



The Coalition Report

Wednesday, July 8, 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.

The Coalition submitted [a letter](#) to the National Capital Planning Commission urging it to postpone approval of the proposed Triumphal Arch in Washington, DC, arguing that its environmental assessment is lacking key information and that the project is counter to several national laws.

We joined several dozen organizations and corporations in [a letter](#) to the Senate urging them to support S. 1547, the America the Beautiful Act, which would extend Great American Outdoors Act funding.

The Coalition submitted [comments](#) to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service on its station-specific hunting and sport fishing regulations, opposing the proposal to rescind regulations phasing out lead ammunition and tackle use in nine wildlife refuges, and arguing that opening hunting and fishing in new places needs to be accompanied by funding to manage those activities.

We submitted [comments](#) to the Office of Personnel Management on its proposed Confidential Government Information Non-Disclosure Agreement, arguing that it is unnecessary, overly broad, likely to discourage lawful communications and hinder government efficiency, and will strip public transparency and accountability.

The Coalition joined four other organizations and one individual in submitting [comments](#) on the Bureau of Land Management's Utah Office Third Quarter Competitive Oil and Gas Lease Sale,

arguing that it would have severe impacts on the Old Spanish National Historic Trail.

We successfully nominated the National Park System for [special designation](#) in the World Monuments Fund's "[Irreplaceable America](#)" project, highlighting some of the U.S.' most important places.

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

- [The Interior Department's guidance instructs parks staff not to confirm deaths, the severity of injuries, or other details](#), *The Washington Post*
- [What to expect at national parks this summer: big crowds, fewer reservation rules, and a less predictable visit](#), *Business Insider*

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.

- *Censorship allowed to continue in short term* - On July 2, a federal appeals court ruled that the Trump administration may continue to remove interpretive materials in the short term while the court considers the legality of President Donald Trump's executive order guiding the censorship actions. The legal proceedings are ongoing. *[Editor note: The Coalition is a co-plaintiff in the suit.]* Source: [The New York Times](#)
- *Wilderness policy up for comment* - On June 15, the National Park Service [opened public comment](#) regarding Director's Order #41: Wilderness Stewardship. They have made no proposed changes to the order, saying that the public comment will help determine whether policies should be updated or clarified, and suggesting that opening public comment first may allow for unchecked subsequent rollbacks to protection. Similar public comment periods have been opened at the Bureau of Land Management and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Source: [PostIndependent](#)
- *Gag order on death reporting* - A Department of the Interior memo instructs all staff to not report deaths or provide details about severe injuries on park property. Staff are now only allowed to confirm that an incident occurred if asked and can give a general location, and they may only give vague statements about the incident being under investigation. Interior Department officials have stated that the guidance was developed to "create a more consistent approach to incident communications across the department and is not intended to conceal fatalities or delay information." Source: [Bangor Daily News](#), [The Washington Post](#)
- *Firefighter survey results* - The advocacy group Grassroots Wildland Firefighters and the National Federation of Federal Employees union recently conducted an anonymous survey

with 825 participants. Their results found that 74% had considered leaving wildland firefighting in the last 12 months, 48% were dissatisfied with their agency, 62% of their units were understaffed, and only 36% felt that morale was strong. They ranked their trust in leadership a 4.8 out of 10. Additionally, 82% reported working more than 500 hours of overtime, and 24% exceeding over 1,000 hours of overtime. The overtime and a lack of work-life balance was cited most frequently as a reason to consider leaving the profession. Only 11% of respondents said they would recommend a career in federal wildland firefighting without reservation. Source: [Grassroots Wildland Firefighters](#)

