

Rule Allowing Guns in Parks Is Blocked

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WASHINGTON (AP) — A federal judge on Thursday blocked a federal rule allowing people to carry concealed loaded guns in national parks and wildlife refuges.

The decision by Judge Colleen Kollar-Kotelly of the United States District Court here halts a change in regulations issued in the waning days of the Bush administration and orders further review. Judge Kollar-Kotelly set a deadline of April 20 for the Interior Department to review the rule and indicate its course of action.

The rule, which took effect in January, lifted earlier restrictions and allowed visitors to carry a loaded gun into a park or wildlife refuge if they had a permit for a concealed weapon and if concealed firearms were allowed by the state where the park or refuge was situated.

The Obama administration had said it was reviewing the Bush rule but had defended it against a lawsuit filed by conservation and gun-control groups. A spokeswoman for Interior Secretary Ken Salazar declined to comment, citing the continuing case.

The Bush administration issued the rule in December in response to letters from half the Senate asking officials to lift the restrictions, which were adopted by the Reagan administration in the 1980s.