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The Committees understand that the Service plans to reconsider this policy and therefore directs the incoming National Park Service Director to review Policy Memorandum 11-03 and to report to the Committees on the results of this evaluation.

Accordingly, the Committees direct the Service to suspend further implementation of Policy Memorandum 11-03 and urge the Service to examine opportunities to partner with non-governmental entities in developing a comprehensive program that uniformly addresses plastic waste recycling system-wide.

Not sure when we'll get a Director, but we'll eventually need to tee this up for them.

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On Wed, May 17, 2017 at 4:40 PM, Stephens, Beverly (Grace) <grace_stephens@nps.gov> wrote:

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----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Bowron, Jessica** <jessica_bowron@nps.gov>
Date: Mon, May 8, 2017 at 4:58 PM
Subject: FY17 omnibus approp - bottled water directive
To: Shawn Bengé <shawn_benge@nps.gov>, Teresa Austin <teresa_austin@nps.gov>, Robert Wilbur <robert_wilbur@nps.gov>, Brian Borda <brian_borda@nps.gov>, "Norton, Shawn" <shawn_norton@nps.gov>
Cc: "Stephens, Beverly" <grace_stephens@nps.gov>, Sean Reilly <sean_reilly@nps.gov>, Jennifer Werner <jennifer_werner@nps.gov>, "Rose, Zenide" <zenide_rose@nps.gov>, "O'Dell, Anne" <anne_odell@nps.gov>

Folks,

Below is the language from the FY17 omnibus appropriations report regarding bottled water. We saw versions of this a year ago in both the House and Senate bills and reports, but this is where they ended up.

There are three components of this directive - 1, we owe them another report after the new Director is confirmed and completes an evaluation of the original policy memo. And 2, further implementation is suspended, pending the new Director's review. Lastly, we are urged to partner with the private/non-profit sector on plastic waste recycling.

Shawn N, do we we have any requests pending that are impacted by this language? Brian, based on our back and forth RE concessions contracts last year, I don't think there are any associated concessions issues, but please confirm.

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Talking Points on Water Bottle Policy Rescission

News release

<https://www.nps.gov/orgs/1207/08-16-2017-water-bottles.htm>

Key Messages

- The National Park service is committed to providing a safe and world-class visitor experience and is discontinuing Policy Memorandum 11-03, entitled "***Recycling and Reduction of Disposable Plastic Bottles in Parks***" which has been referred to as the "*Water Bottle Ban*".
- The policy is being discontinued to allow sales of water in disposable plastic water bottles to provide additional healthy hydration options for recreationalists, hikers, and other visitors to national parks.
- We will continue to expand and encourage the use of free water bottle filling stations as appropriate to ensure our visitors and their families can remain hydrated during visits to a national park, particularly during hot summer visitation periods.

Q&A

Q: Why is the National Park Service discontinuing this policy?

The policy is being discontinued to allow the sale of water in disposable plastic water bottles to provide visitors with another water source for their hydration.

Q: What about Congressional concerns about the policy?

The 2017 omnibus appropriations bill specifically required the NPS to review the policy and suspend further implementation.

Q: If asked about an email campaign calling for superintendents to "resist" the discontinuation of the policy.

The National Park Service made the decision to end the policy allowing parks to prohibit the sale of disposable plastic water bottles, and it is <insert park name>'s obligation to follow this policy.

Q: So what can parks do now about disposable plastic water bottles?

Parks will continue to promote the recycling of disposable plastic water bottles and many parks have already worked with partners to provide free potable water in filling stations located at visitor centers and near trailheads.

If concessionaires wish to continue or initiate a disposable water bottle reduction program they may do so as an independent business decision but must do so in close consultation with park management to ensure the safety of visitors and the protection of the park's resources.

Parks may also work with concessionaires to provide educational materials to park visitors on reusable water bottles and availability of water bottle filling stations within the park.

Q: Why didn't the policy ban sugary drinks like soda?

One main reason was that similar, free refilling options do not exist for other beverages. The now discontinued policy focused on disposable water bottles as parks that were approved to discontinue disposable water bottle sales were still able to offer water to visitors through other means, including free potable water bottle filling stations. These parks will continue to provide free potable water at water bottle filling stations. The decision to rescind the policy was due in part to the recognition that sweetened drinks were the primary alternative for those who may have arrived at a park expecting bottled water to be readily available and did not have or want to purchase a refillable water bottle.

Q: How was this decision made?

The change in policy comes after an internal review of the policy's aims and impact in close consultation with Department of the Interior leadership.

Q: Do you have any data or findings based on that review?

We do not have published data to share at this time.

Q: When will this take effect?

The revocation of the memorandum, which was put in place on December 14, 2011, is effective immediately. Concession providers will now be allowed to sell water bottles if they so choose in coordination with park management.

Q: Why was the ban created in the first place?

The 2011 policy was intended to reduce the amount of plastic that enters the waste stream at a park and to promote recycling and education about disposable plastic water bottles.

It was ultimately determined that there are more effective ways to promote recycling and reduce litter while still providing as many safe, healthy hydration options as possible to our visitors.

Q: How many parks implemented the policy?

The 2011 NPS policy allowed individual parks to voluntarily eliminate the sale of disposable water bottles after an approval process. Only 23 of the 417 National Park Service sites implemented the policy.

The 23 parks that eliminated the sale of water bottles are below.

Arches National Park
Bryce Canyon National Park
Canyonlands National Park
Colorado National Monument