

**National Park System Advisory Board**  
**Minutes for August 15 & 16, 2023 Meeting**  
(certified as accurate by chair)

The **National Park System Advisory Board** (Board) convened for a meeting at 10 a.m. EDT, on Tuesday, August 15 and Wednesday August 16, 2023. In accordance with the provisions of Public Law 92-463 (5 U.S.C. app.) the meeting was open to the public throughout its duration. Designated Federal Officer Joshua Winchell, Board Chair Molly Ward, and Board Vice Chair Shane Douglas conducted the meeting from the South Penthouse in the Department of the Interior Building, 1849 C St., NW, Washington, D.C. The meeting was also publicly accessible virtually through telephone and video conference.

**Board Members Participating:**

Bowen Blair, Mayor Daniella Levine Cava, Theresa Coble, Aja DeCoteau, Shane Douglas, Victor Galan, Gwen Iacona, Robert Keiter, Thomas Kiernan, Breece Robertson, Lindsay Robertson, Lisa Sumption, Jessica Thompson, Molly Ward, Reid Wilson

**Designated Federal Officer (DFO) for the Board:**

Joshua Winchell, Staff Director, National Park System Advisory Board, National Park Service (NPS).

**Other Participants:**

Charles “Chuck” Sams, Director, NPS; Shannon Estenoz, Assistant Secretary, Fish and Wildlife and Parks, Department of the Interior; Donald Leadbetter, Tourism Program Manager, NPS; Jeffrey Reinbold, Superintendent, National Mall and Memorial Parks, NPS; Dr. Turkiya Lowe, Chief Historian, NPS; Lise Aageenbrug, Chief Program Officer, National Park Foundation; Sherry Frear, Chief and Deputy Keeper, National Register of Historic Places and National Historic Landmarks Program, NPS; Jennifer Wyse, Chief of Staff, Natural Resource Stewardship and Science, NPS; Heather Eggleston, Manager, National Natural Landmarks Program, NPS; Dr. Lisa Davidson, Manager, National Historic Landmarks Program, NPS; Alma Ripps, Chief, Office of Policy, NPS; Shirley Sears, Office of Policy, NPS; Roegener Kirk, Office of Policy, NPS; Emily Douce, National Parks Conservation Association; Mike Elfenbein, Izaak Walton League of America; Justin Lindenberg, Stewards of the Coast and Redwoods; Dan Puskar, Public Lands Alliance; Cate Wyatt; Kayla Casper, Latinos in Heritage Conservation; Victor Rector, City of Socorro; Dan Sakura; Maria Nardi, Director of Parks, Recreation, and Open Spaces, Miami-Dade County; Destry Jarvis, World Heritage USA; Matthew Gallagher, American Society of Landscape Architects.

*Note: Meeting agenda, slide presentations, and documents shared at the meeting are posted to the Board’s website: <https://www.nps.gov/resources/advisoryboard150.htm>*

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**CONVENING the Meeting (Day 1) – August 15<sup>th</sup>**

Meeting was called to order by Designated Federal Office Winchell at 10 a.m., ET on August 15, 2023.

**Introductions and Roll Call**

- Winchell opened up the meeting took roll and confirmed members present (see “Board Members Participating” list, above) and confirmed quorum, all members present.
- Winchell introduced Director Charles “Chuck” Sams to provide opening remarks.

**Remarks from Chuck Sams Director, NPS**

- Director Sams expressed his gratitude for the members commitment of time, energy, and expertise, acknowledging the significance of this event in reforming the board. He commended the diverse group, recognizing their various roles as innovators, educators, authors, advocates, organizers, environmentalists, conservationists, and preservationists from across the United States. He stressed the importance of their collective efforts in addressing critical issues facing the National Park Service (NPS) and making it more relevant to all Americans. Highlighting President Biden's "America the Beautiful" initiative, he emphasized the need to expand access and connections to the nation's natural and cultural heritage to ensure that everyone can enjoy and appreciate the treasures held within the NPS. He announced his selection of Board member Molly Ward as the board's chair and Board member Shane Douglas as the vice-chair, expressing his confidence in their leadership. He invited Molly Ward to share a few words, Chair Ward thanked the Director and allowed each member time to introduce themselves. After member introductions, he introduced Shannon Estenoz, Assistant Secretary for Fish and Wildlife and Parks, to provide welcoming remarks.

