

JUNE 2026



# Progressive NGOs and the NPS



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# I. Introduction:

Non-Government Organizations (NGOs) wield far more power than many people realize, and they have been allowed to operate without serious oversight or accountability for decades. Their influence is especially notable when it comes to our national parks and monuments, where these unelected advocacy groups increasingly shape how the public understands history, conservation, and national identity.

The National Parks Service (NPS)—within the Department of the Interior (DOI)—is the main government agency responsible for maintaining our national parks and monuments as well as providing information contextualizing those locations. Through signage, exhibits, and other messaging, the NPS frames the narrative for how park visitors understand our values, history, and national identity.

Although one may like to think the NPS presents a neutral perspective, the agency is staffed by human beings who are susceptible to outside influences or bring progressive agendas of their own. Because the NPS is routinely given some of the highest favorability ratings among federal agencies,<sup>1</sup> its shortcomings are often overlooked. But mounting evidence demonstrates that progressive NGOs use their influence to push DEI, wokeness, climate change, and progressive historical revisionism onto our museums, national parks, and national monuments.

We know that progressives use NGOs to impose their policy aims,<sup>2</sup> but their role in shaping the narratives that define our history may be less fully understood. Some of these NGOs have existed for decades and have institutional reputations that are not heavily scrutinized, while others are questionably shoveled billions of dollars only months after creation.<sup>3</sup>

Their influence is not always exercised openly or consistently. Sometimes these NGOs will shift to more benign priorities when a Republican administration is in power but pivot back to pushing a woke agenda when Democrats are in power. Similarly, there is a revolving door where Democrat administration officials who were loyal to the wider progressive regime relocate to the NGO world and receive a large salary when out of power, then go back again when the White House is favorable to their cause. These seasons of dormancy allow the money to keep

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<sup>1</sup> Andy Cerda, “Americans see many federal agencies favorably, but Republicans grow more critical of Justice Department,” *Pew Research*, August 12, 2024, <https://www.pewresearch.org/short-reads/2024/08/12/americans-see-many-federal-agencies-favorably-but-republicans-grow-more-critical-of-justice-department/>.

<sup>2</sup> U.S. House Committee on Oversight and Accountability, “Hearing Wrap-Up: Taxpayer-Funded NGO Slush Funds Advancing Radical Agendas Must Be Shut Down,” press release, June 4, 2025, <https://oversight.house.gov/release/hearing-wrap-up-taxpayer-funded-ngo-slush-funds-advancing-radical-agendas-must-be-shut-down/>.

<sup>3</sup> David, Blackmon, “\$375B EPA Slush Fund Handled by John Podesta Gave Billions to Charities Founded Only Months Earlier,” *New York Post*, March 5, 2025, <https://nypost.com/2025/03/05/business/john-podesta-375m-epa-slush-fund-gave-billions-to-newly-formed-charities/>.

flowing no matter who is in charge so they can better focus on implementing anti-American progressive ends when their allies are in power.

NGOs operate in different ways based on how they are organized. Some lobby Congress or various subagencies in the Department of the Interior, including the NPS, directly. Sometimes they will offer trainings to staff or provide “expert” consultations on what various signage should say. This influence can be seen in how employees react to conservative correctives.

Although the Trump administration has taken excellent steps to review signage that disseminates progressive narratives at our parks, monuments, and museums, recent leaks by NPS staffers<sup>4</sup> show some are actively trying to undermine these efforts. The leaks underscore how out-of-touch this small minority of NPS staffers and the NGOs that influence them have become.

As the Council to Modernize Government has written, these leaks show the Trump administration is successfully reigning in the absurd messaging that has infiltrated our historic landmarks.<sup>5</sup> But it is time we take a closer look at the NGOs that influence the NPS and have led them to this point.

Although there are many NGOs, we’ll divide some of the major ones into three categories:

- Educational and narrative-shaping
- Advocacy
- Federal Employee Groups

Often these will intersect with each other, but all hold a strong amount of influence over the NPS and do not answer to taxpayers or voters.

The Department of the Interior should know about the progressive influence of NGOs and seek to remove it as much as possible. Moreover, the general public should know when their country’s most treasured parks, monuments, and museums are not being portrayed in a fair and patriotic way. And, most importantly, these NGOs should not receive government money, especially while conservatives have the power to control purse strings.

Below, each category of NGO will be given detail, including a list of the more significant<sup>6</sup> NGOs that influence and shape our national parks system.

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<sup>4</sup> Jake Spring and Hannah Natanson, “National Park Service Flags Hundreds of Items That Might ‘Disparage’ America,” *The Washington Post*, March 2, 2026. <https://www.washingtonpost.com/climate-environment/2026/03/02/national-parks-signs-censorship-slavery/>.

<sup>5</sup> Curtis Schube, “Happy Birthday, USA: Trump Gifts America Its History Back,” *Townhall*, April 10, 2026, <http://townhall.com/columnists/curtis-schube/2026/04/10/happy-birthday-usa-trump-gifts-american-its-history-back-n2674191>.

<sup>6</sup> This is not to say, however, that these lists are exhaustive.

## II. NGOs Influencing the NPS

### A. Educational or Narrative-Shaping Groups

The purpose of the NGOs labeled as educational or narrative-shaping is to influence park personnel, park guests, or the parks themselves to be more supportive of a progressive interpretation of history and society. When NPS staff give tours, erect signage, provide explanations, or present themselves, they can be influenced by these NGOs through trainings and consultations.

Even if the President bans policies like DEI or critical theory, nothing is stopping these NGOs from inserting those influences into NPS staff training or exhibits. They may not even directly interact with staff and could influence park guests before they arrive. Of all groups, these kinds of NGOs are the most likely to receive direct funding from the government.

#### **International Coalition of Sites of Conscience (ICSC)**

The International Coalition of Sites of Conscience (or ICSC) was founded by Ruth Abram, who established the Tenement Museum in New York. The aim of the Tenement Museum, as explained on its website, is to “build an inclusive and expansive American identity.”<sup>7</sup> When it opened in the 1980s, “it radically challenged the methods, subjects, and approaches of museums and historic houses.”<sup>8</sup>

This mentality was applied to ICSC’s development, which is a network of hundreds of “Sites of Conscience” in dozens of countries. Through these sites, the ICSC seeks to:

“[R]ecognize that the power of sites of memory is not inherent; it must be harnessed as a deliberate tactic in the service of human rights and citizen engagement.... Through training and grants as well as regional collaborations, global projects, and grassroots transitional justice initiatives, the International Coalition of Sites of Conscience equips these extraordinary sites with the skills they need to create powerful participatory programs.”

We know this is a progressive organization by its advocacy of abortion,<sup>9</sup> illegal immigration,<sup>10</sup> LGBT expansion,<sup>11</sup> and other radical progressive agenda items. It actively collaborates directly with the NPS, as well as several sites managed by NPS, such as Alcatraz

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<sup>7</sup> Tenement Museum, “About Us,” accessed May 6, 2026, <https://www.tenement.org/about-us/>.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

<sup>9</sup> International Coalition of Sites of Conscience, “Supporting Women’s Right to Choose,” May 3, 2022, <https://www.sitesofconscience.org/2022/05/supporting-womens-right-to-choose/>.

<sup>10</sup> International Coalition of Sites of Conscience, “We Must Go the Extra Mile: On DACA, Education and Advocacy,” September 2017, <https://www.sitesofconscience.org/2017/09/we-must-go-the-extra-mile-on-daca-education-and-advocacy/>.

