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A Devilish New Specie

Axed Colorado River nominee alleges interference: 'Never seen this kind of vitriol'

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Make 'immediate cuts' in water use or face crisis, Colorado River experts warn

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Don't play the game

Too cute: Heidi and Minnie

It's the city's new most expensive private school — and AI is the teacher

This program is using augmented reality to teach preschoolers spatial awareness



An Atlas Obscura Explorer's Guide

The National Parks

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A Devilish New Species Discovered in Big Bend National Park

In 2024, this tiny, fuzzy sunflower relative became the first new genus identified in a U.S. national park in nearly 50 years. Named *ovicula biradiata*, it has become known by the nicknames “woolly devil” for its fur and “devil horn” for the rays that protrude from its flowers.

Axed Colorado River nominee alleges interference: ‘Never seen this kind of vitriol’

<https://www.reviewjournal.com/news/environment/axed-colorado-river-nominee-alleges-interference-never-seen-this-kind-of-vitriol-3462839/>

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**CONFERENCE: 7th International Symposium on River Science, Oct 6-9, UC Davis.**

[Click here for more information.](#)

**CONFERENCE: WaterSmart Innovations, Oct. 7-9, Reno, NV.** [Click here for more information and to register.](#)

**CONFERENCE: Environmental Law Conference at Yosemite, Oct. 16-19, Tenaya Lodge, Yosemite.** [Click here for more information and to register](#)

**Albemarle seeks to expand its lithium mine in Esmeralda County**

The Silver Peak lithium mine in Esmeralda County, which is the only lithium mine currently operating in the United States, is seeking to expand its operations by 1,596 acres (a 25% increase). Albemarle Corporation, the developer and operator of Silver Peak, wants to add new facilities like transfer pump stations, pipelines, brine ponds and production wells as part of the expansion.

Silver Peak has been operating since 1966, long before the recent surge in demand for lithium batteries to support electric vehicles and renewable energy technologies. Albemarle’s proposed expansion would include 548 acres of Bureau of Land Management (BLM) land, and the BLM has indicated it will consider retroactively approving unauthorized facilities that have already been built at the site - including a pumping station and a 1.6 mile conveyance trench.

The BLM will hold a virtual public meeting on September 23 and is accepting public comments until October 6. Learn more in a recent report by KLAS’ Greg Haas.

[Learn more at 8newsnow.com >>](#)

**Defense Department delays cleanup of ‘forever chemicals’ nationwide**

“The Department of Defense has quietly delayed its cleanup of harmful “forever chemicals” at nearly 140 military installations across the country, according to a list of sites analyzed by The New York Times. The Pentagon has been one of the most intensive users of these chemicals, which are also known as PFAS and are a key ingredient in firefighting foam. For decades, crews at U.S. military bases would train to battle flames by lighting jet-fuel fires, then putting them out with large amounts of foam, which would leach into the soil and groundwater. ... The Pentagon’s new timeline would delay cleanup around military sites by nearly a decade in some cases, according to the latest list, which is dated in March and was posted publicly in recent weeks without an announcement. The delays vary by site. They add up to a significant revision from the

Pentagon's earlier cleanup timetable, which had been released three months earlier, in December 2024, in the final days of the Biden administration. ... ” [Read more from the New York Times](#).

## **There's a new, longer U.S. citizenship test with more history questions. Can you answer some?**

Citizenship applicants will be asked up to 20 randomly selected questions out of 128 as part of the 2025 Naturalization Civics Test; you can test your knowledge with our modified quiz.

Starting [next month](#), green card holders seeking to become U.S. citizens will be taking a [new and longer version](#) of the naturalization test.

The 2025 Naturalization Civics Test will have more potential questions — from 100 to 128 — and test takers will be asked [20 randomly selected](#) questions instead of 10. To pass, they'll need to answer 12 of them correctly, instead of six, as in the old test.

Like the older one, it's still an oral test given by a U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services officer. But unlike the older test, once a person answers enough questions to either pass or fail, the officer can stop asking questions.

USCIS spokesperson Matthew Tragesser said in a statement that the changes published in a [Federal Register notice](#) this week will help ensure that only immigrants “who meet all eligibility requirements, including the ability to read, write, and speak English and understand U.S. government and civics, are able to naturalize.”