- *88% support telling full American story* - A new poll facilitated by YouGov and commissioned by the Trust for Public Land found that 88% of Americans agree it is important to preserve historical and cultural landmarks that tell a full American story. 85% also agree that national parks, public lands, and natural landscapes represent something they are proud of. Source: [National Parks Traveler](#)
- *DOI reorg reactions* - SFGate published [an article](#) about the May 2026 reorganization of the Department of the Interior, including several interviews with anonymous NPS employees about the challenges it has caused. Source: SFGate
- *Resistance to censorship* - National Public Radio published [an article](#) about two coalitions, America 433+ and the Resistance Rangers, who have hosted protests, teach-ins, and other events aimed at honoring the United States' complex history as backlash to the Trump administration's censorship. Atmos also published [an article](#) about the Resistance Rangers. Source: National Public Radio, Atmos
- *Plight of American Latino Heritage Fund* - The Nonprofit Quarterly published [an article](#) about the history and plight of the American Latino Heritage Fund, an arm of the National Park Foundation established in 2011 by the Department of the Interior to ensure the NPS tells Latino stories as a part of its interpretation. The article touches on the whims of political initiatives, as well as the importance of telling a more well-rounded American history. Source: Nonprofit Quarterly
- *World Cup visiting map* - The NPS created [a website](#) and maps calibrated to the locations of the soccer World Cup, currently being hosted in the U.S., to encourage visitors to see an NPS site during their travels. Source: [Unofficial Networks](#)
- *Mission 66 impact* - The History Channel published [an article](#) about the impact of Mission 66 on the National Park Service, including expanding facilities, cementing the idea of a visitor center, and building new roads. Source: History Channel

Around the Parks

Reports are in alphabetical order by park/program name.

- *Big Cypress National Preserve* - On June 25, Florida Governor Ron DeSantis announced

that the immigration detention center known as “Alligator Alcatraz,” a private inholding in the park, was closing for good, having served its temporary purpose. All individuals kept at the facility had already been sent to other facilities earlier in June due to hurricane season.

Source: [Associated Press](#)

- *Big Cypress National Preserve* - Miami-Dade County Mayor recently outlined a plan to transfer 17,000 acres of county land to the park, including the area recently used for the “Alligator Alcatraz” immigrant detention center. Source: [National Parks Conservation Association](#)
- *Big South Fork National River and Recreation Area* - On June 29, the park and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers began a rehabilitation project on Brewster Bridge Road to ameliorate damage from significant rain events in 2022 and 2023. The project is expected to be complete by late summer. Source: [Big South Fork National River and Recreation Area](#)
- *Big South Fork National Recreation Area, Great Smoky Mountains National Park* - WPLN published [an article](#) about Appalachian Bear Rescue, a facility that rehabilitates injured and orphaned bears in the two parks, and throughout the state of Tennessee. Source: *WPLN*
- *Biscayne National Park* - On June 25, the historic Boca Chita Key Lighthouse reopened after a two-year rehabilitation project. The restoration was needed due to both deferred maintenances and Hurricanes Irma and Ian in 2017 and 2022, respectively. Work included replacement of safety railings, doors, and windows; repairs to masonry; and lead abatement. It was carried out by NPS staff from the park, Heritage Documentation Program, Historic Preservation Training Center, and the Southeast Regional Office. Source: [Biscayne National Park](#)
- *Cape Cod National Seashore* - *National Parks Traveler* published [an article](#) about the recovery of horseshoe crabs in the lagoon known as East Harbor after a two-decade effort to restore tidal inputs to the lagoon. Source: *National Parks Traveler*
- *Cape Hatteras National Seashore* - On September 8, the park will close the Billy Mitchell Airport for rehabilitation of the runway pavement. The project is expected to be complete after 90 days. The project is being overseen and contracted by the North Carolina Department of Transportation’s Division of Aviation. Source: [Cape Hatteras National Seashore](#)
- *Castillo de San Marcos National Monument* - On July 6, the Florida Department of Transportation began seawall improvements at the park. The project is expected to be complete by January 2028. Source: [Action News JAX](#)
- *Chattahoochee River National Recreation Area* - On July 1, the park announced the reopening of the Island Ford trail system, after a major restoration project. The \$400,000 project was funded by the Chattahoochee National Park Conservancy, and added two new miles of trails to the area. Source: [Chattahoochee River National Recreation Area](#)

