



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

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Incidents

Hawaii Volcanoes National Park Partial Reopening Set For Late September

Due to a lull in the eruption and associated earthquakes, the park will reopen some of its main areas on September 22nd, National Public Lands Day.

Candidates for probable reopening include Kilauea Visitor Center, located near the park entrance, and a viewing area where the public can see firsthand the dramatic changes that have occurred at Halemaumau Crater. Possibilities include the Kilauea Iki overlook or Keanakakoi, but no decision has been made yet.

The Jaggar Museum and overlook will not be reopening in September due to extensive damage. The popular Thurston lava tube, which is still being evaluated, will also remain closed. A team will also evaluate the cliffs beneath Volcano House; if they are stable, visitors will be allowed to return.

At a depth of more than 1,200 feet, the crater is now four times deeper than it was before the eruption began. Its diameter has more than doubled.

Meanwhile: Some people just don't get the point of closures (as they say, what part of 'no' do you not understand?), as attested by this item from the Big Island Now website.

Eleven people who illegally entered the park last Saturday were cited by rangers for disobeying a lawful closure and for disorderly conduct. The group snuck past numerous closure signs and ventured down to the rim of Halema'uma'u Crater below Jaggar Museum. They were spotted by a park geomorphologist and trail crew assessing seismic damage across the caldera at Keanakāko'i.

Members of the group parked their vehicles near Nāmakanipaio Campground and claimed they did not see the numerous closure signs between Highway 11, the museum, and the crater's edge. Each of them – ten men and one woman – was cited \$100 for violating a lawful closure and \$250 for disorderly conduct. There is also a \$30 processing fee for each citation.

Source: [Honolulu Star Advertiser](#), [Big Island Now](#).

Statue of Liberty National Monument Liberty Island Closed And Evacuated Due To Propane Fire

Two propane tanks caught fire near the base of the Statue of Liberty on Monday, prompting the evacuation of 3,400 tourists and almost sparking a “catastrophic” explosion.

The blaze began when a 100-pound propane tank caught fire about 11:45 a.m. in a construction site for a new security screening facility about 200 feet from the base of the statue. It’s not yet clear what sparked the flames. After one tank burst into flames, another tank fell over and started leaking gas from its relief valve; it also caught fire. A third tank nearby was also threatened by the flames. The tanks are five feet tall and about 18 inches in diameter.

It took 50 firefighters two hours to douse the blaze as visitors were evacuated from the island. Fifty more firefighters were on standby. Although the tanks never exploded, firefighters said that it was a near miss and that an explosion could have had catastrophic effects.

A maintenance worker suffered minor burns from the first tank’s flames, but declined medical attention.

Liberty Island was reopened to tourists by 2 p.m.

Source: [New York Daily News](#).

Yellowstone National Park Ten-Year-Old Boy Injured By Bear

A bear charged a family hiking in Yellowstone National Park on Thursday, August 23rd, knocking down and injuring a 10-year-old boy before his parents were able to drive the animal off with bear spray.

The unidentified boy from Washington state was transferred to a hospital for puncture wounds to his back, wounds around his buttocks, and an injured wrist.

It's not clear whether the bear that attacked the boy was a grizzly or a black bear. Yellowstone averages about one bear attack on a human per year, but it's been three years since the last attack within park boundaries.

The family of four was hiking along the Divide Trail southeast of Old Faithful when the bear charged from the vegetation, chased the boy, and knocked him to the ground.

The boy's parents sprayed the bear’s head from a distance of about five feet, causing it to leave. The family walked to the trailhead and drove to the ranger station at Old Faithful, where they were sent to a nearby clinic. The boy was then transferred to a hospital in Big Sky.

The cause of the attack has yet to be determined.

Source: [KOMO News](#).

Haleakala National Park Visitor Killed By Falling Rock

On August 25th, Greg Miller, 34, a visitor from Indiana, was killed by a large rock that fell and struck his head while hiking in the park near Waimoku Falls.

Miller had hiked to a waterfall Saturday with three friends – 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 in the group called emergency dispatch and reported the incident. Local firefighters soon arrived and drove with him to a service road, then hiked up toward Miller on the Pipiwai Trail. On the way up, they met the two women hiking down the trail; they said that 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 and prepared to recover his body the next morning. 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.