- **1 of 20**  
Why is the Declaration of Independence important?  
It says all people are created equal  
It gave women the right to vote  
It ended slavery  
It established the U.S. government and laws
- **2 of 20**  
The words “Life, Liberty, and the pursuit of Happiness” are in what founding document?  
The U.S. Constitution  
The Bill of Rights  
The Declaration of Independence  
The Federalist Papers
- **3 of 20**  
There are three branches of government. Why?  
To cut down on bureaucracy  
So one part does not become too powerful  
To make government decisions faster and more efficiently  
To give the president control over all government decisions

- **4 of 20**

How long is a term for a member of the House of Representatives?

One year

Two years

Three years

Four years

- **5 of 20**

How many senators does each state have?

Two

Four

Six

Eight

- **6 of 20**

The president of the United States can serve only two terms. Why?

To keep the president from being too old

Because George Washington required it in the Constitution

To keep the president from becoming too powerful

Because the Declaration of Independence says so

- **7 of 20**

Who appoints federal judges?

The Senate

The attorney general

The vice president

The president

- **8 of 20**

Name one power that is only for the federal government

Hold elections

Establish local schools

Declare war

Issue driver's licenses

- **9 of 20**

Benjamin Franklin is famous for many things. Name one.

"Father of the Constitution"

First postmaster general of the United States

Fourth president of the United States

President during the War of 1812

- **10 of 20**

James Madison is famous for many things. Name one.

Founded the first free public libraries

Helped write the Declaration of Independence

One of the writers of the Federalist Papers

Fifth president of the United States

- 11 of 20  
Alexander Hamilton is famous for many things. Name one.  
Second president of the United States  
Helped establish the First Bank of the United States  
Helped write the Declaration of Independence  
Was the U.S. ambassador to France
  
- 12 of 20  
What amendment says all persons born or naturalized in the United States, and subject to the jurisdiction thereof, are U.S. citizens?  
The 10th Amendment  
The 14th Amendment  
The 16th Amendment  
The 22nd Amendment
  
- 13 of 20  
When did all men get the right to vote?  
It is given in the Bill of Rights  
When the Declaration of Independence was signed  
In the 19th Amendment  
After the Civil War
  
- 14 of 20  
Dwight D. Eisenhower is famous for many things. Name one.  
General during World War II  
President during the Great Depression  
Resigned from the presidency  
Gave the Gettysburg Address
  
- 15 of 20  
Who was the United States' main rival during the Cold War?  
Germany  
Soviet Union  
Japan  
Vietnam
  
- 16 of 20  
Why did the United States enter the Vietnam War?  
To retaliate against Japan for the attack on Pearl Harbor  
To defend South Korea from invasion by North Korea  
To stop the spread of communism  
To gain control of Vietnam's natural resources
  
- 17 of 20  
Why did the United States enter the Persian Gulf War?  
To stop the spread of communism

To retaliate against the 9/11 terrorist attacks  
To overthrow Saddam Hussein and occupy Iraq  
To force the Iraqi military from Kuwait

18 of 20

Name one U.S. military conflict after the Sept. 11, 2001 attacks.

The war in Iraq  
The Persian Gulf War  
The Kosovo conflict  
The Spanish-American War

19 of 20

Name one example of an American innovation

Light bulb  
Gunpowder  
Television  
X-rays

- 20 of 20

The nation's first motto was "E Pluribus Unum." What does that mean?

In God we trust  
Out of many, one  
Justice for all  
Live free or die

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For those that are surprised

Project 2025: Another look at the Federal Communications Commission (2024)

<https://thefulcrum.us/media-technology/project-2025-fcc>
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## **New national monument along Santa Cruz coast opens to the public for hiking, biking**

**Extract:** For decades, the scenic oceanfront landscape along Highway 1 north of Santa Cruz — with its coastal bluffs, rugged beaches, farm fields and redwood canyons — has been the site of big environmental battles.

PG&E planned to build a nuclear power plant there in the early 1970s. President Reagan pushed for offshore oil drilling during the 1980s. And a Nevada developer proposed a gated luxury community there in the 1990s.

