



Coalition To Protect America's National Parks Weekly National Park System Report

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Editor's Note

Some readers are reporting that copies of this newsletter are going directly to their spam boxes. The reasons for messages being treated as spam – whether this newsletter or any other message – are various and often mysterious, but frequently have to do with the sensitivity of the spam filter used by your email provider. The best way to resolve this problem is to add CPANP to your address book (<https://protectnps.org/>). If that fails, just check your spam box periodically.

Incidents

Hawaii Volcanoes National Park Kilauea Eruption Leads To Closure Of Two-Thirds Of Park

The eruption of Kilauea Volcano that began on May 3rd continues with undiminished vigor. Since this story is being fully covered by all media, this summary covers only the most recent Hawaiian Volcano Observatory (HVO) update available (issued Monday) and the park's status. Useful links are also included.

As of Monday morning, volcanic activity was being dominated by lava fountaining, explosion of spatter more than 100 feet into the air, and an advancing lava flow from fissure 17 at the northeast end of the fissure system. The flow from that fissure had traveled just under a mile, roughly east-southeast parallel to the rift zone, and was turning slightly south. Two more fissures – 18 and 19 – had just appeared. “This eruption is still evolving and additional outbreaks of lava are possible,” reports HVO. “Ground deformation continues and seismicity remains elevated in the area. The location of future outbreaks could include areas both uprift (southwest) and downrift (northeast) of the existing fissures, or, existing fissures can be reactivated. Communities downslope of these fissures could be at risk from lava inundation. Activity can change rapidly.”

Most of Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park – about two-thirds of the park – closed last Friday due to ongoing seismic activity, summit deflation, and the possibility of a steam explosion at the summit of Kilauea Volcano. Those areas of the park will remain closed until further notice. Only the Kahuku Unit is open; it's about an hour's drive south of the park's main entrance on Highway 11. At the request of the park, the FAA has issued a temporary flight restriction that extends 20,000 feet above ground level and a radius of twelve nautical miles around the volcano's summit.

For more information, go to the following sites:

- Hawaii Volcanoes NP – <https://www.nps.gov/havo/index.htm>
- Hawaiian Volcano Observatory (HVO) – <https://volcanoes.usgs.gov/observatories/hvo/>

- HVO webcams – https://volcanoes.usgs.gov/volcanoes/kilauea/multimedia_webcams.html
- HVO photos/videos – https://volcanoes.usgs.gov/volcanoes/kilauea/multimedia_chronology.html
- HVO maps – https://volcanoes.usgs.gov/volcanoes/kilauea/multimedia_maps.html

Canyonlands National Park Man Critically Injured While Trail Riding

A Utah man was listed in critical but stable condition in a Grand Junction hospital following a mountain biking accident in late April.

Nate Malan and several other friends were cycling in the park when Malan apparently misjudged a turn in the trail that was in the shadows and plunged more than 35 feet to the ground below. He suffered a serious head injury, bruised lung, and broken pelvis, arm and ribs.

A nurse who was cycling with him provided first aid before Malan was flown to an ICU facility in Grand Junction, Colorado, about a hundred miles away.

Source/full story: [KSL News](#).

Olympic National Park Pilot Who Crashed In Olympic Mountains Rescued By Navy

A Navy helicopter crew from Whidbey Island rescued a civilian pilot who crashed his plane into a mountainside in the park on May 2nd.

The Navy search-and-rescue crew received a report of a private plane crash in the upper elevations of the Olympic Mountains early that morning. Minutes later, the team of five lifted off from Naval Air Station Whidbey Island in an MH-60S chopper and headed toward the suspected location of the downed aircraft.

While enroute to the crash site, the helicopter rescue crew received the phone number of the pilot and was able to contact him to pinpoint his exact location.

The team arrived on scene just after 9 a.m. and immediately saw the crashed private plane in the snow on the side of a ridgeline. The pilot was spotted atop a ridge about 175 yards above the wreckage, where he had climbed after the crash. He was hoisted aboard the helicopter, then flown to Olympic Medical Center in Port Angeles for treatment.

Navy officials said it was the second rescue of 2018 for the Whidbey Island-based search-and-rescue team, which has also conducted two searches and two medical evacuations this year.

Source/full story: [KOMO News](#).

Glen Canyon National Recreation Area Man Falls 800 Feet To His Death

A Phoenix man fell about 800 feet to his death at Horseshoe Bend Overlook on Sunday, May 6th.

The body of 33-year-old Zachary Wallace was later found by deputies and was transported to the Coconino County Medical Examiner's Office. Rangers and sheriff's deputies reached the body from the side of Colorado River, while a state Department of Public Safety helicopter was used to take Wallace out of the canyon.