Firefighters and police officers in Hana, and a rescue crew from Kahului assisted Haleakala National Park rangers in the incident.

Source: [Fort Wayne News-Sentinel](#).

Yellowstone National Park Man Who Harassed Bison Sentenced

Raymond Reinke, 55, of Pendleton, Oregon, was sentenced to 130 days in jail on charges that included harassing a bison in Yellowstone National Park. Reinke pleaded guilty during a bench trial in federal court at Mammoth Hot Springs in Yellowstone on August 23rd.

After witnesses filmed him taunting a bison, Reinke fled Yellowstone, but was also arrested in Glacier National Park and ticketed for misconduct in Grand Teton.

The judge sentenced Reinke to 60 days in jail for harassing wildlife, 60 days for interfering with law enforcement officers, and 10 days for disorderly conduct.

At the time of his appearance, Reinke had already spent 21 days in jail.

Source: [Cody Enterprise](#).

North Cascades National Park Climber Succumbs To Injuries In 100-Foot Fall

Eric Lindblom, a 60-year-old climber, died on August 5th after falling while on Forbidden Peak in the North Cascades.

Lindblom was free climbing on wet rock slabs with a group of three other climbers above their bivouac shelter when he fell about 100 feet.

A National Park Service helicopter was dispatched from Marblemount in Skagit County after the International Emergency Response Coordination Center was alerted about Lindblom by a personal locator beacon. The operation was made difficult by harsh weather conditions, including rain, wind and lightning.

Source: [Seattle Times](#).

Bighorn Canyon National Recreation Area Three Killed In Boating Accident On Lake

A boating accident on Bighorn Lake on the night of Saturday, August 11th, left three people dead and one man hospitalized in serious condition.

The body of Tammy Scoville, 59, was recovered from the water on Sunday. The injured man, 63-year-old Robert Ludwick of Billings, was located on the shoreline by Big Horn County deputies. He was transferred by boat to Ok-A-Beh Marina and brought to St. Vincent Healthcare by air ambulance.

The accident was reported by an off-duty deputy, who told dispatchers that a vessel had sunk near Dayboard 7 on the lake and two people were in the water. The location of the accident was roughly seven miles south of Yellowtail Dam on the Montana side of the park.

National Park Service, Coast Guard, and Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks personnel launched a search for the two missing boaters. Divers from the NPS Submerged Resources Center assisted in the search. The bodies of the two men – Christian Scoville, 35, and Nathan Kelley, 36 – were found and recovered over the course of the next few days.

The cause of the accident remains unknown.

Source: [Missoulian](#) and [KRTV News](#).

Upper Delaware National Scenic and Recreational River Derailed Train Dumps 4,000 Gallons Of Diesel Fuel Into River

A train carrying various types of waste, including hazardous materials, derailed near Hale Eddy Road on the Delaware River during the early hours of August 9th.

The 63-car train was traveling west from New Jersey to Binghamton along the West Branch of the Delaware River with four locomotives. Reportedly one car contained corrosive material and 13 cars contained hazardous contaminated soil; the rest were either empty or carried construction debris or non-hazardous soils. Diesel fuel, up to 4,000 gallons, spilled into the West Branch of the Delaware from at least one of the locomotives.

Park personnel and emergency response teams were soon on site. The train derailment is believed to have been caused by railroad tracks and a culvert washing out due to recent storms.

Source: [Pocono Record](#).

Cape Cod National Seashore Swimmer Bitten By Shark Off Park Shoreline

A 61-year-old man was flown to a trauma center in Boston on August 15th after being bitten by a shark near Long Nook Beach.

The man was standing in the water about 300 yards south of the beach and about 30 yards offshore when he was bitten. Witnesses said that there were at least ten seals in the area at the time (seals are favored prey of sharks).

The man was able to make it to shore. Other people on the beach went to his aid, employing beach towels to staunch the bleeding from his leg. They then carried him up from the beach where the crew of an arriving ambulance took over care.

The type of shark involved in the incident is not yet known. Rangers are investigating the incident.

Source: [Cape Cod Times](#).

Canyonlands National Park Archeological Site Closed Due To Repeated Vandalism

The park has closed the well-known “False Kiva” archeological site in the Island in the Sky District due to impacts of vandalism. The trail leading to it remains open, but the alcove where it is located has been closed. A solution to allowing access in the future may be guided ranger hikes.

