



Next Steps for Jamestown

By Pamela Goddard

In November 2020, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) released a draft environmental impact statement (DEIS) to determine the future of the illegally permitted transmission line marring the James River's historic landscape at Jamestown. A proper DEIS should carefully evaluate the project's purpose and need while thoroughly examining all practical alternatives. Unfortunately, the Corps' DEIS only presented two preferred alternatives, one extremely harmful to the environment and the other, the in-river line currently damaging Colonial National Historical Park and the Captain John Smith Chesapeake National Historic Trail. They rejected numerous feasible alternatives by overstating regional

continued on page 4



Major Infrastructure Projects Threaten National Parkland in Greater Washington, D.C.

By Kyle Hart

I-495/I-270 Highway Expansion

Maryland Governor Larry Hogan (R) leads efforts to widen I-495 and I-270 by adding two toll lanes in each direction, directly threatening six national park sites: Chesapeake & Ohio Canal National Historical Park, Greenbelt Park, and George Washington Memorial, Baltimore-Washington and Suitland parkways. The I-495 expansion also would harm Rock Creek Park through increased stormwater runoff and wetland destruction upstream.

During last November's public comment period on the draft environmental impact statement (DEIS), NPCA members and supporters submitted over 260 comments to Maryland's Department of Transportation opposing the project. NPCA joined over 50 partner organizations to submit 200 pages of technical comments highlighting numerous flaws in the DEIS. A final EIS remains under development.

Nonetheless, Gov. Hogan plans to approve a predevelopment contract with toll-road giant Transurban that would put the taxpayers on the hook for the costly project. The state Board of Public Works will vote soon on whether to approve this premature contract.

TAKE ACTION!

Urge Comptroller Peter Franchot and Treasurer Nancy Kopp to vote "No!" on this harmful project prior to the completion of a reasonable, thorough and legally required review. <https://p2a.co/Ty182It>

Learn more: www.npca.org/nopaving

A runaway train?

In January, Maryland Department of Transportation and the Federal Railway Administration released a draft environmental impact statement (DEIS) for a proposed super conducting magnetic levitation train (Maglev) between Baltimore and Washington, D.C. This massive project would trigger unacceptable environmental and community impacts while offering few public benefits.

continued on page 4

Top: The proposed I-495 expansion would harm local park lands, including the C&O Canal. ©Jon Bilous | Dreamstime **Left:** Illegally-approved massive transmission line at historic Jamestown. ©Ismael Gama | NPCA

FIELD REPORT

SPRING-SUMMER 2021

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Changing Climate Threatens National Parks



The effects of climate change are happening now, and our more than 400 national parks are suffering. From melting glaciers to record flooding to disastrous wildfires, our parks are at the forefront of the climate crisis. Vulnerable communities are hit especially hard by climate change impacts, with many communities located just outside our parks. Our laws and policies must be inclusive from the start, to ensure equitable climate solutions address the unjust pollution

and health burdens these communities face. Through swift and comprehensive climate action, we can reverse course and protect our national parks, our communities and the local economies that depend on them. Join us and learn more at npca.org/climate.

Above: Rising sea levels along Maryland's Eastern Shore harm the landscape—now state and federal protected lands—where Harriet Tubman spent much of her life. ©Ismael Gama | NPCA

New WWI Memorial Dedicated in April!

By Joy M. Oakes

In April, a memorial commemorating the service and sacrifice of 4.7 million American men and women in WWI was dedicated in Washington, D.C. Edwin Fountain, former vice chair of the WWI Centennial Commission and member of NPCA's Mid-Atlantic Leadership Council, led the campaign to remember the Great

War in the nation's capital. Learn more about WWI's significance, how it changed America and the world, and how this memorial came about by watching the First Colors dedication ceremony here: parkb.it/firstcolors

Below: US Army Band at the First Colors Ceremony. The featured "A Soldiers Journey" bronze sculpture will be installed by 2024. ©The Doughboy Foundation



HAVE A PHOTO OR COMMENT TO SHARE?

We welcome photos from members enjoying national parks, particularly those in the Mid-Atlantic region. We also appreciate feedback on our Field Report. Share your digital photos, comments and ideas with us via email at midatlantic@npca.org.

VICTORY! FRACKING BANNED IN THE DELAWARE RIVER BASIN!

Key Issues Remain Unresolved

By Sharon Davis

In February, the Delaware River Basin Commission voted to ban fracking in the Delaware River Basin. This is a huge victory for the Delaware River, the environment and national parks.