<sup>11</sup> International Coalition of Sites of Conscience, “LGBTQI+ Rights in the Dominican Republic,” April 2021, <https://www.sitesofconscience.org/2021/04/lgbtqindr/>.

Island and Joshua Tree.<sup>12</sup> It has designated some sites as International Sites of Conscience, such as the Golden Gate National Recreation Area, even contributing to K-12 curriculum.<sup>13</sup> It also trains NPS staff on how to interpret various sites, including the “Northeast Region Training” and “Southeast Region Training” for the NPS.<sup>14</sup>

Although it is unclear if ICSC is still receiving funding through grants or compensation for training, it is clear it encourages a progressive bias for NPS staff who receive its trainings. Ideological bias should not be part of any training for DOI. Moreover, visitors who attend a site which has received support or an endorsement from ICSC should be wary of how it has injected bias into the interpretation of the site.

### **National Association for Interpretation (NAI)**

Although very similar to ICSC, the National Association for Interpretation (NAI) is more focused on the United States, it also maintains a presence in dozens of other countries.<sup>15</sup> NAI gives certifications to “interpreters” who work in parks, museums, and cultural sites—including professionals who work within the Department of the Interior.

NAI’s influence on the federal government is historically very strong. In 2006, it worked with several other federal agencies and nonprofits to organize the Definitions Project to come up with “definitions of common terminology used by interpreters, environmental educators, historians, and others in nonformal settings such as parks, aquariums, zoos, nature centers, historic sites, and museums.”<sup>16</sup> By playing a part in determining definitions, NAI could help control how sites are understood and interpreted.

We know its worldview is very progressive, as its own website has a land acknowledgment<sup>17</sup> and several explicit endorsements of DEI:

The overall objective of NAI’s diversity effort is to create a culturally progressive and socially reflective organization that represents, supports and celebrates diversity at all levels... honors diversity in its many dimensions including but not limited to ethnicity, race, culture, nationality, sex, gender, gender expression, sexual orientation, faith,

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<sup>12</sup> International Coalition of Sites of Conscience, “Selected Training,” <https://www.sitesofconscience.org/selected-training/>.

<sup>13</sup> National Park Service, “Site of Conscience,” Golden Gate National Recreation Area, accessed May 6, 2026, <https://home.nps.gov/goga/what-makes-gnra-special.htm>.

<sup>14</sup> International Coalition of Sites of Conscience, “Selected Training.”

<sup>15</sup> The National Association for Interpretation, “About NAI,” accessed May 6, 2026, [https://www.nai-us.org/interp/nai/\\_About/About\\_Landing.aspx?\\_gl=1\\*r71nhi\\*\\_gcl\\_au\\*OTQwNjk5NDQ5LjE3NzgwODY0OTQ](https://www.nai-us.org/interp/nai/_About/About_Landing.aspx?_gl=1*r71nhi*_gcl_au*OTQwNjk5NDQ5LjE3NzgwODY0OTQ).

<sup>16</sup> Definitions Project, “Definitions Project,” accessed May 6, 2026, <https://web.archive.org/web/20080908080758/http://www.definitionsproject.com/>.

<sup>17</sup> The National Association for Interpretation, “About NAI.” (“The National Association for Interpretation acknowledges, with respect that our headquarters in Fort Collins, Colorado, is located in the traditional and ancestral homelands of the Arapaho...”).

socioeconomic background, mental and physical abilities, learning styles, and viewpoints.<sup>18</sup>

NAI is the U.S.-based partner of the Global Alliance for Heritage Interpretation (GAHI), which was explicitly created to advocate for governments to recognize “natural and cultural heritage resources have a value that extends beyond the boundaries of individual states and that all countries should accept responsibility to the global community for the resources in their care.”<sup>19</sup> Its goal is to reframe sites away from a national understanding towards a more globalist perspective.

It is unclear to what extent NAI directly provides training for staff in the DOI. But from the foundational documents of its partner organization, and how it describes itself, its goal is to influence—at least in part—DOI and NPS staff from a globalist perspective—not to present America as a nation with a clear people and history.

### **The Cultural Landscape Foundation (TCLF)**

This NGO designates various areas as culturally, environmentally, or historically significant and provides information on them through databases and reference materials.<sup>20</sup> TCLF’s definitions for the various landscapes are vague and could be broadly interpreted, giving them a wide range of what sites to highlight or ignore. It also has a list of “at-risk” sites that are arbitrarily defined. Many of which are ridiculously chosen. A few examples include designating the White House Grounds as “at-risk” due to President Trump’s efforts to add a Ballroom<sup>21</sup> or the Kennedy Center because Trump’s efforts to rebrand it violate the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).<sup>22</sup>

It sees recent efforts to frame United States culture and history in a negative light as essential and is working to memorialize such efforts. The only reason to continue to list Black Lives Matter Plaza as a “Designated Landscape,”<sup>23</sup> despite it only being created in June 2020 and then removed over a year ago in March 2025, is because it wants to inflate that narrative and history.

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<sup>18</sup> The National Association for Interpretation, “Telling Everyone’s Story - NAI’s Commitment to Diversity,” accessed May 6, 2026, [https://nai-us.org/common/Uploaded%20files/Admin\\_Docs/Telling\\_Everyones\\_Story.pdf](https://nai-us.org/common/Uploaded%20files/Admin_Docs/Telling_Everyones_Story.pdf).

<sup>19</sup> The Global Alliance for Heritage Interpretation, “GAHI Position Paper DRAFT,” July 13, 2019, 4, <https://www.gahi.online/download/gahi-position-paper-draft/>.

<sup>20</sup> The Cultural Landscape Foundation, “About TCLF,” accessed June 16, 2026, <https://www.tclf.org/about-tclf>.

<sup>21</sup> The Cultural Landscape Foundation, “Will the Battle Over the White House Ballroom go to the Supreme Court for ‘Relief?’” April 13, 2026, <https://www.tclf.org/will-battle-over-white-house-ballroom-go-supreme-court-relief>.

<sup>22</sup> The Cultural Landscape Foundation, “Unprecedented Coalition of Cultural Heritage and Architecture Groups Sue to Require Federal Review of President Trump’s Kennedy Center Plans?” March 23, 2026, <https://www.tclf.org/unprecedented-coalition-cultural-heritage-and-architecture-groups-sue-require-federal-review>.

<sup>23</sup> The Cultural Landscape Foundation, “Black Lives Matter Plaza,” accessed June 6, 2026, <https://www.tclf.org/black-lives-matter-plaza>.

Despite this interest in re-imagining American history to serve progressive ends, TCLF also has a partnership with the NPS to “document nationally significant landscapes in five cities.”<sup>24</sup> Given its own conception of what is “nationally significant,” it is clear it is not interested in preserving American greatness, but in opposing the current administration’s goals to “Restor[e] Truth and Sanity to American History.”

## **Post Pigeon EDU**

Rather than try to influence employees who work at monuments, museums, and parks, Post Pigeon EDU seeks to influence children without even leaving their classrooms by creating curriculum for teachers about the various parks.<sup>25</sup> It partners with at least nine national parks through a “postcard program,” which according to at least one pictured example on “deforestation” appears focused on environmental activist principles.<sup>26</sup>

The biographies of the people behind the organization make its worldviews clear. Valerie Quirk, listed as the “Founder/Executive Director” and “board President”<sup>27</sup> earned her M.S.Ed. “studying inequities in public lands access for historically marginalized communities.”<sup>28</sup> An advisory board member named Steph Ng works at a “consulting firm focused on systems change with diversity, equity, and inclusion implemented in everything we do. Steph also serves on the Board of Directors for Vocal Justice, a non-profit that positions youth proximate to injustice as leaders for social change... and DEI trainer in Louisiana and New York.”<sup>29</sup> Additionally, all members have pronouns in the bios, indicating their support for transgender ideologies.