**Remarks from Shannon Estenoz, Assistant Secretary for Fish and Wildlife and Parks, Department of the Interior**

- Assistant Secretary Estenoz expressed her gratitude for the dedication of the board members and acknowledged that their bios highlighted their unique qualifications and commitment to serving the national parks. She emphasized her role as a mother of two “Gen Z” children, recognizing the importance of addressing the needs and concerns of their generation. She also shared her background as a fifth-generation Key West Conch, with South Florida deeply ingrained in her identity. As an engineer, she expressed a solution-oriented approach to her work, emphasizing her commitment to problem-solving. she highlighted several challenges and opportunities facing the National Park Service, including the uneven levels of visitation at parks, the need for effective

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operations in the tourism industry, a housing crisis affecting both rural and urban parks, and the importance of diversifying the park workforce and visitor experience. She emphasized the National Park Service's dual role in preserving history and embracing the future, calling for strong ties with indigenous cultures, gateway communities, and expanding accessibility to parks. She stressed collaboration and adaptability as key to meeting these challenges and evolving while staying true to the NPS mission. Assistant Secretary Estenoz concluded her remarks by expressed gratitude for the board's presence and their collective expertise.

**State of the National Park Service, Chuck Sams, Director, NPS**

- Director Sams provided an overview of the National Park Service, highlighting its 425 national parks and various support and community-based programs. Recent additions to the park system were mentioned, emphasizing inclusivity in telling the nation's story. The creation of the Emmet Till and Mamie Till-Mobley National Monument, spanning two states, was noted as a significant achievement. He emphasized the economic impact of national park visitation on nearby communities, showcasing the importance of these sites. Legislative efforts like the Great American Outdoors Act were highlighted, as well as the bipartisan infrastructure law, which addresses environmental and infrastructure concerns. He underscored the importance of investing in America's infrastructure for a sustainable and equitable future. He discussed climate change and its impacts, with a focus on incorporating indigenous knowledge and scientific research into the National Park Service's climate change response. He also emphasized strengthening relationships with tribal communities and respecting tribal sovereignty. He discussed the National Park Service's commitment to diversity, equity, inclusion, and access, with initiatives like the community engagement program and the RISE program. He discussed the need to adapt to visitor expectations in the digital age and the importance of data-driven decision-making. To conclude, Director Sams discussed the upcoming 250th anniversary of the United States in 2026, the National Park Service's role in commemorating the event, and the need for collaboration and stewardship in protecting and sharing the nation's natural and cultural resources.

**Tourism Trends in the National Park Service (Part I), Donald Leadbetter, Tourism Program Manager, NPS**

- Donald Leadbetter emphasized the importance and complexity of the relationship between national parks and tourism, noted that tourism is a multifaceted and multifaceted phenomenon that has both positive and negative impacts on society, the environment, and the economy, and commented that the National Park Service's Tourism Policy document, dated back to 1998, and highlighted the need to update it due to the significant changes

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that have occurred in the tourism industry over the years. He emphasized the changing roles of local and state tourism organizations, which are now focusing more on destination management to ensure tourism benefits the community, society, and the environment. He commented that the NPS does not overly rely on tourism-generated revenues for funding its conservation work, unlike some other agencies in some other countries. Acknowledging that tourism can have both positive and negative impacts on national parks and communities, he spoke about the need for smart policies and strategies to manage these impacts effectively. He stressed the importance of engaging with local networks, collaborating with stakeholders, and using tourism sector approaches like market research to benefit the National Park Service's goals, and discussed visitation trends in national parks, noting that while some parks experience steep increases, others may see declining or soft visitation. He mentioned ongoing efforts to collect data about park visitors and their origins, as well as the importance of data in understanding and managing tourism and also noted the overlap between tourism management and other disciplines such as visitor use management and recreation planning within federal land and water management agencies. Leadbetter concluded by reaffirming the complexity of the relationship between tourism and the National Park Service and the need for thoughtful policy and strategy to navigate this relationship effectively.

