

National Mall Coalition

www.nationalmallcoalition.org

2020 Annual Report

“Advancing the legacy of the National Mall through public policy and innovative ideas”



Dear Friends of the National Mall,

Washington, DC residents and visitors alike suffered as the fast-moving Covid-19 virus forced dramatic changes to the National Mall starting early in 2020. Smithsonian museums closed down for months, public recreation and First Amendment activities on the open space were curtailed, and the Capitol and other centers of American government closed their doors to the public. We all hoped 2021 would bring the end of the crisis but as we move into 2021, restrictions and closures are still in place.

The National Mall Coalition adapted to the new reality by participating in “virtual” public meetings. And in an unexpected plus, we were able to reach a much larger than would have been possible in an on-site venue by presenting via Zoom our **June 2020 presentation “Resiliency for the National Mall.”**

Since people who couldn’t visit the Mall were, instead, visiting our website, we beefed up our public outreach there and on our Facebook page. New additions include two very popular Mall quizzes, **“The Ultimate Washington Monument Quiz”** and **“How much do you**

know about American history told in our memorials on the National Mall?”

And we completed a **Financing Plan** for our **National Mall Underground** project that lays out a realistic plan to fund this flood control-parking-geothermal project using minimal public funds.

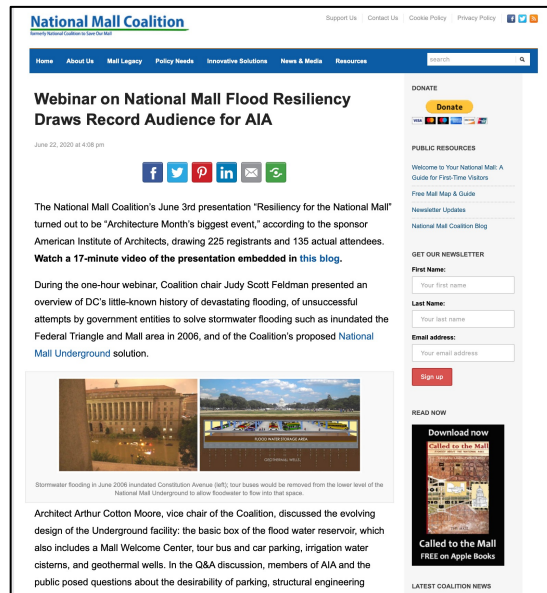
In all we do, we endeavor to advance our mission to **preserve our cultural heritage** on the Mall and **advocate long-term, visionary planning** to ensure that the Mall continues to evolve as the **Stage for American Democracy** for future generations to enjoy.

Sincerely,

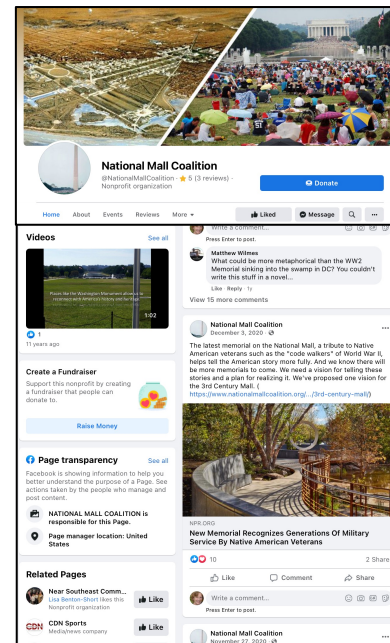


Judy Scott Feldman, Ph.D.
Founding Member and Chair
jfeldman@nationalmallcoalition.org

Public Outreach: Website & Facebook



www.nationalmallcoalition.org



www.facebook.com/NationalMallCoalition/

The Coalition's website, frequently updated, is a rich educational resource for Mall history, historical photographs, current issues, and opinion pieces about ongoing proposals and controversies. Our Facebook page tracks Mall-related content of all kinds.

Public Outreach: A Mall Flooding Solution

“Resiliency for the National Mall”

The National Mall Coalition’s June 3rd presentation “Resiliency for the National Mall” turned out to be “Architecture Month’s biggest event,” according to the sponsors – the Washington Architectural Foundation and the Washington Chapter of the American Institute of Architects – drawing 225 registrants and 135 actual attendees.

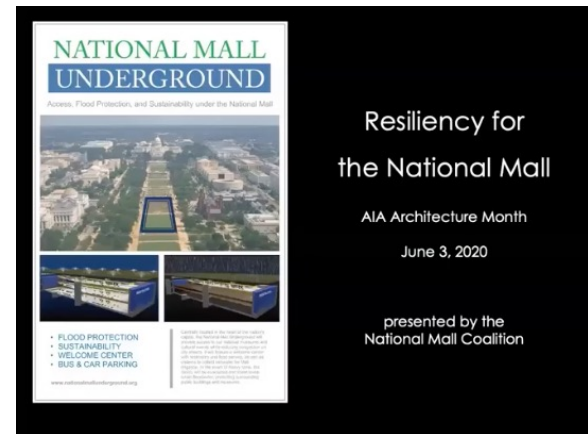
During the one-hour webinar, Coalition chair Judy Scott Feldman, and vice chair and project designer Arthur Cotton Moore, presented an overview of DC’s little-known history of devastating flooding, of unsuccessful attempts by government entities to solve stormwater flooding such as inundated the Federal Triangle and Mall area in 2006, and of the Coalition’s proposed [National Mall Underground](#) solution.