The popularly photographed destination—a real kiva, which by definition is a room used by Pueblos for religious rituals and political meetings—was vandalized most recently in July. The site has been

the victim of graffiti, illegal camping and campfires. Some vandals have moved rocks that form the circular, low structure.

On July 20th, Kate Cannon, the park's superintendent, made the decision to close the "False Kiva" alcove. The last vandalism incident involved unknown persons building a fire and putting handprints at the site. Subsequent efforts to clean it up appeared to have made matters worse. This incident was similar to other damaging incidents and led to her decision.

Rangers have no idea who vandalized the kiva several weeks ago and it's unclear if or when it will ever reopen to the public. A sign now blocks the alcove. Tourists can still hike to the area and see the kiva from a distance, but a second sign on the trail tells visitors the alcove is closed.

Iconic photographs of the kiva may have led to its demise. Untold numbers of people have wanted to take the classic photograph. In order to take that particular shot, a photographer must enter the site, which has contributed to the damage caused over the years.

A final decision on the site could be made in the next few months.

Source: [Moab Times-Independent](#).

National Fire Situation

National Interagency Fire Center Over 100 Major Fires Continue To Burn Nationwide

Synopsis

NIFC remains at PL 5, the agency's highest preparedness level.

As of yesterday, 110 large fires were burning actively nationwide; collectively, they'd burned a total of 2.2 million acres. Firefighters are making progress toward containment goals on many fires in the West. Three new large fires were reported and another six were contained.

National Park Service Fires

Significant fires are currently burning in these national parks:

- *Glacier NP* – As of this past Sunday, the Howe Ridge Fire had burned 12,420 acres and was 12 percent contained. A Type 1 team (Pierson) and 138 firefighters and overhead staff are managing the fire. [Numerous closures](#) remain in effect. More information can be found at [this InciNet webpage](#).
- *Whiskeytown NRA* – Cal Fire continues to manage the Carr Fire, which has now burned 299,651 acres but is 96% contained. The park remains closed. More information can be found at [this InciNet webpage](#).

Active Incident Resource Commitments

| Category | August 16th | August 21st | August 28th |
|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| Area Command Teams | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| NIMO Teams | 1 | 2 | 2 |
| Type 1 Teams | 14 | 15 | 14 |
| Type 2 Teams | 20 | 21 | 21 |
| Crews | 590 | 528 | 447 |
| Engines | 1,545 | 1,461 | 1,002 |
| Helicopters | 195 | 172 | 164 |

| | | | |
|-------------------|--------|--------|--------|
| Total FF/Overhead | 27,339 | 26,010 | 20,703 |
| | | | |

Fires/Acreage

| Category | 2018 Total | 2008-2017 Ave | 2018 Variance |
|--------------------|-------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| Year-to-Date Fires | 43,007 | 46,836 | - 3,829 |
| Year-to-Date Acres | 6,463,893 | 5,163,291 | + 1,300,602 |
| | | | |

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

New Public Laws

Nothing to report.

Senate

On August 22nd, the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources Subcommittee on Public Lands, Forests, and Mining held a hearing on several bills, including the following of interest to NPS:

- S. 483, to designate and expand wilderness areas in Olympic National Forest in the State of Washington, and to designate certain rivers in Olympic National Forest and Olympic National Park as wild and scenic rivers.
- S. 2078, to establish a new mechanism to allow western States to relinquish State trust land within Federally designated conservation areas, including NPS units, and select replacement land from lands administered by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) land within the respective States.
- S. 2907, to withdraw approximately 192,000 Federal surface acres and approximately 315,000 acres of Federal subsurface mineral estate surrounding the Chaco Culture National Historical Park (CCNHP) in Northwestern New Mexico from public land laws, mining, mineral, and geothermal leasing laws.

Christopher McAlear, assistant director, national conservation lands and community partnerships, Bureau of Land Management, was the witness for the department.

House

Nothing to report. The House was in recess the week of August 13-17.

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

Park People, Friends and Allies

NPS Alumni Passing Of Ranger Scott Emmerich

Scott A. Emmerich, 61, passed away at home on August 11th following a two-and-a-half year battle with brain cancer.