**Tourism Trends in the National Park Service (Part II), Jeffrey Reinbold, Superintendent, National Mall and Memorial Parks, NPS**

- Superintendent Reinbold, provided presented on various aspects of tourism and its impacts on the National Mall in Washington, D.C. including the unique challenges and opportunities associated with managing a prominent national park in a busy city. His presentation was offered as a practitioner's perspective with a focus on the ground reality rather than policy. He presented statistics about the National Mall, which spans 1,000 acres and includes numerous sites and features. He mentioned the intense scrutiny and high visitation rates on the National Mall, with over 35-37 million visitors annually. He noted that the National Mall operates efficiently and brings in substantial philanthropic donations, is integral to the identity of Washington, D.C., and plays a significant role in the city's rankings and awards. He discussed the National Mall's engagement with the community through artistic programs, health initiatives, and other events. He highlighted the importance of international visitors, who contribute disproportionately to spending in the area, and mentioned the need for better understanding and measuring international visitation's impact. He shared visitor trends on the National Mall, including data from 2020 and 2022, illustrating the Mall's resilience during the pandemic. He noted that the Mall consistently attracts a significant number of visitors throughout the year, even during the winter months. He noted the impressive growth in visitor spending and job

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support on the National Mall, showcasing its economic significance. He discussed the collaboration with the District on hosting national traditions and celebrations, including the Cherry Blossom Festival, Memorial Day, Independence Day, and presidential inaugurations, and discussed preparations for the USA 250 celebration in 2026, highlighting physical improvements and initiatives to enhance visitor experiences. He finished his presentation by emphasizing the positive aspects of tourism, including opportunities for collaboration and the ability to create unique experiences and events on the National Mall.

**The National Park Service – A Historical View, Dr. Turkiya Lowe, Chief Historian, NPS**

- Dr. Lowe outlined the evolution and key milestones in the history of the National Park System, spanning from its inception to its current role, to its future goals. She emphasized the agency's expanding responsibilities and its commitment to preserving the nation's natural and cultural heritage. She discussed how the NPS originated with the allocation of vast western lands, primarily under the administration of the War Department and later the Department of Agriculture until the establishment of the National Park Service on August 25, 1916. Colonel Charles Young, a commander of the U.S. Colored Troops known as the Buffalo Soldiers, was one of the first park rangers and superintendents, highlighting the military's role in early park management. In 1903, Captain Charles Young became the first African American superintendent, responsible for managing Sequoia National Park in California. The responsibilities of the NPS expanded over the years, evolving from managing large western parks to identifying, evaluating, recognizing, and preserving historically and archaeologically significant properties. The Historic Sites Act of 1935 granted broad authority for these preservation efforts. During the National Park Service's 50th anniversary, it gained mandates for conserving biological and geographical resources, including the addition of new park units like Gateway National Recreational Area in urban areas. The bicentennial period prompted a reevaluation of how American history was represented in parks, leading to the designation of national historic sites related to recent history and social history. From the bicentennial to the 2000s, the NPS doubled in size, adding more than 123 new park units. The Centennial Act expanded the agency's authority to interpret and educate the public about American history and natural and cultural resources and emphasized telling diverse and difficult histories from multiple perspectives and fostering shared resource stewardship.