Wallace's brother told rangers that he saw his brother slip over the edge at about 3:30 p.m. Deputies said no foul play is suspected.

Source/full story: [Arizona Central](#).

Yellowstone National Park Bison Butts 72-Year-Old Woman

On the afternoon of May 1st, 72-year-old Virginia Junk of Boise, Idaho, was butted in the thigh, pushed, and tossed off a trail by a bison in the Old Faithful area. Junk did not see the animal as she walked around a bend in the trail and wasn't able to move away before the animal dropped its head and pushed her off the trail.

Rangers responded to the incident and treated Junk's minor injuries. Junk was transported by ambulance to Madison Memorial Hospital in Rexburg, Idaho.

No citations were issued. This was the first incident of a bison injuring a visitor this. There were five such incidents in 2015 and one last year.

Source/full story: [Yellowstone NP](#).

Haleakala National Park Falling Rock Kills Hiker On Park Trail

Visitor Greg Miller, 34, was killed after being struck in the head by a large rock while hiking in the park on Saturday, May 5th.

Miller had hiked to a waterfall Saturday with three companions – a man and two women. They were sitting by a waterfall near Waimoku Falls off the main Pipiwai Trail when Miller was struck by the falling rock. The other man called emergency dispatchers while the two women stayed with Miller.

At 6:50 p.m., Hana firefighters arrived and drove with the caller to a service road. then began the hike toward Miller near the top of the Pipiwai Trail. On the way up, they met the two women hiking down the trail, who said Miller had suffered head trauma, was not breathing and did not have a pulse despite their CPR efforts. They also said rocks had continued to fall after the initial rock struck Miller.

Responders determined it was unsafe to retrieve Miller at night, so crews escorted the three hikers back to the park visitor center. Firefighters and rangers found Miller's body at around 8:30 a.m. Sunday at the bottom of a 200-foot waterfall. His body was airlifted out with the fire department's Air-1 helicopter to a landing zone near the park's visitor center.

Source/full story: [Fort Wayne News Sentinel](#).

Southeast Region Parks Continue To Deal With Impacts Of Last Year's Hurricanes

Although it's been almost a year since the passage of major hurricanes Harvey, Irma and Maria over many NPS units in the Southeast, parks continue to deal with related impacts:

- *Virgin Islands NP* – Cinnamon Bay Campground, the popular park campground on St. John, will not reopen for the summer season because Redwood Parks Company, which took over management of the campground in 2016, has been awaiting a settlement with its insurance company. Damage to some of the campground's facilities, as well as its most iconic historic structure, the old Danish Warehouse, has been extensive, and its uncertain when the campground will open. The beach at the Cinnamon Bay remains open, but facilities there – including a restaurant, snack wagon, snorkel rental shop, bathrooms and showers – remain closed. There are portable toilets available for public use.
- *Fort Matanzas NM* – Ferry service at the park resumed on Monday after being sidelined by hurricane damage for almost a year. People can again take the ferry from the visitor center area to the fort and receive a tour for no charge. The boat runs every hour starting at 9:30 a.m., and the last tour starts at 4:30 p.m.

The forecast for this hurricane season is due out at month's end; a summary will appear in this newsletter.

Source/full story: [St. John Source](#) and [St. Augustine Record](#).

National Fire Situation

National Interagency Fire Center Large Fires Burning In Two NPS Areas

Synopsis

NIFC is at PL 2. Twelve large fires have burned more than 200,000 acres in six states. Two new large fires have been reported in Arizona. Firefighters were able to contain four large fires in Texas.

National Park Service Fires

A fire at Chiricahua NM has led to closures, but has not yet caused any damage to facilities. Firefighters continue to work to contain the expanding Avian Complex at Big Cypress NP:

- *Big Cypress NP* – The Avian Complex includes the Buzzard, Flamingo, Curlew, Vulture and Caracara fires. The causes of the Buzzard Fire, the Caracara Fire and the Curlew Fire remain under investigation; the Flamingo Fire and the Vulture Fire were caused by lightning. The Vulture and the Caracara wildfires are 100% contained. Firefighters continue to work on the other three fires. Together, these fires have burned 82,461 acres and are just 5% contained. Two Type 2 IMT's (Steve Parrish, IC, and Charles Patterson, IC trainee) are managing the fire; 335 firefighters and overhead are currently assigned. A number of [closure orders](#) are in effect. For details on the fires, go to [InciNet](#).
- *Chiricahua NM* – The Pinery Fire, which started at 1:30 p.m. last Saturday, forced the evacuation and closure of the park. The cause is under investigation but it started on private land, moved into the park, then spread north onto the Coronado National Forest. The fire has burned 1,200 acres and is 40% contained. It's being managed by a Type 3 IMT (Jason Scott, IC); about 260 firefighters and overhead are assigned. The fire is currently hung up on cliffs and rocky outcroppings on ridgetops and has not progressed further north into the park. Firefighters continue to construct direct line and extinguish hotspots along the north and northeast portions of the fire perimeter. The south, west and east portions of the perimeter have been quiet. Firefighters continue to prep structures in the park's headquarters area and have scouted ahead to plan for point source protection for the lookout tower as a precautionary measure. Crews will be chipping cut vegetation from these areas for several days. Crews have also been scouting ahead for options to provide structure protection in the east White Tail Canyon area as a contingency. For more information, go to the IMT's webpage on [InciNet](#).
- *Appalachian NST* – A brush fire on Catawba Mountain in Virginia has been completely contained after scorching about 165 acres. A series of fires broke out on April 29th; aided by dry conditions and wind, they rapidly spread. The cause has not been determined, but investigators believe the fire was human-caused. There's no evidence they were started intentionally. Access to and through a section of the Appalachian Trail had to be restricted, but a shuttle service was available for through-hikers. More than 70 firefighters, along with bulldozers and a helicopter, helped to contain the brush fire. Source: *Roanoke Times*.

May-August Fire Potential Outlook

NIFC has issued its monthly National Significant Wildland Fire Potential Outlook for the period from May through August. The executive summary follows; for the entire report, click on the link provided following the text:

“Preexisting drought conditions, along with several wind events, allowed for fire activity across the southern Great Plains and New Mexico to increase in April. By month’s end, activity was beginning to spread westward into Arizona and southern California.

“Entering May, a normal progression of fire activity is being observed as the Great Plains begins to receive its spring rainfall while the Southwest continues to be dry. What is atypical is the drought severity that is in place across the Four Corners Region and now southern California. The drought, coupled with the carryover of an above average fine fuel growth from last year, is expected to lead to Above Normal Significant Wildland Fire Potential in May and June across portions of the Southwest, Great Basin, and southern California. In the East, the elevated potential across Florida and portions of Georgia will return to Normal potential as summertime convective patterns ensue.

“The peak of the fire season in the Southwest is expected to occur by late June, just before the onset of the annual monsoon season, which should gradually bring their season to a close. Data suggests that the monsoon’s arrival should occur by early July. The projected focus of the monsoon’s early surges will be across New Mexico and Colorado but will refocus westward as July progresses. A normal transition of fire season activity west and north is expected through July as warmer and drier than average conditions develop across the western states. Of concern is the preexisting grass crop from 2017 and the new growth which will cure by July across California, the Great Basin, and Oregon. Higher, timbered elevations in these areas will become a concern by July as the past winter’s below average snowpack melts allowing for the high elevation fuels to become dry enough to support fire activity.

“In August, seasonal transitions focus the fire activity over the northwestern quarter of the country, though central and southern California also continue to experience significant activity. With significant carryover of fine fuels from last year and average grass crop growth this year, elevated fire potential will continue into August across many of the lower and middle elevations from the central Great Basin and California northward to Canada. Higher elevations in the Cascades, Northern Sierras, and possibly the Northern Rockies may also see elevated fire potential should warmer and drier than average conditions develop as expected.

“In Alaska, Normal Significant Wildland Fire Potential is expected as the state experiences a typical transition into fire season. Conditions across the state have been generally wetter than average while temperatures have been warmer than average. Since this pattern is expected to continue through the core of the Alaskan fire season, the potential for Above Normal Significant Wildland Fire Activity is low.”

Source: [Predictive Services, National Interagency Fire Center](#).

Active Incident Resource Commitments

Category	April 24th	May 1st	May 14th
Area Command Teams	0	0	0
NIMO Teams	0	0	0
Type 1 Teams	1	2	1
Type 2 Teams	2	0	1
Crews	29	36	33
Engines	251	147	133
Helicopters	15	18	24
Total FF/Overhead	1,878	1,699	1,686

Fires/Acreages

Category	2018 Total	2007-2017 Ave	2018 Variance

Year-to-Date Fires	21,196	22,256	- 1,060
Year-to-Date Acres	1,475,722	1,073,286	+ 402,436

Sources: [National Interagency Fire Center](#).

News From Around Washington

Reports on official actions and activities from Capitol Hill, the White House, the Department of the Interior, the National Park Service and other related agencies and NGO's.

Capitol Hill Weekly Legislative Roundup

This edition's report covers legislative activities for the weeks ending May 4th and May 11th.