But on Saturday, a new chapter begins. Coast Dairies, a breathtaking 5,843-acre property more than five times the size of San Francisco's Golden Gate Park, will finally be open to the public.

The property, which stretches for six miles along Highway 1, was purchased by the Trust for Public Land, a San Francisco environmental group, in 1998 with \$44.5 million from the David

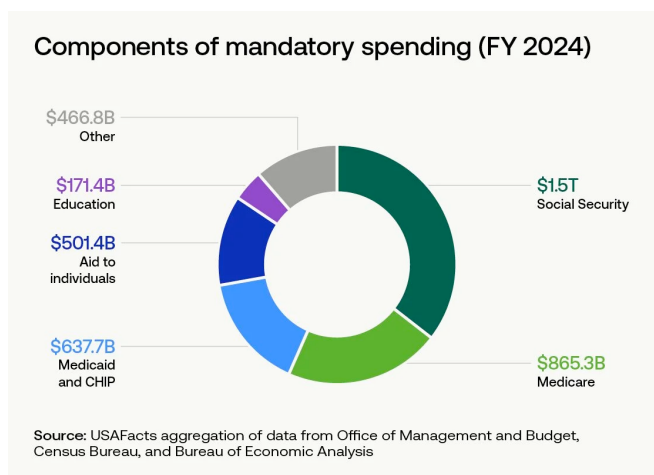
and Lucile Packard Foundation in Los Altos, the California Coastal Conservancy and other donors seeking to preserve its rural character.

In 2014, the trust donated it to the U.S. Bureau of Land Management. And in 2017, eight days before he left office, former President Barack Obama [designated it as a national monument](#). After years of planning work and battles with community groups worried about traffic, trash, endangered species and other issues, the BLM will open a parking lot and 9 miles of trails on the property, which is **officially called [Cotoni-Coast Dairies](#), in recognition of an Ohlone tribal group who lived there centuries ago and the Swiss farmers who owned it for most of the 20th century.**

Starting Saturday it will be open from dawn to dusk. Admission is free.

<https://www.mercurynews.com/2025/08/14/new-national-monument-along-santa-cruz-coast-opens-to-the-public-for-hiking-biking/?clearUserState=true>

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Just so you know



Playing For The World: 1904 Fort Shaw Indian Girls' Basketball Team

The Fort Shaw Indian Boarding School, located in the Sun River Valley outside Great Falls, Montana was one of the first schools in Montana to feature basketball as a recreational sport for girls. In 1902, ten girls formed a team that would become renowned for its skill, tenacity, and the maturing young women's dignity—on and off the court. The team members, who came from Indian nations in Montana and Idaho, dealt with racial and gender stereotypes, but their talent and style of play began drawing large crowds of enthusiastic fans.

Use these video clips, discussion questions, and other support materials to share this unique story with students as they study Native American History.

Visit the [Montana PBS website](#) to learn more about *Playing for the World*.

U.S. Education Dept. unites conservative groups to create 'patriotic' civics content

The U.S. Department of Education announced a partnership Wednesday with more than 40 conservative organizations to create programming around civics aimed at the celebration of the 250th anniversary of the United States.

This coalition "will take bold steps to educate, inspire, and mobilize youth toward active and informed citizenship," U.S. Education Secretary Linda McMahon said in a press release.

Called the [America 250 Civics Education Coalition](#), the project will be overseen by the Education Department and led by the America First Policy Institute (AFPI), a nonprofit conservative group. It includes Turning Point USA, the Heritage Foundation, Hillsdale College and other conservative state and national organizations.

The Education Department statement said the initiative "is dedicated to renewing patriotism, strengthening civic knowledge, and advancing a shared understanding of America's founding principles in schools across the nation."

The department did not provide details of the types of educational materials or programs to be created, saying the coalition held its first meeting on Wednesday, and would be rolling out "a robust programming agenda," over the next 12 months. Included in that programming, the statement said, would be a 50-state speaking tour on college campuses and a college speaker series on fundamental liberties.

