



The Coalition Weekly Report Wednesday, March 20, 2019

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Incidents

Canyonlands NP Searchers Find Body Of Missing Hiker

Searchers found the body of a missing 33-year-old man last Friday following an intensive three-day effort.

Jonathan Hogue, a graduate teaching assistant at the University of Iowa, was an avid hiker who was known for taking long hikes, frequently off trail, during his visits to state and national parks. He was reported missing on March 12th and efforts began to find him. His car was found parked near the Green River Overlook in the Island in the Sky District. His body was found at the base of the overlook, about 500 feet below where his car was parked. Investigators believe he fell to his death.

Hogue was a doctoral student who liked to draw and paint and whose dream was to become a park ranger.

Source: Paighthen Harkins, [Salt Lake Tribune](#).

Sequoia-Kings Canyon NPs Major Interagency Search For Missing Marine Suspended

A massive multiagency search in the park and Sierra Nevada Mountains to locate missing Marine Corps Lt. Matthew Kraft, 24, underway for more than a week, has transitioned to “limited continuous search” status.

Kraft set out on a solo skiing and hiking trip on February 24th with the objective of completing the 195-mile Sierra High Route by March 4th or 5th. On March 4th, his father contacted Mono County Sheriff after not hearing from his son. Cell phone information showed that he’d last been online in the Independence area in Inyo County. The county SAR team began a search for him on March 5th.

Backcountry snow instability and weather issues, including high winds, presented a significant challenge to search crews. Both aerial and ground searchers identified avalanche activity, cornices, and snow bridges throughout the wilderness, including along the Sierra High Route. The search zone was larger than the state of Rhode Island and consisted of the 195-mile Sierra High Route and numerous possible exit points. Searchers have to date found no trace of him.

Agencies assisting in this operation included Sequoia-Kings Canyon and Yosemite SAR teams, the Marine Corps, officers and search teams from Mono, Inyo, Madera, Fresno, Los Angeles and Tulare Counties, the California Highway Patrol, the Air National Guard, the Sierra Madre Search and Rescue

Team, the Bay Area Mountain Rescue Unit, China Lake Naval Weapons Base, and the California Office of Emergency Services.

Source: [InciWeb](#).

Yosemite NP Late Openings Likely Due To Winter Storm Damage

The park has announced that there will be late seasonal openings for facilities throughout the park due to the exceptionally heavy snowpack and the extensive damage to many park facilities caused by winter storms.

The park received above-average snowfall this past winter. The March 1st snow survey showed that both the Merced and Tuolumne River drainages recorded total snow amounts at 143 percent of normal (the final snow survey of the year will be conducted on April 1st). Several significant storm systems in January and February produced high amounts of snow, which resulted in temporary road closures, rock and debris slides, and falling trees.

These storms also caused extensive damage to facilities throughout the park. Damage to facilities includes trees falling on and damaging campground restrooms, compromised utilities systems, damaged or destroyed tent cabins, and falling trees impacting campsites, parking areas, hiking trails, and roads.

Although the park will begin plowing the Glacier Point and Tioga Roads in April, neither road will likely be open before Memorial Day. Deep snow along Tioga Road portends a late opening.

Several facilities operated by Yosemite Hospitality, the park's primary concessioner, are also expected to open later than usual.

Source: [Yosemite NP](#).

Lake Mead NRA Two Men Sentenced For Assault In Road Rage Incident

Two men have been sentenced to prison for their involvement in a road rage incident that occurred in the park in January, 2018. Cameron Thomas, 27, and Schyler Thomas, 23, pleaded guilty at previous court hearings to charges related to the incident.

The incident began with an altercation with other park visitors. When those visitors left the area, the two men chased them in their vehicle. Cameron Thomas opened fire on the other visitors' vehicle with a handgun, striking it once; the round passed through the rear window and passenger side headrest and tore the jacket of the person sitting in the passenger seat.

Cameron Thomas was sentenced to serve 70 months in prison and pay \$1,300 in restitution for assault with intent to inflict serious bodily harm and possession of a firearm during the commission of a crime of violence. He also agreed to forfeit the .45 caliber Glock that was used in the commission of this crime. Once released from prison, he will be on supervised release for four years, including GPS monitoring for the first year. While on supervised release, he must complete 2,000 hours of community service. Some conditions of his sentence may change if he earns his GED and HVAC technician certificate during the first year of incarceration.

