

Coalition Briefs - July 2015

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The Coalition To Protect America's National Parks

Voices of Experience - Advocating The Protection of America's National Park System

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We Have A New Name. The Coalition of National Park Service Retirees is now the “Coalition to Protect America’s National Parks”. The name change does not reflect a shift in the mission or membership focus of the group of 1,079 former National Park Service (NPS) [employees](#) with over 30,000 years of combined experience. The Coalition’s leadership indicated that it was concerned that the reference to “retirees” in the Coalition’s original name left the incorrect impression that current NPS employees or non-retired former NPS employees were unwelcome. Our web site is available at www.protectnps.org.

Antiquities Act. Last spring the U.S. House of Representatives voted in favor of a Bill that would amend the Antiquities Act of 1906 to require that national monument declarations be subjected to review under NEPA. Over the course of two days this month, the Coalition joined other like-minded organizations and attended nearly 50 meetings with Members of Congress, Senators, their staff and members of the Administration voicing concerns with the Bill. An Op-Ed coauthored by three of our participants ran in *The Hill's* Congress blog.

Pipelines. The Coalition continues to monitor proposed natural gas (NG) pipeline legislation, which contains a provision that would eliminate the current requirement that pipelines through parks can only be approved by Congress. The provision would delegate approval authority to the Secretary of the Interior to allow NG pipelines through parks (without further legislation), meaning it could be delegated to lower levels and become more subject to pressure to allow it. The bill has momentum in both the House and Senate.

Land and Water Conservation Fund. 2015 marks the 50th anniversary of the Land and Water Conservation Fund Act. The 1965 Act designated that a portion of receipts from Federal offshore leases be placed into a conservation fund that can be used for land and easement acquisitions. This month the Coalition authored an Op-Ed titled

“The most beautiful places on earth: Our public parks and open space”. The Op-Ed supports reauthorization of the Fund.

Clean Water Rule. [A Coalition authored Op-Ed](#) was published in *The Hill Newspaper* concerning a new rule protecting water in national parks. The EPA and the Army Corps of Engineers released a new rule to re-extend protections of the Clean Water Act to the headwater streams and wetlands. The Coalition believes that this common-sense clean water rule provides ecological, recreational and economic benefits to downstream national parks and communities.

Land Management Workforce Flexibility Act. The Coalition sent a letter to the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform voicing strong support for the [Land Management Workforce Flexibility Act](#). The legislation would provide a fair and reasonable opportunity for experienced temporary employees to become eligible to compete for front-line career positions.

Grand Canyon Tusayan Roadway Easements. The Coalition sent a letter to the Forest Service District Office in Arizona providing comments to the proposed [Tusayan Roadway Easements](#). The proposed easements would enable construction of a massive resort development near the southern edge of Grand Canyon National Park. We urged the Forest Service to conduct a thorough environmental analysis of the full range of potential impacts; and to include both NPS in the planning process as a cooperating agency.

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