
Advocacy Guide

Coalition to Protect America's National Parks



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Who We Are

The Coalition to Protect America's National Parks has an unparalleled understanding of the National Park System and Service, and the issues confronting it. Our organization is made up of more than 1,800 retired, current, and former National Park Service employees and volunteers representing all levels and job disciplines of the agency. On average, Coalition members have worked for the NPS for 30 years, with over 40,000 collective years of stewardship of America's most precious natural and cultural resources. We understand the inner workings of park and agency management, and the impacts law and policy have on park protection, operations, visitors, and communities. We are the non-partisan "Voices of Experience" for all park-related matters.

We Need Your Help

Every year, Congress makes decisions that affect our national parks and public lands - and these decisions affect you too. Right now, in the midst of a pandemic that continues to send shockwaves through our country, this administration continues to push its so-called "energy dominance" agenda. Oil and gas lease sales continue to move forward, at a time when the attention of our nation should be focused on the health and safety of the American people. And our national parks should not reopen until the safety of NPS employees, volunteers, concession employees and partners, and residents of gateway communities can be ensured. We need your help to reach out to members of Congress and oppose policies-that will further harm our national parks and public lands and those who work to protect them.

The Coalition depends on our members and supporters to lift their voices on behalf of our national parks. Policymakers want to hear from constituents. In advocacy, there is truly strength in numbers, so we are continuously seeking to expand and enhance our reach and impact. We rely on advocates like you to advance the issues that directly impact national parks and public lands across the country.

Become an Advocate

As a constituent, you are the ideal advocate for our national parks and public lands. You are uniquely suited to convey to your members of Congress how essential national parks and public lands are in your community. You have the power to educate members about the economic and social benefits that these parks provide to your community throughout the year. Without your help, your member of Congress may not realize the ability of national parks to support jobs, improve health, provide a sanctuary for our natural and cultural resources, and engage our future generations in the great outdoors. We want to make it easy for you to take action, to build relationships with your representatives' offices, and help preserve America's Best Idea for future generations.

It may sound intimidating but becoming an advocate is easy. It is as simple as making a phone call or tweeting a short message to your Senator. We have put together some resources that will walk you through the advocacy process for the issue discussed in this toolkit.

Step 1: Find Contact Information For Members of Congress

House of Representatives

Visit <https://www.house.gov/representatives/find-your-representative> and enter your zip code to locate your representative.

Then visit <https://www.house.gov/representatives> for contact information

Senate

Visit https://www.senate.gov/general/contact_information/senators_cfm.cfm and locate your state to find your state senators.

Then visit https://www.senate.gov/general/contact_information/senators_cfm.cfm for contact information.



Step 2: Get in Touch

Make a Phone Call

Picking up the phone and calling your Senator or Representative's office in Washington, D.C., is an effective way to ensure that your voice is heard and that your elected representatives know how you feel. Don't be surprised when your Senator or Representative does not personally answer the phone— they rely on their staff to field calls and talk to constituents. That staff member, whose job it is to answer and record constituents' requests via phone, will pass along the information to your representative.

If you don't know your Representative's or Senator's D.C. phone number, call the U.S. Capitol switchboard at (202) 224-3121, and ask to be connected. Here are some tips to keep in mind before you make the call:

- Introduce yourself and include where you are from in the district/ state. Let them know you are a member of the Coalition to Protect America's National Parks.
- Tell the staff member why you are calling. What is the current issue?
- Make the phone call personal. Why is the issue important to you?
- Ask your Member of Congress to take action. Be clear about what you would like to see happen.
- Be polite and honest.
- Thank the person you are speaking to for their time and for passing on your concerns.

Sample Phone Script

Caller: Good morning/afternoon. My name is _____ and I live in (town/state). I am a member of the Coalition to Protect America's National Parks. I worked for the National Park Service for ____ (insert years), including at ____ (specific park that has been impacted). I am calling to urge Senator/Representative _____ to support/oppose ____ (issue or reason for calling). This is important because ____ (what is the impact to the park or your community?).

Thank you for your time.

Send an Email to Your Elected Official

Although House and Senate offices receive hundreds or thousands of calls, emails, or letters on a particular topic, each one is counted and has the potential to make a difference. When a Member of Congress is undecided, the number of communications his/her office receives for or against an issue often contributes to how he/she ultimately votes.

Once you identify your elected officials, visit their individual websites for an email address. When drafting your email, keep the following tips in mind:

- Include your name and address at the top of the email.
- Make sure your message is personal but keep it brief.
- Be clear about your position and what you would like to see happen.
- Be honest and polite.

Sample Email Format

Your Name

Your Title

Your Address

Your City, State, Zip

Your Phone Number

Dear Representative/Senator _____:

I live in ___ (insert town/state). I worked for the National Park Service for ___ (insert years), including ___ (issue park if relevant), and I am a member of the Coalition to Protect America's National Parks. Please let Senator/Representative _____ know that I am concerned about ___ (issue) because ___ (personal story or reason for sending an email). I strongly urge the Senator/Representative to ___ (action requested). Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Your Name

Use Twitter to Communicate with your Members of Congress

Twitter is a particularly effective tool to reach out to your elected representatives. Nearly every Member of Congress has a Twitter account, and they use it frequently to keep in touch with their constituents and follow the day's trending stories.

Here are a few tips:

- Remember to tweet at your member of congress using their Twitter handle.
- Keep in mind that you only have 280 characters so make sure your message is clear and concise.
- Make sure to use relevant hashtags

You can find your legislators' Twitter handles by checking C-Span's lists:

House of Representatives

<https://twitter.com/cspan/lists/members-of-congress/members?lang=en>

Senate

<https://twitter.com/cspan/lists/senators/members?lang=en>

Sample Tweet

@___ (insert member twitter handle) please vote/oppose ___ (insert issue). Help protect our national parks for future generations.
@protectnps #ProtectOurParks (or other relevant hashtag).

Questions about advocacy? Send us an email at
editor@protectnps.org

www.ProtectNPS.org
Find us on social - [@protectnps](#)