Schyler Thomas was sentenced on a simple assault charge at a previous court hearing to time served (approximately 3.5 months) followed by one year of supervised release, during which he is required to get his GED and a full-time job.

Source: [NPS Investigative Services Branch](#).

Joshua Tree NP

Remains Of Missing Man Found

An interagency search effort for a missing San Diego man came to a conclusion on March 1st when his remains were found in the Pine City area of the park.

Marty Kenny, 43, was last heard from around midday on February 26th. Friends located his vehicle in the Pine City backcountry board parking lot and notified rangers on Thursday, February 28th.

A search was immediately begun and his campsite and personal items were found. His body was located the next day.

Participating in the operation were the park SAR team, Riverside County Sheriff's Department, Riverside County Search and Rescue and San Bernardino County Sheriff's Department. An investigation into the cause of death is being handled by the San Bernardino County Sheriff's Department.

Source: George Land, [Joshua Tree NP](#).

National Park System Follow-ups On Previously Reported Incidents

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

- *Rocky Mountain NP* – The search for 70-year-old James Pruitt, which began on March 3rd, has been suspended. Significant snowfall in mountainous terrain added to the challenge of search efforts, making finding clues to Pruitt's whereabouts even more difficult. The overall search area encompassed approximately 15 square miles and included the Glacier Gorge drainage, the Loch Vale drainage and the Glacier Creek drainage. Rangers will continue to patrol the search area and further actions may be considered as conditions improve. Reported clues will be investigated as appropriate. Source: Kyle Patterson, [Rocky Mountain 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

March 12 – The president signed into law S. 47, to provide for the management of the natural resources of the United States. (Public Law 116–9). This bill is the renamed “John D. Dingell, Jr. Conservation, Management, and Recreation Act”, which includes several provisions that impact the National Park Service. See the [February 20th Coalition Weekly Report](#) for full details on its provisions.

Senate Actions

March 11 – The nomination of David Bernhardt, of Virginia, to be Secretary of the Interior was transmitted to the Senate.

March 11 – The president transmitted to Congress his budget proposal for the United States government for fiscal year 2020.

March 12 – The Senate passed S. Res. 91, designating March 3, 2019, as “World Wildlife Day”.

March 13 – The Committee on the Budget held a hearing to examine the president's proposed budget request for fiscal year 2020. Testifying was Russell Vought, acting director, Office of Management and Budget.

March 13 – The Committee on Environment and Public Works held a hearing to examine an original bill entitled, “Diesel Emissions Reduction Act of 2019.” There were no witnesses from federal agencies at the hearing.

March 14 – The Senate agreed to S. Res. 114, expressing support for the designation of March 21, 2019, as “National Rosie the Riveter Day”.

March 14 – The Committee on Energy and Natural Resources held a hearing to examine opportunities to improve access, infrastructure, and permitting for outdoor recreation. There were no witnesses from federal agencies at the hearing.

House Actions

March 11 – The president transmitted to Congress his budget proposal for the United States government for fiscal year 2020.

March 12 – The House passed:

- H.R. 1582, to amend title 44, United States Code, to require preservation of certain electronic records by Federal agencies, to require a certification and reports relating to Presidential records.
- H.R. 1608, to amend the Federal Advisory Committee Act to increase the transparency of Federal advisory committees.
- H.R. 1654, to amend title 44, United States Code, to modernize the *Federal Register* by replacing requirements that the documents be printed with requirements that the documents be published. The bill passed by a vote of 426 yeas to 1 nay.

March 12 – The Committee on the Budget held a hearing to examine the president's proposed budget request for fiscal year 2020. Testifying was Russell Vought, acting director, Office of Management and Budget.

March 12 – The Committee on Natural Resources Subcommittee on Water, Oceans, and Wildlife held a hearing entitled “WOW 101: The State of Wildlife.” There were no witnesses from federal agencies at the hearing.

March 13 – The Committee on Natural Resources held a hearing entitled “Forgotten Voices: The Inadequate Review and Improper Alteration of Our National Monuments.” Edwin Roberson, Utah state director for the Bureau of Land Management, was the witness for the department.

