



February 6, 2025

The Honorable Doug Burgum
Secretary of the Interior
1849 C Street, NW
Washington, DC 20240

Re: Seasonal Staffing of the National Parks

Dear Secretary Burgum:

Each year the National Park Service hires 7,000-8,000 seasonal employees to staff important front-line positions that provide services to Americans and others who visit the parks for their annual vacations and other special occasions. Currently, there is a Presidential freeze on hiring both permanent and seasonal positions. Already the NPS has rescinded job offers to 400 persons.

Many parks function only due to the influx of these seasonal employees who provide visitor services, maintenance, law enforcement, and search and rescue services. Some will cease to function at all since they are so dependent on these critical positions. With reduced or non-existent services many Americans may decide to forego a visit to these parks resulting in major economic impacts to local communities throughout the country adjacent to the parks.

In NPS lore, these critical seasonal employees have been referred to as “90-day wonders.” The 90 days being the average time period that seasonals served in their positions. Soon visitors to our national parks will be met with closed facilities, dirty facilities, unsafe campgrounds, overflowing trash, and fewer rangers to provide guidance because of staffing shortages.

In the Washington, DC area, Wolf Trap National Park for the Performing Arts is one park whose operation depends almost entirely on seasonal positions. Without an ability to hire their seasonal staff, there will be no performances at the park this summer. Many other parks throughout the country will be similarly affected.

This is not acceptable. We urge you to work with the President to immediately lift the freeze on the hiring of seasonal employees and the permanent employees who will be responsible for the recruiting, training, and supervising these seasonal employees.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Timothy Whitehouse". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Timothy Whitehouse
Executive Director