Scott was born in Wausau, Wisconsin, growing up in Mosinee. He received his undergraduate degrees in psychology and communications and later a master of business administration degree from the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

He fell in love with Glacier National Park while working at Goat Haunt as a summer Student Conservation Association employee and left determined to return. After obtaining his seasonal law enforcement commission, he began his career with the National Park Service in Yosemite National Park in 1983, where he met the love of his life, Jan Knox. Jan and Scott married in 1989.

After a short stint with U.S. Customs as a criminal investigator in San Diego, Scott was given the opportunity to return to Glacier National Park as the West Lakes Subdistrict ranger in 1989. He later found his home as the North Fork District ranger, where he remained until retiring in 2014.

Scott was a ranger's ranger, a jack-of-all-trades — a wildlife biologist at heart, a counselor, mediator, interpreter, educator, friend and leader. He embraced all aspects of the job — wildlife management, emergency medicine, rescue, visitor and resource protection, training and education, community relations, public speaking, mentoring and leadership.

Being a ranger gave Scott opportunity to fulfill his love of the outdoors — hiking, skiing, rafting and climbing. He was a park medic and oversaw the park's emergency medical program, including teaching first aid and CPR classes and serving as the park's representative on the advisory board of the Advanced Life-Support Emergency Rescue Team (A.L.E.R.T.) air ambulance program for 23 years. At a ceremony in Washington, D.C., Scott was awarded the 2010 Harry Yount National Park Ranger Award for Excellence for promotion of the ranger profession.

Scott was very involved in his community outside of the Park Service as well. His love of the hunting and wildlife led him to teach bow hunter education classes to help educate young people about hunter safety and ethics. He also served as a School District Six board member for seven years.

His greatest joy was being father to his daughter, McKenna. He always strived to be an involved parent, from volunteering in her elementary school classes and officiating soccer games to attending her piano recitals and music/theatre/dance performances into her college years.

On a ski trip with his dog and best friend, Mya, in January of 2016, a healthy and active Scott collapsed with a stroke caused by a glioblastoma. For the next two and a half years, Scott devoted himself to the fight, researching all he could to improve his chances through diet, alternative treatments and exercise, along with traditional Western medicine. Most important to him was to pass on what he learned to others. He inspired many with his commitment and humorous and inspirational posts on CaringBridge.

Scott is survived by his wife and daughter; his parents, Donna and Arden Emmerich; his siblings, Susan, Cheryl and Jeff; and his nephews, Jake, Brad, Ben, Ian and Eric. He also leaves behind many loving friends and family who will continue to be inspired by his actions and his will to never give up no matter the odds.

A celebration of life will be held on October 6th. Details are to be announced later.

Donations in his honor are appreciated to A.L.E.R.T., 310 Sunnyview Lane, Kalispell, MT 59901; or Columbia Falls High School Alumni Community Academic Endowment, P.O. Box 1641, Columbia Falls, MT 59912, both of which were very important to Scott.

Cards can be sent to the following address: Jan Knox and McKenna Emmerich, 200 Meadow Lake Road, Columbia Falls, MT 59912.

Columbia Mortuary in Columbia Falls is caring for the family. Please visit www.columbiamortuary.com to leave condolences for the family.

Source: [Daily Interlake](#) via member Amy Vanderbilt.

NPS Alumni

Passing Of Ranger Jon Peterson

Jon Alan Peterson, a career ranger in the National Park Service, died on Saturday, June 23rd, at his home in Bishop, California, from extra-skeletal myxoid chondrosarcoma advancement and related complications. Jon died peacefully, finally out of pain, surrounded by family and friends. He was 66 years old.

Jon began his life's calling as a park ranger with Baxter State Park Authority in northern Maine. From Maine, Jon moved on to work for Ozark National Scenic Riverways in Missouri, Glen Canyon National Recreation Area in Arizona and Utah, and Grand Canyon National Park in Arizona with the River Unit along the Colorado River.

From the deserts of the Southwest he transferred to above the Arctic Circle to work three seasons in the Northwest Alaska Areas (now called Western Arctic National Parklands) comprised of Cape Krusenstern National Monument, Noatak National Preserve and Kobuk Valley National Park. While there, Jon conducted Arctic snowmobile patrols, camping in temperatures of minus 60 degrees Fahrenheit. Jon spent an additional season with Lake Clark National Park and Preserve.