March 13 – The Committee on Oversight and Reform held a hearing entitled “FOIA: Examining Transparency Under the Trump Administration.” Testimony was heard from Melanie Ann Pustay, director of the Office of Information Policy, Department of Justice; Rachel Spector, acting deputy chief Freedom of Information Act officer, Department of the Interior; and Tim Epp, acting director, National Freedom of Information Act Office, Environmental Protection Agency.

March 13 – The Committee on Oversight and Reform Subcommittee on Civil Rights and Civil Liberties and the Subcommittee on Government Operations held a joint hearing on H.R. 1076, the “Fair Chance to Compete for Jobs Act,” which would prohibit federal agencies and federal contractors from requesting that an applicant for employment disclose criminal history record information before the applicant has received a conditional offer. There were no witnesses from federal agencies at this hearing.

National Park Service

National Park System

Administration's Proposed FY 2020 Budget Jeopardizes Parks – On March 11th, the National Parks Conservation Association issued a statement regarding the president's proposed FY 2020 budget, which it says "would jeopardize the protection, maintenance and operation" of NPS areas nationwide. "The budget calls for a total cut of \$481 million to the National Park Service budget, including a \$77 million cut to the Park Service's already inadequate operating budget," says NPCA. "This would result in the loss of hundreds of park staff and dig our parks into an even bigger financial hole as they face nearly \$12 billion in needed repairs. The budget also includes deep cuts to historic preservation and interpretation." NPCA's statement also criticizes shortfalls in EPA's budget. See their press release at the link below for details on where the cuts would fall. *Outside* magazine's take on the proposed budget was even more pointed; the story's headline read "Trump's Proposed Budget Would Devastate National Parks." Says the author: "Despite rhetoric about allocating more money for fire suppression and to address the National Park Service's overwhelming maintenance backlog, the reality is that, if this proposal were to move forward, there would be less cash to go around for virtually every line item that isn't directly related to oil and gas extraction," writes the author, but continues with this important caveat: "The good news? The President doesn't set the federal government's budget; Congress does. And, according to House Natural Resources Committee Chair Raúl Grijalva, 'This isn't worth the paper it's printed on, it's dead on arrival in Congress, and printing it was a waste of time.'" Sources: [National Parks Conservation Association](#); Wes Siler, [Outside](#).

Around The Parks

Reports on activities in the parks, listed in alphabetical order. [**NOTE:** The signing into law of the comprehensive John D. Dingell, Jr. Conservation, Management, and Recreation Act led to numerous changes in the National Park System, including new areas, new designations, boundary changes, etc. Those are alluded to in the relevant following entries as simply "the Act"].

- *Acadia NP* – With the signing of the Act into law, the 2015 expansion of the park's boundary has been validated, including 1,441 acres of donated land on the Schoodic Peninsula. A large portion of that land is now the Schoodic Woods Campground and Trails. The act also permits the harvesting of clams and worms within Acadia's intertidal zone. And it permanently reauthorizes the Acadia Advisory Commission, the citizens' panel that serves as a liaison between park officials and its neighboring communities. Source: Dick Broom, [Mount Desert Islander](#).
- *Death Valley NP* – The big rainstorms that hit the West last week didn't do any serious damage to the park, but they did leave behind something you don't often see in Death Valley – a lake that measured about ten miles long. A photographer who was in the park at the time took a series of fine photos of the lake; some of them appear on the following webpage. Source: Amy Graff, [SFGate.com](#).
- *Fort Sumter and Fort Moultrie NHP* – The Act redesignated Fort Sumter National Monument as Fort Sumter and Fort Moultrie National Historical Park. The law also established management authority and redefined the boundaries of the park so that it now includes Fort Sumter, Fort Moultrie and the Sullivan's Island Life Saving Station Historic District. On March 15th, Sen. Tim Scott, who sponsored the bill that became a title in the Act, visited the park and "opened" the new area along with the park's superintendent and the mayor of Charlestown. Source: Abbey O'Brien, [WCSC News](#).
- *Golden Spike NHP* – Under the provisions of the Act, the park's designation changes from national historic site to national historic park. The change comes on the eve of 150th anniversary celebrations of the May 10, 1869, sinking of the Golden Spike, marking the completion of the nation's transcontinental railroad system. A series of activities are planned to mark the sesquicentennial event, dubbed Spike 150 by Utah boosters. Source: Tim Vandennack, [Standard-Examiner](#).
- *Medgar and Myrlie Evers Home NM* – The Act has changed the Evers Home status from a national landmark to a national monument. The Service will now begin planning for the area's

development, including parking, access and tour sizes, restrooms and other visitor services. Medgar Evers was a World War II veteran who became the first field secretary of the Mississippi NAACP; beginning in 1954, he led voter registration drives and boycotts to push for racial equality. He was assassinated on June 12, 1963, outside the house. Myrlie Evers was national chairwoman of the NAACP from 1995 to 1998. Source: [Associated Press via NBC News](#).

