

Public Lands

The so-called Department of Government Efficiency fired upwards of 4,500 employees in charge of protecting hundreds of millions of acres of public lands, claiming these widespread cuts were an attempt to root out waste, fraud, and abuse. These federal employees from the National Parks Service, Fish & Wildlife, Bureau of Land Management, U.S. Forest Service, and Department of the Interior were responsible for everything from administering EMT services to park visitors, to maintaining trailheads and campgrounds, mitigating wildland fire risk, and permitting public lands projects.

Does firing rangers, first responders, and EMTs in parks keep the public safe and root out fraud?

Does slowing permitting help increase efficiency?

Does preventing massive wildfires through forest management sound like waste?

Of course not.

Cuts at the Forest Service, which affected about 10% of the agency to date—along with a federal hiring freeze that is affecting wildland firefighters—will hurt routine forest health projects that help prevent catastrophic wildfires.

While DOGE claims to be bringing greater efficiency to government, actions like this are ineffective and just plain stupid, and worse, they are dangerous to public safety across the country.

Some public lands, like national parks and monuments, are already cutting hours and closing campsites in response to layoffs of critical workers. Yosemite National Park, an area as large as Rhode Island, was even forced to lay off their only locksmith, leading to safety concerns.

And despite these firings leading to low staffing and concerns for public safety, the Trump administration ordered these National Parks to remain open and accessible.

How is any of this efficient?

Alex Wild, *Fired National Park EMT:*

“I honestly can’t imagine how the parks will operate without my position. I mean, they just can’t. I am the only EMT at my park and the first responder for any emergency. This is flat-out reckless.”

“These are the people who teach your Jr Rangers, build your trails, clean your restrooms, rescue injured visitors, and keep the parks operating. We are not the excess. We are essential to maintaining access to parks.”

Source: Ranger_wild on Instagram

DEEP CUTS

- ▶ Over **4,000** public lands employees fired or placed on leave
- ▶ **10%** of the National Forest Service let go
- ▶ Hundreds of campsites closing ahead of summer travel due to staffing cuts

DEEP IMPACTS

- ▶ These cuts impact over **400** national parks, **560** national wildlife refuges and nearly **250** million acres of other public land
- ▶ National Park lands span all 50 states
- ▶ More than **331 million** people visited National Parks last year