Jon accepted his first permanent position with Kennesaw National Historic Battlefield Park in Georgia, where he completed training at the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center, also in Georgia. From there he transferred back to Arizona to take a river ranger job with Grand Canyon National Park, working upstream of Lake Mead National Recreation Area. He then transferred back to Alaska as a district ranger above the Arctic Circle in Anaktuvuk Pass with Gates of the Arctic National Park and Preserve – the nation's largest ice free national park.

After marrying Kathryn (Kathy) Hess in 1994, the couple moved to Kotzebue, Alaska, where Jon accepted a position with the National Park Service as chief ranger at Northwest Alaska Areas. A taildragger airplane owner/pilot in Alaska, Jon spent many hours flying his Cessna C-140 above the Arctic Circle, searching for caribou herds and landing on river gravel bars in the midnight sun. Jon also enjoyed hangar flying with the fighter pilot/test pilot crowd. Raised a military brat, Jon was preceded in death by his father, Lt. Colonel (USAF Ret.) Harry Peterson, a fighter pilot who served in three wars.

Jon transferred to Death Valley National Park in California/Nevada in 1997 and the couple relocated to Bishop, California. Jon retired from Death Valley National Park as a federal special agent in 2005 after serving four years as the patrol ranger at Saline Warm Springs. This was perhaps his most colorful and challenging position, maintaining a park presence at a site frequented by some of the national park system's more free-spirited visitors, attending military airspace meetings at Edwards Air Force Base with representatives of the US Air Force and Naval Air Weapons Station China Lake Navy and Marine aviation units, and representing the park superintendent at Inyo Associates gatherings.

Embracing the ranger way, Jon was a certified structural/wildland firefighter, water safety instructor, emergency medical technician, cave guide, certified scuba diver, USAF-SER Arctic Survival School graduate, federal firearms instructor and private pilot. Jon received valor awards from his Fraternal Order of Police union and the Department of the Interior for action taken during his public service.

Once diagnosed with a rare form of fatal cartilage cancer, Jon chose to run at the disease, giving no quarter. In 14 years of cancer treatment at UCLA, Jon volunteered for experimental chemotherapy four times, underwent five major chest surgeries, two targeted radiation kills and over 70 cryo-ablation treatments. He took great enjoyment in playing jokes on his UCLA teams of care providers, once donning giant green rubber Hulk hands while describing his "side effects" of the treatments to staff.

Jon leaves his devoted wife of 24 years, Kathryn Peterson of Bishop, California; mother, Betty Peterson of Lindsborg, Kansas; sister, Christine (Lex) Shwaiko of Stockton Springs, Maine; brother, Tom (Naomi) Peterson of Emporia, Kansas; brother, Jim Peterson of Hartford, Kansas; sister, Kathy Peterson of Lindsborg, Kansas and brother, Bill (Sandy) Peterson of Pleasanton, Kansas; nephews and nieces, Ander, Adrian, Emily, Ingrid, Alan, Carl, Hannah and Marten; uncle, Robert (Janita) Peterson of Kansas City, Missouri; cousins, Britt (Leslie) Elving of Wichita, Kansas, Erik (Bev) Elving of Kansas City, Missouri, Kent (Heek) Peterson of Kansas City, Missouri and Keith Peterson of Los Angeles, California.

A celebration of life and potluck will be held at 3 p.m. on September 29th at Bishop Elk Park, 3301 W. Line Street in Bishop, California. Please contact Jon's wife Kathy at CelebrateJonsLife@gmail.com for more information.

Source: Kathy Peterson via member Nancy Wizner

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

Trump's Power To Fire Federal Workers Curtailed By Court – “A federal district judge in Washington struck down most of the key provisions of three executive orders that President Trump signed in late May that would have made it easier to fire federal employees,” reports the *New York Times*. “The ruling, issued early [last] Saturday, is a blow to Republican efforts to rein in public-sector labor unions, which states like Wisconsin have aggressively curtailed in recent years. In June, the Supreme Court dealt public-sector unions a major blow by ending mandatory union fees for government workers nationwide... The executive orders, which also rolled back the power of the unions that represent federal workers, had instructed agencies to seek to reduce the amount of time in which underperforming employees are allowed to demonstrate improvement before facing termination, from a maximum of up to 120 days to a maximum of 30 days, and to seek to limit workers' avenues for appealing performance evaluations. The orders also sought to significantly reduce the amount of so-called official time that federal employees in union positions can spend on union business during work hours.” Source: [New York Times](#).