New Public Laws

On April 30th, the president signed into law S. 167, to designate a National Memorial to Fallen Educators at the National Teachers Hall of Fame in Emporia, Kansas. (P.L. 115-169).

On May 7th, the president signed into law H.R. 4300, to authorize Pacific Historic Parks, a cooperating association of the National Park Service, to establish a commemorative display to honor members of the United States Armed Forces and Allies who served in the Pacific Theater during World War II, at a suitable location at the Pearl Harbor site of the World War II Valor in the Pacific National Monument, HI. (P.L. 115-70).

Senate

On May 10th, the Subcommittee on Interior, Environment and Related Agencies Appropriations held a hearing on the FY 2019 budget for the Department of the Interior. Secretary Ryan Zinke was the witness for the department.

House

On May 7th, the House passed H.R. 4910, to require the secretary of the interior to provide an outer burial receptacle, or grave liner, for each grave in an open national cemetery administered by the National Park Service, in a manner similar to those provided by the Department of Veterans Affairs to those buried in national cemeteries administered by the National Cemetery Administration. This bill also provides for the reimbursement of a veteran's survivors who provide a privately purchased outer burial receptacle for use in a National Park Service cemetery. The bill affects the only two remaining active cemeteries within the National Park System - Andersonville National Cemetery in Georgia and Andrew Johnson National Cemetery in Tennessee. The bill was passed by a vote of 388 yeas to 0 nays.

On May 8th, the Committee on Natural Resources approved, among other bills:

- H.R. 1791, to establish the Mountains to Sound Greenway National Heritage Area.
- H.R. 5655, to establish the Camp Nelson Heritage National Monument in Kentucky as a unit of the National Park System upon the acquisition of sufficient lands to constitute a manageable unit.

On May 9th and May 10th, the Committee on Appropriations Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies held hearings entitled "American Indian/Alaska Native Public Witnesses". There was no witness from the department at the hearings.

On May 10th, the Senate received notification of the withdrawal of the nomination by the Trump administration of Ryan Douglas Nelson, of Idaho, to be solicitor of the Department of the Interior, which was sent to the Senate on January 8th. (News reports have said the administration intends to nominate him for a federal judgeship instead).

Source: Don Hellmann, former assistant director, legislative and congressional affairs for the National Park Service.

Park People, Friends and Allies

Great Smoky Mountains NP Chief Ranger Steve Kloster Retiring

Steve Kloster, the chief ranger at Great Smoky Mountains National Park, is retiring after 35 years of federal service.

Kloster began his career with the National Park Service as a park technician at Allegheny Portage Railroad National Historic Site. He became chief ranger at Great Smoky Mountains National Park in May 2015.

Kloster has won numerous awards throughout his career, including the Department of the Interior's Exemplary Act Award and the Georgia Medal for Valor in 1992 for the rescue of a pilot involved in a mid-air collision.

Kloster is an upstate New York native who earned a bachelor's degree in recreation education from State University of New York College at Cortland.

Source/full story: [Columbia Daily Herald](#).

Coalition News and Activities

News and actions taken by CPANP on behalf of the National Park Service and National Park System, plus news about members of the Coalition:

Coalition Membership Continues To Rise – According to Amy Gilbert, CPANP's executive director, the Coalition had 1,536 members as of early this month – 1,569 counting volunteers and supporters.

CPANP Supports Kids To Parks Day – On Saturday, May 19th, the National Park Trust along with its many partners, including CPANP, will celebrate the Eighth Annual 'Kids to Parks Day'. Local, state and national parks across the country will host a variety of special programs and events to encourage children and their families to get outside and enjoy their public parks. The nationwide program coordinator, National Park Trust, is a non-profit dedicated to preserving the national parks while creating park stewards for tomorrow. For a list of park events by state, visit <https://www.parktrust.org/kids-to-parks-day/>.

NPS History Site Continues To Grow – Member Harry Butowsky continues to build a comprehensive database of NPS documents. This month, he placed 150 additional studies on the web, including 75 national wild and scenic river studies. He also posted an additional 50 reports under the park/agency history category, as well as a series of reports from Hopewell National Historical Park and Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument,. And he added seven new selections from the Historic American Buildings Survey. There are now more than 30,000 items listed on the site (<http://npshistory.com/>), which drew 55,000 visitors last month.

Other CPANP news, including Coalition actions, can be read about in the May edition of [Coalition Briefs](#).

News Reports and Releases

A brief summary of recent news stories, web postings and agency press releases pertaining to the federal government, the administration, DOI, the National Park Service, public lands and the climate and environment.

