

Coalition Briefs  
November 2018

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# The Coalition To Protect America's National Parks

*Voices of Experience*

## In This Brief

[Duke Alumni Search](#)

[Address Updates](#)

[About a Blog](#)

[Hill Meetings](#)

[Cost of Climate  
Change](#)

[What We're Reading  
This Month](#)

[Support the  
Coalition with  
Amazon Smile](#)

[Membership Update](#)

[Website Links](#)

## Calling All Duke Alumni

We are assisting the Park Institute of America and would love to know how many of our members hold an undergraduate or graduate degree from Duke University. The Park Institute was established in 2016 through a partnership agreement between the Nicholas School of the Environment at Duke University and the Coalition to Protect America's National Parks. The broad goals of the Institute are communication, transformational training, wide-ranging partnerships, and sharing new technologies and ideas to promote conservation, visitor use, and sustainability. The process is underway to make the Institute operational by building the board and raising funds.

If you're a Duke alumni, please let us know. We can share additional information and see if there might be some ways for you to help in bringing the Institute on line. Contact [editor@protectnps.org](mailto:editor@protectnps.org) if interested.

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Park Institute of America

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### **Membership**

Have you moved? Do we have the correct contact information? If you need to update your address, please send an email to [editor@protectnps.org](mailto:editor@protectnps.org) and we can make sure future mailings are sent to the right place.

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### **Follow Our Blog**

Did you know the Coalition to Protect America's National Parks has a regular blog? Topics range from current events to interviews with our members. This month, we published a feature on the mental health benefits of a walk in the woods, the commemoration of Hispanic Heritage Month, and an interview with our BOD Chair, Phil Francis. Click the box below to check out the blog!

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### **Coalition Blog**

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#### **Coalition Members meet with Congressional Representatives**

On October 3 & 4, Board Chair Phil Francis, accompanied by board members Don Hellmann, Brenda Barrett, and coalition member Tom Ross, held meetings with staff of Senators Casey (D-PA), Baldwin (D-WI), Nelson (D-FL), and the Republican majority staff of the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee to discuss the bill to permanently reauthorize the Land and Water Conservation Fund. The coalition received strong interest from the Senate staff in seeing LWCF reauthorized, while recognizing that the effort depends upon the resolution

## Update

The Coalition's membership currently stands at **1,600** members.

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of budget concerns about its long-term cost. It is likely that the effort to reauthorize LWCF will be combined with other pending parks and public lands bills awaiting final action in the lame-duck session of Congress following the November elections. Staff of the senators used the meetings to ask about and get insight from the coalition members on other Park Service issues that were of concern to them, including pending legislation to address the NPS deferred maintenance backlog and other NPS program matters.

[Read the Coalition's Letter on LWCF Reauthorization](#)

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## The Cost of Climate Change

According to Executive Council member Mike Murray, there is a variance between the proposed NPS budget increases and the actual costs that will be incurred by the Service due to changes brought on by climate change, particularly by the many coastal parks that will be dealing with expensive infrastructure issues as oceans rise. Murray says, “the NPS's massive \$12 billion deferred maintenance backlog has been in the news recently. As we have reported, there is a bipartisan bill in Congress that would begin to provide NPS with significant annual funding to address the backlog - a welcome proposal to all who support the National Park System. Unfortunately, at the same time Congress appears willing to provide significant funding for facility maintenance, Trump Administration environmental policies, including increased oil and gas development on public lands and rollbacks of various air emissions standards, will likely accelerate climate change and exacerbate

the impacts of climate change in parks. For example, as described in a 2015 NPS report, 40 coastal parks that were studied have over \$40 billion in facility assets with high exposure to being severely damaged or destroyed by sea level by the end of the current century. Providing NPS with funding to address the \$12 billion maintenance backlog is significant progress that is long overdue, but it pales in comparison to \$40 billion in increased risk to NPS facilities resulting from the Administration's reckless environmental policies.” Click the link in the box below to view the coastal assets report.

## Coastal Assets Report

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

Read Executive Council member Brenda Barrett's [article](#) in *Living Landscape Observer* on the challenge of saving cultural resources on a landscape scale.

Coalition member Rick Jones published an op-ed in the *Pueblo Chieftain* about protecting Colorado's public lands. Read it [here](#).

The National Park Service is considering new restrictions on demonstrations near the White House and National Mall that could shrink how much of the White House sidewalk is available for protest by nearly 80% and charge applicants a fee. Read more in [this article](#) from *The Atlantic*.

A climate change catastrophe is looming if we don't make urgent, global changes, says a new report from the UN. Click [here](#) to read *The Guardian's* coverage of this alarming report from the United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on

## Climate Change.

As funding cuts and a changing climate threaten America's parks, two friends are working to protect them, one photo at a time. Meet the 'Art Rangers.' [Read more](#) from *National Geographic*.

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