Zinke Blames 'Environmental Terrorists' For Severity Of California Fires – *Washington Post* writer Erin Logan poses this question about wildfire severity in California: “[Who] is to blame for [California's] increasingly destructive wildfires?” She then provides the secretary's answer. “According to Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke, it's 'environmental terrorist groups.'” During a radio interview with Breitbart News, Zinke said that 'environmental terrorist groups' are preventing the government from managing forests and are largely responsible for the severity of the fires. But fire scientists and forestry experts have said climate change is the main factor behind the problem.” The article provides additional details on Zinke's insights into fire management. Source: [Washington Post](#).

National Park System

Stories and articles pertaining to the parks, regions, technical and training centers, and WASO.

A Century Of National Park Service Maps – The National Geographic Society's webpage has an article entitled “See A Century Of National Park Maps From Our Archives.” The article includes several of the 100 park maps that the National Geographic magazine has published since 1912. Source: [National Geographic Society](#).

Tuning In To The National Parks – In celebration of the Park Service's 102nd birthday, the NPS has created a webpage that contains PARKTRACKS, “an innovative audio experience to help counter the

hustle and bustle of city life, and tap into the trends of tranquility and mindfulness.” PARKTRACKS, says the site, “will virtually transport you to national parks across the country with sounds captured by the National Park Service’s Natural Sounds and Night Skies Division.” The soundtrack is about 12 minutes long. Source: [National Park Service](#).

Parks, Wildlife and Selfies – On August 20th, *USA Today* ran a piece about park visitors getting too close to wildlife, often to take selfies: “People are getting too close and personal with wildlife, putting at risk not only their own lives but those of park creatures... As both the number of visitors to national parks and wildlife populations have increased in recent decades, humans and animals too often find themselves in close proximity, causing headaches for park officials eager to keep the wild in wildlife.” The author talks about the associated problems and how they’ve affected management of a number of parks. Source: [USA Today](#).

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

- *Black Canyon of the Gunnison NP* – A ceremony was held on August 24th recognizing the addition of 2,494 acres to the park. Senator Cory Gardner called the acreage a “strategic addition” in that it provides more public access for recreational opportunities like fly fishing, hiking, camping and taking in wildlife. He also pointed out the importance of protecting the aesthetic of the public land. Source: [Montrose Press](#).
- *Yosemite NP* – This issue of *Outside* has an article entitled “Yosemite Finally Reckons with Its Discriminatory Past.” It concerns relations between the park and the descendants of the native people who once lived within its boundaries. In June, the park signed a 30-year agreement that will allow the local American Indian Council of Mariposa County to build and use a wauhoga, the Miwuk word for village. A roundhouse is scheduled to be completed in 2019, and multiple umachas—lodges sheathed in cedar bark—will be built as well. The buildings will be constructed using traditional methods and materials and will serve as a focal point for Native American cultural and religious ceremonies. Writes the author: “Though nobody will live in the wauhoga, the agreement is nonetheless a watershed moment in the park’s relationship with local Native Americans, who have long sought to reestablish their cultural and subsistence connection with the park.” Source: [Outside](#).
- *Yellowstone NP* – A new [vital signs report](#) has been issued for the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem. It focuses on 35 key vital signs ranging from snowpack and rivers (water) to forests, fire, wildlife and aquatic species such as fish. Although the region’s wildlife are faring well at present, climate change and human development in the region “loom ominously.” Source: [Mountain Journal](#).
- *Olympic NP* – Visitor access will be limited at Hurricane Hill from September 5th to September 27th while the first of hundreds of mountain goats are rounded up and relocated to national forest land in the North Cascades mountains. They will be captured with darts or net guns depending on the terrain and helicoptered by sling to the staging area before being transported in crates via refrigerated trucks to non-wilderness sites in the North Cascades for their release the following day. Those that are not captured and moved are to be killed, perhaps beginning as early as 2019. Source: [Peninsula Daily News](#).
- *Lyndon B. Johnson NHP* – The park will be closing the “Texas White House” – the ranch home of President Johnson – until further notice because of health and safety concerns arising from water leakage in various places in the main house. They will remain closed until the service can confirm that the two buildings do not pose safety concerns. Source: [Austin360.com](#).
- *Point Reyes NS* – On August 6th, the Point Reyes Lighthouse was closed to visitors for a \$5 million face-lift that has been two decades in the planning. It will be closed for two months. Repairs will be made to the lighthouse and its Fresnel lens and the site will be made accessible to all visitors. Source: [San Francisco Chronicle](#).