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**National Park Foundation Update, Lise Aageenbrug, Chief Program Officer, National Park Foundation**

- Lise Aageenbrug, presented on the National Park Foundation's role as the official philanthropic partner of the National Park Service (NPS) and how their efforts aim to complement and enhance the NPS's mission. The National Park Foundation was created in 1967 and collaborates closely with the National Park Service and seeks to attract corporate and individual donors and use federal appropriations to support the NPS by increasing the pace, scale, and effectiveness of their initiatives. The NPF board of directors consists of 30 members, including representatives from the NPS and the Secretary of Interior, as well as citizens from various backgrounds across the country. The Foundation's revenue has grown over the years, from around \$20 million annually to \$150 million, allowing greater collaboration with the NPS and address more of the system's needs. She discussed a successful centennial campaign that raised \$550 million, surpassing their initial \$250 million goal. Corporate-funded efforts focus on waste reduction, energy conservation, and water conservation within the parks. Examples include adding solar panels, reducing plastic waste, and improving landfill management. The Foundation also supports initiatives that tell the complete American story, including creating new civil rights sites, inclusive storytelling grants, and funding for underrepresented historical narratives. The Foundation also works to help improve the digital experience for park visitors, enhancing transportation systems, modernizing campgrounds, increasing accessibility, and addressing housing issues for NPS staff, especially in gateway communities with high living costs. In addition to these categories, the National Park Foundation collaborates with 450 partner organizations across the National Park System, leveraging their combined efforts to support parks. Lastly, Aageenbrug introduced an upcoming campaign by the National Park Foundation, focusing on four key areas: conserving threatened parks and wildlife, telling America's story, improving the visitor experience, and inspiring the next generation of park stewards.

**National Historic Landmarks Program Overview, Sherry Frear, Chief and Deputy Keeper, National Register of Historic Places and National Historic Landmarks Program, NPS**

- Sherry Frear provided an overview of the National Historic Landmarks (NHL) Program. She discussed the diversity of places designated as NHLs using an example of Hueco Tanks, designated in 2021, with its unique landform and significant archaeological deposits. The presentation provided background on the history of the NHL Program, which began with the Historic Sites Act of 1935, directing the National Park Service to survey and designate historic sites, buildings, and objects of exceptional value. The first NHLs were designated in 1960, and these designations were automatically added to the

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National Register of Historic Places. She noted that NHLs can encompass various types of properties, including buildings, structures, objects, sites, and districts. She emphasized that most NHLs are private properties, which makes notifying property owners a crucial part of the designation process. She also discussed the importance of theme studies, which provide historic context and registration requirements for specific topics, such as labor history, LGBTQ history, and African American outdoor recreation history. NHL nominations consist of two critical elements: demonstrating national significance and a high degree of integrity. The six criteria for evaluating significance, include events, people, ideas, architecture, districts, and information potential. Integrity is a crucial factor in NHL designation, focusing on location, setting, design, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. The designation process starts with a letter of inquiry from proponents, followed by the preparation of nominations by the proponents themselves. The nominations are peer-reviewed and presented to the NHL Committee for review, then to the National Park System Advisory Board for further review and approval, before reaching the Secretary for final approval. IN conclusion, she discussed the future direction of the NHL Program, highlighting potential theme studies on women's history and Native American history and mentioned ongoing projects related to Indian boarding schools and black high schools during the Jim Crow era.

**National Natural Landmarks Overview, Jennifer Wyse, Chief of Staff, National Resource Stewardship and Science, NPS**

- Jennifer Wyse provided a history and overview of the National Natural Landmarks Program and how it operates within the Natural Resource Stewardship and Science Directorate of the NPS. NNLs are natural areas that exemplify exceptional biological or geological features, provided they meet specific criteria such as national significance, good condition, uniqueness, and high scientific value. NNL sites can be privately or publicly owned, and NNL designation does not alter ownership or public access. The NPS has identified four priority areas: "Holding the Line," "Conservation at Scale," "Managing amid Continuous Change," and "Science Access and Engagement," which the NNL Program helps advance. The NNL Program provides technical assistance to designated sites for day-to-day management and resource challenges. NNL sites contribute to larger landscape conservation efforts through restoration projects, such as habitat restoration at Savage Gulf NNL and river restoration at Kickapoo River Natural Area. NNLs offer opportunities for scientific research and education and helps promote public engagement and science communication. Partnerships with organizations like the American Geosciences Institute support events like National Fossil Day, and educational materials, such as the "Telling the Dinosaur Story" video series and geologic time scale representations, connect NNLs with paleontological heritage. The NNL Program will continue to engage with partners and site owners to advance conservation goals.and efforts will include identifying new sites for evaluation and working with the NNL Committee on the designation process.

