



The Coalition Report

Wednesday, July 22, 2026

Coalition Actions

On July 23, the Coalition, Association of National Park Rangers, and Great Old Broads for Wilderness will host a special webinar event, “[The History and Future of America's Public Lands](#),” facilitated by Coalition member Walt Dabney. Interested participants can register at the link above. *(Editor note: We ran an erroneous link the in the previous Coalition Report. Thanks to those who brought it to our attention. The link above is correct.)*

We submitted [comments](#) to U.S. Customs and Border Protection urging thoughtful improvements to border security that balance responsible land stewardship in Big Bend National Park.

The Coalition and the Association of National Park Rangers submitted [a letter](#) to the Secretary of the Interior urging the cancellation of the proposed revocation of Public Land Order 7923, which currently bars oil and gas development on lands surrounding Chaco Culture National Historical Park.

We submitted [comments](#) on Grand Teton National Park’s revised draft programmatic agreement for the Moose-Wilson Road, strongly objecting to the plan’s lack of public input in reversing the 2016 Record of Decision for the Moose-Wilson Corridor.

The Coalition joined three organizations and one individual in submitting [a protest](#) to the Bureau of Land Management Southern Nevada District for its proposed resource management plan amendment for the Purple Sage energy center project, arguing it does not properly take into account the Old Spanish National Historic Trail.

We joined several organizations in submitting [comments](#) to the Bureau of Land Management Montana/Dakotas Office Q4 2026 Oil and Gas Lease Parcel Sales, urging it to defer all proposed

parcels until a comprehensive programmatic environmental review has been completed due to effects on Theodore Roosevelt National Park.

Our staff and Executive Council continue to provide statements and interviews to the media highlighting challenges to the National Park System. Recent work includes:

- [Statement on the Trump administration's efforts to shrink Grand Staircase-Escalante and Bears Ears National Monuments](#), press release

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.

- *Change to Endangered Species Act* - On July 10, the Departments of the Interior and Commerce announced a final rule rescinding legal precedent that harms to endangered species can include modification or degradation of habitat. Under the new rule, only directly killing or injuring an endangered animal would count as harms. Habitat loss is the main reason species become endangered. Earthjustice has already stated it will pursue legal recourse. On July 17, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service announced further changes, removing the “blanket rule” to manage threatened species the same as endangered species, and requiring the designation of critical habitat to take into account economic, national security, and other relevant impacts, as well as allowing for areas to be excluded as critical habitat “if that exclusion will not cause the extinction of the species.” Source: [The New York Times](#), [Department of the Interior](#)
- *Changes to Section 106* - On July 17, the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation sent a draft revision of new Section 106 regulations under the National Historic Preservation Act. The advisory council was asked to vote on the regulations by email by July 24. The revisions strip meaningful public, Tribal, and local government participation, eliminate requirements for “avoidance, minimization, and mitigation,” jettison protections for Traditional Cultural Landscapes, and change the definition of “historic.” If approved by the advisory council, it will go to public comment. Source: [Cultural Heritage Partners](#), [The Atlantic](#)
- *Local impacts of staffing cuts* - Prospect Partners, LLC, and Hawk Eye Strategies have published fact sheets highlighting the impacts of the Department of Government Efficiency's staff cuts on the workforce in Arizona, California, Colorado, Montana, New Mexico, and Nevada. In those states, nearly 6,000 federal public lands jobs were lost in 2025, with Colorado losing the most. Source: [Prospect Partners, LLC](#)
- *Bears Ears and Grand Staircase reduced 90%* - On July 13, President Donald Trump signed executive orders calling for the reduction of Bears Ears National Monument and Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument, both by about 90% of their previous

acreage. Both have also been divided into two noncontiguous units. President Trump called the designation of the two monuments “an egregious use of government power.” The Southern Utah Wilderness Alliance intends to pursue legal action over the decision. *[Editor note: Both of these national monuments are managed by the Bureau of Land Management, not the National Park Service, but the order raises questions about authority under the Antiquities Act, putting NPS units at potential risk.]* Source: [SFGate](#)

