



The Coalition Weekly Report Wednesday, March 13, 2019

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Incidents

Hot Springs NP Investigation Underway Into Shooting

Rangers and special agents are investigating a shooting that took place in the park on the evening of Thursday, February 21st.

Park dispatch received a call at that time advising that a man had been shot at the West Mountain overlook. Rangers and Hot Springs Police Department officers responded, found the man, and provided initial care. He was taken to a local hospital, where he was last reported to be in stable condition.

West Mountain Summit and all trails on West Mountain were temporarily closed to the public, but have since reopened.

Source: [National Park Service](#);

National Park System Follow-ups On Previously Reported Incidents

Below are short follow-ups on incidents previously reported in this newsletter:

- *Rocky Mountain NP* – There have been no recent reports on the status of the search for 70-year-old James Pruitt, which began on March 3rd. Pruitt arrived in the area on February 22nd and has not been heard from since February 28th.
- *Zion NP* – The Zion-Mount Carmel Highway, which was closed on March 2nd after heavy rains undercut a section of the road, reopened last Friday morning, albeit with limited hours and only for non-oversized vehicles. The Zion-Mount Carmel Highway is still closed from the tunnel to Canyon Junction. No through traffic will be allowed until temporary repairs are in place. The park is currently working with Federal Highways on repairs to the road; it's not yet known when it will reopen. Some canyoneering routes – Keyhole, Canyon Overlook, Pine Creek, Spry, Clear Creek, Fat Man's Misery, and Lodge Canyons – will remain closed "until more reliable road access is ensured that can safely support canyoneering activities." Source: Aly Baltrus, [Zion NP](#).

Congressional Actions

Reports on legislation, upcoming hearings and new public laws of relevance to the national parks, prepared by Don Hellmann, former assistant director, legislative and Congressional affairs for the National Park Service.

New Public Laws

Nothing to report.

Senate Actions

March 5 – The Committee on Energy and Natural Resources held a hearing to examine the electricity sector in a changing climate. There were no witnesses from federal agencies at the hearing.

March 5 – The Committee on Environment and Public Works Subcommittee on Clean Air and Nuclear Safety held a hearing to examine states' role in protecting air quality, focusing on principles of cooperative federalism. There were no witnesses from federal agencies at the hearing.

March 6 – The Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs held a hearing to examine recommendations to reduce risk of waste, fraud, and mismanagement in federal programs. Witnesses were all from GAO – Gene L. Dodaro, comptroller general; Cathleen Berrick, managing director, defense capabilities and management; Nikki Clowers, managing director, health care; Elizabeth Curda, director, education, workforce, and income security; Mark Gaffigan, managing director, natural resources and environment; Nick Marinos, director, information technology and cybersecurity; and Chris Mihm, managing director, strategic issues.

March 7 – The Committee on Energy and Natural Resources held a hearing to examine the multiple values and unique issues of access and development associated with public lands in the western United States. There were no witnesses from federal agencies at the hearing.

House Actions

March 4 - The chair announced the speaker's appointment of the following members to the Select Committee on the Climate Crisis – Representatives Castor (FL, chair); Luján, Bonamici and Brownley (CA); Huffman, McEachin and Levin (CA); Casten (IL); Neguse and Graves (LA); Griffith, Palmer and Carter (GA); Miller and Armstrong.

March 7 – The Committee on Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Energy held a hearing entitled “Wasted Energy: DOE's Inaction on Efficiency Standards and Its Impact on Consumers and the Climate.” Daniel Simmons, assistant secretary, Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy, Department of Energy, testified on behalf of the federal government.