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**ADJOURNMENT (Day 1) – August 15<sup>th</sup>**

- Chair Ward thanked Board members and meeting attendees and adjourned the first day of the meeting at 4:43pm, ET, on August 15<sup>th</sup>, 2023.
- Chair Ward stated the Board would reconvene for its second and final day of the meeting at 10am ET the following day.

**RECONVENING THE MEETING (Day 2) – August 16<sup>th</sup>**

- The meeting was called to order by Chair Ward at 10am, ET on August 16<sup>th</sup>, 2023. Winchell took roll and confirmed a quorum with all members present. Chair Ward thanked members, presenters, and members of the public for their time, and introduced the day's agenda, focused on National Historic and National Natural landmark proposals.

**National Natural Landmark Proposal Review, Heather Eggleston, Manager, National Natural Landmarks Program, NPS**

- Heather Eggleston provided a slide presentation (posted on the Board's website, see note above) describing the two NNL proposals reviewed and recommended for Board consideration by the NNL committee, Glenwood Caverns and Iron Mountain Hot Springs, and John Boyd Thacher State Park. For both sites, Eggleston reviewed detailed information about its characteristics found in the documents posted to the Board's website in advance of the meeting. Eggleston reviewed detailed information about its characteristics found in the documents posted to the Board's website in advance of the meeting.
- During the Board member question and answer session, Reid Wilson inquired about the relationship between one of the proposed NNLs and a nearby amusement park. Eggleston clarified that the commercial portion of the cave leading to the NNL is connected to the amusement park but explained that the NNL designation primarily focuses on the underground resources, and the presence of above-ground commercial activities does not impact the cave resources significantly. Bob Keiter raised questions about the possibility of interpreting the site if designated as an NNL, given that it is privately owned. Eggleston confirmed that interpretive information is already provided during cave tours and suggested that this educational aspect could be further emphasized in the future. Regarding the New York designation, Keiter sought clarification on whether the entire state park or just a specific area was being designated as an NNL. Eggleston clarified that the proposed designation included only certain areas within the state park that were reflective of the unique resources, as determined by evaluators. She also noted that designating entire state parks as NNLs is not uncommon. Kiernan inquired about any significant concerns or weaknesses in the NNL Committee's recommendations. Eggleston



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explained that one of the sites had undergone a supplemental evaluation due to gaps in information initially identified by the Committee. The subsequent evaluation addressed these concerns, and the NNL Committee unanimously recommended both sites for NNL designation.