- *Most polluted national parks* - The National Parks Conservation Association published an update to its 2019 Polluted Parks report, ranking parks on categories such as visibility, health, and climate change threats. The top most polluted parks are Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks, Joshua Tree National Park, and Mojave National Preserve. The top worst parks for hazy skies are Sequoia and Kings Canyon, Gateway Arch National Park, and Mammoth Cave National Park. The report also identified 14 parks at greatest risk due to climate change. Overall, the update showed modest improvements since the 2019 report. Source: [National Parks Conservation Association](#)
- *Park crowding* - CNN published [an article](#) about summer crowding at various national parks, and the challenges of growing visitation and shrinking staff numbers. Source: *CNN*
- *Low morale* - *Denver7* published [an article](#) about the diminishing morale due to heavy workloads and understaffing at the National Park Service. Source: *Denver7*
- *Donation of EV chargers* - Over the last nine years, BMW, working with the National Park Foundation, has donated 100 electric vehicle charging ports in and around national parks. Source: [National Park Service Office of Communications](#)
- *National Parks Traveler update* - *E&E News* published [an article](#) about the closure of *National Parks Traveler*, which took place on June 30, and the hole it leaves behind in the media landscape. Owner Kurt Repanshek said there are parties who are interested in purchasing the media outlet, though he is looking forward to retiring. Source: *E&E News*

Around the Parks

Reports are in alphabetical order by park/program name.

- *Antietam National Battlefield* - On July 13, the National Museum of Civil War Medicine announced that the NPS had voided its cooperative agreement to manage the historic Pry House in Keedysville, Maryland. The organization stated that they had been operating under a non-standard cooperative agreement, and that NPS staffing issues make it untenable to continue to engage and execute agreements outside the standard templates. The museum operated at the Pry House for 20 years. Source: [yahoo!news](#)
- *Arches National Park* - On July 7, The Grand County (UT) Commission voted 4-3 to accept a \$1 million grant from the Utah Department of Transportation’s Transportation Investment Fund. Following that decision, they voted 5-2 to award a \$2.86 million operator contract to

Via Transportation for a pilot free Moab-to-Arches shuttle service, targeted to start September 1. In addition to the UDOT grant, the contract is being funded by the county's Transient Room Tax funds, and pledged support by the NPS, which has not yet been secured. Source: [Moab Sun Times](#)

- *Badlands National Park* - On July 17, the park announced that it has been officially recognized as an International Dark Sky Park by Dark Sky International. The park has been working on its certification since 2018. Source: [Badlands National Park](#)
- *Belmont-Paul Women's Equality National Monument* - On July 8, U.S. Representative Valerie Foushee (D-NC) submitted a letter to the NPS acting assistant director of legislative and Congressional affairs, requesting "an audit or formal review" of the park's exhibits by an NPS curator or other staff to identify areas for enhancement or repair. Representative Foushee found a handwritten note providing interpretation of a desk the formerly belonged to Elizabeth Cady Stanton, and called it "inconsistent with the significance of the site and the standards visitors expect at a national monument." Source: [U.S. Representative Valerie Foushee](#)
- *Big Cypress National Preserve, Everglades National Park* - From July 10-19, the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission hosted the Florida Python Challenge, offering over \$25,000 prizes for individuals to kill invasive Burmese pythons from the Everglades region. Each year, competitors remove between 200-300 pythons, resulting in 1,400 kills since 2013. Source: [USA Today](#)
- *Blue Ridge Parkway* - The Blue Ridge Conservancy, on behalf of The Conservation Fund, recently purchased a key one-acre parcel adjacent to Grandmother Mountain near Linville, North Carolina. The parcel will eventually become part of Blue Ridge Parkway. Source: [The Charlotte Observer](#)
- *Cape Hatteras National Seashore* - On July 9, the park gave an update on its ongoing lighthouse restoration project. They outlines milestones that they have accomplished and are ongoing. Source: [Cape Hatteras National Seashore](#)
- *Glacier National Park* - In late July, the park will begin a project to plug the Butte Oil Well at Kintla Lake. The Kintla Lake Wilderness Campground will close from July 27 through late August for helicopter operations. The project is expected to be complete in Fall 2026. Source: [Glacier National Park](#)
- *Golden Gate National Recreation Area* - On June 18, the California Coastal Conservancy approved the transfer of 94 acres at Pedro Point in San Mateo County to the National Park Service. The transfer still requires approval from the California State Department of General Services, and there are plans to build a new trail to connect to the California Coastal Trail before the transfer. Pacifica city officials are also discussing the transfer of another 152 acres at the site. Source: [The Sentinel](#)