National Park Service

National Park System

NPS Visitation Topped 318 Million In 2018 – Recreational visits to the national parks exceeded 300 million in 2018 for the fourth consecutive year. The 318.2 million recreation visit total is the third highest since record keeping began in 1904. Golden Gate NRA reclaimed the top spot for highest visitation from Blue Ridge Parkway; these two parks have been trading places at one and two since 1979. In the national parks category, Great Smoky Mountains NP (11.4 million) and Grand Canyon NP (6.4 million) continued to hold the top two spots, as they have since 1990. Here are some other numbers: More than 1.4 billion recreational visitor hours were recorded; there were nearly 14 million overnight stays; 28 parks set new records for visitation (about 7% of reporting parks) and 17 parks broke records that they set in 2017; three parks had over 10 million recreation visits (Blue Ridge Parkway, Golden Gate NRA and Great Smoky Mountains NP) and another nine had over 5 million recreation visits; and 77 parks had over a million recreation visits (about 20% of reporting parks).

Source: [National Park Service](#).

Headway Made On Backlogged Maintenance Projects In FY 18 – The NPS estimates that over \$671 million in needed repair work was completed in FY 18 at national parks across the country, one of the highest amounts recorded of deferred maintenance needs retired in a single year. This leaves, at the end of FY18, more than \$11.9 billion in backlogged maintenance and repair needs for the more than 5,500 miles of paved roads, 17,000 miles of trails and 24,000 buildings in the system. Source: [National Park Service](#).

Around The Parks

Reports on activities in the parks, listed in alphabetical order.

- *Alcatraz Island* – A series of buildings and tunnels have been found under the prison yard at Alcatraz. [A study published in Near Surface Geophysics](#) details the steps archaeologists took to confirm the long-time suspicions of historians – that when the prison was built in the early 20th century, it was constructed over the Civil War-era military fortification. Archaeologists are now planning more study to discover what else lies just below the surface. Source: Katie Dowd, [SFGate.com](#).
- *Gulf Islands NS* – The park and HMS Ferries, Inc. have signed a 10 year concessions contract for the operation of Pensacola Bay Cruises. HMS will immediately begin preparing for the 2019 season. Service startup date, schedule, prices, and other details will be announced as soon as they are available. Pensacola Bay Cruises’ 150 passenger boats, named *Turtle Runner* and *Pelican Perch*, were built with funds received via a post-Deepwater Horizon oil spill settlement reached with BP. The settlement earmarked some funds specifically to compensate the public for the temporary lost use of the national seashore beaches and waters. The settlement earmarked other funds for restoration of the park’s natural resources injured by the spill. Source: Brent Everitt, [Gulf Islands NS](#).
- *Harriett Tubman NHP* – It can take a little while to get a new park going, but Harriett Tubman is now off and running with its first ranger – more than two years after the park was created. Kim Szewczyk has been hired as a permanent park ranger. She previously served as the chief of interpretation and education at Women's Rights NHP, and has assisted at the Tubman park and represented the National Park Service at events in the Auburn area for nearly two years. Source: Robert Harding, [Auburnpub.com](#).
- *San Juan NHP* – A FONSI has been approved for the EA for the American Camp temporary visitor center replacement project. Two alternatives were evaluated in the EA – the first was a “no action” alternative, the second, which was approved, authorizes the replacement of the 40 year-old “temporary” visitor center with a new facility, the relocation of the visitor center entrance road, and expansion of park operational facilities, including administrative campsites and a maintenance storage area. The FONSI and EA can be viewed [at this link](#). Source: [San Juan Islander](#).
- *Yellowstone NP* – A new documentary entitled “[Epic Yellowstone: Return of the Predators](#)” premiered last Saturday at the Smithsonian National Museum of Natural History, then aired on Sunday on the Smithsonian Channel. The film was shown at the museum as part of its 2019 Environmental Film Festival, an annual event that brings hundreds of films to the nation’s capital. The festival runs until March 24th. No word yet on when and where it will next be shown. Source: Erin Blakemore, [Washington Post](#).

Federal Government

Recent news stories, web postings, statements, and press releases pertaining to Congress (excepting official business, which appears above), the administration, DOI, and other public land management agencies that have bearing on the NPS.