- *Grand Canyon NP* – The park has canceled a contract proposal to run commercial river trips in the Grand Canyon after backlash over higher franchise fees. The NPS announced earlier this year that it was soliciting bids for up to 16 commercial contracts for a 10-year period. The proposal raised the minimum franchise fee between 4 percent and 18 percent to between 5 percent and 22.5 percent, based on gross receipts. The contract proposal was canceled the week before last. The park said it would put it up for bid again next year after analyzing feedback. The current contracts have been extended until the end of 2019. Source: [Arizona Daily Sun](#).

Public Comments Solicited – A listing of some (but not all) of the planned actions in parks open to public comment on the NPS Planning, Environment and Public Comment (PEPC) [webpage](#), arranged in chronological order by their closing dates. **New entries are in red:**

- *Zion NP: South Entrance Fee Station Reconfiguration* – The park is developing an environmental assessment to consider alternatives to redesign the South Entrance Fee Station and adjacent roadway to decrease park entry wait times for vehicular traffic, reduce localized vehicle congestion, improve employee safety, develop a renewable energy source to sustain park operations, and replace faulty culverts to improve roadway conditions during weather events. Closes: **September 3rd**. [PEPC link](#).
- *National Park Service: Potential Monument Designations* – The Service is seeking public comments on three potential national monument designations: the Medgar and Myrlie Evers Home, Jackson, Mississippi; Mill Springs Battlefield, Nancy, Kentucky; and Camp Nelson, Nicholasville, Kentucky. Closes: **September 10th**. [PEPC link](#).
- *Gulf Islands NS: Personal Watercraft Use Management Plan* – The park’s draft EIS on PWC management is now open for comment. Closes: **September 17th**. [PEPC link](#).

Editorial Opinions – Links to editorials and op-ed commentary on issues pertaining either directly or indirectly to the National Park Service.

- “[She’s Lethal, Graceful, Priceless. Don’t Underestimate Mount Rainier](#),” Matt Misterek, *News Tribune*. Misterek, the paper’s editorial page editor, writes about both the “priceless value” of Mount Rainier and the need to take care when hiking there and about the need to fund our extraordinary national parks. Regarding the latter, he asks this rhetorical question: “How much are we personally willing to pay for outdoor experiences that are transcendent but perhaps discretionary?” His answer: “In this election year, it’s up to voters to press for action. Elected leaders should listen to the late, great conservationist John Muir, and understand that investing in our priceless national parks isn’t so discretionary after all.”
- “[Alaska Should Support Existing National Park Wildlife Regulations](#),” Tony Knowles, *Anchorage Daily News*. Knowles, who served two terms as Alaska’s governor and two terms as Anchorage’s mayor, weighs in on the proposed changes in NPS wildlife management regs in Alaska: “The current proposal by the Trump administration, in collaboration with the Walker administration, to permit unethical and unscientific predator control practices on National Park Service lands in Alaska is contrary to Alaska’s interests and should be abandoned.” His editorial explains why.

Climate and The Environment

Stories and articles pertaining to climate and environmental changes and their implications – direct or indirect – on national parks.

Phoenix Prepares For Extreme Heat – Climate change is driving up average temperatures in Phoenix each summer, making the heat deadly for residents. More than 155 people died from heat-related causes in the Phoenix area last year, a new record in a place where the number of such deaths has

been on the rise. Nighttime low temperatures have gone up an average 9 degrees in recent decades, making it harder for people to cool off especially if they don't have reliable access to cool places or air conditioning. In response, the city has launched an overhaul of how it prepares for and deals with extreme heat, including development of a preparedness plan for extreme heat. An important component of the plan will be creating an extreme heat alert system to let people know when it's risky to be outside because most heat-related deaths throughout Phoenix are outdoors, with trails and desert areas being among the most common locations. Source: [Our Daily Planet](#).