These are the people behind creating curriculum for public school students as young as kindergarten. Of the suggested parks, it includes the César E. Chávez National Monument in California. Post Pidgeon EDU describes Chavez as “the most important Latino leader in the United States during the twentieth century” because he helped establish the “first permanent agricultural union.”<sup>30</sup> Putting aside allegations Chavez groomed and sexually abused children and adults,<sup>31</sup> the framing is clearly designed to create assumptions in children about unions, especially progressive ones.

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<sup>24</sup> The Cultural Landscape Foundation, “National Park Service Guides,” accessed June 6, 2026, <https://www.tclf.org/places/view-city-and-regional-guides/national-park-service-guides>.

<sup>25</sup> Post Pigeon EDU, “Vision + Approach,” accessed May 18, 2026, <https://postpigeonedu.org/about/>.

<sup>26</sup> Post Pigeon EDU, “Our Reach,” accessed May 18, 2026, <https://postpigeonedu.org/impact-2/>.

<sup>27</sup> Post Pigeon EDU, “Team,” accessed May 7, 2026, <https://postpigeonedu.org/team/#elementor-action%3Aaction%3Dpopup%3Aopen%26settings%3DeyJpZCI6IjIxNTkiLCJ0b2dnbGUiOmZhbHNifQ%3D%3D>.

<sup>28</sup> Post Pigeon EDU, “About,” accessed May 7, 2026, <https://postpigeonedu.org/about/>.

<sup>29</sup> Post Pigeon EDU, “Team.”

<sup>30</sup> Post Pigeon EDU, “For Educators,” accessed May 18, 2026, <https://postpigeonedu.org/educators/>.

<sup>31</sup> Manny Fernandez and Sarah Hurtes, “Cesar Chavez, a civil Rights Icon, is Accused of Abusing Girls for Years, The New York Times, March 18, 2026, updated June 11, 2026, <https://www.nytimes.com/2026/03/18/us/cesar-chavez-sexual-abuse-allegations-ufw.html>.

## Wilderness Inquiry (WI)

Wilderness Inquiry (WI) is another nonprofit that claims to partner with the NPS and several other agencies, such as Bureau of Land Management, USDA Forest Service, state parks, and NGOs, to name a few.<sup>32</sup> This NGO focuses on leading outdoor trips and experiences, but does so by pushing DEI.

In its five-year (2023-2027) strategic plan, WI asserted “A strong aspiration to center diversity, equity, inclusion, and access (DEIA) throughout all of our programs and organizational structures,” as well as “A desire to focus on reaching and effectively serving four core communities: youth; people with disabilities; BIPOC; and LGBTQ+.”<sup>33</sup>

Also in 2023, WI stressed that it “primarily seek[s] to engage [its] core audiences from communities historically and currently underrepresented in the outdoors, including 1) people with disabilities; 2) individuals who identify as Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) and/or LGBTQ+; and 3) individuals and families that experience financial inequity.”<sup>34</sup> It currently offers “Women’s Trips” eligible “to all adults who identify as women...”<sup>35</sup>

“There’s a long, long history of discrimination and intentional, forced exclusion from nature and natural spaces that goes far beyond just recreation,” a WI senior manager said last year. “You think about how this country came to be and the forced removal of Indigenous people from their lands...”<sup>36</sup>

By partnering with this group, the NPS is legitimizing many progressive presuppositions.

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<sup>32</sup> Wilderness Inquiry, Inc., “Our Partners,” accessed May 28, 2026, <https://wildernessinquiry.org/about-us/our-partners/>.

<sup>33</sup> Wilderness Inquiry, "Wilderness Inquiry Strategic Plan Summary, 2023-2027", accessed May 28, 2026, <https://wi.cdn.brillianthosting.app/uploads/2023/06/WI-Strategic-Plan-2023-2027-Overview.docx.pdf>.

<sup>34</sup> Wilderness Inquiry, Inc., “Consolidated Financial Statements Auditor’s Report for the Years Ended December 31, 2023 and 2022,” accessed May 12, 2026, <https://wildernessinquiry.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/01/Wilderness-Inquiry-23-Audit-Report-Final.pdf>.

<sup>35</sup> Wilderness Inquiry, Inc., “Women’s Trips,” accessed May 28, 2026, <https://wildernessinquiry.org/our-travel-experience/group-types/women-only-trips/>.

<sup>36</sup> Sommer Wagen, Lavender Magazine, "How Wilderness Inquiry Helps Everyone Return to Nature," August 21, 2025, <https://lavendermagazine.com/featured-home-page/how-wilderness-inquiry-helps-everyone-return-to-nature/>.

## B. Advocacy Groups

Although this category of NGOs may legally be registered as "non-government" organizations, its entire existence is predicated on influencing the government. Many of these groups are formed and staffed by people who want to see changes to how the parks are presented and are not interested in telling a pro-American story. Moreover, despite often receiving government money, it is not answerable to the American people, Congress, or the NPS. It only answers to its donors and board directors, who carry their own agendas.

### **American Alliance of Museums (AAM)**

The American Alliance of Museums (AAM) aims to serve museums, science centers, and zoos through public advocacy. It also provides training and accreditation to various museums, including those managed by the National Parks Service. Additionally, the National Association for Interpretation is part of its Council of Affiliates, which "discuss[es] issues of common concern and exchange[s] information about organizational priorities and activities."<sup>37</sup>

It has a whole bureau dedicated to providing speakers, workshops, and consultations on topics such as "Advocacy," "Diversity, Equity, Accessibility, and Inclusion (DEAI)," and "Social Impact" with fees ranging from \$2,000 to \$20,000.<sup>38</sup> But DEI<sup>39</sup> is not just a small footnote of what it does. It spearheaded a national DEI task force backed by several major donors such as the Mellon, Alice L. Walton, and Ford foundations.<sup>40</sup> This "Excellence in DEAI Task Force" created a report which "lays the groundwork that allows our field to establish a common set of Core Concepts and Key Indicators of excellence in DEAI."<sup>41</sup>

The groundwork is well detailed. For example, AAM claims, "One major aspect of the work that takes time is shifting leaders and museum professionals away from white-dominant characteristics of perfection, risk aversion, and conflict avoidance to move toward action."<sup>42</sup> Its DEI work is "an ongoing journey without a fixed end point"<sup>43</sup> and it believes "[w]e have an obligation to continue our work to center DEAI in everything that we do..."<sup>44</sup> It offers a service to implement concepts such as "Trans inclusion and LGBTQ+ terminology," "Racial equity,"

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<sup>37</sup> American Alliance of Museums, "Council of Affiliates," accessed June 8, 2026, <https://www.aam-us.org/programs/about-aam/council-of-affiliates/>.

<sup>38</sup> American Alliance of Museums, "Alliance Advisory Services and Speakers Bureau," accessed June 8, 2026, <https://www.aam-us.org/programs/alliance-advisors/>.

<sup>39</sup> Or DEAI, also known as Justice, Equity, and Inclusion (JEDI).

