-acre inholding, the Johnson Tract, and growing efforts to stop its development. The project will require permits from the NPS, as well as several other federal and state agencies. A U.S. Army Corps of Engineers permit is currently being contested in federal court. Source: [Alaska Public Media](#)
- *Lake Mead National Recreation Area* - On February 7, the park will reopen Government Wash for the first time since August 2024, after a significant restoration of unauthorized encampments, roads, and resource damage from prolonged stays. Over 12,000 pounds of litter and debris were removed. The park also created 51 defined campsites, improved infrastructure, and restored natural resources in the area. Source: [Lake Mead National Recreation Area](#)
- *Rocky Mountain National Park* - The *Estes Valley Voice* published an article about the Rocky Mountain Conservancy’s efforts to support accessibility in the park. They provide

six all-terrain wheelchairs, offered for free to visitors through the Estes Park Mountain Shop. The Conservancy also funds wheelchair sleds and tethers for winter use, and has a programming bus equipped with a wheelchair lift and space for two wheelchairs. In May 2026, the Conservancy will publish a comprehensive Visitor Access Guide for the park.

Source: [Estes Valley Voice](#)

- *Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area* - On February 12, the California Fish and Game Commission voted unanimously to list six groups of Central Coast and Southern California mountain lions as threatened under the California Endangered Species Act due to habitat loss and fragmentation. Source: [Santa Barbara Independent](#)
- *Statue of Liberty National Monument* - The park recently completed a five-year, \$30 million restoration project of the walls and deck of Fort Wood, the fort that forms the base of the Statue of Liberty. The project was executed by Allegrone Companies and funded by the Great American Outdoors Act. Source: [iBerkshires.com](#)
- *Wild and Scenic Rivers Program* (an NPS-administered program) - The *River Reporter* published [an article](#) about Camp FIMFO, a \$40 million proposed project to renovate a historic campground in Highland, New York, adjacent to the Upper Delaware River, a designated Wild and Scenic River. The NPS declared the project to be out of conformance with the River Management Plan (RMP) in 2023, but the project continues to move forward. The article considers tools that the NPS could use to close the project, including the possibility of eminent domain. The owner of the project, Northgate Resorts, has stated that they are working closely with the Town of Highland to ensure the project conforms with local zoning laws, which “were already reviewed by NPS and determined to be in conformance with the RMP.” Source: *River Reporter*
- *Whiskeytown National Recreation Area* - On February 9, the NPS published a rule in the *Federal Register* opening 80 miles of trails for bicycle and e-bike use, starting on March 11. Source: [Whiskeytown National Recreation Area](#)
- *Yellowstone National Park* - In a formal comment published in *Global Ecology and Conservation*, scientists from Utah State University and Colorado State University argue that a 2025 paper claiming that willow populations surged 1,500% after wolves were reintroduced to the park, “relies on circular reasoning and violations of basic modeling assumptions.” They argue that once those issues are addressed, evidence no longer supports claims of dramatic ecosystem changes due to the reintroduction of wolves. Source: [Science Daily](#)

Personnel Changes

- *National Parks Conservation Association* - Tiernan Sittenfeld was selected as the new president and CEO of the organization. Tiernan comes to the NPCA after over 20 years working at the League of Conservation Voters. She will start her new role on March 1.

Source: [National Parks Conservation Association](#)

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

- Ronald “Ron” James Berg, 80, passed away December 13. Ron worked on a biology study of ptarmigan in Glacier National Park in 1963. Later in his career, he became the deputy regional administrator of the Marine Fisheries Service in Juneau, Alaska, working “to preserve the national parks.” Source: [Legacy/Juneau Empire](#)
- Martin Joseph Burke, 78, passed away on February 5. Martin worked for many years as head conservator at the Harpers Ferry Center, retiring in 2004. Source: [Herald-Mail Media](#)
- Vincent “Vince” C. DeRico, 75, passed away on February 1. Vince worked for a time for the NPS as a fire warden. Source: [Legacy/A.W. Rich Funeral Home - Fairfax](#)
- William “Bill” Fountain, 76, passed away in late January. Bill worked for Olympic National Park for a time. Source: [Legacy/Sequim Valley Funeral Chapel](#)
- Jim Hart, 83, passed away on February 5. Jim was the executive director of the Friends of the Smokies for many years, starting in 2001. Source: [Paxton Media Group](#)
- Russell Kucinski, 75, passed away recently. Russell worked for a time as a geologist in the Alaska Region. Source: Bill Wade
- Donald “Don” Mitchinson, 92, passed away on February 10. Don worked for a time as a seasonal interpretive ranger at Wind Cave National Park and Jewel Cave National Monument. Source: [Times of Wayne County](#)
- Thomas “Tom” Pattalochi, 76, passed away on July 9, 2025. Tom worked for the NPS as a preservation carpenter at Point Reyes National Seashore for a time. Source: [The Press Democrat](#)
- Logan LeVerne “Verne” Shell, 90, passed away on January 30. Verne worked as a sanitation engineer at Glacier National Park in the summers of 1961 and 1962. Source: [Legacy/Lienkaemper Funeral Chapel](#)
- Dorothy Sullivan passed away recently. Dorothy spent three years work on art commissioned by the National Park Service and Trail of Tears Association, and was awarded as the 2020 Cherokee National Treasure for her efforts researching and painting the history and heritage of the Cherokee Nation. Source: [Fox23](#)