Government and Administration

Legislation Proposed To Cut Federal Employee Benefits – On May 7th, *Government Executive* reported that OPM Director Jeff Pon had written a letter to House Speaker Paul Ryan requesting a number of legislative changes that would cut retirement benefits for federal workers. The cuts, according to Pon, would “bring federal benefits more in line with the private sector.” Here are some of the key proposals:

- Eliminate FERS supplements for federal employees who retire before Social Security kicks in at age 62;
- Change the basis of a retiree’s defined benefit annuity payments from their highest three years of salary to their highest five years;
- Increase the amount federal employees contribute to FERS by 1 percentage point per year until they reach an overall contribution level of 7.25 percent, matching the government’s contribution;
- Eliminate cost-of-living adjustments for FERS retirees—both current and future—and reduce Civil Service Retirement System COLAs by 0.5 percent.

Source/full story: [Government Executive](#).

Proposed Employee Benefit Cuts Garner Little Hill Support – *Government Executive* ran a follow-up article on the above story in its May 11th edition which reported that the above proposal has received little support from either party. It also included some strongly worded comments worth sharing, one from a Republican and the other from a Democrat. This one is from Rep. Mike Turner (R-OH): “Despite their hard work and dedication, few groups have been asked to sacrifice more than federal employees. Since the start of the Great Recession in 2008, federal workers have foregone \$182 billion in the form of pay and benefit cuts . . . With the United States’ growing economy and a tightening labor market, we cannot afford to make the federal government a less attractive place to work by diminishing the very benefits that help the government keep pace with jobs in the (often higher-paying) private sector.” The second is from Rep. Elijah Cummings (D-MD): “The Trump administration’s draconian proposal—to cut more than \$143 billion over the next 10 years from the pay and benefits of current federal workers, retirees, future retirees, and even children who suffer the loss of a parent—comes after the president and Republicans in Congress just enacted \$1.5 trillion in tax cuts for wealthy individuals and corporations. Enacting these changes would betray the promises the nation has made to middle class federal workers who dedicate their lives to public service—as well as their families—and it would severely degrade recruitment and retention.” Source/full story: [Government Executive](#).

Zinke Watch – Here’s the latest on Secretary Zinke and his merry band at DOI:

- *Zinke’s Staffers, Part IV* – Over the last few issues (most recently on April 25th), we’ve periodically featured the questionable practices and occasional misdeeds of the secretary’s staff. Today we continue with David Bernhardt, Zinke’s deputy secretary, courtesy of *Huffington Post*: “Bernhardt is barred from participating in matters involving his former employer, lobbying firm Brownstein Hyatt Farber & Schreck, per the ethics agreement he signed last year. But, according to a newly released calendar, Bernhardt had a Dec. 19 meeting with Brian Ballard, a Florida lobbyist who raised millions of dollars for President Donald Trump’s campaign and was hired by MGM in March 2017 to lobby the Department of the Interior on issues including ‘Indian Gaming & Expansion Policy.’ Joining Ballard at the meeting were Sylvester Lukis and Dan McFaul, who are both partners in the lobbying firm. All three are registered to represent MGM, which paid the firm \$350,000 for its services over the last year, according to lobbying disclosure reports... Brownstein Hyatt, where Bernhardt worked for eight

years prior to being sworn in at the Interior Department in August, has also been representing MGM on this issue since he was with the firm.” Source/full story: [Huffington Post](#).

- *Zinke and the Multiple Misstatements – Westwise*, a publication of the Center for Western Priorities, published a piece last week entitled “Secretary Zinke’s Four Lies and a Truth.” The four “whoppers” it lists concern Bears Ears NM and were taken from testimony before Congress last week – that his Bears Ears decision “restored” wilderness (it didn’t – the wilderness was there before and remains there now); that oil and gas leasing was never discussed (documents show they were central to the discussion); that acquiring more land via LWCF funding is a bad idea because the NPS has a big maintenance backlog (they have separate funding sources); and that his park maintenance proposal represents the biggest investment ever made in U.S. public lands (the CCC was). The true statement? Zinke said that the public deserves to be heard on decisions concerning public lands. But he isn’t following his own counsel on that one. Source/full story: [Westwise](#).
- *Zinke and the Missing Bureau Chiefs – E&E News* reports that Zinke is predicting that three bureau chief positions will remain open until next year – directors of the NPS, BLM and FWS. No further details are available, as the full article requires subscription. Source/full story: [E&E News](#).

