



THE COALITION TO PROTECT AMERICA'S NATIONAL PARKS

— VOICES OF EXPERIENCE —

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Membership Update

The Coalition's membership currently stands at 1,884 members.

Website Links

- [Coalition News](#)
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Annual Giving Campaign

Our annual giving campaign is in full swing. We are so very thankful for all of the support our members provide to the Coalition. Your generosity allows us to continue to work as effective advocates for our national parks and public lands. Have you made your 2020 donation yet? If not, please consider making it today and help us to continue to protect our parks!

Make Your Donation Today

Continued Concern for LWCF

Despite the fact that the Great American Outdoors Act has been signed into law, there continues to be concern over full funding for Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) projects. The Department of the Interior [missed the deadline](#) to publish a list of full allocations for LWCF projects, and the Coalition submitted a [FOIA request](#). When the list was presented to Congress, it failed to provide descriptions of the projects, which the Coalition discussed in a [podcast](#) and through a [media statement](#).

Later in the month, Secretary Bernhardt announced that DOI would issue new orders regarding LWCF projects that impose unnecessary, top-down requirements that will potentially delay the National Park Service's ability to address its over \$5 billion backlog of land acquisition needs. Coalition Chair Phil Francis said the order is unacceptable and, "demonstrates bad faith on the part of Secretary Bernhardt." You can read the full statement by clicking the link in the box below.

Statement on LWCF Project Funds

Election Engagement

As we waited to hear the results of the 2020 Presidential Election, the Coalition continued to emphasize that we will continue to advocate for the protection of our national parks and public lands, regardless of the outcome. Coalition Chair Phil Francis said in an [interview](#) with *Conde Nast Traveler* that, "our national parks and public lands are meant to be enjoyed by all Americans and they will always need advocates, regardless of the election results. As a non-partisan organization, we will continue to fight to protect our national parks and public lands, no matter which political party is in power."

You can learn more about our advocacy during the election process in [this interview](#) with *National Parks Traveler* or [this follow-up](#) from *Conde Nast Traveler*.

Advocacy on The Hill

Though we can't travel to Capital Hill in person, the Coalition is still busy advocating for policies, legislation, and appropriations to help our national parks and public lands. We [submitted testimony](#) for a Senate hearing, expressing support for bills such as the CORE Act and the Sunset Crater Volcano National Monument Boundary Adjustment Act, but expressing reservations about other bills, including portions of the National Prescribed Fire Act of 2000 and the Human-Powered Travel in Wilderness Areas Act. We also [sent a letter](#) to the chairs and ranking members of the Natural Resources and Armed Services Committees expressing our support for the National Defense Authorization Act, specifically several provisions that would help protect national parks and public lands.

Finally, we [signed on to joint letter](#) regarding FY 2021 appropriations and the Interior, Environment and Related Agencies Appropriations bill, as well as the Transportation, Housing and Urban Development Appropriations bill.

Bad Precedent in Alaska

We issued a statement on an NPS final rule that has gone far beyond a precedent set in *Sturgeon v. Frost*, a case in which the Supreme Court held that the NPS could not enforce a System-wide regulation prohibiting the operation of a hovercraft on part of the Nation River that flows through the Yukon-Charley Rivers National Preserve. While the Supreme Court ruling was specific to the Nation River in the Preserve, the recent NPS rule expands the application of the ruling to over two thousand water bodies in Alaska's national parks, preserve, and monuments under NPS jurisdiction in Alaska.

Coalition Statement

Xpress West High-Speed Rail

The Coalition signed on to a letter requesting that the proposed XpressWest High-Speed Rail Project include wildlife overcrossings, which are necessary to avoid the permanent blockage of critical California wildlife corridors resulting from the project's concrete barrier walls. Click the box below to read the full letter.

Xpress West Rail Letter

On Oil and Gas Lease Sales

The Coalition signed on to comments regarding the Forest Service's proposed revision to their oil and gas regulations. 122 organizations were included in the letter that argued that the proposed rule is inconsistent with the USFS's legal obligations and thus the specific proposed revisions should not be adopted. Full letter linked below.

O and G Comments

Attacks on NEPA

The Coalition issued a statement on OMB's memo directing federal agencies to prioritize aligning their National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) procedures with the finalized Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations. Phil Francis called the directive "a waste of taxpayer money and National Park Service staff time, as there are numerous court cases pending challenging the new CEQ regulations."

NEPA Statement

What We're Reading & Tracking This Month

Last call for any Hartzog Award nominees! Do you know someone who has demonstrated outstanding support for the mission of the National Park System and/or the National Park Service? Click [here](#) to make a nomination. While the deadline was November 30, we'll give you a few more days, just in case.

Native American Heritage Day has passed but it's always a good time to check out [this article](#) about 15 parks that offer opportunities to honor Indigenous history by former NPS Superintendent Gerard Baker.

Scientific American reached out to researchers and climate scientists and asked them to answer one question: What is the most important action you want to see the Biden administration take to address climate change? [Click here](#) to take a look at some of their suggestions.