

THE OUTDOOR REPORT

February 19th, 2026

President Nominates Scott Socha to be NPS Director

President Trump has nominated Scott Socha to be Director of the National Park Service (NPS). Socha is the President of Delaware North's parks and resorts division, which provides services, like food and lodging, to national parks. The Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee will be responsible for vetting Socha, who will need approval by the Committee and, ultimately, the full Senate. It is unclear when the initial hearing be scheduled at this point. The position, which is currently led by Jessica Bowron as Acting Director, is important given some of the challenges facing NPS, including America's 250th Anniversary. The Committee is likely to first consider the nomination of Steve Pearce, who has been nominated to be Director of the Bureau of Land Management (BLM).

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The Make America Beautiful Again (MABA) Commission Releases Strategy

The MABA Commission is chaired by Interior Secretary Bergum and is tasked with "balancing stewardship and economic growth, encouraging responsible conservation, restoring America's wildlife, lands and waters, and protecting our Nation's outdoor heritage for the enjoyment of the American people." The Commission recently released a strategy to "conserve America's natural beauty and expand outdoor recreation opportunities." Secretary Burgum noted that "Through American Energy Dominance, expanded access to outdoor recreation, and an end to burdensome red tape, the Trump administration has already taken monumental steps to Make America Beautiful Again. By honoring our past while building for our future, through responsible conservation, the MABA 250 initiative's groundbreaking framework will ensure our nation's treasured lands and historic legacy are responsibly managed and preserved for centuries to come."

House Farm Bill Introduced

The House Committee on Agriculture formally released the text of their Farm Bill, which will be marked-up in committee on Monday. Chairman GT Thompson said that "this bill provides modern policies for modern challenges and is shaped by years of listening to the needs of farmers, ranchers, and rural Americans. The farm bill affects our entire country, regardless of whether you live on a farm, and I look forward to seeing my colleagues in Congress work together to get this critical legislation across the finish line." Democrats are largely opposed to the Republicans' bill, and the Senate has yet to release their own version of the Farm Bill.

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