**National Historic Landmark Proposal Review, Dr. Lisa Davidson, Manager, National Historic Landmarks Program, NPS**

- Dr. Lisa Davidson provided a slide presentation (posted on the Board’s website, see note above) describing the NHL proposals reviewed and recommended for Board consideration by the NHL committee. Davidson presented on the following 16 candidates the committee recommended to the Board for designation: Pond Farm Pottery, Guerneville, Sonoma County, CA ; Wayfarers Chapel, Rancho Palos Verdes, CA; Temple Aaron, Trinidad, CO; Wink’s Panorama, Gilpin County, CO; Barnum Institute of Science and History, Bridgeport, CT; National Archives Building, Washington, DC; Strategic Air Command Ground Alert Facility, Mountain Home Air Force Base, Elmore County, ID; Sam and Ruth Van Sickle Ford House, Aurora, IL; Montgomery County Jail and Sheriff’s Residence, Crawfordsville, IN; Pottawattamie County Jail and Sheriff’s Residence, Council Bluffs, IA; Sampson-White Joiner Shop, Duxbury, MA; Fort Armistead, Coker Creek, Monroe County, TN; Rio Vista Bracero Reception Center, Socorro, TX; Jefferson County Courthouse, Charles Town, WV; Rock Island Site II, Door County, WI; and the Quebec 01 Launch Control Facility, Laramie County, WY.
- Davidson presented on recommended updated documentation for the following 6 existing National Historic Landmarks: John Muir Home/Strentzel-Muir Ranch, Martinez, Contra Costa County, CA; Carter G. Woodson House, Washington, DC; Riverside Historic District, Riverside, IL; Historic Moravian Bethlehem Historic District, Bethlehem, PA; Hermitage Hotel, Nashville, TN; and the Waterford Historic District, Loudoun County, VA. Lastly, Davidson recommended withdrawal of designation for 3 existing National Historic Landmarks: Goldenrod Showboat, Kampsville, Calhoun County, IL; Deluge (Fire Fighting Tug), New Orleans, LA; and the Ste. Claire (Passenger Steamboat), Wayne County, MI.
- During the Board member question and answer session Victor Galan inquired about accessibility modifications and their potential impact on the features of historical buildings. Davidson responded by mentioning that public museums like the Barnum Building are likely to follow appropriate laws like the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) when renovating for accessibility. However, for properties not open to the public, there may be no such requirement. Breece Robertson expressed enthusiasm at the inclusion of Fort Armistead as a potential NHL and emphasized its importance as a historical site related to the Civil War. She also highlighted the significance of the John

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Brown trial's historical connection to the Jefferson County Courthouse and urged that this aspect should not be lost when considering its NHL designation. The discussion also touched upon the Roosevelt Memorial, which Robertson praised for its unique attributes and its connection to President Franklin D. Roosevelt's humility. Davidson explained that the initial draft of the nomination did not include the Roosevelt Memorial as a contributing resource, but the NHL Committee pushed for its inclusion, recognizing its significance. Robertson inquired about public outreach efforts for the P.T. Barnum site and whether the complex history of P.T. Barnum, including issues like animal cruelty and human exploitation, would be included in the interpretation. Davidson noted that the site is committed to telling the full and honest story, and efforts would be made to include all relevant historical information. Daniella Cava emphasized the importance of not only designating these landmarks but also finding ways to make their history accessible to the public. She raised concerns about the challenges faced in sharing difficult historical narratives, especially in an era where some aspects of history are being denied. Vice Chair Shane Douglas observed that there seemed to be limited control once landmarks are designated. He noted the Board's interest in revisiting how to elevate the stories associated with these landmarks and how to provide ongoing support for education and interpretation. Tom Kiernan asked about the relationship between NHLs and properties listed on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). Davidson explained that while many NHLs begin as NRHP listings, there is no strict requirement for NHLs to be listed on the NRHP first. Davidson clarified that properties listed on the NRHP become NHLs when designated, but not vice versa. Jes Thompson inquired about the update frequency of the historical scholarship and education related to existing NHLs. Davidson explained that the process was somewhat ad hoc, with updates being done as needed, often in conjunction with interpretative efforts at park units. Davidson noted that several older NHLs were in need of updates, but there was no fixed schedule for these revisions.

**Public Comment**

- Emily Douce, Deputy Vice President of Government Affairs at the National Parks Conservation Association, began by introducing her organization and its role in advocating for national parks. She expressed support for focusing on climate change and traditional ecological knowledge in park management policies. She also mentioned the importance of reinstating guidance on climate change management, specifically Director's Order 100.
- Mike Elfenbein, Executive Director of the Cypress Chapter of the Izaak Walton League, spoke about the positive initiatives in South Florida's National Park Service units, such as efforts to prevent oil drilling and improve wildfire management. He also raised concerns about the decline in mammal populations in Everglades National Park and the need for a balanced approach to conservation.