National Park System

DOI Sending Park Police To Border – According to *The Hill*, U.S. Park Police officers will be among those working to secure the U.S. border with Mexico, effective this week. Here are excerpts from the article that appeared in the publication: “The Interior Department is sending its law enforcement officers to help the Department of Homeland Security secure the U.S.– Mexico border, according to an internal email obtained by *The Hill*. The announcement from the U.S. Park Police (USPP) Planning Unit and National Park Service (NPS), sent last Thursday, says that officers from both agencies will assist the Border Patrol along the southwest border starting May 13 as part of ‘Secretary [Ryan] Zinke’s offer of assistance to the Department of Homeland Security.’ According to the guidance, officers will be sent in rotating groups and spend ‘approximately 21 days’ at two national park and monument sites located on the U.S.–Mexico border: Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument in Arizona and Amistad National Recreation Area in Texas.” Source/full story: [The Hill](#).

How To Become A Seasonal Ranger – The *Asheville Citizen-Times* ran an article on April 25th on the 22 cadets who recently graduated from the 100th class of the NPS Seasonal Law Enforcement Training Academy at Southwestern Community College. Several are interviewed about their backgrounds and job expectations. It also describes the work that enforcement rangers do in the NPS. Source/full story: [Asheville Citizen-Times](#).

Around The Parks – Brief reports on parks, culled either from park press releases or from newspapers:

- *Yellowstone NP* – On Sunday, May 13th, Steamboat Geyser erupted for the fifth time this year. The park reports that there’s no indication of any volcanic activity in Yellowstone and that most geysers are intermittent, but adds that “the string of eruptions is a good sign that summer visitors will get to see some ‘spectacular geysering.’” Unlike some of the other Yellowstone geysers, which erupt relatively predictably, Steamboat goes through periods of dormancy, including one that lasted nine years. Source/full story: [Casper Star Tribune](#).
- *Death Valley NP* – After four months of closure for construction, Dantes View overlook – one of the most popular sites in the park – is again open to the public. The upgraded overlook features a broad flat viewing area, benches, a retaining wall to stabilize the eroding hilltop, a wall with a railing, and a bronze tactile map of the surrounding landscape. Though the site is now open, the grand opening and ribbon cutting ceremony will take place on June 6th. Source/full story: [Death Valley NP](#).

- *Katahdin Woods and Waters NM* – Visitors to the new Maine park – there were about 30,000 during 2017, its first year – have on occasion had trouble finding it. That’s because the state’s governor, Paul LePage, vehemently opposed its creation, once calling it a “mosquito-infested wasteland,” and refused to authorize directional signs on the state’s highways. LePage had hoped a review by Secretary Zinke would undo the monument’s federal designation, but that didn’t happen. The governor’s press secretary says visitors to the region can now expect a little assistance on the road. Source/full story: [Maine Public Radio](#).
- *Bighorn Canyon NRA* – Fees will no longer be collected at the park, effective May 25th, the first day of the Memorial Day weekend. A cost-benefit analysis conducted in 2017 determined that it is not economically feasible to continue to collect fees, as it costs more to collect the fees than the program generates in revenue. The park has about 250,000 visitors each year. Source/full story: [Lovell Chronicle](#).
- *Crater Lake NP* – The dropping price and improving technology of drones have led to an increase in the number buzzing the lake, despite the Servicewide ban. They’re being seen on a regular basis, particularly in the summer, and have even buzzed boat tours on the lake. According to a recent article in *The Oregonian*, the park is stepping up efforts to enforce the ban; the maximum penalty is six months in jail and a \$5,000 fine. Source/full story: [The Oregonian](#).
- *Guilford Courthouse NMP* – A team of 25 DAR members volunteered over 1,100 hours to generate a list of more than 2,300 people whose pension applications show they participated in the Battle of Guilford Courthouse. The names, pension application numbers and relevant phrases from the pension files were combined into both a digital and a hard-copy database as a service to the park and presented to park staff this spring. Source/full story: [Greensboro News and Record](#).
- *George Washington Memorial Parkway* – The Friends of Claude Moore Colonial Farm, the nonprofit volunteer entity that funds and manages the Claude Moore Colonial Farm, which is located on the parkway, are launching a public campaign to keep the farm operating and open to the public. The NPS plans on closing it on December 21st. Legislation ([H.R. 5201](#)) to keep the farm open to the public has been introduced in Congress. Source/full story: [Daily Herald](#).
- *Redwood N&SP* – Save the Redwoods League, the National Park Service and California State Parks have announced a new commitment to healing previously-harvested redwood forests through a collaboration known as “Redwoods Rising.” One of the project’s goals in coming decades will be to bring back stands of coast redwoods (*Sequoia sempervirens*) on 80,000 acres of public lands in the parks. “Redwoods Rising” represents an unprecedented level of collaboration among these three organizations. Source/full story: [Redwood N&SP](#).
- *Blue Ridge Parkway* – The park has launched a vista clearance project entitled “Renew The Views.” “[In] the first major project of its kind since the parkway was constructed in the 1930s,” reports the *Citizen-Times*, “a team of parkway resource managers and skilled arborists are working around Haywood and Jackson counties to give some much-needed shearing to overgrown vistas.” This is no small project – there are 910 designed roadside vistas along the 469 miles of parkway from Shenandoah National Park in Virginia down to the entrance of Great Smoky Mountains National Park in Cherokee. Source/full story: [Citizen-Times](#).
- *Delaware Water Gap NRA* – Delaware Water Gap has acquired a former Girl Scout camp, adding 1,054 acres to the park. After Camp Hidden Falls was closed in 2012, the Girl Scouts began working with several conservation organizations to find a way to preserve the land. The Conservation Fund purchased it for \$4.5 million last year and transferred it to the park last month. All of the camp buildings and a dam were removed before the purchase. What remains is a large swath of upland forest with 15 acres of wetlands, eight waterfalls, and two miles of pristine streams. Source/full story: [Pike County Courier](#).