- *Mill Springs NB* – The Act established Mill Springs as our newest Civil War battlefield park. The battle took place on January 19, 1862, largely on what is now commonly referred to as Zollicoffer Park, named after Confederate General Felix Zollicoffer, who died there. It was the second-largest battle to take place in Kentucky and had a significant impact on the momentum of the war. Source: Christopher Harris, [Commonwealth Journal](#).
- *Natchez Trace Parkway* – Tennessee state representatives unanimously voted in agreement last week on a resolution that declared the Natchez Trace Bridge a public health hazard due to the numerous suicides that have occurred there – 32 people as of last year. The resolution will now head to the state senate floor. If it passes in both houses, it will be sent to Congress for action. Source: [Nashville Tennessean](#).
- *National Capital Region* – NCR has published a [Long-Range Transportation Plan](#) for parks in the Greater Washington area. The 20-year plan “establishes a vision for equitable and safe access to iconic visitor experiences while protecting parks’ history, beauty and nature.” Because maintenance needs exceed available funding, the plan also outlines an investment strategy that balances competing priorities. As of 2015, there were over 1,500 NPS “transportation assets” in NCR, including roads, paved multi-use trails, bridges, tunnels, parking areas and marinas. The investment strategy developed in the plan, focuses on three main components – fund highest priority assets first, align capital and operations and maintenance investments, and invest in new assets. The plan identifies transportation funding needs totaling more than \$86 million annually, with a projected annual transportation budget for Greater Washington area national parks of \$36.5 million. Source: Jonathan Shafer, [NCRO](#).
- *Yellowstone NP* – The *Daily Mail*, a British tabloid, has published an over-the-top story about a “crazed” bison attacking “terrified tourists” riding snowmobiles in the park. It’s worth a look to see several photos of the faceoff between the bison and the snowmobilers; there’s also a video, but several attempts at running it proved unavailing. As for the prose – well, it puts our tabloids to shame. Source: [Daily Mail](#).

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.

Department of the Interior

DOI’s FY 20 Budget Request Highlights Border Enforcement – “The Trump administration on Monday called for cutting the Interior Department's funding by 14 percent, but it also highlighted the agency's increasing role in providing U.S. border security,” reported *The Hill* on March 11th. “The White House’s newly released fiscal 2020 budget request seeks a reduction in grants and funds for acquiring land, while at the same time boosting Interior's efforts to become a bigger player in securing the southern border...President Trump's budget calls for providing \$930.3 million in law enforcement funding for programs like the one started under former Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke in 2018 that rotates U.S. Park Police and National Park Service officers to the border to engage in border and drug enforcement.” The article includes additional information on the DOI request. Source: Miranda Green, [The Hill](#).

House and Senate

Florida Republicans Blast President On Insufficient Everglades Funding – Senators Rick Scott and Marco Rubio and Representatives Brian Mast and Francis Rooney – all Republicans – have strongly criticized the Trump administration for not including enough funding for Everglades restoration in its new budget proposal. They urged the president to include \$200 million in the fiscal 2020 budget for South Florida Ecosystem Restoration, but the budget only includes \$63 million for Florida wetlands, lacks funding for an Everglades reservoir that would reduce polluted water from Lake Okeechobee, and slashes Corps of Engineers spending by 31 percent. Here’s an excerpt from their letter to him: “It is incredibly short-sighted to continue to underfund a series of projects that are absolutely necessary to ensure the environmental sustainability and economic vitality of one of the most dynamic regions of our nation. Everglades restoration is critically important to the State of Florida and enjoys broad bipartisan support in Congress. Failing to meet the basic federal funding commitments to restore the Everglades is contrary to the administration’s goal of improving project partnerships and cost-sharing with states.” Source: Steve Lemongello, [Orlando Sentinel](#).