- *Glen Canyon National Recreation Area* - The University of Colorado - Denver published [an article](#) about alumnus Amanda Charobee, who is a GIS specialist at the park. She interned with the NPS while in her master's program at the university. The article outlines her work using GIS to document resources at the park. Source: *CU Denver News*
- *Grand Canyon National Park* - *SFGate* published [an article](#) about the airplane accident in 1956 over the park that led to the creation of the Federal Aviation Administration. Source: *SFGate*
- *Grand Teton National Park* - On June 29, the park began a rehabilitation of the trail to Delta Lake, including better wayfinding, erosion mitigation, trail stabilization, and rehabilitation of social trails. The project will continue through early August. The project is being funded by Grand Teton National Park Foundation and a grant from AllTrails, and will be executed by the park's trail crew in partnership with crews from the Access Fund and volunteer hours from the Teton Climbers Coalition. Source: [Grand Teton National Park](#)
- *Grand Teton National Park* - *WyoFile* published [an article](#) about the deal the Jackson Hole Airport made with the National Park Service in 2018 to avoid paying fees on new revenue it would gain by acquiring a fuel and service business. Source: *WyoFile*
- *Historic Preservation Fund* (an NPS-administered program) - The City of Casper, Wyoming, recently began a preservation project on the Fort Casper Museum through a \$723,500 Save America's Treasures Grant. The funding is being matched by Natrona One Cent Sales Tax funds. The project is expected to be complete in early December. Source: [Wyoming News Now](#)
- *Kalaupapa National Historical Park* - On June 26, the park opened reservations for public tours for the first time. The tours will be offered twice a week, starting on July 9. They will last a full day, including hiking 8 miles with 1,600 feet of elevation gain and descent. Each tour is capped at 100 individuals. Source: [Kalaupapa National Historical Park](#)
- *Mount Rushmore National Memorial* - On July 3, the park hosted a celebration for the 250th anniversary of the United States, including a performance by the U.S. Air Force Academy Band; remarks by South Dakota Governor Larry Rhoden, Interior Secretary Doug Burgum, and President Donald Trump; and a fireworks show for the first time since 2020. 102,991 people requested tickets for the event, which was awarded via lottery. 4,800 participants were permitted to attend. Source: [DRG News](#), [South Dakota Searchlight](#)
- *National Mall and Memorial Parks* - On July 4, President Donald Trump gave a speech to mark the 250th anniversary of the founding of the United States. The celebration was delayed several hours by thunderstorms. Several other events were canceled or temporarily closed due to the storms, including D.C.'s Independence Day Parade, the Great American State Fair on the Mall, and the "A Capitol Fourth" concert. Source: [Houston Public Media](#)

- *National Mall and Memorial Parks* - *The Washington Post* published [an article](#) about the reflecting pool at the Lincoln Memorial, arguing that the challenges with algae not only reflect the Trump administration's mismanagement of the pool, but also pollution and climate change. One expert called the reflecting pool a "canary in the coal mine," indicating larger trends that are increasingly threatening water quality and ecosystems. Source: *The Washington Post*
- *National Mall and Memorial Parks* - On June 30, the Department of the Interior hosted a ribbon-cutting ceremony to officially unveil the recently-installed statues of 13 Revolutionary War soldiers at Freedom Plaza. The statues include one of Caesar Rodney that was removed in Delaware during 2020 Black Lives Matter protests due to his ownership of enslaved peoples, and depictions of several formerly enslaved people who served during the war, James Armistead Lafayette, Jack Sisson, and Caesar Glover. Source: [Washingtonian](#)
- *National Mall and Memorial Parks* - On June 26, the Washington, DC, city manager submitted a letter to the NPS suggesting an alternative location for the proposed Triumphal Arch on an empty traffic oval on South Capitol Street between Nationals Park and Audi Field. In the letter, he argued that the arch could become a symbol of sports triumph and would support the developing neighborhood. Source: [The Washington Post \(via Instagram\)](#)
- *New Philadelphia National Historic Site* - The park recently received a \$25,000 grant from the Jefferson National Park Association BlueSky Opportunity Fund to support storytelling stations and interns related to historical research and interpretive narrative development. Source: [New Philadelphia National Historic Site](#)
- *Sagamore Hill National Historic Site, Theodore Roosevelt Birthplace National Historic Site, Theodore Roosevelt National Park* - The three parks loaned artifacts for the opening of the Theodore Roosevelt Presidential Library on July 4. They include his Rough Rider uniform from the Spanish-American War, the eyeglass case and folded campaign speech that helped deflect a bullet from an assassination attempt, and his compass. Source: [National Park Service Office of Communications](#)
- *Yellowstone National Park* - *NBC News* published [a video segment](#) about Harlan Kredit, believed to be the longest-serving ranger at the park. Source: *NBC News*
- *Yellowstone National Park* - The U.S. Geological Survey's Yellowstone Volcano Observatory published [an article](#) about the Howard Eaton Trail, which used to be the longest hiking and equestrian trail in the park. The trail was largely abandoned due to budget constraints in 1970, with some sections left to decompose, some repurposed under new names, and three sections still maintained as the Howard Eaton Trail. Source: *U.S. Geological Survey*

- *Yosemite National Park* - SFGate published [an article](#) about a 1977 plane crash at Lower Merced Pass Lake and subsequent efforts by locals to collect the hundreds of pounds of marijuana it was carrying. The article includes a first-hand interview with Ken Yager, head of the Yosemite Climbing Association. Source: *SFGate*

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.