- *Golden Gate National Recreation Area* - The Golden Gate National Parks Conservancy, with support from AllTrails, recently put out a map for the “Golden Gate Dozen Trail,” a 13-mile route connecting 12 of the park’s sites, from Crissy Field to Fort Funston. The route can be hiked or biked. Source: [San Francisco Examiner](#)
- *Grand Teton National Park, Yellowstone National Park* - On July 15, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service announced a new proposed rule that would return grizzly bear management in the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem to the states of Idaho, Montana, and Wyoming. The rule is open for [public comment through August 17](#). Source: [High Country News](#)
- *Great Smoky Mountains National Park* - The park recently opened a new exhibit at the Oconaluftee Visitor Center about the photographer George Masa. The project was done in collaboration with Smokies Life and the biographers from the article “George Masa: A Life Reimagined.” Source: [Great Smoky Mountains National Park](#)
- *Mount Rainier National Park* - SFGate published [an article](#) about the short-lived nine-hole golf course in Paradise Valley, which was only open for three months in 1931. It was billed as the highest golf course in the U.S. at 5,500 feet above sea level. Due to the Great Depression and the short playing season, the course never reopened after that season, and was left to the natural succession of local flora. Source: SFGate
- *National Mall and Memorial Parks* - On July 9, the National Capital Planning Commission approved the proposed Triumphal Arch, including the preliminary site and building plans for it to be built at Memorial Circle. In their approval, they recommended a series of revisions to the project to comply with the Height of Buildings Act. Final approval is expected this fall. Source: [ABC7](#)
- *National Mall and Memorial Parks* - E&E News published [an article](#) outlining the current status of several of President Donald Trump’s “pet projects” in Washington, DC, including the proposed Triumphal Arch, security upgrades at Lafayette Park, renovations at the East Potomac Golf Course, repairs to the Lincoln Memorial Reflecting Pool, the proposed Garden of American Heroes, and the White House ballroom construction. All are sites managed by the NPS. Source: E&E News
- *Reconstruction Era National Historical Park* - Gettysburg College published [an article](#) about student Julia Ciccone, who is working as an interpretation intern at the park this summer through the Brian C. Pohanka Internship Program and the Gettysburg College Civil War Institute. Source: [Gettysburg College](#)
- *Reconstruction Era National Historic Network* (an NPS-administered program) - On July 14, the NPS announced the addition of three sites to the network: Mother Bethel African Methodist Episcopal Church in Pennsylvania, Susie King Taylor Museum and Freedom Park in Georgia, and the Center for Civil Rights History and Research in South Carolina. Source: [Reconstruction Era National Historical Park](#)

- *Rock Creek Park* - On July 15, the NPS announced a Memorandum of Agreement for the removal of the Foundry Branch streetcar bridge in Glover-Archbold Park. After demolition, the area will be restored with native vegetation, and the Glover-Archbold Park trail will be reopened for the first time in many years. Source: [Rock Creek Park](#)
- *Saguaro National Park* - On July 10, the park announced the completion of a restoration project on the Manning Camp Trail, including improved erosion control, improving trail tread, and removing overgrown vegetation and downed logs. The project was funded by the Great American Outdoors Act and executed by park staff, a Maintenance Action Team, and interns from American Conservation Experience and Conservation Legacy. Source: [Saguaro National Park](#)
- *Saratoga National Historical Park* - The park recently opened an e-bike rental concession to allow visitors to ride the 10-mile Battlefield Tour Road. Source: [WNYT \(YouTube\)](#)
- *Save America's Treasures Grants* (an NPS-administered program) - On July 14, the *USS Silversides*, a WWII submarine, was towed across Lake Michigan from its museum in Muskegon, Michigan, to Fincantieri Bay Shipbuilding in Sturgeon Bay, Wisconsin, for dry dock repairs. The ship hasn't undergone dry dock preservation in over 50 years. The \$3.5 million project is being supported, in part, through a \$750,000 grant through Save America's Treasures. Source: [FOX11](#)
- *Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks* - New research published in *Nature* found that previous prescribed burns protected thousands of giant sequoias from perishing in the Castle (2020) and KNP Complex (2021) wildfires. Prescribed burns within the last 10 years reduced mortality odds by 77%, increasing their ability to survive four-fold. Source: [Nature](#)
- *Virgin Islands National Park* - In May, the park re-released an announcement for a concession at Caneel Bay, the first of its kind since the property was transferred to the National Park Service. *GearJunkie* published an article that notes significant differences between the park's 2024 Request for Qualifications and the 2026 Request for Proposals, including less beach access for the public, removal of conservation and interpretive zones, and no cap on the number of rooms. Source: [GearJunkie](#)
- *Voyageurs National Park* - On July 20, the park announced a Request for Proposals for a 10-year concession contract for lodging, retail, food and beverage, guest transportation, marina services, and mechanical boat portage at Kettle Falls. Applications are due September 16, and the contract is expected to begin on January 1, 2027. Source: [Voyageurs National Park](#)
- *Yellowstone National Park* - *WyoFile* published [an article](#) about a pack of wolves known as "Mollie's Pack," the last remaining pack from the reintroduction of wolves 31 years ago. The wolves are currently quite far from their usual territory in the park's Pelican Valley, likely due to the historically mild winter and sparse snowpack. The migration puts them at higher