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:

- *Arctic Melting Now Locked In* – Even if the world cuts emissions in line with the Paris Agreement, winter temperatures in the Arctic will rise from 3° to 5°C by 2050 and 5° to 9°C by 2080, devastating the region and unleashing sea level rises worldwide, finds a new report by UN Environment. The report, entitled “Global Linkages – A Graphic Look At The Changing Arctic,” adds that rapidly thawing permafrost could even accelerate climate change further and derail efforts to meet the Paris Agreement’s long-term goal of limiting the rise in global temperature to 2°C. Other environmental pressures on the Arctic identified by the paper include ocean acidification and plastic pollution. Even if global emissions were to halt overnight, winter temperatures in the Arctic would still increase 4° to 5°C by 2100 compared to the late 20th century. This increase is locked into the climate system by greenhouse gases already emitted and ocean heat storage. Source: [Press Release, UN Environment](#).
- *Arctic Bog Thawing Becoming Serious Climate Threat* – The January edition of *Geophysical Research Letters* contains a report entitled “[Warming Effects of Spring Rainfall Increase Methane Emissions From Thawing Permafrost](#).” Here’s an abstract of the report, which the authors refer to refreshingly as a “plain language summary”: “Because the world is getting warmer, permanently frozen ground around the arctic, known as permafrost, is thawing. When permafrost thaws, the ground collapses and sinks. Often a wetland forms within the collapsed area. Conversion of permanently frozen landscapes to wetlands changes the exchange of greenhouse gases between the land and atmosphere, which impacts global temperatures. Wetlands release methane into the atmosphere. Methane is a potent greenhouse gas. The ability of methane to warm the Earth is 32 times stronger than that of carbon dioxide over a period of 100 years. In our study, we found that methane release from a thaw wetland in Interior Alaska was greater in rainy years when rain fell in spring. When spring rainwater entered the wetland, it rapidly warmed wetland soils. Rain has roughly the same temperature as the air, and during springtime in northern regions, the air is warmer than the ground. The microbial and plant processes that generate methane increase with temperature. Therefore, wetland soils, warmed by spring rainfall, supported more methane production and release. Northern regions are expected to receive more rainfall in the future. By warming soils and increasing methane release, this rainfall could increase near-term global warming associated with permafrost thaw.” Source: [Geophysical Research Letters](#).

- *Global Environmental Outlook Dire* – The sixth global environmental outlook prepared by UN Environment, entitled [Global Environmental Outlook 6](#), was released last Wednesday. It was prepared by 250 scientists and experts from more than 70 countries. The news, not surprisingly, is grim. Because of the dangerous combination of climate change, pollution, mass extinctions and a growing human population, say the report’s authors, damage to the planet has now become so serious that the health of the world’s peoples “will be increasingly threatened unless urgent action is taken.” According to the report, about 25 percent of all premature deaths and diseases around the world (about 9 million in 2015) are due to human-caused environmental damage and pollution. Each year, air pollution kills 7 million people worldwide and costs society about \$5 trillion. Another 1.4 million are killed because of water pollution. “This report is an outlook for humanity,” said Joyce Msuya, acting executive director of U.N. Environment. “We are at a crossroads. Do we continue on our current path, which will lead to a bleak future for humankind or do we pivot to a more sustainable development pathway? That is the choice our political leaders must make, now.” Source: Doyle Rice, [USA Today](#).

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:

- *Students Rally For Climate Change Action* – Our generation (well, parts of it) may be dithering over the cost and even the necessity for action on the worsening climate crisis, but not so those behind us – particularly those in their twenties and younger. Therein lies a cause for hope. Their concern was displayed last Friday, when students in 1,700 locations in more than 100 countries around the globe staged a massive demonstration demanding that leaders in their own countries and globally take action to address the existential threat of climate change. A reported 1.4 million students walked out of school and marched and held rallies from Tokyo to Cape Town and from Stockholm to New York to raise awareness of the climate change crisis and their increasing concern that their generation will be unduly impacted by the failure to reign in greenhouse gas emissions now before it is too late. Source: Monica Medina and Miro Korenha, [Our Daily Planet](#).