Administration and Government

Administration Fills ‘The Swamp’ With Lobbyists – The most recent edition of *Sierra*, the national magazine of the Sierra Club, has an article entitled “Lobbyists Are In Charge Now.” Here’s an excerpt: “For a president who vowed to ‘drain the swamp,’ the revolving door between corporate lobbying and regulatory agencies spins full tilt. According to a March 2018 report by ProPublica, at least 187 political appointees had previously worked as federal lobbyists, many of whom regulated the same industries that they had previously represented.... The Trump administration ethics pledge shares many characteristics with previous administrations. It requires, for example, government officials to shy away from ‘particular matters involving former employers or clients’ for two years. It also requires officials to not lobby for five years after leaving government. But any administration also has the power to grant an ethics waiver to any candidate that it favors. The Trump administration initially resisted making its ethics waivers public, but when it did, it revealed that during the first four months of his presidency, the Trump administration granted five times as many ethics waivers as the Obama administration.” Our own Secretary Bernhardt said at his confirmation hearing that he would not have qualified to head Interior under the Obama administration’s lobbying rules. The Campaign Legal Center, a public watchdog group, has filed a complaint against six former lobbyists in DOI with priorities to the NRA and the Heritage Foundation, among others. Source: Jacob Shea, [Sierra](#).

Department of the Interior

DOI Pushes New Approach To Forest Management – Interior has established a timeline for increasing timber cuts and instituting other "active management" practices for federal forests. In a secretarial order (3372) issued on January 2nd, but not posted until mid-February, Secretary Zinke sets out a series of deadlines to "identify and remove" environmental hurdles for forest management projects, identify salvage logging projects and begin other measures aimed at reducing wildfire risks. “Zinke's directive came in response to Trump's executive order in December calling on the Interior and Agriculture departments to speed forest-thinning and related activities in response to wildfires,” reports *E&E News*. “USDA, which oversees national forests, doesn't plan a similar order, a spokesman said, but Zinke's directive calls for coordination with USDA. The Interior document suggests stepped-up logging in national parks, and it specifically mentions salvage logging in areas affected by wildfires, insect infestation and disease in 2017 and 2018. Salvage logging options are to be identified by March 31 in consultation with USDA, according to the order.” For additional details on the order, click on the following link. Source: Marc Heller, [E&E News](#).

House and Senate

Congressional Leaders Oppose Proposed DOI FOIA Changes – On March 5th, a bipartisan group of Congressional leaders – Senate Finance Chairman Chuck Grassley (R-IA), House Oversight Chairman Rep. Elijah Cummings (D-MD), Senate Appropriations Vice Chair Patrick Leahy (D-VT), and Sen. John Cornyn (R-TX) of the Senate Finance Committee – sent a letter to DOI saying that the department’s plan to clamp down on public records requests would undermine government transparency and potentially violate the Freedom of Information Act. The lawmakers said the proposed changes to the rules governing public records requests "needlessly encroaches" on the right of Americans to access federal documents. "Those who have followed the issue understand that exponential increases in requests and litigation have overwhelmed the department's capacity to timely process the public's FOIA requests," said a DOI spokesperson, adding that the purpose of the changes has been misunderstood: "We believe these changes will result in a more transparent, equitable, and accountable FOIA program." Source: Michael Biesecker, [Associated Press](#).

Climate and Conservation

This section covers the myriad interconnected, conservation-related threats that are transforming the national parks, their ecosystems, and the world ecosphere, often simultaneously.

National and Worldwide Issues

The Bad News – The news on climate and conservation issues these days is inevitably grim, but needs to be shared – mitigated, when and where possible, with good news, which follows. First the former:

- *Ocean Warming, Continued* – There was a double dose of bad news on the ocean warming front last week. The first came via the journal *Science*, which published a report ([available at this link](#)) that reveals that climate change caused a 4.1 percent decline in the global productivity of ocean fisheries between 1930 and 2010, with some of the largest fish-producing regions of the globe experiencing much greater losses of up to 35 percent. The second came in the form of a new study published in *Nature Climate Change* ([available at this link](#)) that shows that the number of ocean heat wave days each year increased by more than 50 percent between 1987 and 2016, as compared to the years between 1925 and 1954, and that these heat events are occurring more frequently and lasting for longer periods of time. Source: Monica Medina and Miro Korenha, [Our Daily Planet](#).
- *Changing Climate Making Flying Problematic* – Remember that scene early in the movie *The Day After Tomorrow* where Jake Gyllenhaal and his fellow students are in a plane that almost crashes due to violent climate-change-induced turbulence? That part of the otherwise scientifically questionable movie appears to be a forecast of things to come. Scientists believe that climate change will cause much more violent turbulence of the sort that broke the leg of a Turkish Airlines flight attendant this past weekend and sent 28 passengers to the hospital. Severe turbulence is expected to increase by several hundred percent in the crowded airspace over North America, Europe and the North Pacific by mid-century, when the CO2 in the atmosphere is double its pre-industrial concentration. It is expected to rise 149 percent in the busy North Atlantic flight corridor. Source: Jeff McMahon, [Forbes](#).

The Good News – Despite the continuous drumbeat of bad news on the climate and conservation fronts, some headway is being made in meeting and dealing with related issues:

- *Climate Action Gets Bipartisan Senate Support* – Senator Lisa Murkowski, a Republican from Alaska, and Joe Manchin, a Democrat from West Virginia co-authored an opinion piece for the March 8th *Washington Post* entitled “It’s Time To Act On Climate Change – Responsibly.” “There is no question that climate change is real or that human activities are driving much of it,” they write. “Congress is in the middle of a debate about the appropriate way to tackle climate change. This is often portrayed as an issue with just two sides — those who support drastic, unattainable measures to reduce greenhouse-gas emissions, and those who want to do nothing. We believe the time for sensationalism is over. And we are seeking ideas that will bring people together, rather than drive them apart.... American ingenuity has solved many of the great challenges of our time and is key to addressing climate change. If the United States is going to lead by example, we must continue to lead the world in the development of new and improved technologies. On the Energy and Natural Resources Committee, we agree it is time to act.” Source: Lisa Murkowski and Joe Manchin, [Washington Post](#).
- *Wisconsin Joins Climate Action Alliance* – Tony Evers, Wisconsin’s new governor, has announced on that the state will join the U.S. Climate Alliance, becoming the 21st state to join its ranks, and that the state will work to meet the climate change reduction targets set by the Paris Agreement. The states that have joined the alliance now represent nearly half the U.S. population and combined have economies worth over \$10 trillion. Source: Monica Medina and Miro Korenha, [Our Daily Planet](#).
- *Green New Deal Has Strong Bipartisan Support* – A [Yale University study](#) of the Green New Deal (GND) shows overwhelming support for the plan, with 81% of registered voters saying they either “strongly support” (40%) or “somewhat support” (41%) it. As expected, support is strongest among Democrats (92%), but a large majority of Republicans (64%) – including conservative Republicans (57%) – also support the policy goals in the description of GND used by researchers: A program that would generate 100% of the nation’s electricity from clean, renewable sources within the next 10 years; upgrade the nation’s energy grid, buildings, and transportation infrastructure; increase energy efficiency; invest in green technology research and development; and provide training for jobs in the new green economy. Source: Abel

Gustafson, Seth Rosenthal, Anthony Leiserowitz, Edward Maibach, John Kotcher, Matthew Ballew and Matthew Goldberg, [Yale Program On Climate Change Communication](#).

National Park System Issues

Climate Change – News pertaining to the impacts of climate change on park lands, waters, species and other assets:

- *National Park System* – The Conversation, an independent and not-for-profit global network dedicated to improving public discourse through scholarly and scientific articles, recently posted an article to its environment and energy section entitled “Human-Caused Climate Change Severely Exposes The US National Parks.” The author references a recent report ([which can be read at this link](#)) that reveals that “climate change has exposed the national parks to conditions hotter and drier than the country as a whole. This occurs because extensive parts of the parks are in extreme environments – the Arctic, high mountains, and the arid southwestern United States.” National parks are of high value because they “conserve the most intact natural places in the country, harbor endangered plants and animals and unique ecosystems, and help assure human well-being by protecting watersheds that provide drinking water to people and by storing carbon, which naturally reduces climate change. The researchers found that temperatures in national park areas increased at double the national rate from 1895 to 2010 and that precipitation decreased across a greater fraction of national park areas than across the United States as a whole. “Our research provides climate data to analyze vulnerabilities of plants, animals and ecosystems,” writes the author. “The data can also help park managers develop adaptation measures for fire management, invasive species control and other ways to protect parks in the future.” Source: Patrick Gonzalez, [The Conversation](#).
- *Colorado Mountain Parks* – Over the first days of the month, masses of snow sliding off mountains shut down ski resorts, damaged gas lines and buried cars on busy highways throughout Colorado. Along Interstate 70 avalanches moving at speeds of up to 200 mph pushed pickup trucks into the median and left the road covered with piles of compressed frozen snow as hard as concrete. The Colorado Avalanche Information Center reports that 346 avalanches were reported during the first week of March. Snow scientists say extreme avalanches are among the accelerating impacts of climate change in mountain regions. Global warming can affect avalanches in several ways – more moisture in a warmer atmosphere can fuel more extreme snowstorms, which means bigger avalanches; warmer temperatures can make snow layers collapse and slide; more rain-on-snow events also destabilize snow layers. These problems are beginning to be reported all around the world. Source: Bob Berwyn, [Inside Climate News](#).

Native Flora and Fauna – Recent news pertaining to the protection, propagation and advancement of species now or formerly native to the national parks – or removal of those that aren’t:

- *Isle Royale NP* – For the first time since 1985, researchers doing the long-running winter study of wolves and moose on Michigan’s remote Isle Royale have placed tracking collars on some of the island’s moose. Twenty of them were collared, ten at each end of the island. These “smart collars” make it possible for researchers to track animals in real-time and will provide information, among other things, on their physiological performance, energetics, foraging, migration, habitat selection, and sociality. The park’s study of the interrelationship of wolves and moose is now in its 61st year and is the longest predator-prey research project of its kind. The park is also monitoring the island’s newly introduced wolves with radio collars. Source: Tanda Gmitter, [Grand Rapids Press](#).

Wildland Fire – News pertaining to the impacts of worsening fire seasons, increasing WUI challenges, and related matters:

- *Systemwide* – Climate change has dramatically altered the wildland firefighting profession, whose members must now deal with increasingly larger, more severe and more frequent fires. It's also beginning to take a toll on the firefighters themselves. At least 115 firefighters and emergency medical service workers in the U.S. died by suicide in 2017 according to data compiled by the Firefighter Behavioral Health Alliance. “The figure, probably an undercount, is a startling one,” reports the *Los Angeles Times*, “and one that many worry portends an epidemic as ever-lengthening fire seasons, more frequent mass casualty events and increased strain on emergency personnel take their toll. The suicide rate among such workers has been estimated at 18 per 100,000 people, exceeding the rate in the general population of 13 per 100,000...” Source: Nina Agrawa, [Los Angeles Times](#).

The Coalition

Here's what's been going on with the Coalition over the past week:

- *Powerline Project Near Colonial NHP Halted* – The Coalition, in partnership with NPCA and other conservation groups, entered legal objections to an Army Corps of Engineers project that would have erected nearly 300-foot-high towers over the James River within sight of Historic Jamestowne and the park. A federal appellate court, holding that the Corps should have prepared an EIS for the project, ordered the permit for the powerlines to be withdrawn. [Click on this link](#) for more information on the court's decision; [click on this link](#) for background on the Coalition's actions.
- *Protecting Oxon Cove Park* – The Coalition has sent a letter to the chair of the House Committee on Appropriations' Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and Relations Agencies urging that language be included in the FY 20 appropriations bill that would prohibit the Department of the Interior from using any funds to sell, exchange, lease, or transfer Oxon Cove Park in Prince William County, Maryland. The governor of Maryland is interested in an exchange of land with the NPS in order to use Oxon Cove for developmental purposes. “We ask the subcommittee to allow the people who live near Oxon Cove Park, as well as the hundreds of school children and others who come from nearby communities, to be able to continue to enjoy Oxon Cove Park,” said Coalition chair Phil Francis. [Click on this link](#) to see the letter.
- *NEPA Analysis Sought For Planned Pipeline* – The Coalition has weighed in on the proposal to run a pipeline across Blue Ridge Parkway and the Appalachian Trail, asking that the NPS “immediately undertake the preparation of an EIS to thoroughly examine the alternatives to, and impacts of, the pipeline on national park lands and resources,” adding that “the potentially devastating impacts that the pipeline will have on the parkway and the ANST cannot be brushed aside.” [Click on this link](#) to read the letter.

Source: Emily Thompson, Communications and Advocacy Coordinator.

Park People

Recent NPS Management Changes – Here's a listing of recent personnel changes in the NPS. Click on the links following the brief summaries for additional details:

- *Devils Tower NM* – Amnesty Kochanowski will become the park's superintendent on March 17th. She's been acting in that capacity there since last summer. From 2011 until 2018, she served as the safety, health, and wellness manager for Cedar Breaks NM, Pipe Spring NM, and Zion NP. Source: Vanessa Lacayo, [Devils Tower NM](#).
- *New Bedford Whaling NHP* – Jennifer Smith is the park's new superintendent. She's been acting superintendent there since April of 2018. Smith started with the National Park Service as a volunteer at the park in January 1998 and later became the park's first seasonal ranger. She has also served as the park's chief of visitor services, interpretation and education, as the site manager at Roger Williams NM, and as the deputy superintendent of a three-park group

that included Blackstone River Valley NHP, New Bedford Whaling NHP, and Roger Williams NM. Source: John Harlan Warren, [New Bedford Whaling NHP](#).

- *Selma to Montgomery NHT* – Barbara Tagger, the park’s acting superintendent, is heading to Birmingham, Alabama, to work with the Birmingham Civil Rights National Monument, which includes the Birmingham Civil Rights Institute, 16th Street Baptist Church, and the A.G. Gaston Motel. She will be continuing her efforts to help the nation learn about Alabama’s place in the civil rights movement in her new position. Source: Shauna Stuart, [Birmingham News](#).
- *Point Reyes NS* – John Dell’Osso, the park’s chief interpreter, is set to retire after serving 36 years at the 57-year-old park. Dell’Osso began working for the park as a volunteer, which he continued for two summers while he was attending U.C. Davis. While he held other positions for a few years, education and interpretation made up the bulk of his career at Point Reyes. Outside of the park, he has served on the Cotati City Council for 13 years and is currently its mayor. After retirement, he plans to do a lot more fishing and bird watching. Source: Will Houston, [Marin Independent Journal](#).

From The Archives

This section contains incidents taken from *Morning Report* issues published during the corresponding week (approximately) 25 years ago in 1994. All entries appear in the original verb tense; “submitters” are those people who originally submitted the incident report.