Europe's Summer Signals Long-Term Climate Changes – Although a long ways from NPS jurisdictions, Europe this summer – particularly northern Europe – has been experiencing extreme climate changes that are clear indicators of the future for those of us in the northern hemisphere. “[In Europe’s] northernmost latitudes, where the climate is warming faster than the global average,” reports the *New York Times*, “temperatures have been the most extreme, according to a study by researchers at Oxford University and the [World Weather Attribution](#) network... The preliminary results of the Oxford study found that, in some places, climate change more than doubled the likelihood of this summer’s European heat wave.” The full article details the wide range of impacts that the heat wave have had on the Europe. Source: [New York Times](#).

Climate Change ‘Supercharging’ Hot Summer – An article in the *Washington Post* ratified much of what was said in the above-noted *Times* article, but looks at this summer’s impacts worldwide and explains how changes in the jet stream are causing many of the related problems. “Climate models for three decades have predicted exactly what the world is seeing this summer,” write the authors. “And they predict that it will get hotter — and that what is a record today could someday be the norm.” The temperature changes are also causing an increase in extreme weather – heavier downpours, stronger hurricanes, longer droughts. As for the USA: “Average temperature is rising rapidly across the United States. Heat waves are becoming more extreme and will continue to do so. Overall precipitation has decreased in the South and West and increased in the North and East. That trend will continue. The heaviest precipitation events will become more frequent and more extreme. Snowpack will continue to decline. Large wildfires will become even more frequent.” The story includes reports of extreme weather and temperatures from around the world, including some breathtaking high temperatures. Source: [Washington Post](#).

From The Archives

This section contains incidents taken from *Morning Report* issues published during the corresponding week (approximately) 25 years ago in 1993. All entries appear in the original verb tense.

- *Blue Ridge Parkway* – On August 15th, a 33-year-old wrecker operator was in the process of removing a vehicle from a steep embankment near the parkway when he collapsed and went into a seizure. Ranger Paula Wells, a certified cardiac technician, was handling the investigation; following a medical assessment of the situation, Wells attempted to start an IV on the wrecker driver. The effort failed when the operator went into severe convulsions and pulled the IV from his arm. It eventually took seven people to hold the patient down so Wells could continue her work and restart the IV. The situation became more grave when all vital signs were lost and could not be monitored even with the equipment that arrived on the responding ambulance. Wells continued her work on the patient, though, and was rewarded with a response a few minutes later. She continued to maintain the patient until he was stabilized enough for transport. The wrecker operator was conscious when he was admitted to Lynchburg General Hospital, and was in stable condition at the time of the report.
- *Olympic National Park* – Ranger Matt Spelsberg received a report of a visitor in anaphylactic shock from a bee sting about a half mile up the Rapid Stoop trail in the park's Staircase area on August 15th. He found a 29-year-old California man semi-conscious and breathing shallowly. Spelsberg administered epinephrine, benadryl and oxygen until an ambulance arrived. Paramedics transported him to a local hospital. The victim had never experienced such a reaction to a bee sting and was not prepared for the reaction he experienced. Doctors

said that he would likely have died if Spelsberg had not administered medication in such a timely manner.

- *New River Gorge National River* – Around 12:30 a.m. on August 22nd, rangers responded to a report of a structural fire in the town of Thurmond and found that the historical railroad repair building was fully involved and threatening other historical structures nearby. Due to the limited amounts of water available, structural engines from Oak Hill concentrated on saving the threatened historical structures while the engine house burned to the ground. The railroad repair building was under lease to the NPS from the CSX Corporation. Acquisition was pending. The building was considered a key to the historical interpretation of the town and was one of the planned center pieces in the NPS development of Thurmond. Since there were no utilities connected to the building, the fire is being treated as arson and an investigation is underway.

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- Production: Steve Pittleman
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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

"The ultimate purposes for which parks are managed have spiritual overtones. To some degree, each of the bountiful elements of the parks - plant or tree or bird, historic building or artifact, seashell or pot shard - helps a person to find his place in the universe. The function of a national park might be considered as contributing insight into those sovereign questions that human knowledge derived from practical experience finds so difficult to answer: Who are we, where are we, and why?"

[William C. Everhart](#), *The National Park Service*, 1972

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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.

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