<sup>40</sup> American Alliance of Museums, "Excellence in DEAI Report," August 2, 2022, <https://www.aam-us.org/2022/08/02/excellence-in-deai-report/>.

<sup>41</sup> American Alliance of Museums, "Excellence in DEAI," accessed June 8, 2026, 4, <https://www.aam-us.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/07/AAM-Excellence-in-DEAI-Report.pdf>.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*, 7.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, 6.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*, 15.

“Unconscious bias,” “Micro-behaviors,” “Allyship,” “Intersectionality,” “Inclusive leadership,” and many others.<sup>45</sup>

AAM is also very anti-immigration enforcement, even offering a sample policy on how to respond if ICE tries to detain someone on museum grounds and how staff are permitted to refuse them help.<sup>46</sup>

To influence NPS activity, AAM gives “accreditation” to parks that meet its own criteria. In 2024, the NPS touted Independence National Historical Park in Philadelphia’s reaccreditation by AAM. According to the NPS press release, that park—one of seven accredited national park museums in the nation—earned the accreditation due to being a “good steward of its resources” and had undergone “rigorous process of self-assessment and review by peers.”<sup>47</sup> Given that NPS press releases are boasting AAM accreditation, it is clearly being influenced by AAM.

### **Public Lands Alliance (PLA)**

Formally known as the Association of Partners for Public Lands, the Public Lands Alliance (PLA) is a collection of non-profits that advocate for public lands, but with progressive goals. Operating as a tax-exempt 501(c)(3), it claims 22 percent of its income comes from government grants and agreements, according to its Annual Report.<sup>48</sup> It reports most of its expenses as going to unclear and undefined categories like “Represent,” “Connect,” “Strengthen.”<sup>49</sup>

Its efforts, at least, are transparent. It advocates for greater funding for the government (and an expansion of state power) and for nonprofits, which it describes as “essential to helping public lands adapt to the effects of climate change.”<sup>50</sup> PLA thinks that parks should be guided by unaccountable non-profits that operate without transparency.

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<sup>45</sup> Ibid., 16

<sup>46</sup> American Alliance of Museums, “Sample Policy for Preparing for and Responding to ICE Enforcement Actions in Museums,” February 20, 2026, <https://www.aam-us.org/2026/02/20/sample-policy-for-preparing-for-and-responding-to-ice-enforcement-actions-in-museums/>.

<sup>47</sup> National Park Service, “Independence National Historical Park receives reaccreditation from the American Alliance of Museums,” April 18, 2024, <https://www.nps.gov/inde/learn/news/independence-national-historical-park-receives-reaccreditation-from-the-american-alliance-of-museums.htm>.

<sup>48</sup> Public Lands Alliance, “PLA Annual Report FY2024,” accessed May 8, 2026, 5, [https://higherlogicdownload.s3.amazonaws.com/APPL/9787d742-a01a-487a-ae76-e493bb4462b1/UploadedImages/Impacts\\_Page/PLA\\_Annual\\_Report\\_FY2024\\_pdf\\_2\\_.pdf](https://higherlogicdownload.s3.amazonaws.com/APPL/9787d742-a01a-487a-ae76-e493bb4462b1/UploadedImages/Impacts_Page/PLA_Annual_Report_FY2024_pdf_2_.pdf).

<sup>49</sup> Ibid.

<sup>50</sup> Public Lands Alliance, “Partnership Priorities for America’s Public Lands,” accessed May 18, 2026, 2, [https://higherlogicdownload.s3.amazonaws.com/APPL/9787d742-a01a-487a-ae76-e493bb4462b1/UploadedImages/PLA\\_Partnership\\_Priorities\\_2023-2024.pdf](https://higherlogicdownload.s3.amazonaws.com/APPL/9787d742-a01a-487a-ae76-e493bb4462b1/UploadedImages/PLA_Partnership_Priorities_2023-2024.pdf).

It also advocates for a Civilian Climate Corps (CCC),<sup>51</sup> an initiative supported by the Biden administration and left-wing lawmakers, which would prop-up DEI jobs meant to funnel funds into nonprofits fighting for “environmental justice” or other progressive causes.<sup>52</sup>

Its explicit function is to be an administrator for progressive thought in our parks. At its 2024 convention, it “focused on powerful themes for the public lands community, such as inclusive storytelling” and “on codesigning outdoor spaces with local communities and why diversity in the outdoors is critical for environmental sustainability.”<sup>53</sup> Again, the goal is to subvert parks and monuments for progressive ends.

### **The Sunrise Movement**

The Sunrise Movement’s homepage says in big bold letters, “We are the Climate Revolution.”<sup>54</sup> This explicitly progressive organization was founded in 2017 and is one of the biggest proponents—it “demands” it—of the Green New Deal.<sup>55</sup> Other “demands” are stopping the “climate crisis,” creating “millions of good paying union jobs,” investing in “racial and economic justice,” and to “reimagine our government to work for everyday people.”<sup>56</sup> It even is involved in overtly partisan activist movements, including “ICE Out,” “Students Rise Up,” and “Electoral Organizing.”<sup>57</sup>

It is also a major advocate for a CCC, wanting to see millions of people working for them.<sup>58</sup> For reference, the entire Department of the Interior employs about 70,000 people.<sup>59</sup> Sunrise fundamentally believes a CCC, or something like it, will push America towards socialism.

Even if at times this organization appears moderate—focused on something like trail maintenance—it’s clear any advocacy of a CCC, ICE Out, or similar initiative, is an attempt at progressive subversion.

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<sup>51</sup> Public Lands Alliance, “Partnership Priorities for America’s Public Lands,” 2023-2024, 7, [https://higherlogicdownload.s3.amazonaws.com/APPL/9787d742-a01a-487a-ae76-e493bb4462b1/UploadedImages/PLA\\_Partnership\\_Priorities\\_2023-2024.pdf](https://higherlogicdownload.s3.amazonaws.com/APPL/9787d742-a01a-487a-ae76-e493bb4462b1/UploadedImages/PLA_Partnership_Priorities_2023-2024.pdf).

<sup>52</sup> Congress.gov, “Text - H.R.5572 - 118th Congress (2023-2024): Civilian Climate Corps for Jobs and Justice Act,” 118<sup>th</sup> Cong. (2023-2024), introduced September 19, 2023, <https://www.congress.gov/bill/118th-congress/house-bill/5572/text>.

<sup>53</sup> Public Lands Alliance, “PLA Annual Report FY2024,” accessed May 12, 2026, 3, [https://higherlogicdownload.s3.amazonaws.com/APPL/9787d742-a01a-487a-ae76-e493bb4462b1/UploadedImages/Impacts\\_Page/PLA\\_Annual\\_Report\\_FY2024\\_pdf\\_2\\_.pdf](https://higherlogicdownload.s3.amazonaws.com/APPL/9787d742-a01a-487a-ae76-e493bb4462b1/UploadedImages/Impacts_Page/PLA_Annual_Report_FY2024_pdf_2_.pdf).

<sup>54</sup> Sunrise Movement, “Who We Are,” accessed May 18, 2026, <https://www.sunrisemovement.org/>.

<sup>55</sup> Sunrise Movement, “Our Demands,” accessed May 18, 2026, <https://www.sunrisemovement.org/green-new-deal/>.

<sup>56</sup> Sunrise Movement, “Our Demands,” accessed May 18, 2026, <https://www.sunrisemovement.org/our-demands/#stances>.

<sup>57</sup> Sunrise Movement, “Our Campaigns,” accessed May 18, 2026, <https://www.sunrisemovement.org/campaigns/>.