- *Bureau of Land Management* (with ramifications for all U.S. public lands) - Cascadia Wildlands, a conservation group, has filed a lawsuit against the Bureau of Land Management for executing a logging project in western Oregon under a management plan that was never submitted to Congress. Public lands management plans have historically not been subject to review by Congress, but the Government Accountability Office recently issued guidance that management plans are subject to the Congressional Review Act. This was recently used to challenge the management plan for Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument. The legal team for the nonprofit has stated that they hope their case compels Congress to revise the Congressional Review Act to exempt public land management plans. Source: [Government Executive](#), [Cascadia Wildlands](#)
- *Independence National Historical Park* - On July 3, due to a federal appeals court verdict regarding censorship (see "National/Regional NPS Updates" above), the Trump administration is now allowed to install new displays at the President's House to replace previous exhibits about enslaved people owned by George Washington. The City of Philadelphia recently lost its lawsuit against the Trump administration over ownership of the exhibit content (see [6/24/26 Coalition Report](#)). The censorship case is ongoing, which could mean the exhibit is once again rescinded. Source: [CBS News](#)
- *National Mall and Memorial Parks* - On June 22, the Cultural Landscape Foundation petitioned a federal judge to intervene on further renovations as part of its ongoing lawsuit against the NPS for the project at the Lincoln Memorial Reflecting Pool. Source: [WDBJ7](#)
- *National Mall and Memorial Parks* - On June 29, a federal judge sided with Accountability NOW USA that its protest signs and flags do not constitute a threat or incitement of violence. The group had signage referencing sexual misconduct allegations of President Donald Trump and a flag with "8647" on it. Source: [USA Today](#)

Park People

Deceased

- Philip "Phil" L. Camara Jr., 90, passed away on June 26. Phil was a trail volunteer for many years at Acadia National Park and Yosemite National Park, and was honored by the NPS for his generous contribution to the Volunteers in Parks program. Source: [Legacy/Western](#)

Mass News

- John Cook passed away on July 3. John was a third-generation National Park Service employee, with his grandfather and father both serving for many years. John worked for the NPS for many years, including time at Saguaro National Park, Chaco Culture National Historical Park, Navajo National Monument, Canyon de Chelly National Monument, Hubbell Trading Post National Historic Site, Great Smoky Mountains National Park, as regional director at the (former) Southwest Region, and retiring as regional director of the Intermountain Region. Source: [Kingsport Spirit](#), John Reynolds
- Billy Grinstead passed away on June 27. Billy worked for the NPS for many years, including time at Rocky Mountain National Park and the Intermountain Region. Source: Judy Geniac
- Larry Eugene Wilson, 91, passed away on June 24. Larry worked from 1991-1996 as a carpenter for the NPS at Rocky Mountain National Park. Source: [Legacy/Brown's Funeral Service - Durant](#)

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](#)
- *Amache National Historic Site* - Public comment is [open through July 15](#) on a General Management Plan for the park. Source: [National Park Service Planning, Environment and Public Comment](#)
- *Big Bend National Park* - U.S. Customs and Border Protection has opened [public comment through July 13](#) on a plan to construct a vehicle border barrier system and roads in Brewster County, Texas, including a 17-mile non-contiguous system in four locations in the park, as well as 205 miles of roads. Source: [The Guardian](#)
- *Denali National Park and Preserve* - Public comment is [open through July 17](#) on a proposal that would increase the number of vehicles per day by roughly 60% on miles 15-90 of the Denali Park Road. Source: [Anchorage Daily News](#)
- *Grand Canyon National Park* - The Arizona Department of Environmental Quality has

opened public comment 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](#)

- *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

Due to unforeseen circumstances, our Congressional expert was unable to provide our usual thorough run-down. Below are some highlights, with further detail to be provided in our next Coalition Report on 7/22/26.