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.

- *Canaveral National Seashore* - Public comment is [open through March 13](#) on a storm adaptive management plan for the Playalinda Beach district. Source: [Canaveral National Seashore](#)
- *Cumberland Island National Seashore* - Public comment has been [extended through February 21](#) on a visitor use management plan for the park, which would increase daily visitation and camping capacity, add two beachfront pavilions, add backcountry campsites, allow for on-island retail and kayak/canoe rental, and establish bicycle access. Source: [National Parks Traveler](#)
- *Gates of the Arctic National Park and Preserve, Alaska Region* - In early December, two Native-owned regional corporations, NANA and Doyon, signed a nonbinding memorandum of understanding with the developers of the Ambler Road project, a proposed 211-mile road into interior Alaska that would cross Gates of the Arctic and have ecological consequences for the larger region. Previously, the two corporations had expressed opposition to the project, arguing that they were not adequately consulting residents along the route. A January 16 letter to shareholders from NANA stated that their new MOU does not reflect a formal change in their position or a decision to support the road. However, it does include certain requirements to protect regional interests if the road is developed, including jobs for Indigenous shareholders, subsistence protections, and limiting future road access to private and industrial use. Source: [Anchorage Daily News](#)
- *George Washington Memorial Parkway* - Public comment is [open through March 16](#) on a proposed amendment to the Glen Echo Park 2001 management plan to identify areas for future development, remove several existing structures to open space for events, improve accessibility and stormwater management, and better protect cultural and natural resources. Source: [George Washington Memorial Parkway](#)
- *Los Angeles Coastal Area Special Resource Study* - Public comment is [open through April 6](#) on a Special Resource Study of the Los Angeles coast for possible inclusion in the National Park System. Source: [National Parks Traveler](#)
- *Mammoth Cave National Park* - Public comment is [open through April 10](#) on a proposal to allow bicycle use on 37 miles of multi-use trails in the park and allow horse riding on the Houchin Ferry North/Ollie Road. Source: [Blue Ridge Outdoors](#)
- *Memphis Area Lynching Sites Special Resource Study* - Public comment is [open through April 3](#) on a Special Resource Study of eight sites in Tennessee for possible inclusion in the National Park System. Source: [National Park Service Office of Communications](#)

- *National Mall and Memorial Parks* - Public comment is [open through March 5](#) on a development concept plan for Tidal Basin, including a vehicle barrier system around the Jefferson Memorial. Source: [National Mall and Memorial Parks](#)
- *St. Croix National Scenic Riverway* - Public comment is [open through February 21](#) on a comprehensive river management plan. Source: [St. Croix National Scenic Riverway](#)
- *The White House and President's Park* - The National Capital Planning Commission has opened [public comment through March 4](#) on the East Wing Modernization Project, including the proposed construction of a 90,000-square-foot ballroom. Source: [National Trust for Historic Preservation](#)
- *Whiskeytown National Recreation Area* - Public comment is [open through February 21](#) on a proposal to rebuild Whiskeytown Environmental School, which was destroyed in the 2018 Carr Fire. Source: [Record Searchlight](#)

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.

New Public Laws

Nothing to report.

