



THE COALITION TO PROTECT AMERICA'S NATIONAL PARKS

— VOICES OF EXPERIENCE —

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Membership Update

The Coalition's membership currently stands at 1,905 members.

Website Links

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Infrastructure Support

The Coalition issued a statement in support of President Biden's infrastructure package - The American Jobs Plan - saying in part, "we applaud President Biden for his recognition that to truly Build Back Better, our nation's public lands and national parks need to be a priority, as well as addressing climate change, investing in our transportation infrastructure, and creating good paying jobs." The full statement is linked in the box below.

[Coalition Statement on American Jobs Plan](#)

FY 2022 Budget Recommendations

We finalized our FY 2022 [NPS Budget Recommendations](#) as the beginning of an extended commitment to address the decline of nearly 3,500 in NPS staffing over the past decade. This document was submitted to the Senate Interior Appropriations subcommittee and as a follow-up to several Congressional offices that members of the Executive Council met with during our virtual lobby days. It was also sent to several partner groups and submitted to the hearing record for a recent Subcommittee on National Parks, Forests, and Public Lands hearing on *The Future of America's Public Lands*. The report is linked below.

[Budget Recommendations](#)

What Do You Think About the CWR?

Bill Halainen recently announced that he is stepping down as the editor of the Coalition Weekly Report (CWR). Bill has devoted countless hours to ensuring that news from around the National Park System is shared with us all, and we are grateful for his time and service. We are also committed to keeping the CWR going. As we make plans for the future of the CWR, we'd like to hear from you. Please take a moment to answer this [short survey](#) and help us ensure that you're receiving the news that matters to you.

[Weekly Report Survey](#)

Congressional Actions

Speaking of the CWR, here is the rundown of Congressional actions of interest to the NPS that occurred in April. This section will appear in the Weekly Report once we work through the logistics of getting it up and running again!

[Congressional Actions](#)

Job Opportunities

The [Experienced Services Program \(ESP\)](#) for the National Park Service (NPS) is a chance for experienced workers, age 55+, to share their knowledge and skills. This is a unique opportunity to continue to support the mission of the NPS while providing mentorship and earning an income. Work is available in a range of fields, including cultural or natural resources, communications, project management, and more. The work can be part-time or full-time, short-term or long-term, consistent or intermittent, project-focused or fulfilling a specific organizational function. You don't need to be an NPS retiree to participate in the program. Hiring is through the National Older Worker Career Center (NOWCC) and will NOT affect your annuity. If you're interested in enrolling in the ESP, click [here](#) to search open positions. For more information on the NPS program, visit the [NOWCC website](#) or contact Program Development Manager Peggy O'Dell at mgaodell@gmail.com.

Oil and Gas Reform Updates

We signed on to a [letter](#) sent to Congressional leadership, urging them to support oil and gas reform measures in any upcoming legislative vehicle. And following a [DOI Forum](#) on the oil and gas program, we submitted a set of [comments](#) and recommendations to DOI about much needed reforms of the Department's fossil fuels leasing programs. In addition to our own comments, we [signed on](#) to comments and recommendations sent to Interior from a coalition of partner organizations from the west and southwest. We also contributed and signed on to [extensive comments](#) regarding oil and gas leasing impacts on national scenic trails and national historic trails, particularly on federal lands crossed by such trails and subject to mandated administration, management, and protective provisions of the National Trails System Act.

Outreach to DOI

We issued a [statement](#) in support of Secretary Haaland's two orders to prioritize action on climate change throughout the Interior Department and to restore transparency and integrity in the Department's decision-making processes. The Secretary's orders rescind previous orders issued by the Trump administration that established energy development as the "dominant" use of those lands.

Ahead of Secretary Haaland's visit to Utah last month, we issued a [statement](#) urging her to restore protections to Bears Ears and Grand Staircase Escalante National Monuments.

Finally, we released a [statement of support](#) for several DOI nominees and urged the Senate to confirm Tommy Beaudreau as Deputy Secretary of the Department of the Interior and Shannon Estenoz as Assistant Secretary of the Interior for Fish Wildlife and Parks

Continuing Advocacy

We submitted [comments](#) regarding the draft Federal Highway Administration's study proposal regarding the use of e-bikes on public lands. While we appreciate the proposal for a well-designed study to gather information applicable to e-bike use on public lands, there are some relatively minor additions and adjustments needed in the study proposal to ensure the information gathered is portrayed in an objective fashion that does not create the false impression that USDOT "approves" or "endorses" e-bike use as a necessarily legal and appropriate use on federal lands managed by the respective agencies under four different legislative mandates.

In a [letter](#) sent to the NPS Director of Public Health, the Coalition expressed a concern over the continuing lack of transparency regarding the NPS Covid-19 response program, which could erode employee and public confidence in the credibility of the program. General information on Covid-19 infection numbers and park locations should be made available to the public.

The Coalition also joined over 340 organizations and signed on to a letter sent to President Biden in support of conserving 30 percent of our lands, waters, and ocean by 2030. We have been a strong supporter of this initiative and look forward to tracking its progress. The full letter is linked in the box below.

[30 x 30 Support](#)

Amache Legislation

The Coalition [sent a letter](#) in support of legislation to establish the Amache National Historic Site as a unit of the National Park System (H.R. 2497 / S. 1284). The bipartisan legislation would make the Granada Relocation Center, a World War II Japanese incarceration site in Colorado known as "Amache", a unit of the National Park System. The legislation was introduced by Congressman Joe Neguse (D-CO) and Ken Buck (R-CO) and Senators Michael Bennet and John Hickenlooper.

Regional Haze in PA and NC

We also signed on to a [letter](#) sent to the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection regarding their implementation plan for regional haze and urging Pennsylvania to provide for reasonable progress measures in its haze plan that will significantly reduce visibility impairing pollution from sources in the state that contribute to regional haze in Class I areas like Shenandoah National Park.

We joined several community, health, and conservation groups in a [sign on letter](#), sent to the North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality, expressing concern that the state is heading toward violating its obligations under the Clean Air Act to restore visibility in protected areas like Great Smoky Mountains National Park. The letter includes several recommendations to correct course.

What We're Reading & Tracking This Month

Coalition Chair Phil Francis joined an [episode of the Park Leaders Podcast](#) to discuss how friends groups can help maintain accountability among park rangers and leaders. He also [spoke with The Washington Post](#) about best practices for those considering a national park visit this summer.

Also from the [Washington Post](#), here are [some alternatives](#) to our nation's busiest national parks. Planning a trip to one the lesser-known parks can help you avoid crowds and have an even better time!

A [new feature](#) from Google Earth allows users to see the striking effect of climate change over the past four decades. Users can click through timelapses that highlight melting ice caps, receding glaciers, massive urban growth and wildfires' impact on agriculture.