Learn more, and read the Q&A from the session, [here](#).

Watch a 17-minute video of the presentation embedded in [this blog](#).



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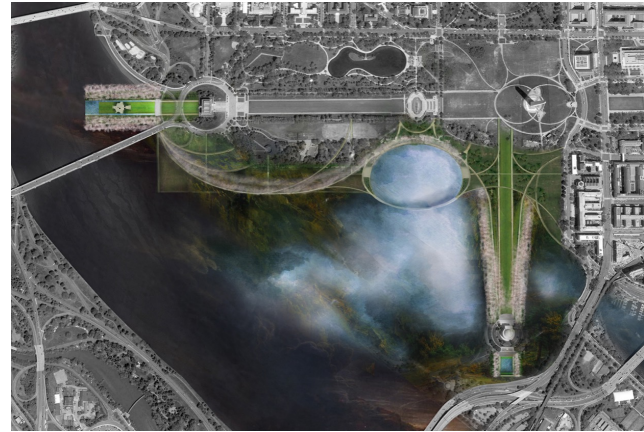


Citizen Advocacy

Among other projects proposed for the Mall, the National Mall Coalition participated in discussions about, and formally commented on, ideas for redesigning the Tidal Basin to protect this part of the Mall from constant and intensifying flooding. The “Tidal Basin Ideas Lab” is a three-year project of the National Trust for Historic Preservation in partnership with the National Park Service and the Trust for the National Mall. Five architects were engaged to propose redesigns. Learn more about the Ideas Lab [here](#).

The Coalition commended the Ideas Lab for raising public awareness about the urgency of the flooding problem. But we cautioned that the **dramatic scope of the proposed changes** – ranging from relocating memorials and cherry trees to letting the area gradually succumb to rising sea levels – **require more serious public discussion and objective analysis**. The questions posed by the Ideas Lab in their online public survey appear to us to be aimed at tourists, less so at preservation and advocacy groups such as the Coalition.

The Coalition offered that our **National Mall Underground could be adapted** to accept floodwater via a tunnel and be an interim and potentially long-term solution to the Tidal Basin flooding problem.



Our letter calls for serious discussion of important but as-yet unanswered historic preservation questions:

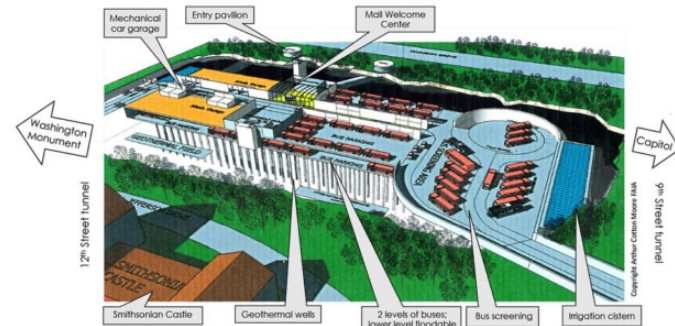
“How serious exactly is the flooding threat, to the Jefferson, MLK, and FDR memorials, the walkways, the beloved cherry trees, the Tidal Basin as a place? How do we balance preservation of the Basin form, the cherry trees, and recreational public use with the need to upgrade, update, modify this historic landscape? How should any redesign of this integral part of the National Mall respond to the historic plans and symbolism of the Mall as a unified whole?”

Innovation: Financing Plan for the National Mall Underground

A Financial Planning study, commissioned by the National Mall Coalition and carried out by Ram Island Strategies, Partners for Economic Solutions, and Bostonia Partners, found that **the proposed National Mall Underground is financially feasible**, based in part on its revenue-generating potential from parking revenue, stormwater mitigation payments, and clean energy payments under existing federal programs.

The financing plan finds that:

“For stakeholders that have been investigating alternative solutions to the costly damage being inflicted on their assets from chronic and recurring flooding, the National Mall Underground can achieve a stormwater mitigation solution at significant cost savings. Of equal value to these federal stakeholders is that the financing plan uses existing federal contracting authorization programs to pay for this stormwater mitigation over time, avoiding the need for upfront appropriated dollars.”



National Mall Underground: Resiliency for the National Mall

<https://www.nationalmallcoalition.org/innovation/resiliency-to-ensure-the-future/>

Stormwater / Water Resources

- 30-million-gallon stormwater reservoir for 200-year flood (e.g., 2006 Federal Triangle flood)
- Rainwater & groundwater cisterns
- Irrigation water for Mall grass, gardens, trees

Visitor Services

- Welcome Center for Mall visitors
- Restrooms, food vending, shelter in place
- Bus driver rest station

Clean Renewable Energy

- 1,000 geothermal wells centrally located under Mall grass
- 3,000 tons of cooling per hour for Smithsonian museums and GSA public buildings

Intermodal Transportation Facility

- Parking for 600 tour/school buses & 600 cars
- Electric charging station for buses and cars
- Connection to Metro and DC Circulator
- 2 blocks from CSX rail line
- Bicycle/moped rental
- Easy access and coordination across transit modes

Learn more about the earlier **Army Corps of Engineers' positive report** that found that the Underground is an effective flooding solution [here](#).