- *Everglades NP* – At 1 p.m. on February 18th, a 60-year-old Homestead man drove to the park's main entrance, intentionally struck the car in front of him, then drove off the road, around a line of waiting cars and into the park. Rangers attempted to stop him, pursuing him at speeds between 10 and 90 mph. Several minutes into the pursuit, during which he threw empty beer cans out of the car’s window, he finally stopped. As the rangers got out of their vehicles to contact him, though, he shifted into reverse, backed into a patrol car, then sped south, swerving at oncoming traffic and forcing vehicles to pull off onto the road shoulder. Because of these life-threatening actions, the decision was made to force him off the road. After several attempts, a ranger was able to succeed in this effort. The man was forcibly removed from his car. He struggled with rangers, refusing to comply with their commands, and was only brought under control through several sprays of OC-10. The state's Baker Act was used to place him under 72-hour psychiatric detention in Jackson Memorial Hospital in Miami. Rangers learned that he was a psychiatric outpatient at a local clinic with a history of disorders dating back to the 1960s. He had been arrested on a similar offense in Pompano Beach on February 14th, and spent 13 months in the Broward county jail for felony assault and battery before being released. On February 17th, he was arrested by Homestead police for throwing rocks at traffic on U.S. Highway 1. Family members said that he was a diabetic and was taking lithium, a psychiatric drug, three times a day. At the time of the incident, he had been drinking heavily and had not received his lithium for about 16 hours. On the evening of February 22nd, he was released from Jackson Memorial and his family was notified. Before they could arrive, however, he left the hospital, walked onto the Palmetto Expressway, and was struck and killed by a passing car. Submitted by Law Enforcement Specialist Phil Selleck.
- *Grand Canyon NP* – On the afternoon of February 24th, visitors reported that a 50-year-old German visitor had slipped on ice on the New Hance Trail while descending into Red Canyon, had fallen an unknown distance, and had suffered injury serious enough to cause fluid to drain from her ears. Due to snow cover and the hazardous terrain, rangers who responded in the park helicopter were unable to land at the site. A helicopter short haul rescue was deemed appropriate, but the only park pilot currently qualified for such missions was out of the park. Two rangers, one of them a paramedic, instead hiked to the scene on foot, which took about 75 minutes. Fortunately, park personnel had recently been assisting Arizona Department of Public Safety Air Rescue with short haul rescue training. Although fully trained, the DPS team had not yet received authorization from their agency to conduct rescues. Because of the gravity of the situation, though, the agency approved the mission, and Ranger 36, the DPS

helicopter, was dispatched to the park. Two ranger/paramedics were transported to the scene and prepared the woman for evacuation. Shortly after sunset, Ranger 36 extracted the woman and a ranger/paramedic on a 50-foot short haul line and brought them to a helispot on the canyon rim. She was then transferred to the helicopter and flown to Flagstaff Medical Center for treatment. Physicians determined that she'd suffered a concussion and an avulsion to her forehead; they expect to release her following treatment and observation. Submitted by Chief Ranger Ken Phillips.

- *Gulf Islands NS* – Sometime during the night of March 1st, four coal barges broke free from their tow during rough weather on the inter-coastal waterway north of Perdido Key and Santa Rosa Island. The barges were drawn out into the Gulf by currents through Pensacola Pass, then separated – two went east and two went west, and all four eventually sank or went aground off-shore near either Fort Pickens or Perdido Key. Two broke up. On March 4th, small amounts of coal began appearing on shore at both locations. On March 6th, about three miles of beach at Perdido Key was covered with coal at the high tide line, with pieces ranging in size from small flakes to baseball-sized chunks. Storms and rough weather are predicted for the coming week, and more coal will likely wash ashore. Contact has been made with Warrior Gulf, owners of the four barges, about salvage of the barges and cleanup of the beach. It's estimated that it will take about a week to complete the initial cleanup. Submitted by Chief Ranger Gene Phillips.

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- Production: Steve Pittleman
- Regular Correspondents: Don Hellmann, Dennis Burnett, Rick Smith, Emily Thompson, and Duncan Morrow
- Issue Contributors: Tony Sisto, Mike Murray, Bob Martin, Mark Forbes

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

"[Over time], I became aware of a rare attitude in [park] visitors. These were *their* parks, a part of their heritage, and they felt fiercely protective of them. I found that to harm or threaten a national park is to touch a sensitive nerve in the American public. Many visitors as well as park employees seemed to live by a set of values rarely seen elsewhere, and that they themselves might not live by outside the park. They appreciated the natural beauty around them - the land, the plants, the birds, the animals. And what's more, they showed a regard for other peoples chance to share the park experience. They seemed to feel they were part of a whole natural system, and most of them behaved as if they did not want to leave that system any worse than they found it, so that others and even future generations could enjoy and share it."

Robert Cahn, *National Parks in Crisis*, 1980

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The *Coalition Weekly 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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