Fracking fragments forests and pollutes groundwater, surface waters and nearby drinking wells. This is of special concern because the Delaware River provides drinking water for over 13 million people, including residents in the New York City and Philadelphia metro areas. And the Upper Delaware River hosts a world-class fishery, which is a major regional economic driver.

The Delaware River Basin Commission is a congressionally legislated compact among the four states that comprise the basin and



the federal government, currently represented by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. NPCA has contested proposed fracking in the basin since 2011, citing concerns about potential degradation of its national parks especially the Upper Delaware Scenic and Recreational River, Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area and the Appalachian

National Scenic Trail. These three parks attract more than 4 million visitors annually.

There is still one outstanding issue regarding fracking in the basin. The industry has proposed a plan to cycle water into and out of the basin to use in their fracking operations elsewhere. There will be an opportunity to weigh in later this year during a public comment period—please stay tuned!

Learn more about this victory:
npca.org/frackingvote

Above: Trout fishing on the Upper Delaware River ©Jared Maskowski | Delaware River Club **Below:** NPCA celebrates the recent fracking ban in the Delaware River Basin and remains committed to protecting the basin from unresolved threats. ©Mihai Andritoiu | Dreamstime



Meet Hope Wright, Our Delaware-Pennsylvania Fellow

Hope Wright is thrilled to be serving as the Mid-Atlantic design and research fellow. She completed her bachelor's degrees in anthropology and environmental science at the College of William & Mary in 2018. She served as a Student Conservation Association intern at Sagamore Hill National Historic Site on Long Island

STAFF NEWS

and completed a master's degree in environmental sustainability at the University of Edinburgh. Based in Pennsylvania, Hope is researching indigenous history along the Delaware River, among other projects.

Right: Hope Wright ©Hope Wright | NPCA



Major Infrastructure Projects Threaten National Parkland

continued from page 1

The Maglev train would significantly degrade the Baltimore-Washington Parkway's landscape. Construction also would destroy land within the Patuxent National Wildlife Refuge and the Beltsville Agriculture Research Center. In total, Maglev construction could harm up to 141 acres of parkland, 51 acres of wetlands and 436 acres of forest habitat.

Because of its electricity demand, the Maglev would greatly increase harmful climate pollution, increasing net transportation energy consumption by approximately three trillion BTUs by 2045. That's enough energy to power around 88,900 average homes for one year. While Maglev developers claim that Maglev would reduce highway congestion, analysis in the DEIS and by local experts indicates that the project would have little impact on traffic.

NPCA urges the railway administration to choose the "No Build" option in the DEIS. Instead of spending up to \$16.8 billion on a harmful, expensive project with little public benefit, we should invest in our existing regional rail systems: MARC, Amtrak and Metro.

Learn more about the proposed Maglev train and how it would harm Mid-Atlantic parks: npca.org/maglevtrain



Above: Cyclists exercise along the bike path that runs beside the Chesapeake & Ohio Canal National Historical Park outside of Washington, D.C. ©Liz Albro | Dreamstime **Below:** Powder Mill Road at its interchange with the Baltimore-Washington Parkway, Beltsville, Maryland. ©Andrew Bossi | Wikimedia Commons • Both areas are under threat from potential infrastructure projects.

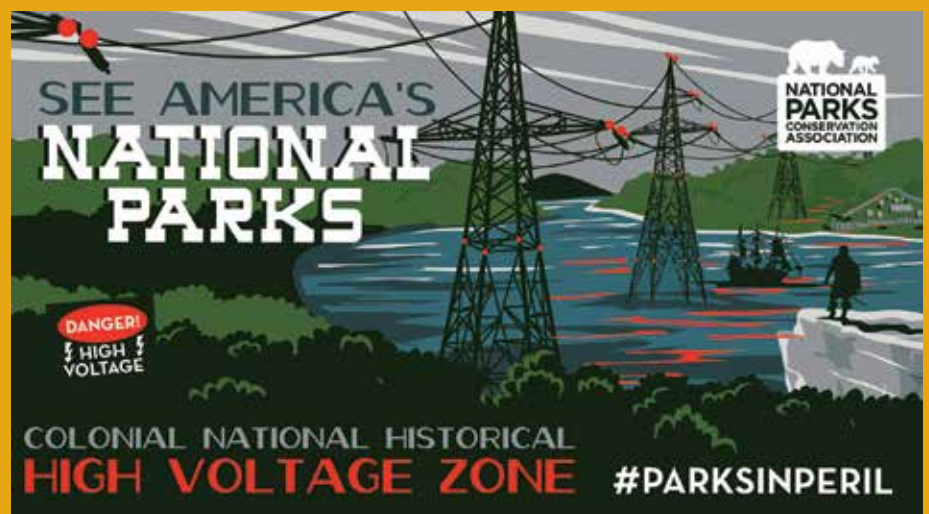


Next Steps for Jamestown

continued from page 1

electricity needs, requiring an arbitrary completion timeline, ignoring the least environmentally damaging alternatives and incorrectly assessing project costs.

