



## THE COALITION TO PROTECT AMERICA'S NATIONAL PARKS

VOICES OF EXPERIENCE

### In This Brief

- [Hartzog Award Nominations](#)
- [OMB Memo](#)
- [On Pendley](#)
- [ESA Revisions](#)
- [Boundary Waters](#)
- [Tongass National Forest](#)
- [Utah Oil and Gas Lease Sales](#)
- [Virtual Advocacy](#)

### What We're Reading and Tracking

[Support the Coalition with Amazon Smile](#)

### Membership Update

[Website Links](#)

[Donate Today](#)



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### Membership Update

The Coalition's membership currently stands at 1,890 members.

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### Seeking Hartzog Award Nominations

Each year, the Coalition recognizes significant contributions by individuals or groups who demonstrate outstanding support for the mission of the National Park System and/or the National Park Service. Recipients can be active NPS employees, NPS retirees or members of the general public who have demonstrated support for the mission of the National Park System or provided invaluable service or leadership to parks or the National Park Service or its programs. You can see the list of past winners [here](#).

Do you have a nominee in mind? Please send it our way! Nominations must be placed no later than **November 30, 2020**. Click on the link below for more information or to make a nomination.

[Hartzog Nominations](#)

### Diversity Training Memo

The Coalition joined with our partners in opposing the Office of Management and Budget's (OMB) recent memo, "Training in the Federal Government," and the related 2020 Executive Order on Combating Race and Sex Stereotyping. "These directives are beginning to have a damaging and chilling impact on agency efforts to address prejudice, workplace harassment, discrimination, and related challenges," the letter reads. It goes on to ask Congress to support the engagement of federal agencies in training they deem "appropriate and necessary to try to enhance awareness of diversity, harassment and discrimination challenges, employee morale, opportunities for advancement, workplace culture and more," and urges Congress to prevent any federal funding from being used to implement the troubling directives.

[Joint Sign-On Letter](#)

### Push Back on Pendley

We joined over fifty other conservation organizations to call on Interior Secretary David Bernhardt to retract all management plans, decisions, rulemakings, and regulations that were influenced by William Perry Pendley, after a judge ruled Pendley served unlawfully for 14 months as the Director of the Bureau of Land Management. Read the full letter linked in the box below.

[Letter Sent to DOI](#)

### ESA Revisions

The Coalition signed on to a [letter](#) urging the Department of the Interior (DOI) to withdraw the two recent proposed rules related to habitat designation under the Endangered Species Act. Weakening agencies' authority to protect such habitat would be a severe blow to the efficacy of the Act and its ability to spare species from extinction.

We also reviewed and signed on to an extensive technical comment letter regarding concerns over the proposed regulation, which would "create unnecessary and illegal obstacles to achieving the ESA's conservation mandate." Scroll to the bottom of the page to read the full letter [here](#).

### Protecting our Waters

We signed on to a letter in support of *H.R. 5598 Boundary Waters Wilderness Protection and Pollution Prevention Act*. This bipartisan legislation would permanently protect the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness, Voyageurs National Park, Canada's Quetico Park, and their headwaters in the Superior National Forest from harmful and toxic mineral extraction that would irreparably pollute this pristine watershed for future generations

[Boundary Waters Letter](#)

### Protecting our Lands

The Coalition to Protect America's National Parks slammed President Trump's decision to open up Tongass National Forest to logging and industry, jeopardizing the world's largest intact temperate rainforest. This forest has been called the "lungs of the country," and is home to a number of diverse species and old-growth forest. Coalition Chair Phil Francis called it "an outrageous decision that will destroy resources, harm the climate, and greatly diminish the ability of visitors to experience wild Alaska. This is a particularly appalling action from an administration that has spent years rolling back protections on public lands and the environment."

[Statement on Tongass NF](#)

### Utah Oil and Gas Lease Sale Concerns

The Coalition signed on to extensive comments regarding the Supplemental Analysis for Greenhouse Gas Emissions Related to Oil and Gas leasing in Utah. We believe the BLM's curative attempt with this EA is insufficient for several reasons - including that it is being done post-hoc and was not part of informing BLM's decision-making process, as required - and in particular because it fails to analyze and address cumulative climate change impacts on cultural resources within the lease sales. Comments are linked below.

[Utah Comments](#)

### Virtual Advocacy

While we continue to adjust and readjust to the continuing impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Coalition has remained committed to our work as an active, vocal, and dedicated advocate for our parks and public lands. We continue to [meet virtually](#) with government agencies. Coalition Chair Phil Francis [recently participated](#) in a panel at the Association of National Park Rangers' online Ranger Rendezvous, and Coalition Executive Council Member Sheridan Steele [was a guest](#) on a recent *National Parks Traveler* podcast. We'll keep raising our voices in protection of our national parks!

### What We're Reading & Tracking This Month

Cumberland Island welcomes 60,000 visitors, as well as hundreds of researchers and scientists, annually. It consists of nearly 9,000 acres of federally-protected Wilderness, as well as over 11,000 acres of potential Wilderness, making it the largest Wilderness Area on the Eastern Seaboard. Numerous threatened and endangered species call its nearly 17,000 acres of marsh, mudflats, and tidal creeks home. All of this is at risk from Spaceport Camden, which will launch rockets right over the area. In addition, allowing a private spaceport to launch orbital rockets over private residents, a National Seashore, and a protected Wilderness area sets a terrifying precedent. Find out how you can make a difference and join the fight by visiting [No Rockets Over Wilderness](#) and signing the petition.

The Coalition submitted yet another [FOIA request](#) for COVID-19 infection numbers within the ranks of the NPS. While Yellowstone National Park has [shared numbers](#), the NPS has yet to respond to any of our numerous requests about numbers in the overall Service.

And finally, we will be kicking off our annual giving campaign this month! We'll be sending you more information soon about how you can help us [protect our parks](#) by supporting the Coalition's efforts.