<sup>58</sup> Ellen Sciales, “The Civilian Climate Corps (CCC), Explained,” Sunrise Movement, April 20, 2021, <https://www.sunrisemovement.org/theory-of-change/the-ccc-explained/>.

<sup>59</sup> U.S. Department of the Interior, “About Our Employees,” accessed May 12, 2026, <https://www.doi.gov/employees/about>.

## The Coalition to Protect America's National Parks

Also known as “the Coalition,” the Coalition to Protect America’s National Parks is mainly made up of former NPS professionals and does a great deal of advocacy work. It uses its institutional history as a justification for subversion.

In a press release from May 2026, the Coalition condemned President Trump’s attempt to reclaim American history by listing examples of “history and science” it believes are being erased:

Under orders from Secretary Burgum, the National Park Service removed a slavery exhibit at Independence Park in Philadelphia. They also removed signage acknowledging climate change at Fort Sumter in South Carolina. And at Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge in New York City they removed a reference to historical events like slavery, Japanese internment camps, and conflicts with Native Americans. In addition, interpretive signs addressing climate change were removed at Acadia National Park in Maine and the word ‘transgender’ from Stonewall’s website.<sup>60</sup>

Take the Independence Hall example. For the focus of the exhibits to be on slavery, not the significance of the actual historical site, where the Declaration of Independence was signed and where the Constitutional Convention occurred, seems awfully out of place.<sup>61</sup> This site specifically should be a celebration of our founding, not matters that—while important—are not relevant to the location. Removing that content makes a lot of sense.

The Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge was another egregious example. It had an interactive exhibit in which the visitor takes the role of a slave who can choose to fight for the Patriots or the British during the Revolutionary War. According to the script, if the visitor chooses to fight for the Patriots, the following narration is prompted:

The so-called Patriots seem to talk a lot about freedom, even though many of them own other human beings. When you declare that ‘all men are created equal’ and endowed with inalienable rights of ‘life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness,’ even enslaved people are going to hear about it....<sup>62</sup>

This too seemed like a clear example to fix, yet the Coalition complained.

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<sup>60</sup> The Coalition to Protect America’s National Parks, “National Parks Experts Urge Congress to Press Burgum on Staffing, Censorship, and Funding at Upcoming Hearing,” press release, May 11, 2026, <https://protectnps.org/2026/05/11/national-parks-experts-urge-congress-to-press-burgum-on-staffing-censorship-and-funding-at-upcoming-hearing/>.

<sup>61</sup> Schube, “Happy Birthday.”

<sup>62</sup> Internet Archive, “DOI Targets for Removal from National Parks under EO14253/SO343,” accessed May 18, 2026, <https://archive.org/details/nps-removal-targets>. (See file labeled “SandyHookFoundationExhibit.ColonelTye.pdf” in subfolder “896” in subfolder “bird\_teeth”).

In reality, the Coalition appears upset that irrelevant environmentalism and anti-American propaganda is no longer being force-fed to park guests. It is not about erasing history or science.

### **The Grand Canyon Trust (GCT)**

Although the Grand Canyon National Park is almost entirely located in Arizona, the Grand Canyon Trust (GCT) is broadly focused on the entire Colorado Plateau, which includes large portions of Arizona, Colorado, New Mexico, and Utah. The ideological stance of the GCT is not mysterious. For example, its DEI statement says that since it is comprised of mostly white people, it is obliged to be more committed to diversity—which logically implies supporting non-white people.<sup>63</sup> Moreover, the Board of Trustees is stacked with Obama and Biden administration appointees, a “gender-affirming care” specialist, progressive activist groups like Natural Resources Defense Council, and former staffers for other prominent Democrats in state governments and Congress.

Environmental advocates are motivated to declare as much land as possible as national parks because it makes it impossible for any resources therein to be used to help the American people. GCT was closely involved in a fight to declare several areas as national parks, including the “Baaj Nwaavjo I’tah Kukveni,” which President Biden designated as a national monument in 2023. The GCT Energy Director was especially pleased by this move because it would lead to “a permanent mining ban.”<sup>64</sup> It also pushed for the designation of the Bears Ears and Grand Staircase-Escalante as national monuments for similar reasons.<sup>65</sup>

This continues the observable trend of designating more places under the federal government in order to enact tighter control of lands. This also includes the narratives surrounding the places that receive the designation. GCT not only has an environmental agenda, but also a cultural agenda. It explicitly opposes President Trump’s efforts to restore Truth and Sanity to our parks and monuments<sup>66</sup> and pushes for strong progressive ideologies in the NPS and many other departments of DOI.

### **The National Parks Foundation (NPF)**

The National Parks Foundation (NPF) was established by Congress and is the official nonprofit partner of the NPS. Its Board of Directors is chosen by the Secretary of the Interior, so it is inherently managed by the will of the White House. It goes without saying, when under a Democrat administration, grant money is used to subvert our parks.

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<sup>63</sup> Grand Canyon Trust, “About Us,” accessed June 9, 2026, <https://www.grandcanyontrust.org/about-us/>.

<sup>64</sup> Amber Reimondo, “Across the monument, a permanent mining ban prevents new mining claims from being staked. But there are some exceptions,” Grand Canyon Trust, November 6, 2023, <https://www.grandcanyontrust.org/blog/what-happens-uranium-mining-new-grand-canyon-national-monument/>.

<sup>65</sup> Grand Canyon Trust, “Successes Through the Years,” accessed June 9, 2026, <https://www.grandcanyontrust.org/successes-through-years/>.

<sup>66</sup> Amanda Podmore, “Is Censorship Coming to the National Parks of the Colorado Plateau?” Grand Canyon Trust, March 19, 2026, <https://www.grandcanyontrust.org/blog/censorship-national-parks-colorado-plateau/>.

According to a March 2024 press release issued during the Biden administration, the NPF awarded millions of dollars in funding through its ParkVentures program for “equity-focused outdoor projects” to “affinity groups” for things like “community building and representation” at public parks, “identifying and eliminating barriers,” and “diversifying perspectives in parks.”<sup>67</sup>

Some funding it was granted went to Friends of Saguaro National Park, Inc. to engage with “historically excluded communities – low-income, ‘Latinx,’ Indigenous, and disabled youth.”<sup>68</sup> Other funding went to the Joy Trip Project for the expressly DEI purpose of getting “Black educators, youth, and activists” to travel along the Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail to discuss “York – the enslaved African American member of the Corps of Discovery – and what his story means for people of color in the outdoors today.”<sup>69</sup> There are numerous other examples on its website.

One organization we mentioned previously, Wilderness Inquiry, received a ParkVentures grant and stated, “we are excited to reach more members of this community and others who identify as people of color, LGBTQ+, and individuals experiencing disability so all people can form lasting connections to these wonderful parks.”<sup>70</sup>

Rather than using money to preserve the parks, funds doled out by the previous administration are being used to subvert our parks—while apparently discriminating against classes of people who do not meet certain identity criterion—and promote a progressive agenda.