National Park System Issues

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:

- *Yellowstone NP* – A new film is out on the effort to restore Yellowstone cutthroat trout to the park. The film, called “The Return,” premiered in Jackson Hole’s Center for the Arts on March 13th. The species has been on the brink of extinction, but has been checked by the work of Dave Sweet and his daughter, Diana, a fisheries biologist. They have worked with numerous environmental groups and government agencies to save this native species, which is said to impact over 40 other species in the pristine ecosystem found in the Thorofare area of the park. Says Sweet: “A lot of people thought that it was too late. That there was nothing that could be done. I refused to accept that.” Source: [Buckrail.com](#).
- *Western Parks* – Bad news arrived for the future of Ponderosa pine and Douglas fir last week in the form of a report in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences entitled “[Wildfires And Climate Change Push Low-elevation Forests Across A Critical Climate Threshold For Tree Regeneration](#).” Here’s a summary of key points of the report taken from CNN’s story on it: “Some forests in four regions in California, Colorado, the Northern Rockies and the southwestern part of the United States have crossed ‘a critical climate threshold for post-fire tree generation,’ the study says. Climate conditions over the past 20 years have accelerated changes that would have otherwise taken decades or even centuries to play out across broad regions of the country. This is leading to the abrupt decline of trees and making these lands increasingly unsuitable for tree regeneration. Climate change is endangering our forests now, not just in some distant future.” Here’s the reason why those two species are particularly threatened: “Adult trees have better survival mechanisms to deal with poor climate conditions,

but intense wildfires are wiping out these Ponderosa pines and Douglas firs. The trees have thick bark that make them typically good at surviving surface level fires, but they can't survive the more intense fires that move through the canopy, like this region has seen. Had there not been such intense fires, these trees may have lived for centuries.” Source: Jen Christensen, [CNN](#).

Park Carrying Capacity – Management challenges pertaining to the balance between park protection and use:

- *Saguaro NP* – The park has been experiencing a surge in visitation and has been encouraging visitors to come early, or late, or to avoid weekends if possible. Records have been set for visitation in both districts. Several parking lots and pullouts along the east side loop drive have been filling daily. To reduce traffic in the parking lots, the park has also worked to make it easier for visitors to pay entrance fees ahead of their visit or from trailheads so that they do not need to come to the visitor centers to pay their fees. Source: Andy Fisher, [Saguaro NP](#).

Invasive and Exotic Species – News on exotic or invasive species that have appeared or may soon appear in NPS areas and efforts to counter them:

- *Florida Parks* – On February 21st, CNN reported that the red tide that has afflicted Florida for the past year or so has at last abated: “After 15 months of being plagued by red tide, tests of Florida waters show the organism was not detected this past week...” In a report issued on February 20th, Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission announced that “the presence of the organism was not observed in daily water samples collected from southwest Florida, northwest Florida, or along Florida's east coast....[Last August], the red tide produced 2,000 tons of dead marine life and cost businesses more than \$8 million. In the same month, Florida's then-Gov. Rick Scott issued a state of emergency for seven counties in southwestern Florida giving more state funding to local governments and research agencies.” Source: Amanda Jackson, [CNN](#).

Park People

NPS Alumni Passing Of Don Reeser

Don Reeser, 80, former superintendent of Haleakala NP, died at his home on March 9th.

Reeser led the park from 1988 until his retirement in 2005. During that time and after his retirement, he was actively engaged in conservation and community projects. Reeser was known for pioneering the work of fencing and removing goats from both Hawaii Volcanoes and Haleakala national parks, for significantly expanding the size of Haleakala, and for forging partnerships with local conservation groups.

His consistent commitment to preserving Maui's natural environment earned him the Sierra Club's Distinguished Service Award in 1997 and a place on the list of “100 Most Influential People” of Maui County's first 100 years during the Maui County Centennial Celebration in 2005.

Reeser was also a past president of the Rotary Club of Maui and of the Maui Historical Society and a board member of Ka 'Ohana O Kalaupapa, which seeks to memorialize Hansen's disease patients sent to Kalaupapa.

Reeser was known by many as “a Renaissance man.” He was a beekeeper, grew all kinds of fruit trees, raised chickens, made his own wine and played the saxophone.