Erika Donalds, co-chair of the coalition and chair of education opportunity at AFPI, said in the announcement that, "through this coalition, we are uniting to bring these lessons back to classrooms and communities and prepare future generations to safeguard our republic."

The announcement comes as the Trump administration is dismantling the Education Department in an effort to "[return education to the states](#)."

The federal government is [prohibited by law](#) from "any direction, supervision, or control over the curriculum" in schools.

Education Department officials did not return a request for comment Wednesday night.

The department also announced that it would begin a program to award grants "to promote a civic education that teaches American history, values, and geography with an unbiased approach."

This is not the first time President Trump has sought to promote patriotism in education. During his first term he founded the "[1776 Commission](#)" to advise on how to teach young people the "founding principles" of the nation. In an executive action earlier this year, part of a broader announcement about "ending racial indoctrination" in schools, [he revived it](#).

https://www.npr.org/2025/09/17/nx-s1-5544582/u-s-education-dept-unites-conservative-groups-to-create-patriotic-civics-content?utm_source=firefox-newtab-en-us

Don't play the game!

My daughter came home from school and said,
“Mom, you're not going to believe what happened in history class today.”
Her teacher told the class they were going to play a game.
He walked around the room and whispered to each kid whether they were a witch or just a regular person. Then he gave the instructions:

“Form the biggest group you can without a witch. If your group has even one, you all fail.”
She said the whole room instantly lit up with suspicion.
Everyone started interrogating each other. Are you a witch? How do we know you're not lying?
Some kids clung to one big group, but most broke off into smaller, exclusive cliques. They turned away anyone who seemed uncertain, nervous, or gave off even the slightest hint of being guilty.

The energy shifted fast. Suddenly everyone was suspicious of everyone.
Whispers. Finger-pointing. Side-eyes. Trust dissolved in minutes.
Finally, when all the groups were formed, the teacher said,
“Alright, time to find out who fails. Witches, raise your hands.”
And not one hand went up.
The whole class exploded. “Wait! You messed up the game!”

And then the teacher dropped the bomb:
“Did I? Were there any actual witches in Salem, or did everyone just believe what they were told?”
My daughter said the room went dead silent.

That's when it hit them. No witch was ever needed for the damage to happen. Fear had already done its work. Suspicion alone divided the entire class, turning community into chaos.

And isn't that exactly what we're seeing today?

Different words, same playbook.
Instead of “witch,” it's liberal, conservative, vaxxed, unvaxxed, pro-this, anti-that.
The labels shift, but the tactic is the same.
Get people scared. Get them suspicious. Get them divided.
Then sit back while trust crumbles.

The danger was never the witch.

The danger is the rumor. The suspicion. The fear. The planted lies.

Refuse the whisper. **Don't play the game.** Because the second we start hunting “witches,” we've already lost.

Anon on FB



Too cute; Heidi and Minnie

Playing For The World: 1904 Fort Shaw Indian Boarding School

The Fort Shaw Indian Boarding School, located in the Sun River Valley outside Great Falls, Montana was one of the first schools in Montana to feature basketball as a recreational sport for girls. In 1902, ten girls formed a team that would become renowned for its skill, tenacity, and the maturing young women's dignity—on and off the court. The team members, who came from Indian nations in Montana and Idaho, dealt with racial and gender stereotypes, but their talent and style of play began drawing large crowds of enthusiastic fans.

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https://static.pbslearningmedia.org/media/collections/banner_image.png Visit the [Montana PBS website](#) to learn more about *Playing for the World*.

Watching trends:

It's the city's new most expensive private school — and AI is the teacher

<https://sfstandard.com/2025/09/19/alpha-school-ai-teacher-san-francisco/>

This program is using augmented reality to teach preschoolers spatial awareness

LAT, KATE SEQUEIRA: "The preschoolers were fascinated, looking at their classroom through the lens of an iPad camera, watching animated images pop up as a cheerful voice told them: Feed apples to a pig behind a haystack. Select the carnival ride located between two sets of balloons.

While the game delighted these 3- and 4-year-olds, they were actually participating in a serious research project that is developing an important foundation for their future in math — spatial thinking and its integrated vocabulary, a skill typically overlooked in early education."