### **National Parks Conservation Association (NPCA)**

The National Parks Conservation Association (NPCA) is a D.C.-based nonprofit that claims to be independent and advocate for the NPS. Influence Watch lists NPCA as one of the largest nonprofits that oppose nuclear energy.<sup>71</sup> Between 2020 and 2024, the Foundation for the Carolinas (its largest donor) gave over a million dollars every year—with over \$3 million in 2022.<sup>72</sup> The Foundation for the Carolinas is a donor-advised fund, whose biggest known donor is Fred Stanback, a donor and board member of several major progressive environmental activist groups.<sup>73</sup>

It should not be a shock that such activist groups support progressive causes, but if this nonprofit is claiming to be independent and to serve the interests of the national parks, it is not

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<sup>67</sup> Karen Cumberland, “NPF’s ParkVentures Program Awards \$2.2 Million to Affinity Groups”, National Parks Foundation, March 12, 2024, <https://www.nationalparks.org/news-and-updates/updates/npf-parkventures-program-awards-over-2-million-affinity-groups>.

<sup>68</sup> Ibid.

<sup>69</sup> Ibid.

<sup>70</sup> Ibid.

<sup>71</sup> InfluenceWatch, “Opposition to Nuclear Energy,” accessed May 13, 2026, <https://www.influencewatch.org/influence-networks/opposition-to-nuclear-energy/>.

<sup>72</sup> InfluenceWatch, “National Parks Conservation Association,” accessed May 13, 2026, <https://www.influencewatch.org/non-profit/national-parks-conservation-association/>.

<sup>73</sup> InfluenceWatch, “Foundation for the Carolinas (FFTC),” accessed May 13, 2026, <https://www.influencewatch.org/non-profit/foundation-for-the-carolinas-fftc/>.

unreasonable to question that independence. According to the history section on NPCA's website, it has lost focus from the original mission and veered into progressive causes in the past:

The environmental movement was on the rise [in the 1970s] and in response, Anthony Wayne Smith... steered the organization into unfamiliar and often contentious waters — immigration and population policy were among his pet issues — that caused the organization to lose focus, influence and members.<sup>74</sup>

Population policy is usually a euphemism for population control, such as abortion or anti-natalism, and is founded on the belief that humanity is bad and the population should be reduced. Although it claims to have course-corrected since then, Stanback is a documented population control advocate,<sup>75</sup> and being that the Foundation for the Carolinas is its biggest donor it is hard to imagine his views do not have significant influence.

It is one thing to advocate for parks which are already used and beloved by Americans, it is another to argue new parks should be founded and protected to artificially raise the prestige of progressive historical movements in the United States. NPCA claims it “advocated tirelessly for new park sites — such as Pullman, Stonewall, and Belmont-Paul Women’s Equality National Monuments”<sup>76</sup> which were all designated by President Obama as monuments celebrating union labor, black history, gay rights, and the Equal Rights Amendment. It is telling that the NPCA does not seem interested in designating sites associated with conservative goals as worthy of being national monuments, as its goal is to codify progressive history and bury American history.

According to its Justice, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion statement, “NPCA recognizes that the modern environmental movement and public lands system were built on a foundation of institutional racism and made possible by the violent displacement of Indigenous people.”<sup>77</sup> Yet it still “independently” lobbies Congress on behalf of the parks and monuments supposedly founded on racist and violent grounds. This contradiction only makes sense if NPCA’s goal is not simply to preserve parks, but to redefine its purpose and mission.

## **Save Our Parks**

This organization is less transparent than others listed, but it is apparent that, like the others, it exists to subvert our parks and monuments for progressive ends. Although it is unclear how it advocates for the parks, who works there, or how it is funded, it maintains an anonymous tip line and a small social media presence. It is a classic example of an astroturf organization.

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<sup>74</sup> NPCA.org, “Our History,” accessed May 13, 2026, <https://www.npca.org/campaigns/our-history>.

<sup>75</sup> Brittany Crocker, “Headache powder billionaire donates big to small group creating migraines for TVA,” *Knoxville News*, April 6, 2018, <https://www.knoxnews.com/story/news/2018/04/06/tva-target-group-funded-headache-powder-billionaire-fred-stanback/461636002/>.

<sup>76</sup> NPCA.org, “Hour History.”

<sup>77</sup> NPCA.org, “Our Commitment to Justice, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion,” accessed May 13, 2026, <https://www.npca.org/about/our-commitment-to-justice-equity-diversity-and-inclusion>.

Its many press releases and social media posts make its progressive credentials clear. For example, a post from Facebook reads:

This Martin Luther King Jr. Day, the American people have to pay entry fees at our National Parks for the first time in decades. On Trump's orders, Doug Burgum is happy to erase and forget Black history, and this overt racism is embarrassing, for Burgum and for all of us.<sup>78</sup>

It will simultaneously complain about the parks being underfunded, while saying funding them through fees is racist.

Its X account is no better. In a weak attempt to criticize the American Petroleum Institute, it wrote:

.@APIenergy's member companies have decked out their social media profiles for #Pride month—have they forgotten about their donations to anti-LGBTQ+ lawmakers?

A rainbow won't make us forget the damage the oil industry has caused to the environment and to LGBTQ+ Americans.<sup>79</sup>

Of all the progressive criticisms to make about energy companies, not being good enough for the “LGBTQ+” is a strange one.

Its press releases refer inquiries to “Save Our Parks spokesperson” Jayson O’Neill with an email domain for Focal Point Strategy Group,<sup>80</sup> a public relations firm founded by longtime Democrat operatives Kyle Herrig and Zac Petkanas.<sup>81</sup> It is also worth noting that O’Neill used to work for the Western Values Project,<sup>82</sup> an organization associated with the Sixteen Thirty Fund, which is managed by Arabella Advisors<sup>83</sup>—a progressive group notorious for creating astro-turf organizations.

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<sup>78</sup> Save our Parks, “This Martin Luther King Jr. Day, the American people have to pay entry fees at our National Parks for the first time in decades. On Trump’s orders, Doug Burgum is happy to erase and forget Black history, and this overt racism is embarrassing, for Burgum and for all of us,” Facebook, January 19, 2026, <https://www.facebook.com/share/p/1KaHM9f5uo/>.

<sup>79</sup> Save our Parks (@SaveOurParksUSA), “.@APIenergy's member companies have decked out their social media profiles for #Pride month—have they forgotten about their donations to anti-LGBTQ+ lawmakers? A rainbow won't make us forget the damage the oil industry has caused to the environment and to LGBTQ+ Americans,” X, June 20, 2021, <https://x.com/SaveOurParksUSA/status/1406706418669998080?s=20>.

<sup>80</sup> Save our Parks, "Reality Check: Doug Burgum Mismanagement and Misallocation of Fees Leaves National Parks in Chaos," May 27, 2026, <https://www.saveourparks.us/news-index/reality-check-doug-burgum-mismanagement-and-misallocation-of-fees-leaves-national-parks-in-chaos>.

<sup>81</sup> Focal Point Strategy Group, “Meet the Team,” accessed May 13, 2026 <https://www.focalpointstrategygroup.com/home-1>.

<sup>82</sup> Jayson O'Neill (Jayson O.), LinkedIn, accessed May 13, 2026, <https://www.linkedin.com/in/jaysono/>.

<sup>83</sup> InfluenceWatch, “Western Values Project Action (WVPA),” accessed May 13, 2026, <https://www.influencewatch.org/non-profit/western-values-project-action-wvpa/>.

## The Wilderness Society (TWS)

As one of the more radical groups, The Wilderness Society's (TWS) current president is Tracy Stone-Manning, who previously served as President Biden's Director of the Bureau of Land Management (BLM). She is a well-documented radical, who was involved in a tree spiking plot (in which metal spikes are inserted into trees making timber production extremely dangerous for lumberjacks) but was given no prison time for testifying against her friends.<sup>84</sup> During and after her time at BLM, she never touched the brakes on Biden's Green New Deal aspirations.