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- Justin Lindenberg, Executive Director of the Stewards of the Coast and Redwoods, urged the Advisory Board to approve the nomination of the Pond Farm Pottery site as a National Historic Landmark. He emphasized the cultural and historical significance of the site and its potential to inspire future generations.
- Dan Puskar, CEO of the Public Lands Alliance, highlighted the unique role of the Advisory Board in providing expertise not found in the federal government. He encouraged the Board to consider broader aspects of visitor experience, education, and infrastructure investments in their subcommittee work.
- Cate Magennis Wyatt spoke about the history of Waterford, a historic village, and the challenges it faces. She emphasized the importance of preserving cultural heritage and asked for support in addressing infrastructure issues in her community.
- Kayla Casper, Executive Director of Latinos in Heritage Conservation, expressed gratitude for considering the Rio Vista Farm National Historic Landmark nomination. She highlighted the importance of sites like Rio Vista Farm in telling the story of Braceros and strengthening connections between the United States and Mexico.
- Victor Rector, the Historic Preservation Officer for the City of Socorro, thanked the Board for considering the Rio Vista site. He emphasized the importance of sharing stories related to natural history, culture, and legacy, and expressed gratitude for the opportunity to preserve and share the site's history.
- Throughout the session, Winchell encouraged participants to submit written comments to expand on their spoken remarks, which would be added to the meeting record and made available to the Board and the public. After the spoken comments, the session concluded, and no additional individuals requested to speak.

**Concluding Remarks, Director Chuck Sams, NPS**

- In his concluding remarks, Director Sams expressed his gratitude to the attendees for volunteering for an important position related to the National Parks. He emphasized the significance of the advice and guidance they will provide in shaping the future of these parks. He reflected on his own connection to the Lincoln Memorial, where he was sworn in, and how it symbolizes the ideals of unity and democracy. Director Sams recalled visiting the Lincoln Memorial as a young man and being inspired by the words inscribed there, particularly the second inaugural and the Gettysburg Address, and highlighted the immense pressure and challenges that President Lincoln faced during a divisive time in American history, as he worked to preserve the Union and uphold the principles of democracy. Director Sams also acknowledged a lesser-known aspect of Lincoln's legacy, specifically his role in the sentencing 38 Dakota individuals to death for their uprising against the United States. He underscored the idea that Americans have the responsibility to continue the experiment of democracy and strive for a stronger union. Director Sams reflected on his inauguration at the Lincoln Memorial and the symbolic significance of

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the location. He was reminded of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s "I Have a Dream" which in part underscored the importance of their roles in preserving national monuments, memorials, and parks. He acknowledges the diversity of backgrounds and experiences brought by the attendees and how it plays a crucial role in the National Parks' ability to serve as the nation's memory and conscience. Director Sams concluded by calling on the Board to help the NPS tell stories fiercely and be stewards of both the flora and fauna in the parks, preserving them not only for the present but for future generations.

### **Decisions and Actions**

- Approval of Minutes – The Board unanimously approved minutes from the December 10, 2020 meeting.
- National Historic Landmark Nominations – The Board unanimously approved the recommendations from the NHL Committee to recommend to the Secretary the designation of 16 new National Historic Landmarks; updated documentation for 6 existing National Historic Landmarks; and recommended withdrawal of designation for 3 existing National Historic Landmarks.
- National Natural Landmark Nomination – The Board unanimously approved the recommendations from the NNL Committee to recommend to the Secretary the designation of 2 new National Natural Landmarks.
- Establishment of Committees and Committee Chair Assignment – The Board concurred with establishment of three committees by the Designated Federal Officer: the National Historic Landmarks Committee (Lindsay Robertson assigned as chair); the National Natural Landmarks Committee (Reid Wilson assigned as chair); and the Tourism Committee (Lisa Sumption assigned as chair).

### **ADJOURNMENT**

Chair Ward thanked Director Sams, Board members, and meeting attendees and adjourned the meeting at 4:46 p.m., ET, on August 16, 2023.