risk of being hunted this fall. Source: *WyoFile*

- *Zion National Park* - The *St. George News* published an article about the park's success removing over 2,408 square feet of graffiti in 2025. Source: [St. George News](#)

Legal Actions

Legal actions involving the National Park Service. If the Coalition is involved in a lawsuit, those will be recorded in "Coalition Actions" above.

- *Independence National Historical Park* - On July 8, the City of Philadelphia filed a petition for a federal court of appeals to rehear a July 3 decision in favor of the National Park Service removing exhibits at the President's House about enslaved people belonging to President George Washington. The petition argues that the court's mandate was "procedurally flawed" and "substantively objectionable." On July 14 during the night, NPS staff installed the new exhibits at the President's House, which frame Washington's role with slavery in a different light. Source: [NBC Philadelphia](#), [WHYY](#)
- *Mojave National Preserve* - On July 13, in a lawsuit by the National Parks Conservation Association against the Department of the Interior and National Park Service for authorizing mining activities at the Colosseum Mine, the Department of Justice submitted its opposition. The DOJ argues that the existing Plan of Operations, dating to 1985, is still valid, despite the mine being closed in 1993 when the Mojave National Preserve was established from existing Bureau of Land Management Land. (See also: [4/29/26 Coalition Report](#).) It is estimated that ~\$785 million in gold and an unknown quantity of earth minerals could be extracted from the mine. The lawsuit is ongoing. Source: [The National Law Review](#), [The Sydney Morning Herald](#)
- *Yellowstone National Park* - In an ongoing 2024 lawsuit from the State of Montana against the Department of the Interior over the Yellowstone Bison Management Plan, the Montana Department of Livestock has presented seven exhibits to support its argument, including text messages from the park's superintendent, two memos from the Interagency Bison Management Plan facilitator, and a 2010 draft environmental impact statement by NPS. Montana is trying to demonstrate that the park failed to properly consider viable alternatives in its planning process. Source: [Billings Gazette](#)

Personnel Changes

- *Cape Lookout National Seashore* - Laura E. Rich Acosta was selected as the new superintendent. She brings almost 20 years of NPS experience, most recently as the Midwest Region chief of facility and asset management. She began her new role on July 12. Source: [Cape Lookout National Seashore](#)
- *National Parks Conservation Association* - Ed Stierli has been selected as the new vice

president of government affairs. Ed has over 15 years of advocacy work and most recently worked as the NPCA's senior regional director for the mid-Atlantic region. Source: [National Parks Conservation Association](#)

- *Nez Perce National Historical Park* - Jason Lyon was selected as the new superintendent. Jason has 26 years of NPS experience, most recently as cultural anthropologist and Tribal liaison for the Intermountain Region. He also has previous experience with the Nez Perce Tribe's Cultural Resource Program and as a Cultural Resource Specialist at Nez Perce National Historical Park. Source: [Nez Perce National Historical Park](#)
- *Redwood National and State Parks* - Jacob "Jake" Ohlson was selected as the new superintendent. Jake has over 20 years of NPS experience, most recently as superintendent of Glen Canyon National Recreation Area and Rainbow Bridge National Monument. He starts his new role in mid-August. Source: [Redwood National and State Parks](#)
- *Redwood Parks Conservancy* - Tara Dettmar was selected as the new executive director. Tara has over 20 years of conservation experience, most recently leading the Tribal Marine Stewards Network. Source: [Redwood Parks Conservancy \(Facebook\)](#)
- *San Francisco Maritime National Historical Park* - Jonathan Dille was selected as the new superintendent. Jonathan has 11 years of NPS experience, most recently as San Francisco Maritime's chief of administration and business services and interim superintendent since July 2025. Source: [San Francisco Maritime National Historical Park](#)

