

## 2017 Briefing Statement

**Bureau:** National Park Service  
**Issue:** Recycling and Reduction of Disposable Plastic Bottles in Parks  
**Park/Program:** Park Facility Management Division  
**Date:** July 12, 2017

### Current Status

- On May 4, 2017, Congress passed the Consolidated Appropriations Act, H.R.244, which included an explanatory statement requiring the NPS to, “suspend further implementation of the Policy Memorandum 11-03.” The statement further directs the incoming NPS Director to review Policy Memorandum 11-03 and to report to the Committees on the results of the evaluation.
- A Director’s memo has been developed to inform parks that, in accordance with the recent report language, the NPS will not approve any new park for PM 11-03 implementation until a new Director is confirmed and the policy has been reviewed. The NPS intends to release this memo in mid-July.

### Background

- In December 2011, the National Park Service (NPS) issued Policy Memo (PM) 11-03, “Recycling and Reduction of Disposable Plastic Bottles in Parks.” It is a bureau-level policy that allows individual parks to voluntarily establish disposable plastic water bottle sales elimination programs (DPWB - SEPs) that reduce the volume of DPWB waste.
- As a condition of the DPWB policy, parks are required to complete a program self-assessment and ensure visitors are provided with free, alternative water sources. Regional Directors must approve all SEPs, and have the authority to deny requests if the park self-assessment fails to address the required items enumerated in PM 11-03.
- In accordance with PM 11-03 Section E., NPS is required to monitor and continuously improve the program to address both park and visitor needs.
- Preliminary public engagement data contained in a letter to former director Jarvis, and conducted by Corporate Accountability International show that since 2011, more than 500,000 actions have been taken by the public in support of NPS’ efforts to reduce DPWBs.
- In September 2016, NPS issued a data call to the 23 parks that have approved DPWB - SEPs and requested data related to water bottle filling stations (e.g., usage data). This unpublished data shows that on an annual basis, DPWB -SEPs at the 23 parks:
  - Prevent the disposal of up to 2M disposable plastic water bottles per year.
  - Prevent the use of up to 112,000 pounds of polyethylene terephthalate (PET) per year.
  - Prevent the emission of up to 141 metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalents (MTCO<sub>2</sub>e/year) per year.
  - Saves up to 3,350 million British thermal units (MBTUs/year) of energy per year.
  - Saves up to 420 cubic yards of landfill space per year.

### Contact

Robert Wilbur – robert\_wilbur@nps.gov – Chief, Park Facility Management Division  
Shawn Norton – shawn\_norton@nps.gov – Branch Chief, Sustainable Operations and Climate Change

Subject Re: plastic water bottles

To: "Foster, Maureen" <[maureen\\_foster@ios.doi.gov](mailto:maureen_foster@ios.doi.gov)>

Cc: "Pavlik, Brian" <[brian\\_pavlik@nps.gov](mailto:brian_pavlik@nps.gov)>; "Stephens, Beverly (Grace)" <[grace\\_stephens@nps.gov](mailto:grace_stephens@nps.gov)>; Bob Vogel <[bob\\_vogel@nps.gov](mailto:bob_vogel@nps.gov)>; Michael Reynolds <[michael\\_reynolds@nps.gov](mailto:michael_reynolds@nps.gov)>

Please refrain from taking action on this written memo. It does not reflect the views of the new Administration and will need to be rewritten with input and approval from FWP.

Thank you,  
Virginia

On Wed, Jul 12, 2017 at 12:47 PM, Foster, Maureen <[maureen\\_foster@ios.doi.gov](mailto:maureen_foster@ios.doi.gov)> wrote:  
Agree with Brian, that is vital.

Also what does this bullet mean:

Preliminary public engagement data contained in a letter to former director Jarvis, and conducted by Corporate Accountability International show that since 2011, more than 500,000 actions have been taken by the public in support of NPS efforts to reduce DPWBs.

Also please address the concern that parks are allowed to sell other types of beverages (e.g., soda, sports drinks). Have sales of those increased? Or is that being tracked?

---

Maureen D. Foster  
Chief of Staff  
Office of the Assistant Secretary  
for Fish and Wildlife and Parks  
1849 C Street, NW, Room 3161  
Washington, DC 20240

202-208-5970 (desk)  
202-208-4416 (main)

[Maureen.Foster@ios.doi.gov](mailto:Maureen.Foster@ios.doi.gov)

On Wed, Jul 12, 2017 at 12:38 PM, Pavlik, Brian <[brian\\_pavlik@nps.gov](mailto:brian_pavlik@nps.gov)> wrote:  
Thanks Grace. I know the data collected says unpublished but are there any reports you have to back up the figures provided?

On Wed, Jul 12, 2017 at 12:22 PM, Stephens, Beverly (Grace) <[grace\\_stephens@nps.gov](mailto:grace_stephens@nps.gov)> wrote:  
Hi,

I apologize for the delay. As you will see in the briefing statement, we are working on a memo to come from Mike informing parks that we will not grant any new requests to ban bottled water per the instructions in the report that accompanied the FY17 Omnibus Appropriations bill. The memo has been delayed due to the (b) (6) having to take sudden personal leave. We hope to get it out next week. We have verbally communicated to all regions that the memo is forthcoming and we have not allowed any new parks to impose a water bottle ban in the interim. So, we are already enforcing the report language, we just have not yet put out the memo.

Please let me know if you have questions.  
Thanks,  
Grace

Grace Stephens  
Chief of Staff (Acting)  
National Park Service  
(202) 354-1978 (o)  
(202) 538-5597 (c)

Brian Pavlik  
National Park Service  
1849 C St. NW, Rm #3129  
Washington, DC 20240  
202-208-2308 (Office)  
202-641-3709 (Mobile)

Virginia H. Johnson  
Acting Assistant Secretary for Fish and Wildlife and Parks,  
U.S. Department of the Interior  
Telephone: (202) 208-4943

Brian Pavlik  
National Park Service  
1849 C St. NW, Rm #3129