Senate Actions

- On June 23, the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources held a hearing to consider the nomination of Kevin Lilly to be Assistant Secretary for Fish and Wildlife at the Department of the Interior. On June 24, a hearing was held by the Committee on Environment and Public Works. Senator Alex Padilla (D-CA) asked questions regarding the discontinuation of Yosemite National Park's reservation system, and the resulting traffic and harm to park resources. Source: [U.S. Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works](#), [Congress.gov](#), [Senator Alex Padilla](#)
- On June 24, the Senate Judiciary Subcommittee on the Constitution held a hearing titled "Protecting American Citizenship IV: America 250 and Reclaiming American Citizenship." Testimony was heard from Chris Griswold, Policy Director for American Compass; Tim Whitehouse, Executive Director of Public Employees for Environmental Responsibility (PEER); and Matthew Spalding, Dean of the Van Andel Graduate School of Government. PEER's comments focused on the lack of transparency around Freedom 250, including using NPS staff time, the diversion of recreation fees to Washington, DC, beautification projects, and favoritism for Freedom 250 event attendance. Source: [U.S. Senate Committee on the Judiciary](#), [Public Employees for Environmental Responsibility](#)

House Actions

- On June 24, the House Committee on Natural Resources approved H.R. 9250, the Great American Outdoors Act 250 (since rebranded to the "America the Beautiful Act" to match the companion Senate bill), which would reauthorize the National Parks and Public Land Legacy Restoration Fund to address deferred maintenance (originally established by the Great American Outdoors Act). Source: [House Committee on Natural Resources](#), [GovTrack.us](#)

Other Relevant Department of the Interior News

- *Long-distance bike trail nominations* - On July 2, the Department of the Interior opened the National Biking on Long-Distance Trails Act Nomination Tool, allowing anyone to nominate a route for consideration of national importance. The establishment of the national biking trails is a result of the Expanding Public Lands Outdoor Recreation Experiences (EXPLORE) Act. Nominations will be accepted through August 3. Source: [Department of the Interior](#)
- *Another wind lease settlement* - On June 29, the Department of the Interior announced a settlement agreement with Duke Energy to voluntarily terminate its offshore wind lease in the Carolina Long Bay and reinvest the same amount in “an energy modernization strategy...which may include advancing new nuclear and natural gas generation.” This is the third federal wind lease established under the Biden administration that has been settled this year (see [4/1/26](#) and [6/24/26 Coalition Reports](#)). Source: [Department of the Interior](#)

Incidents

Listed alphabetically by park/program.

Curecanti National Recreation Area

Low water

On June 25, the park announced closures in June, July, and August to move the Lake Fork and Elk Creek marinas to deeper water, based on projected water levels. Source: [Curecanti National Recreation Area](#)

Death Valley National Park

Vehicle fire

On June 20, a van with an attached trailer was driving westbound up Towne Pass in 108°F temperatures when the vehicle began overheating and a fire ignited. All six occupants escaped without major injuries. They attempted to put the fire out with two fire extinguishers, but were unsuccessful. Personnel from the NPS, California Highway Patrol, and Beatty (NV) Volunteer Fire Department responded to the scene. Despite the efforts, the van and trailer were a “total loss.” Source: [Death Valley National Park](#)

Glacier National Park

Flooding

On June 21, the park received heavy rain and runoff. The Going-to-the-Sun Road closed temporarily. Many Glacier Valley was evacuated and closed. Many trails also closed, including the Swiftcurrent Lake Loop, Ptarmigan Cutoff, Swiftcurrent Pass, and the Iceberg Trail. On July 1, Many Glacier Valley and the Going-to-the-Sun Road reopened. Source: [SFGate](#), [Glacier National Park](#)

Golden Gate National Recreation Area

Cliff rescue

On June 22, two individuals illegally hiked off trail near the Golden Gate Bridge, ignoring warning signs. They eventually required rescue. Personnel from California Highway Patrol and San Francisco Fire Department were able to use a helicopter to extract the two individuals. Fire Department officials stated that the NPS would fine the two individuals for illegally going off trail.

Source: [The Bee](#), [San Francisco Fire Department \(X\)](#)

Grand Canyon National Park

Damage to artifact

On June 17, a visitor climbed onto “historic handcrafted furniture” near the fireplace inside the Desert View Watchtower in order to take a photo. The furniture toppled underneath the individual, and as they reached out, they struck a Hopi headpiece created by artist Fred Kabotie and caused it to fall. The piece broke in two places and was damaged in three others. Park staff provided medical support to the individual. The three departed before law enforcement rangers were notified. The park is looking for any information the public may have about the incident.