- *Death Valley NP* – Researchers checking on the endangered Devils Hole pupfish last month counted just 87 of the critically endangered fish in the species' only native habitat, 90 miles west of Las Vegas. That's the lowest spring total in three years. The pupfish is one of the most isolated and endangered animals on Earth. The species is thought to be a relic of the last ice age, trapped in Devils Hole when the climate warmed and nearby lakes and streams dried out. The inch-long, neon-blue fish has been under federal protection since 1967. Its population peaked at 544 in 1990 and bottomed out at 32 in the spring of 2013. Source/full story: [Las Vegas Review-Journal](#).
- *Sitka NHP* – Last month, the Sitka Tribe of Alaska and the National Park Service announced a historic collaboration at Sitka National Historical Park, known locally as "Totem Park." The tribe will co-manage the park's interpretation program, which includes greeting visitors at the front desk, leading interpretative walks and talks, and running natural history and cultural history education programs. Although other parks and tribes have similar agreements, this one is different. According to *Sierra Magazine*, "the agreement between the Sitka Tribe of Alaska and Sitka National Historical Park is the first such compact supported through an annual funding agreement for park programs. The steady source of funding and support sets a precedent for more robust self-governance by tribes working with the NPS." Source/full story: [Sierra Magazine](#).

Public Comments Solicited – A listing of planned actions in parks open to public comment, arranged in chronological order by their closing dates. New entries are in **dark red**:

- *Antietam Visitor Access and Circulation Plan* – Antietam is seeking comments on its draft access and circulation plan. The purpose of this plan/EA is to improve visitor access to, and circulation within, the battlefield; the plan/EA also amend the battlefield's 1992 general management plan as it pertains to visitor circulation, the visitor center, battlefield tour roads, and tour stops. Closes: May 23rd. [PEPC link](#).
- *Lassen Volcanic Wilderness Stewardship Plan EA* – The park has prepared a range of alternatives on its draft wilderness stewardship plan EA and is accepting comments through the end of May. Closes: May 26th. [PEPC link](#).
- *Mississippi Civil Rights Sites* – The Service has begun to examine key civil rights sites in Mississippi for possible designation as a national park area and invites the public to weigh-in at the start of the project that could run two years. Closes: June 1st. [PEPC link](#).
- *Pictured Rocks Visitor Use Management Project* – The park has opened its visitor use management plan to public comment. It focuses on analyzing visitor use issues at high visitation areas from Sand Point to Spray Falls. Closes: June 6th. [PEPC link](#).
- *Big Bend Backcountry Management Plan Update* – The park is updating its 1995 backcountry management plan, which directs park management on wilderness and backcountry use topics, including backpacking, primitive car camping, backcountry use limits, and other considerations. Closes: June 18th. [PEPC link](#).
- *Acadia Draft Transportation Plan and EIS* – The NPS invites the public to provide feedback on the range of management alternatives and potential environmental impacts identified in the Draft Transportation Plan and EIS. Closes: June 26th. [PEPC link](#).

Climate and The Environment

Bear Hibernation Disrupted By Climate Change – The May 4th edition of the *New York Times* has a story on the impacts of climate change on black bear hibernation: "[As] climate change leads to warmer winters, later falls and earlier springs — which can disrupt both food supplies and biological rhythms — American black bears are changing their hibernation routines, scientists say. In some cases, bears are not hibernating at all, staying awake all winter. In others, bears are waking from their

slumber too early. For every one degree Celsius that minimum temperatures increase in winter, bears hibernate for six fewer days, a study found last fall. As global temperatures continue to rise, by the middle of the century black bears may stay awake between 15 and 39 more days per year, the study said." Source/full story: [New York Times](#).