Read about the **Financing Plan** [here](#).

Civics Education: Online History Quizzes

Ultimate Washington Monument American History in our Memorials

Take the Ultimate Washington Monument Quiz

August 12, 2020 at 9:18 pm



Take this 14-question, multiple-choice challenge to learn about the history of one of the United States' most recognizable monuments on the National Mall.



In 1783, Congress of the Confederation called for what kind of monument to George Washington?



- ☐ A triumphal arch
- ☐ An equestrian statue
- ☐ An American university
- ☐ A bridge in the capital city

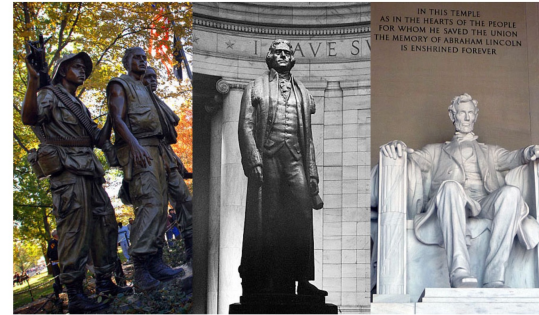
Quiz: How much do you know about American history told in our memorials on the National Mall?

November 13, 2020 at 9:36 pm



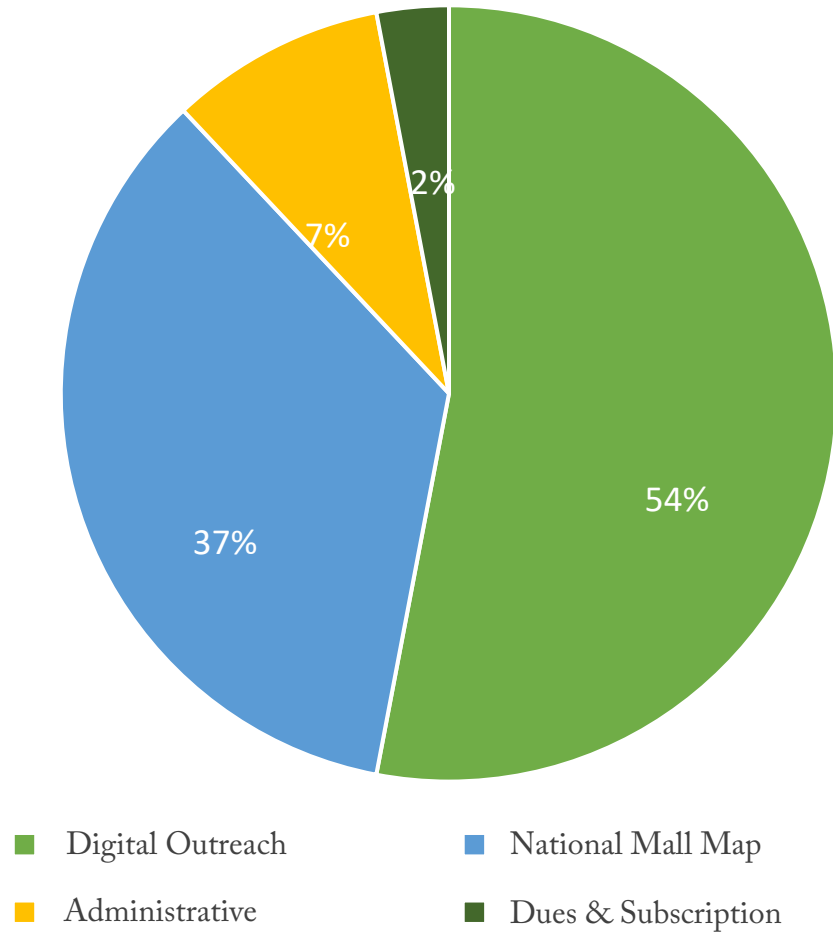
Answer seven questions and find out about the controversies surrounding memorials on the Stage for American Democracy.

Which of the following memorials has generated controversy and criticism?



Quizzes are popular, especially among schoolchildren. So the Coalition is using them as a fun way to get the public to learn about American history and the role of the National Mall in American democracy. Especially during the Covid-19 shutdown of schools, when there is a need for new online resources to supplement distance learning, our quizzes have proved to be a very popular resource for thousands of quiz-takers.

2020 Expenses



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The National Mall Coalition, an all-volunteer citizens organization, is working to protect the integrity of our nation’s premier civic space and stage for democracy and promote comprehensive, visionary planning for the Mall in its 3rd century.

The Coalition is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. All donations are tax deductible to the full extent of the law.

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