According to its website, its goals are to "strive to end fossil fuel development on public lands and waters, making them entirely pollution-free. The first step is to make these lands a net-zero source of emissions by 2030...."<sup>85</sup> This means that in three and a half years, TWS wants to shut down nearly all energy production in the United States.

Although most of its efforts seem to prioritize environmental activism, it also clearly has social activist interests. Soon after President Trump was elected, TWS published a map of national parks and monuments it said were threatened by his "fossil fuel-centric 'energy dominance' vision."<sup>86</sup> Interestingly, it included several monuments that have little to no connection with energy or resource production, such as the Statue of Liberty, Emmett Till and Mamie Till-Mobley National Monument, the Belmont-Paul Women's Equality National Monument, and the Springfield 1908 Race Riot National Monument to name a few.<sup>87</sup>

A major reason TWS supports massive acquisitions of land is because its vision for the environment falls under the 30x30 movement. The goal of this global movement is to set aside 30% of the earth for conservation use by 2030. It intends to do this by "working to ensure federal agencies mobilized by President Biden's 2021 executive order to protect 30 percent of U.S. lands and waters follow through on those plans and develop appropriate methods for gathering input on which landscapes are most in need of protection."<sup>88</sup>

With President Biden no longer in power, it's unclear if or how it maintains relationships with the NPS or other federal agencies with the current administration. But with a former DOI official as its president, it has insider knowledge on how to project its agenda on federal agencies.

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<sup>84</sup> Matthew Brown, "Biden nominee linked to 1989 sabotage draws Republican ire," *Associated Press*, June 11, 2021, <https://apnews.com/article/government-and-politics-joe-biden-lifestyle-business-environment-and-nature-46552c29a0168be0fb6d9baa2ae11c57>.

<sup>85</sup> The Wilderness Society, "Climate Change Solutions," accessed June 9, 2026, <https://www.wilderness.org/key-issues/climate-change-solutions>.

<sup>86</sup> The Wilderness Society, "New map illustrates public lands reach of Trump's 'energy dominance' vision," February 24, 2025, <https://www.wilderness.org/articles/press-release/map-illustrate-public-lands-reach-trump-energy-dominance>.

<sup>87</sup> Ibid.

<sup>88</sup> The Wilderness Society, "30 x 30 movement," accessed June 9, 2026, <https://www.wilderness.org/key-issues/30-x-30-movement>.

## National Park Friends Alliance (NPFA)

The National Park Friends Alliance is made up of hundreds of individual groups that provide supplementary support to specific NPS parks. The groups are formally partnered with the NPS but operate independently from each other. Many do important work organizing activities, raising funds, and providing volunteers for parks. However, just because NPFA claims independence and nonpartisanship does not mean they never use their position to influence the NPS towards progressive ends.

One example is the Mississippi Park Connection, which is the official nonprofit organization for the Mississippi National River and Recreation Area. In the opening of its DEI statement, it claims:

The very concept of a ‘park’ is one that is based on the separation of humans from the natural world. Forcible dispossession of non-white people from the land made the Mississippi National River and Recreation Area possible in the first place, and we recognize this history and the present-day racial exclusions that have followed from decisions to separate people from place.<sup>89</sup>

Being a member of the National “Park” Friends Alliance, having the word “park” in its name, and receiving legitimacy from the National “Parks” Service while denouncing the concept of a “park” is deeply ironic.

Some groups emphasize progressive events more than just through statements. For example, Washington’s National Park Fund, the official philanthropic partner of Mount Rainier, North Cascades, and Olympic National Parks, regularly organizes Latina trail crews, “employment opportunities and pipelines for traditionally underrepresented groups,” “BIPOC” youth camping trips, “all-native” climbs of Mount Rainer, and works with “DEI consultants to advance our board/staff internal understanding, define our focus, and map out next steps to expand our impact.”<sup>90</sup> All these efforts are inherently exclusionary.

The Golden Gate National Parks Conservatory has several events called “Queer and Trans in the Nurseries” in which visitors can grow native plants hosted by “an all-queer staff!”<sup>91</sup> Additionally, the Parks Conservancy claims that its work in climate change advocacy “intersects

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<sup>89</sup> Mississippi Park Connection, “Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion,” accessed May 13, 2026 <https://parkconnection.org/dei>.

<sup>90</sup> Washington’s National Park Fund, “Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion,” accessed May 13, 2026, <https://wnpf.org/our-priorities/diversity-equity-inclusion/>.

<sup>91</sup> Golden Gate National Parks Conservatory, “Belonging in Nature: Queer and Trans in the Nurseries,” accessed May 13, 2026, <https://www.parksconservancy.org/events/marin-headlands/belonging-nature-queer-and-trans-nurseries>.

with our work to position parks as a platform to advance social and racial justice.”<sup>92</sup> This essentially admits its game.

Just because the supposed general mission of these various “friends of the national parks” is to support America’s beloved national parks and monuments does not make it so. Underneath the surface, groups in the National Park Friends Alliance have agendas it attempts to push. If it is going to be the “official partners” of the NPS, then the government and the American public need to hold these local groups accountable.

### **C. Federal Employee Groups**

Although this category is smaller, and may have other issues to focus on, federal employee groups are part of the web of NGOs that influence the NPS. Any group that represents NPS employees is bound to carry some influence over the NPS. It is in its interest to pressure as many NPS members to join as possible to influence the NPS from within.

Like any other union, its allegiance is to its members, not the American people. Unlike private employee unions, government employee unions don’t collectively bargain with business owners or private management. Instead, it bargains against the administration—the elected officials constitutionally mandated to execute the will of the voting public.

#### **National Federation of Federal Employees (NFFE)**

The National Federation of Federal Employees (NFFE) is the oldest government union and represents many in the National Parks Service.

NFFE encourages NPS employees to unionize because it allows further consolidation of power. With unionization, it becomes easier for progressive NPS employees to push for more progressive policies, such as hiring based upon DEI principles.

When Yellowstone National Park employees decided to join the NFFE, it said in a statement, “We also want to find tangible ways to build a more inclusive, diverse workplace....”<sup>93</sup> Collective bargaining to secure better contracts may be one goal of joining a union, but advancing progressive and discriminatory ideas is also baked into the deal.

When President Trump set the expectation that employees should loyally serve America and remove progressive ideology from their professional platforms, the NFFE condemned it.<sup>94</sup>

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<sup>92</sup> Golden Gate National Parks Conservancy, “Climate Change in the Parks,” accessed May 13, 2026, <https://www.parksconservancy.org/our-work/climate-change-parks>.

<sup>93</sup> National Federation of Federal Employees, “Workers at Yellowstone National Park Organize a Union Under NFFE,” July 24, 2023, <https://www.nffe.org/press-release/workers-at-yellowstone-national-park-organize-a-union-under-nffe/>.

<sup>94</sup> National Federation of Federal Employees, “Federal Employees’ Union Responds to Trump Administration Vow to Purge Federal Workers Insufficiently ‘Loyal’ to President,” March 3, 2020, <https://www.nffe.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/2020-03-02-PR-Trump-Hunts-Civil-Servants-Randy-Edits.pdf>.