Park People

Deceased

- Gordon Dean Boyd, 94, passed away on June 13. Gordon worked for the NPS for several decades, including time at Yellowstone National Park, Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks, Olympic National Park, and Lake Roosevelt National Recreation Area. He retired from the NPS in 1988. Source: [Legacy/Big Timber Pioneer](#)
- William "Will" Morris passed away on July 3. Will worked for the NPS from 1980-2002, including as chief of interpretation at Mesa Verde. Source: Bill Wade, Coalition records
- Susan Elizabeth Newton, 59, passed away on July 12. Susan worked for the National Park Foundation for 10 years and contributed research on increasing diversity in national parks through a doctorate program at the University of Missouri - St. Louis. Source: [Dignity Memorial](#)
- Mary Therese Sennott, 95, passed away on June 22. Mary worked at Yellowstone National Park during a summer in college. Source: [The Orange County Register](#)

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 August 14](#) about the agency's current Wilderness Stewardship Policy to inform future policy (see more in "Around the Parks" above). Source: [PostIndependent](#)
- *National Park Service* - Public comment is [open through August 14](#) on draft guidance for the implementation of the EXPLORE Act, Section 122, to allow for bolt installations in federal wilderness. Source: [Department of the Interior](#)
- *George Washington Memorial Parkway, National Mall and Memorial Parks* - The NPS opened additional [public comment through July 30](#) on the Assessment of Effects Report for the proposed Triumphal Arch. Source: [National Park Service Office of Communications](#)
- *Grand Canyon National Park* - The Arizona Department of Environmental Quality has opened public comment by mail and email through July 27 on a proposal to issue a new pollution discharge elimination system permit for the Havasupai Garden Potable Water Pump Station for 1.25 million gallons per day of treated chlorinated groundwater to Garden Creek. Source: [Arizona Department of Environmental Quality](#)
- *Grand Canyon National Park* - Public comment is [open through August 15](#) on a draft programmatic agreement outlining the consideration of historic properties during fire management activities. Source: [Grand Canyon National Park](#)
- *Yosemite National Park* - Public comment is [open through July 13](#) on a proposal to improve the John Muir Trailhead and the Mist Trail corridor. Source: [Yosemite National Park](#)

Congressional Actions

New Public Laws

Nothing to report.

Senate & House Actions

Nothing to report - the Senate and House were on 4th of July recess from July 6-13.

Other Relevant Department of the Interior and U.S. Forest Service (Dept. of Agriculture) News

- *Intended dismantling of USFS* - An ongoing lawsuit against the Department of Agriculture for its reorganization of the U.S. Forest Service, including moving offices from Washington,

DC, Utah, has revealed documents that the process has been a workaround to avoid a Reduction in Force. This runs counter to statements to the public previously which assured that the move was to put employees closer to the resources they manage. It also runs counter to a section of the 2025 appropriations act, which bars the department from standing up any new office of five or more people without approval from the Appropriations Committees. The Department of Agriculture has argued, internally, that these sections of the law are unconstitutional, so employees should ignore them. Source:

[More Than Just Parks](#)

- *2014 oil spill remediation spending* - On July 3, the Department of the Interior opened a 30-day public comment period for a draft damage assessment and restoration plan to address injuries associated with the March 2014 collision of two ships near Texas City, Texas. The incident resulted in 168,000 gallons of fuel oil being released into the Houston Ship Channel and Galveston Bay. In 2020, a federal court awarded federal and state trustees \$15.3 million in damages, and this plan outlines how those funds will be used to restore, replace, or acquire resources and services equivalent to those lost or impacted in the incident. Comments can be submitted in writing or email. Source: [Department of the Interior](#)

Incidents

Listed alphabetically by park/program.

Acadia National Park

Medical emergency

On July 11, a 61-year-old went swimming in Echo Lake near the Ikes Point boat launch. As they exited the water, they experienced “a medical emergency,” becoming unresponsive in the water. Within 30 seconds, others nearby were able to extract them. They did not survive the incident.