Reeser was born May 25, 1938, in Albany, Oregon. He first visited Hawaii in 1960, when he stayed with a college friend on Hawaii island and worked in the pineapple fields. He later said this work, his first connection with a multicultural community, was a life-changing experience. It was during this

summer that he met his future wife, Henrietta “Bunnie” Weber, member of a Big Island kamaaina family.

Following graduation with a forestry degree from Oregon State University, he began a career that included stints at Glacier, Grand Canyon, Muir Woods and Hawaii Volcanoes, where he started work as wildlife ranger in 1968.

While at Hawaii Volcanoes, he initiated the use of fencing and complete removal of feral goat populations to restore native ecosystems. By the time he transferred to Redwood National Park in 1979, more than 15,000 goats had been eliminated, and the park’s native plants had begun to recover. During that time, he led what would become the nation’s first resources management division, which provided a model for the rest of the park system. “I don’t know anybody around who changes a whole system,” said Bryan Harry, former Hawaii Volcanoes superintendent. “He changed how we deal with an ecosystem.”

By the time Reeser was assigned as superintendent of Haleakala in 1988, fencing there was well underway, using the system established on the Big Island. Boundary fencing now totals about 48 miles, the summit is free of pigs and goats, and much of Kipahulu Valley and the Hana rainforest also are protected, allowing native plants to flourish.

Reeser took on other challenges to the park’s peace and well-being. He joined forces with others opposing an idea for a tramway from Kula to a restaurant at the summit. He participated in the effort to require an environmental impact statement on the effects on the whole island (not just on the runway area) of lengthening the Kahului Airport runway to accommodate direct international flights, which could carry invasive species. He also joined in the call for an environmental review of the Hawaii Superferry, seeing it as a possible conduit for the spread of alien pests. And he worked for the prohibition of helicopter flights over the crater, helping to create an agreement that became a model for other parks.

The park expanded greatly during Reeser’s tenure, from 28,000 acres to 34,000, filling out its Kipahulu section, adding the Kaapahu section, and obtaining a federal appropriation for the purchase of the Nuu section. During that time, park staff grew from 38 to 70 positions.

Reeser worked with community groups on these projects, ignoring boundaries to cooperate with other landowning entities and prevent the spread of invasive species. He helped establish the East Maui Watershed Partnership to pool economic, technical and human resources in a combined effort to protect the watershed.

These partnerships with government agencies, environmental groups and private landowners were particularly important in fighting alien species, such as miconia, whose rapid spread resulted in the establishment of the Maui Invasive Species Committee. Reeser helped keep the plant out of park land by funding work to stop miconia from moving closer to the pristine Kipahulu Valley.

Reeser’s survivors include his daughter, Cheryl Ku’ulei; son, Bryan; sister, Beverley Griffiths; three grandchildren and companion Diane Price. Plans are pending for a celebration of life.

In lieu of flowers, the family asks that monetary donations be made in his honor to the Friends of Haleakala National Park (http://fhnp.org/FoH/FoH_membership.php) or to Ka ‘Ohana O Kalaupapa (www.kalaupapaohana.org/support.html). Condolences may be sent to Borthwick Norman’s Mortuary, 105 Waiale Road, Wailuku 96793.

Source: Jill Engledow, [Maui News](#).

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:

- *Grand Canyon NP* – Superintendent Chris Lehnertz will be leaving the National Park Service on March 31st. She submitted her resignation to the acting director earlier this month. She had this to say in a farewell message to employees: “Twenty-nine years of federal service have been

a true gift to me, made meaningful by both the work and more importantly, the colleagues and friends who have delivered so much to the nation. Thank you for each and every day that you put into managing the resources under your care and providing visitors with a transformative experience. It is a difficult road at Grand Canyon – with challenges in recruitment and hiring, ever increasing visitation, and threats to park resources – all made more difficult in times of uncertainty. My hope for each of you is that you'll continue to grow and learn as you implement the mission of this extraordinary organization. Please know that your efforts mean so much to so many.”

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.