Senate Actions

February 3 - The Committee on Energy and Natural Resources met for a business meeting and favorably reported a number of bills including the following related to the National Park Service/System:

- S.91, a bill to improve federal activities relating to wildfires, including authorizing post-fire recovery activities, supporting adoption of technology, and requiring additional federal coordination;
- S.290, a bill that directs the Secretary of the Interior to upgrade existing emergency communications centers in units of the National Park System to Next Generation 9-1-1 systems;
- S.446, a bill that would prohibit Big Cypress National Preserve from being designated as wilderness or as a component of the National Wilderness Preservation System;
- S.1353, which would extend the authority for modifications to the Second Division Memorial in the District of Columbia; the memorial is located in President's Park in Washington, DC, and is managed and maintained by the National Park Service;
- S.1516, which would authorize the Secretary of the Interior to conduct a Special Resource Study of the Cahokia Mounds, Emerald Mounds, and Pulcher Mounds in the state of Illinois to determine if it would be eligible to become a unit of the National Park System;

- S.1518 and H.R. 1550, bills that would re-designate Saratoga National Historical Park as Saratoga National Battlefield Park; and
- S.2881, to provide for the transfer of administrative jurisdiction over certain federal land (U.S. Forest Service land and National Park Service land) in the state of California. The land is generally depicted on the map entitled “Ackerson Meadow Land Interchange” and dated February 24, 2022, and would transfer jurisdiction of lands between Yosemite National Park and Stanislaus National Forest in accordance with laws applicable to the National Park and National Forest Systems.

February 11 - The Senate received the following nominations from the President:

- William Hague, of Washington, to be an Assistant Secretary of the Interior. He currently serves as Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for Insular, International, and Ocean Affairs.
- Kevin Lilly, of Texas, to be Assistant Secretary for Fish and Wildlife. He has been acting in this position since July of 2025.
- Scott Socha, of New York, to be Director of the National Park Service. He is currently the president for parks and resorts at Delaware North Australia.

House of Representatives Actions

February 10 -

The Committee on Natural Resources: Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations held a hearing entitled “All in for America250: Public-Private Partnerships Supporting America's Semiquincentennial on our Public Lands.” Testimony was heard from Will Glasco, Chief Executive Officer, Preservation Virginia; and public witnesses. The hearing addressed the issue of the “erasure of history” in the national parks, as well as other issues associated with America 250 and Freedom 250, the two major funding groups for the United States’ 250th anniversary celebration.

The Committee on Natural Resources: Subcommittee on Federal Lands also held a hearing on a number of bills including:

- H.R. 34, the “LASSO Act,” which would require 10% of annual revenue generated by public lands, including national park areas (primarily entrance and user fees), to be deposited into the Social Security Trust Fund; and
- S.282, the “Katahdin Woods and Waters National Monument Access Act,” which would provide greater regional access to the Katahdin Woods and Waters National Monument in the state of Maine, establish the monument’s boundary, authorize land acquisition, authorize acquisition of land for the monument’s administration outside the boundary, and other activities.

Testimony was heard from Representatives Gosar, Hurd of Colorado, Min, Malliotakis, and Moore of Utah; representatives from federal, state and local agencies; and public witnesses. No one testified on behalf of the NPS or Department of the Interior.

February 11 - The Committee on Natural Resources held a markup on a number of bills including:

- H.R. 5497, the “Apostle Islands National Park and Preserve Act,” which would re-designate Apostle Islands National Lakeshore to Apostles Islands National Park and Preserve;
- H.R. 1352, which would designate the General George C. Marshall House, in the Commonwealth of Virginia, as an affiliated area of the National Park System;
- H.R. 1945, the “America's National Churchill Museum National Historic Landmark Act,” which would designate the museum and the Churchill memorial currently listed on the National Register of Historic Places as a National Historic Landmark and directs the Secretary of the Interior to conduct a Special Resource Study to determine the eligibility of the Landmark in Fulton, Missouri, on the grounds of Westminster College, to be a unit of the National Park System;
- H.R. 4671, the “Ensuring Casualty Assistance for our Firefighters Act,” which would direct the Secretary of the Interior to develop a Wildland Fire Management Casualty Assistance Program for firefighters and their families with regard to firefighters injured during firefighting; and
- H.R. 6380, the “Chiricahua National Park Act,” which would designate the Chiricahua National Monument as a National Park.

H.R. 5497, H.R. 1352, and H.R. 6380 were ordered reported, as amended. H.R. 1945 and H.R. 4671 were ordered reported, without amendment.