Source: [Bangor Daily News](#), [Bar Harbor Story](#)

Acadia National Park

Fall

On July 17, an individual fell 30 feet into the water at Monument Cove near Thunder Hole. Bystanders pulled the individual from the water, and they were reported to be vomiting salt water, unable to use their legs, had a head laceration and possible broken bones, and was “losing alertness.” The Coast Guard, NPS, and Bar Harbor (ME) Fire Department responded to the scene and transported the individual to the Seal Harbor pier. An ambulance took the individual to a field across from Seal Harbor Beach, and the individual was then transported via LifeFlight of Maine to a local hospital. Source: [Bar Harbor Story](#)

Black Canyon of the Gunnison National Park, Curecanti National Recreation Area

Mudslides

On July 15, heavy thunderstorms hit the area, causing three major mudslides across East Portal Road, stranding 21 visitors. The campground and picnic area were also said to have been covered. They were evacuated that night and the following morning, and the East Portal area is closed until further notice. Source: [KKTV](#)

Curecanti National Recreation Area

Low water

On July 16, the NPS announced the planned move of El Creek and Lake Fork marina infrastructure and the closure of the Lake Fork boat ramp due to low water levels. Source: [Curecanti National Recreation Area](#)

Denali National Park and Preserve

Backcountry rescue

On July 2, an individual became “critically ill” while at a remote cabin in the park north of Denali. An Alaska Air National Guard used a helicopter hoist to extract the individual and took them to Providence Alaska Medical Center in Anchorage, Alaska. Source: [U.S. Department of Defense](#)

Glacier National Park

Climber rescue

On July 6, two individuals were descending after a climb up Mount Siyeh when one of them suffered a “significant arm injury.” A Two Bear Air helicopter with hoist capability was able to extract both individuals and bring them to the visitor center at Logan Pass. Park personnel assisted them there. No further details were given. Source: [NBC Montana](#)

Glacier National Park

Rockfall

On July 11, rocks fell onto a vehicle on the Going-to-the-Sun Road in the Rimrocks area. Personnel from the NPS and the Advanced Life-Support and Emergency Rescue Team responded and transported an injured visitor to the Logan Health Hospital in Kalispell, Montana. The road shut down for two hours during the operation. Source: [SFGate](#)

Glen Canyon National Recreation Area

Fire operations

On July 7, the park announced the presence of fire suppression aircraft scooping water from the lake between Good Hope Bay and Castle Butte to support response efforts for the Babylon Fire (see “Wildfires” below). Boaters are advised to exercise caution, monitor marine radios, and reduce speed. Source: [Glen Canyon National Recreation Area](#)

Grand Teton National Park

Measles

On July 10, the Wyoming Department of Health identified a positive measles case, with potential for public exposure on July 7 at Colter Bay. Symptoms typically show up 7-21 days after exposure. Source: [Grand Teton National Park](#)

Grand Teton National Park

Low water

On July 16, concession boat cruises on Jackson Lake were canceled due to low water preventing boats from being able to pull up to the dock. The lake is just above 70% full. Source: [SFGate](#)

Great Smoky Mountains National Park

Motorcyclist fatality

On July 18, a motorcyclist crashed while driving on the Foothills Parkway. They passed away from injuries sustained in the crash. No further details were given. Source: [WBIR](#)

Gulf Islands National Seashore

Deceased individual

On July 4, an 18-year-old went to Horn Island with three other individuals. The island has no facilities and is primarily reached by private boat. The individual was last seen on the beach about 3 PM, having “decided not to return from the islands with [their] friends,” reportedly with the plan of returning with other friends. The group of three took the individual’s phone and keys with them. At 11 PM that night, one of the friends reported the individual missing to the individual’s parent. The parent reported it to authorities, and the Jackson County (MS) Sheriff’s Department, NPS, Department of Marine Resources, and the U.S. Coast Guard began a search. Additionally, family and friends also searched. On July 6, the individual was found deceased by an NPS staff member. Mysterious circumstances surround the incident, including a lack of content on the individual’s phone from their day on the boat and island. Additionally, the Jackson County (MS) Sheriff’s Office has asked the public for information if they “observed or heard an argument, disturbance, or other unusual activity while on the the island that day.” One video of a fight has surfaced. The incident has drawn national scrutiny due to a history of racial tension in the region. The deceased individual was Black, while the three friends are white. Source: [NewsNation \(7/9, 7/10\)](#), [Associated Press](#), [PBS](#)

Isle Royale National Park

Wolf habituation

On July 9, the park closed camping and hammock use at the Three Mile Campground and the nearby vicinity due to a wolf that has been increasingly showing signs of habituation. The park has addressed the issue through hazing, improved trash management, and stricter food storage rules, and will intensify hazing during the closure. The park hopes to reopen camping and off trail zones on August 1, but will reassess depending on the results of their efforts. Noise-producing

devices will also be installed at Rock Harbor, Three Mile, and Daisy Farm Campgrounds.