Source: [Grand Canyon National Park](#)

Grand Canyon National Park

Mystery illness

A series of individuals who recently rafted the Grand Canyon have had mysterious symptoms, including severe pain, fatigue, and other flu-like symptoms. The NPS Office of Public Health is working with the park and other public health partners to investigate the illness. Source: [12News](#)

Grand Teton National Park

Hiker rescues

As of June 23, park staff have conducted five rescues at Delta Lake this year. Several of the rescues were for lower leg injuries, and three of the rescues required a response by helicopter from Teton County (WY) Search and Rescue. Visitation to the lake has increased 440% since the park began collecting data in 2016, likely due to its popularity on social media. Source: [SFGate](#)

Isle Royale National Park

Wildlife interactions

On July 6, the park closed the Duncan Narrows Campground due to “increasing frequency of interactions between humans and wildlife.” The campground was expected to reopen on July 8.

Source: [Detroit Free Press](#)

Rocky Mountain National Park

Climber fatality

On July 5, the NPS became aware of a climber that had passed away while on the Kiener's Route of Longs Peak. On July 6, the individual's body was recovered with helicopter support from Teton County (WY) Search and Rescue. No other details have been provided. Source: [Denver7](#)

Upper Delaware Scenic and Recreational River

Missing child

On July 3, a child that was tubing on the Delaware River near the Old Carriage House went missing. Personnel from the NPS, Yulan (NY) Fire Department, Narrowsburg (NY) Fire Department, Lackawaxen (PA) Fire Department, Lumberland (NY) Fire Department, and the Battalion 8 team from Orange County (NY) responded to the scene. About 15 minutes into the search, the child returned on their own power to the campground. Source: [Sullivan County Democrat](#)

U.S. Park Police

Bystander killed in law enforcement chase

On June 20, a 24-year old and 19-year-old in an allegedly stolen vehicle were attempting to evade U.S. Park Police in a high-speed chase on the Taft Bridge when the suspects crashed into a 46-year-old driver on a moped. The moped driver did not survive injuries sustained in the crash. U.S. Park Police arrested the suspect, then later dropped the charges, saying, "the office is not in receipt of all the information needed to make a decision on charges." The U.S. Park Police's policy on chases was altered to allow them in August. Source: [NBC Washington \(6/22, 6/25\)](#)

White Sands National Park

Visitor handles bat

On June 18, a teenage visitor brought a deceased bat to the visitor center and placed it on the front desk, utilizing their bare hands. The visitor and an accompanying adult told staff the bat was already dead when they picked it up. They left shortly after, before park staff gave them guidance. On June 25, the park put out a press release encouraging the visitors to contact a medical provider or local health department right away to discuss rabies post-exposure treatment. It is unclear whether the bat was tested for rabies. Source: [White Sands National Park](#)

Yellowstone National Park

Child injured by bison

On June 26, a 12-year-old was injured by a bison near Mud Volcano, just north of Fishing Bridge. The individual sustained injuries, and medical personnel transported them to a nearby hospital. No further details were released about the incident. Source: [Yellowstone National Park](#)

Zion National Park

Arrest for murder framed as accident, suspect suicide

In 2006, an individual fell off Angels Landing in what was, at the time, categorized as an accident. In 2022, an individual came to police, stating when they were a minor, they had been groomed to be sexually involved with a youth pastor, who was the Angels Landing victim's spouse. The pastor had told the minor that they could only be together if their spouse was not alive. The pastor was on the hike to Angels Landing with their spouse and was the only known witness, stating that they were moving backpacks for a photo when they heard the victim scream. The pastor had increased their life insurance policies just before the incident. On June 22, the 49-year-old suspect was arrested and charged with murder and insurance fraud. On June 25, it was announced that the suspect had committed suicide while in jail. Source: [The Guardian](#)