## Association of National Park Rangers (ANPR)

The mission statement of the Association of National Park Rangers (ANPR) is “to promote and enhance the professions, spirit, and mission of National Park Service employees; to support management and the perpetuation of the National Park Service and the National Park System; and to provide a forum for professional enrichment.”<sup>95</sup> Mission statements can be a good for organizations, but personnel is policy. Its current Executive Director, Bill Wade,<sup>96</sup> is a well-documented activist. According to ANPR’s website, Wade is “a founder of, and a past Council member of the Coalition to Protect America’s National Parks.”<sup>97</sup>

Additionally, ANPR is by no means politically neutral. It co-signed with more expressly progressive organizations such as the Coalition to Protect America’s National Parks, Union of Concerned Scientists, and Democracy Forward, to sue the Trump administration over its Executive Order “Restoring Truth and Sanity to American History.”<sup>98</sup>

When activist NPS staff leaked how the DOI was complying with Trump’s executive order, the Washington Post made sure to quote Wade:

...the breadth of the submissions revealed the many hours of work that Trump’s order imposed on already overextended park employees, who ‘probably should’ve been doing other things most of us believe would be more important.’

The exercise, Wade added, runs counter to the reasons many National Park Service employees gravitated toward their work in the first place. ‘It’s a real affront to the values that rangers have.’ ...

But if such legal avenues ultimately fail, Wade said, he suspects the push to alter the telling of history at many sites will continue.

‘The impact is that the visitors are just not going to get true, accurate stories’<sup>99</sup>

In another story regarding the removal of pride flags and slavery exhibits, Wade stated that actions by the Trump administration have been “deeply emotional” and “gut wrenching.” “They knew right where to go. Right to the heart of what we consider sacred as a gay

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<sup>95</sup> Association of National Park Rangers, “Association of National Park Rangers,” accessed May 14, 2026, <https://www.anpr.org/>.

<sup>96</sup> Association of National Park Rangers, “Board of Directors,” accessed May 18, 2026, <https://www.anpr.org/about/officers>.

<sup>97</sup> Association of National Park Rangers, “Board of Directors.”

<sup>98</sup> Democracy Forward, “Coalition Files Lawsuit to Challenge Censorship, Erasure of American History and Science at National Parks,” February 17, 2026, <https://democracyforward.org/news/press-releases/coalition-files-lawsuit-to-challenge-censorship-erasure-of-american-history-and-science-at-national-parks/>.

<sup>99</sup> Karin Brulliard and Brady Dennis, “Confidential database reveals which items NPS thinks may ‘disparage’ America,” *The Washington Post*, March 2, 2026, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/climate-environment/2026/03/02/national-parks-signs-censorship-slavery/>.

community.”<sup>100</sup> This is a strange thing to say on behalf of an organization that purports to focus on national parks.

In ANPR’s newsletter, it also condemns building a wall along the southern border<sup>101</sup> and actively call for members to join Democracy Forward’s social media efforts.<sup>102</sup> Obviously, no organization can represent all NPS employees. But there is no question that the progressive partisan focus of this organization is influencing NPS employees to be more resentful of Trump’s agenda.

### **National Association of Government Employees (NAGE)**

The National Association of Government Employees (NAGE) is an affiliate of the Service Employees International Union—SEIU Local 5000—which is affiliated with the AFL-CIO. As expected with a public labor union, it claims to represent all of its working members, but pushes for the policies of the progressive left.

Joining with progressive groups such as Democracy Forward and Protect Democracy, NAGE opposes the Trump administration’s attempt to ensure that federal workers, including those in the NPS, are not seeking direct opposition to America’s founding principles.<sup>103</sup>

NPS employees who may have joined NAGE, or another public union, will face pressure to close ranks and not speak up on the pressure by progressives to teach a false history that emphasizes America’s shortcomings and ignores American greatness. No country can function if those entrusted with our nature, monuments, and history are encouraged or pressured to subvert the nation by presenting it in a way that undermines America.

## **III. Conclusion**

Unfortunately, this list is far from conclusive. There are many other NGOs that claim to be independent, but actively seek to influence the government, often successfully. Their funding often comes—whether directly or indirectly—from the government, but taxpayers never vote or have any meaningful say in the way these organizations shape the direction of our country.

One cannot assume that the self-labeled “non-governmental organization” means they are not funded by, or attempt to influence, the government. Nor does the non-profit label mean they

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<sup>100</sup> Shannon Ryan, “Advocacy Groups Sue Over Pride Flag Removal at Stonewall, Other Park History Edits,” *Spectrum News*, February 19, 2026, <https://ny1.com/nyc/all-boroughs/news/2026/02/19/park-rangers-sue-trump-administration-over-pride-flag-stonewall-other-history-changes>.

<sup>101</sup> Association of National Park Rangers, “Our national parks in crisis: Censorship is real,” March 6, 2026, <https://www.anpr.org/release/2026/0306>.

<sup>102</sup> Association of National Park Rangers, “Our National Parks in Crisis: Drilling Projects Threaten National Parks,” April 17, 2026, <https://www.anpr.org/release/2026/0417>.

<sup>103</sup> AFSCME, “New LawsUIT Seeks to Protect the Nonpartisan Civil Service from Latest Trump-Vance Administration Attacks,” November 6, 2025, <https://www.afscme.org/press/releases/2025/new-lawsuit-seeks-to-protect-the-nonpartisan-civil-service-from-latest-trump-vance-administration-attacks>.

have purely charitable aims. These are institutions of influence, and many are using that influence without scrutiny or oversight to erase any semblance of a history Americans should be proud of.

The National Parks Service does more than simply maintain trails and pick up trash. They are the custodians of the most important historical sites as well as some of the most beautiful nature sites. How we understand our nature and history, or even see it for ourselves, determines what we think of America today. This in turn affects our views on policy and the direction we want our country to take. Progressivism understands this, which is why it has invested hundreds of millions of dollars into influencing the parks.

So, what is to be done?

These NGOs need regular review and proper scrutiny. Simply because one is an expert or has a longstanding relationship with the NPS should not be a qualification for influencing how our national history is presented. NPS should put policies in place dismissing organizations that push agendas that do not align with the purpose of the parks—to display our celebrated history and beauty. Climate alarmism, historical revisionism, or any sort of anti-American rhetoric have no place on the land NPS maintains. Obviously, some sites may require a nuanced discussion—as history is complicated and sometimes regrettable—but the final goal of all American parks and monuments should be to make citizens proud to be Americans and guests to admire our country.

Of course, there are many national parks and monuments which were specifically created as humiliation monuments to shame Americans for not being 21<sup>st</sup> century progressives. That is precisely why President Obama established the Stonewall National Monument and the César E. Chávez National Monument. President Trump should re-evaluate what even qualifies as a National Monument and delist several places that have been added recently in a woke fervor.

Government funding of an NGO to aid in the NPS’s mission—whether through grants, consulting, or various other means—should be contingent upon the principles of celebrating American heritage and beauty. When considering partnering with an NGO, their history and track record on supporting that mission must be taken into consideration.

Guidance should be given to DOI that lays out clear and objective criteria about which NGOs are appropriate to work with. NGOs that promote DEI, climate alarmism, identity-based history,<sup>104</sup> or revisionist history should not have access, should be removed from positions of influence, and should be barred from receiving federal funds. Organizations that conserve America’s rich history and beauty should be prioritized.

Without question, no set of recommendations will permanently remove a decentralized ideological influence from any agency, including the NPS. Therefore, DOI should engage in

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<sup>104</sup> Such as “black history”, “LGBTQ history”, “Latino history”, etc.

constant reevaluation of standard practices on how the NPS decides to work with, accept support from, or in any way be influenced by the countless NGOs.