On July 13, the park closed Duncan Narrows Campground for the second time this month, after a wolf accessed the interior of a shelter, gnawed on a cooler, and pulled clothing and other items out of the shelter. No campers were inside the shelter when it entered. The park is working to increase staff presence and hazing. The park also hopes to open the Duncan Narrows Campground on August 1.

Source: *Isle Royale National Park* ([7/9](#), [7/14](#))

Kalaupapa National Historical Park

Protests halt tours

On July 9, the day of the first park-led tours for the public, about 25 Moloka'i residents led a protest at the trailhead, located in Pālā'au State Park. They held signs saying "No tours on Kalaupapa" and "Feds get out," and a Maui County Council member held the gate to the trailhead shut. After a 15-minute interruption in which protestors stated their concerns, they acquiesced to a ranger's request for them to move, and the tour was able to continue. One protestor stated that the tours were started without any community consultation and felt that the tours would be "a cash cow for NPS." Previously, by the park's enabling legislation, tours were only permitted by companies owned by individuals with Hansen's disease at the site. Though there are two remaining individuals still living at Kalaupapa, neither of them have operated a tour company. On July 11, the NPS stated it has paused future tours "while it reassesses the feasibility of visitor access." Source: [Honolulu Civil Beat](#), [KHON2](#)

Mount Rainier National Park

Climbing fatality

On July 19, six climbers in two parties were hit by rockfall on the Disappointment Cleaver route of Mount Rainier. A 44-year-old was killed in the accident and another individual suffered leg injuries. All six climbers were extracted from the mountain via helicopter. Source: [The News Tribune](#)

National Mall and Memorial Parks

Unsafe temps for documents

On July 16, after a Washington, DC, reporter from *City Cast DC*, published evidence that two rare documents signed by former President Abraham Lincoln were stored in improper conditions in an exhibit in the new Undercroft museum, they were removed from public display. The *City Cast DC* reported NPS employees stating that the screens designed to protect the documents from light have been defective and temperatures in the display case have repeatedly reached levels above 80 degrees Fahrenheit, putting the documents at risk of damage. The Undercroft was closed for most of the day, and the documents were replaced with replicas. The NPS has stated that they will return the documents to the exhibit when the heat wave has passed. Source: [NBC Washington](#), [Yahoo!news](#)

New River Gorge National Park and Preserve

Drowning

On July 5, a swimmer went underwater and never resurfaced near Brooks Falls on the New River. A search was conducted, utilizing boats, drones, and ground teams. The following morning, the individual was found deceased near their original location by the West Virginia Department of Natural Resources dive team. Their body was recovered and transferred to a West Virginia medical examiner. Source: [WVVA](#)

North Cascades National Park

Missing backpacker

On June 24, a 55-year-old backpacker started on a 10-day trip out of the Canyon Creek Trailhead. They were reported overdue and their car was found still at the trailhead. The park has begun a search and is looking for any information the public can provide. Source: [Cascadia Daily News](#)

Olympic National Park

Medical emergency

On July 10, a 15-year-old experienced severe abdominal pain and vomiting while visiting Shi Shi Beach. NPS staff requested a Coast Guard helicopter, which utilized a hoist maneuver to extract the individual. They were flown to Air Station Port Angeles (WA), then taken to Olympic Medical Center for further treatment. Source: [KING5](#)

Yellowstone National Park

Fishing closures

On July 9, the park closed the Madison, Firehole, and Gibbon River, and all associated tributaries, to fishing daily from 2 PM to sunrise due to warm water temperatures and low river flows. On July 15, the park announced full closures to fishing on the three rivers due to peak water temperatures between 80-86 degrees Fahrenheit during the day and high air temperatures. Dead fish have been observed in the Firehole River. Source: [Yellowstone National Park](#)