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. As of July 6, the Babylon Fire was not burning in the park, but headed toward the park and Highway 211, the singular access to the Needles District. As of July 7, the fire was 100,479 acres and 0% contained. Source: [ABC4](#), *Canyonlands National Park (6/28, 7/1)*, [Watch Duty](#)
- *Everglades National Park* - On June 17, lightning started the Coptic Fire in the northeastern area of the park, south of Highway 41 and west of the L-31N Canal. As of July 6, the Coptic Fire was 5,685 acres and 100% contained. Source: [Everglades National Park](#), [Watch Duty](#)
- *Golden Gate National Recreation Area* - On June 27, a wildfire began in China Beach. Personnel from San Francisco Fire Department responded and suppressed the fire. It was confined to a 50-foot by 50-foot area. The cause of the fire was not disclosed. Source: [SFGate](#)
- *Grand Canyon National Park* - On June 30, a lightning-caused wildfire was reported below the North Rim. As of July 7, the Cliff Spring Fire was 170 acres. Source: [Grand Canyon National Park](#), [Watch Duty](#)
- *Grand Canyon-Parashant National Monument* - On June 15, lightning caused a fire south of Mount Dellenbaugh. As of July 1, the Dellenbaugh Fire was 779 acres and 100% contained. Source: [ABC4](#), [Inciweb](#)
- *North Cascades National Park Service Complex, Ross Lake National Recreation Area* - On June 24, a series of lightning strikes hit the area, causing four fires north of Little Beaver Creek and west of Ross Lake. As of July 3, the fires were reported as follows:
 - Borderline Fire: 0.5 acres, 100% contained
 - Rigby Fire: 0.1 acres ("a single snag"), 100% contained
 - View Fire: 0.1 acres, 100% contained.
 - Little Beaver Fire: 1 acre, 100% contained
 - Luna Fire: 1 acre, 100% contained
 - Source: *North Cascades National Park (6/26, 7/3)*, [Cascadia Daily News](#), [Watch Duty](#)

- *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 6, the Mt. Tom Creek Fire was 68 acres and 0% contained. Source: [Olympic National Park](#), [Watch Duty](#)

Follow-ups on Previously Reported Incidents

- *National Mall and Memorial Parks* -
 - According to an official statement filed in an ongoing lawsuit about the Lincoln Memorial Reflecting Pool (see “Legal Actions” above), on June 9, the U.S. Park Police responded to a complaint that the liner of the pool had been cut with a sharp knife or razor. In a separate incident, 70 fence post tops were also thrown into the pool. The agency stated that they did not announce the incident publicly sooner as to not encourage further damage.
 - On June 19, an individual was recorded on camera kneeling down into the pool and removing something from the water. On June 24, the U.S. Park Police released video of the individual, asking for any information the public can provide regarding the incident.
 - As of June 25, seven people had been arrested, seven citations issued, and 18 police reports filed related to vandalism at the pool.
 - On June 28, President Donald Trump said the pool will be drained right after July 4 to treat the damage “caused by these ‘animals.’”
 - Source: [WDBJ](#), [U.S. Park Police \(X\)](#), [KATV](#)
- *Olympic National Park* - New details obtained by a Freedom of Information Act inquiry have been released about a mountain lion attack on a four-year-old on July 20, 2025 (see [7/23/25 Coalition Report](#)). Visitors had previously reported the animal lingering near people, and on July 7, park staff closed part of Hurricane Ridge to haze the animal away from the area. On July 16, GPS data showed the mountain lion was again headed toward Hurricane Ridge. Staff considered temporary trail closures and another hazing operation, but could not find the animal. On July 18, a backpacker at Los Angeles Campground encountered the animal from a 15-foot distance and reported it to Wilderness Information Center staff later that morning, but this was not relayed to wildlife staff. The NPS report stated that “Although there is Park policy about this subject, there seems to be a lack of training surrounding more urgent wildlife interactions.” There were also concerns about the frequency settings on the animal’s GPS collar and faulty VHF telemetry equipment. Source: [SFGate](#)
- *Olympic National Park* - On July 8, the NPS and Olympic National Forest will reopen the Staircase area and its access road for the first time since the July 2025 Bear Gulch Fire. The campground, ranger station, Rapids Loop Trail, and other developed facilities will reopen, while wilderness trails in the area will remain closed for ongoing assessment and restoration. Source: [Olympic National Park](#)

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- Editor: Katie Wallace
- Tech and Production Support: Steve Pittleman, Debbie Reed, Emily Thompson
- Regular Correspondent: Chris Soller
- Issue Contributors: Dennis Burnett, Steve Hastings, Mike Murray, 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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