NPCA urges the Corps to develop a supplemental DEIS to address these shortcomings, deepen its alternatives analysis and identify a practicable solution that protects national parks, historic places and the environment while also meeting the region's electricity needs.



Learn more at www.npcaprotectjamestown

New River Gorge— Now a National Park and Preserve

By Joy M. Oakes



In December 2020, the 116th Congress approved a legislative package that included language to re-designate New River Gorge National River in West Virginia as New River Gorge National Park & Preserve, making the site the 63rd national park and 20th national preserve in the park system. The legislation:

- Designated 65,165 acres as preserve, where hunting is allowed, and 7,021 acres as national park, where hunting is not allowed.
- Authorized the Park Service to expand the preserve by up to 3,711 acres by purchasing land from willing sellers.
- Authorized the Park Service to acquire up to 100 additional acres for parking at popular trailheads.
- Opened 368 acres to hunting at Grandview, previously off-limits.
- Placed 301 acres in the Lower Gorge—originally proposed as national park—into the preserve.

TAKE ACTION!

NPCA is asking Congress to increase the National Park System's funding so the Park Service can steward park resources and manage visitation. Contact your members of Congress to urge them to help provide more funding for the National Park System so it can better protect and interpret these special places. Capitol Switchboard: 202.225.3121

Above: Visitors can enjoy views into New River Gorge National Park & Preserve from Grandview's main overlook, 1,400 feet above the New River's Horseshoe Bend. ©Steveheap | Dreamstime

SHOW YOUR PARK LOVE

Your passion and dedication to national parks continues to make a tremendous difference—thank you! We hope we can continue to count on you to commit to NPCA and our parks. Here are some impactful ways you can show your love for our national parks.

Volunteer

Partnering with NPCA as a volunteer is a fun way to support your favorite national park. To learn about volunteer opportunities, contact Melanie McDowell at mmcdowell@npca.org.

Become an Online Activist

Learn more about the threats facing our parks and take action online at npca.org/advocacy.

Leave Your Park Legacy

Leaving a gift to NPCA in your will or trust is a personal way you can ensure national parks thrive for generations to come. To learn more about making national parks a part of your enduring legacy, visit MyParkLegacy.org.

Make a Gift

Your generous support is more critical than ever. To learn more about how you can support NPCA financially, visit npca.org/give.

Attend an Event

Join NPCA for virtual events, including free Park Talks, to hear from staff, park experts and partners about some of the park stories, victories and threats we most want to share. Visit npca.org/events to learn more.

Your Next Adventure Awaits

Don't just dream about your next park adventure. Take this time to plan ahead for one of our small-group educational land adventures or small-ship cruises and experience the very best of our national parks. Find details at npca.org/trips.

Stay Engaged from Home

Engage in national park activities and learning without leaving your home at parkit.npcap.org/.



National Park Travel

Introducing NPCA's travel Insider Guides, featuring unique insights from local NPCA staff! Plan your own extraordinary trips to national parks around the country, including Gettysburg. Whether you're interested in Civil War history or looking for a scenic drive through vibrant downtowns and bucolic countryside, Gettysburg and its surroundings have something for everyone. For more information, visit npca.org/parkguides.

And, check out our updated travel website to learn about upcoming national park trips with NPCA at npca.org/trips.

Above: Gettysburg National Military Park ©Ronscall1 | Dreamstime



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©David Greaves

Eastern Painted Turtle

Clean Air for Our National Parks and Communities

Millions of people visit U.S. national parks and wilderness areas each year. Those visitors expect to find the cleanest and freshest air possible. But over the decades, hazy air pollution has degraded scenic views and harmed public health.

Thankfully, every state is required to develop and implement a plan to reduce haze-making pollution, and draft plans are due this summer. To clean up the air in parks and wilderness areas, including those in the Mid-Atlantic region, we need help from park advocates like you!

Support this work by contacting Halle Van der Gaag at hvandergaag@npca.org.

Learn more about regional haze and find opportunities to urge your state to control harmful pollution from a range of industrial sources: www.npca.org/issues/clearing-the-air.



Above: Preserving inspiring views from Stony Man Mountain in Shenandoah National Park in Virginia also benefits public health across the region. ©Appalachianviews | Dreamstime