Yellowstone National Park

Bison attack

On July 10, a bull bison entered the Bridge Bay Campground. It approached a group of “kids, who were taking pictures on their cellphones from a good distance away,” and then charged them. The kids were able to scatter and escape safely. The bison continued running through the campground, with individuals yelling to one another about the threat. It eventually laid down. A little while later, two individuals were walking along the road “at least 100 yards” from the bison, taking pictures of it. When the bison stood up, the two individuals moved off behind some trees away from the bison. A truck drove by, and the bison started charging the truck, but it passed by

quickly. The bison kept moving in the direction of the two individuals in the trees. They both tried to scatter, but one individual was charged and thrown eight feet into the air. The bison stood over the victim, shaking its head in “an obvious display of agitation.” A bystander who caught much of the incident on film ran toward the bison, yelling, and other bystanders joined in. The bison took off running. The bystanders administered first aid and called 911. Park personnel provided medical care and the individual was taken to a nearby hospital. They had their right femur broken in four places, and they are expected to make a full recovery. The park has stated that no management action will be taken against the bull bison. Source: *Cowboy State Daily* ([7/11](#), [7/15](#))

Wildfires

- *Canyonlands National Park* - On June 26, a wildfire started in San Juan County, Utah. On June 28, the park closed and evacuated the Needles District. On July 18, the Needles District reopened. Elephant Hill, Lavender, and Davis Canyon Roads remain closed for fire operations. As of July 21, the fire was 107,189 acres and 95% contained. Source: [ABC4](#), *Canyonlands National Park* ([6/28](#), [7/1](#), [7/17](#)), [Watch Duty](#)
- *Mesa Verde National Park* - On July 6, a lightning-caused fire was reported in Long Canyon near Wetherill Mesa. The Wetherill Mesa Road and the Long House and Step House cliff dwellings were closed for fire management operations. On July 8, Wetherill Mesa reopened. The fire burned about 0.5 acres. Source: [Mesa Verde National Park](#)
- *North Cascades National Park Complex (Lake Ross National Recreation Area)* - The week of July 12, lightning struck the area east of Ross Lake, igniting the Border 1 and Border 2 Fires. As of July 17, the Border 1 fire was 1 acre and the Border 2 Fire was 0.25 acres. Source: [Whatcom News](#)
- *Olympic National Park* - On June 23, a lightning storm moved through the area. On June 24, backpackers reported a fire on “a remote mountain slope” on the west side of the park. As of July 21, the Mt. Tom Creek Fire was 69 acres and 27% contained. Source: [Olympic National Park](#), [Watch Duty](#)

Follow-ups on Previously Reported Incidents

- *Grand Canyon National Park* - SFGate published [an article](#) about the logistical and psychological after-effects of the 2026 Dragon Bravo Fire on park and concession employees who lost their homes and jobs. Source: SFGate
- *National Mall and Memorial Parks* - On July 8 and 9, four individuals all pleaded not guilty to charges for allegedly damaging the Lincoln Memorial Reflecting Pool. On July 10, the NPS again drained the pool to repair the alleged vandalism of the new liner and “clean up the fireworks stuff.” Source: [Los Angeles Daily News](#)
- *Shenandoah National Park* - On July 20, the 31-year-old found guilty of an assault on their partner with a hatchet at Mathews Arm Campground in April 2025 (see [4/1/26 Coalition](#))

[Report](#)) was sentenced to 78 months in federal prison. Source: [Shen-Valley Times](#)

- *Wrangell - St. Elias National Park and Preserve* - The legal proceedings for the three individuals that illegally poached two Dall sheep just over the border from the park, in Canada, have wrapped up. In addition to the conviction in Canada (see [12/26/24 Coalition Report](#)), the individuals pleaded guilty to Lacey Act violations in the U.S. for illegal transport and import of wildlife. They were sentenced to probation, fined and ordered to pay restitution, and forfeited firearms, equipment, and the illegally-harvested sheep. The sheep horns were returned to the Government of Yukon in Canada, and one was donated to the National Park Service. The meat was donated to the White River First Nation and proceeds from the sale of the capes will support conservation efforts. The investigation was completed with cooperation between the NPS, Alaska Wildlife Troopers, Alaska State Troopers, Yukon Conservation Officer Services, Parks Canada, Environment and Climate Change Canada, the U.S. Attorney's Office for the District of Alaska, and the Yukon Crown. Source: [Alaska Native News](#)
- *Yellowstone National Park* - On July 6, the park lifted the temporary closures put in place after the May 2026 bear attack near Old Faithful (see [5/13/26 Coalition Report](#))

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

The Coalition to Protect America's National Parks is a non-profit organization of past and current NPS employees and their allies that studies, educates, speaks, and acts for the preservation and protection of the National Park System and mission-related programs of the National Park Service.

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