Other Relevant Department of the Interior News

- *BIA pathway for wildland firefighting* - On February 3, the Department of the Interior announced a new partnership with the Bureau of Indian Affairs and the Bureau of Indian Education, the Native Youth Firefighter Training Program, which will give high school and post-secondary students opportunities to learn skills that prepare them for wildland firefighting careers. Source: [Department of the Interior](#)
- *BLM Materials Access Program* - On February 12, the Bureau of Land Management announced the creation of a Materials Access Program, intended to “make it easier and more affordable for the public to obtain common materials used in construction and community development” by reducing regulatory burden, creating flat pricing tiers, and launching a new online mapping tool for established community pits. Source: [Department of the Interior](#)
- *BLM proposing to revoke bison grazing* - On January 16, the Bureau of Land Management issued a Notice of Proposed Decision to rescind bison grazing permits on 63,000 acres in Montana. The proposal is a reversal of a 2022 BLM decision. The permittee, American Prairie, and several other Tribes, non-profits, and corporations filed protests, arguing the proposal would bar Tribal bison herds nationwide, undermining treaty rights and food

sovereignty. The BLM is required to review and consider protests, and after a final decision is made, administrative appeals can be made for 30 days. Source: [National Parks Traveler](#)

- “MABA 250” - On February 11, the Make American Beautiful Again commission launched MABA 250, an effort to “conserve America’s natural beauty and expand outdoor recreation opportunities” in honor of the U.S.’ 250th anniversary as a nation. Source: [Department of the Interior](#)

Incidents

Listed alphabetically by park/program.

Bryce Canyon National Park Suspected double suicide

On January 29, two individuals were found deceased a half-mile from the Mossy Cave trailhead. The two, believed to be a couple, ages 36 and 37, are believed to have died by suicide. No further details were released. Source: [St. George News](#)

Golden Gate National Recreation Area Coyote at Alcatraz

In mid-January, a coyote swam over a mile across San Francisco Bay (CA) to Alcatraz, the first documented coyote on the island since 1972. The park announced that it would wait a week to see if the animal left on its own, then would “humanely trap and remove” it to a location outside San Francisco, citing concerns that a predator could devastate nesting bird populations on the island. Source: [SFGate](#)

National Mall and Memorial Parks Lawsuit against golf course overhaul

On February 13, two Washington, DC, residents sued the Department of the Interior for its efforts to overhaul the East Potomac Golf Course, arguing it violates its congressional mandate to make the park for the recreation and pleasure of the people and did not follow the National Environmental Policy Act for assessing impacts. Source: [NBC Washington](#)

Rocky Mountain National Park Climber rescue

On February 6, a 47-year-old and 50-year-old were climbing the Kiener’s Route of Longs Peak at about 14,000 feet when they called for emergency assistance, reporting they were “incapacitated, unable to continue their route, and had not planned to remain overnight.” NPS staff maintained communication with the individuals overnight, and the next morning, personnel from the NPS and Larimer County (CO) Search and Rescue began hiking toward their location. Several air resources were requested, but had to abort due to wind conditions. That afternoon, a

Colorado National Guard helicopter with personnel from Alpine Rescue and Rocky Mountain Rescue were able to land on the summit of Longs Peak. The climbers, who had moved to the summit, were located and flown to Upper Beaver Meadows Road. Source: [Rocky Mountain National Park](#)

Stonewall National Monument

Pride flag rally

On February 9, in accordance with Department of the Interior guidance (see “National/Regional NPS Updates” above), the park took down its LGBTQ+ Pride flag and replaced it with an American flag. On February 12, after several days of protests, a group of elected officials raised the Pride flag next to the U.S. flag on the site. Trump Administration officials have stated the flag will come back down, but, as of February 16, it remained in place. Source: [The New York Times](#), [Yahoo](#)

Follow-ups on Previously Reported Incidents

- *Acadia National Park* - In the wake of the death of a 24-year-old stranded during high tide on Bar Island (see [2/4/26 Coalition Report](#)), the Town of Bar Harbor has taken steps to have a boat in “warm storage” that is accessible and ready to deploy. Response to the individual was delayed because the park’s boat “did not become operational” during the incident and Bar Harbor did not have a boat in the water or in accessible warm storage for immediate deployment. Source: [Bangor Daily News](#)
- *Lake Chelan National Recreation Area, North Cascades National Park* - KPQ published an update for recovery in the community of Stehekin, following the December 2025 floods (see [12/24/25 Coalition Report](#)). The NPS has been unable to fix the roads, which has kept the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers from making repairs on the river and levees. Chelan County (WA) has authorized \$1 million to support repairs. The NPS has stated that the recovery will be “phased and long-term” and they are working with partners to evaluate next steps. Source: [KPQ](#)
- *Olympic National Park* - On February 6, the 26-year-old that had been missing since November 2025 (see [12/10/25](#) and [12/24/25 Coalition Reports](#)), was found deceased in the Sol Duc Valley. No further detail about the incident has yet been released. Source: [The Leader](#)

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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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