Report: Climate Change Poses 'Immediate' Threat To California – The May 11th *Los Angeles Times* has an article on a climate change report just issued by the California Environmental Protection Agency's Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment. Not surprisingly, the news is not good: "From record temperatures to proliferating wildfires and rising seas, climate change poses an immediate and escalating threat to California's environment, public health, and economic vitality." The report – [Indicators of Climate Change in California](#) – tracks three dozen effects climate change is already having on California's weather, water, people, plants and wildlife. The news article focuses on five of them – hotter nights, warming waters, more destructive wildfires, rising oceans and retreating glaciers. Source/full story: [Los Angeles Times](#).

From The Archives

This section contains news and incidents taken from *Morning Report* issues published during the corresponding week 25 years ago. This week we go back to late April and early May, 1993. All entries appear in the original verb tense.

- *Hagerman Fossil Beds NM* – A major landslide in late April sheared away the entire end of a park ridge and pushed debris 200 feet into the Snake River. A new cliff has been formed approximately 100 feet from the edge of its predecessor. The landslide, which occurred at the site of the 1987 landslide that destroyed the Bell Rapid pump station on the 27,000-acre farming project west of the monument, also caused new tension cracks and shear zones that extend far beyond the actual landslide site. The area was closed to the public at the time; no impacts on visitation are anticipated, other than the possibility that visitors may be lured to the area by either land or boat. Fossils are known to exist in the strata on both sides of the new landslide, but the area is still moving and too unstable to make any paleontological assessment.
- *Zion NP* – At 5:20 p.m. on April 30th, the Washington County sheriff's office notified the park that they'd received a report that water was flowing over the top of the 85-foot-high Kolob Reservoir dam. Water from the reservoir flows into the North Fork of the Virgin River, which runs through the park and the park's gateway communities of Springdale and Rockville. Both the park and sheriff's office began mobilizing personnel in event of a major flood. A model had been developed by Washington County which indicated that a catastrophic release of the reservoir would increase the river's flow to 75,000 to 80,000 cubic feet per second throughout all of Zion Canyon. A county helicopter which was dispatched to check the report arrived at the dam at 7:40 p.m. and reported that water was not flowing over the dam. By the time that report was received, all low-lying areas in the park had been secured and all park employees and visitors who might be affected had been notified and/or evacuated. Rangers then began the process of advising all those they'd contacted that the report had been false. Although the report was erroneous, it provided the opportunity for a very good and valuable exercise.
- *Denali NP* – On Sunday, April 25th, three members of a British Army expedition developed frostbite while descending from the summit of Mt. Foraker. The entire eight-member team descended to 5,700 feet on the north side, where one member became completely immobile due to rewarming of his frostbitten feet. The five healthy members separated and skied down to Wonder Lake for help, expecting to arrive there on May 4th. On May 3rd, commercial aircraft picked up a mayday call from the three injured climbers on an FAA emergency channel. Since the south side of the range was clouded in, Ranger Ron Purdum flew from headquarters along the north side of the range and located the camp on the Foraker Glacier. After dropping them a park radio, he determined that they needed to be evacuated. The park's rescue Llama, which followed a K2 Aviation aircraft that flew ahead to pick out the clearest route, reached the party about two hours later. Ranger Kevin Moore helped evacuate the climbers, who were taken to

Talkeetna, then to Humana Hospital in Anchorage. The other five members of the expedition arrived at Wonder Lake on the 4th.

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- Production: Steve Pittleman
- Regular Correspondents: Don Hellmann, Dennis Burnett and Rick Smith
- Issue Contributors: Duncan Morrow, Mark Forbes, Deb Liggett.

If you see something that might be of interest to Coalition members, send it to Bill Halainen at the Weekly National Park System Report: BHalainen@gmail.com. Please don't submit them via his personal email address or Facebook page.

A Closing Observation

"A land ethic for tomorrow should be as honest as Thoreau's *Walden* and as comprehensive as the sensitive science of ecology. It should stress the oneness of our resources and the live-and-help-live logic of the great chain of life. If, in our haste to 'progress,' the economics of ecology are disregarded by citizens and policy makers alike, the result will be an ugly America. We cannot afford an America where expedience tramples upon esthetics and development decisions are made with an eye only on the present."

Secretary of Interior Stewart Udall, *The Quiet Crisis*, 1963

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The *Weekly National Park System Report* is a publication of The Coalition To Protect America's National Parks. It is prepared by Coalition member Bill Halainen, former editor of the *NPS Morning Report*, and produced and disseminated by Coalition member Steve Pittleman.

The Coalition is a non-profit organization of past and current NPS employees and their allies that "studies, educates, speaks, and acts for the preservation and protection of the National Park System and mission-related programs of the National Park Service."

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