- *Grand Canyon NP* – On February 1st, a 33-year-old park concession employee was arrested by rangers for disorderly conduct and being under the influence of alcohol after she disrupted customers in a cafeteria by screaming and throwing dishes. The woman, who actively resisted arrest and attempted to kick the rangers, was also charged with interference with an agency function. On February 25th, another ranger investigated a report that the woman was under the influence of opiate drugs. She attempted to flee, assaulted the ranger by punching him and trying to push him down a flight of stairs, and actively resisted handcuffing. She was charged this time with assault, disorderly conduct, interfering with an agency function, and being under the influence of alcohol and drugs. She was released pending trial in both cases and continued to work as a fire/security dispatcher with the Fred Harvey Company. Around midnight on February 28th, rangers received a report that the woman, while drinking in a concession employee bar, had made specific and detailed threats to kill the rangers involved in her two previous arrests. She then began screaming profanity and assaulted a man in the bar with a pool cue. When three rangers later attempted to contact her, she fled into her dormitory room and barricaded the door with furniture. Based on witness statements, the woman's behavior and physical evidence, rangers believed that she was under the influence of both cocaine and heroin. They evacuated the surrounding dormitory rooms and spent about an hour attempting to negotiate a surrender before making a forced entry into her room and arresting her. Although she physically resisted arrest and handcuffing, neither she nor the arresting rangers were injured. A canister of oleoresin capsicum (OC) spray was found concealed under a pillow on the bed she was lying on. She was charged with assault with a dangerous weapon, disorderly conduct, interference with an agency function, and being under the influence of drugs. She is being held in the Coconino county jail pending court appearances on 11 misdemeanor and felony charges. Submitted by park dispatch.
- *Natchez Trace Parkway* – Around noon on March 5th, rangers at the Natchez ranger station received an anonymous call reporting that several thousand gallons of crude oil had been spilled into Cole Creek upstream from the parkway and that the oil was moving toward park waters. The spill, which originated at a National Gasoline Company well in the Natchez oil and gas field about 15 miles upstream from the park, apparently occurred when crude oil overflowed from two filled 220-barrel holding tanks at the well site. An illegal drain pipe through the containment dike surrounding the holding tanks allowed the oil to discharge into the headwaters of an unnamed tributary to the south fork of Cole Creek. A preliminary estimate placed the amount of oil spilled at about 200 barrels. Prompt action by Ashland Oil Company, which has no affiliation with the well involved in the spill, and American Environmental, Inc., led to the containment of most of the oil upstream from park waters. Park personnel have been working with EPA, the Coast Guard, Mississippi DEQ and other agencies in the spill response and clean-up, which should be completed by mid-week. Clean-up of about 20 miles of affected streams is currently in progress using freshwater flushing. Containment booms and vacuum trucks are operating about eight miles upstream from the park. A biological survey will be conducted to assess damage to park aquatic resource. Submitted by Chief Ranger Gordon Wissinger.

- *Dinosaur NM* – In June of 1992, NPS rangers, BLM investigators, and local law enforcement officers following up on some information provided by an informant discovered an excavated archeological site on federal land near Vernal, Utah. The married couple suspected of looting the site had been under surveillance for similar depredations in the park and elsewhere on federal lands in the area. The informant also told officers that the couple had removed a cradleboard with the mummified remains of a Fremont Indian infant from the site, and that he had seen it at their residence. On March 17th, federal agents arrested the pair for the theft, and they were subsequently indicted in federal district court for various ARPA violations. The remains, which date from around 650 A.D., were the first such found in the Uintah Basin. In 1993, the husband and wife each pled guilty to one felony ARPA violation under a plea agreement. On March 8, 1994, they were sentenced to five years' supervised probation and ten months' in-home confinement (with all their activities monitored electronically), fined \$1,100 for restitution and repatriation, and ordered to forfeit a 1989 Ford pickup. They were not required, however, to pay the \$10,000 cost of the investigation and site excavation. The judge's comments during sentencing were interesting in that the couple's defense attorney maintained that his clients should receive light sentences because there was no real victim, nor did the baby have any family ties to modern times. The judge stated that the baby was indeed a victim, that the baby had obviously had a caring family who had wrapped and buried him/her, and that the baby was exceptionally vulnerable to this type of crime. The judge also stated that he believed the testimony from Ute and Hopi witnesses who linked the Fremont culture to their nations through oral histories. Submitted by Chief Ranger Dan Moses.

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- Editor: Bill Halainen
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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

"If future generations are to remember us with gratitude rather than contempt, we must leave them more than the miracles of technology. We must leave them a glimpse of the world as it was in the beginning, not just after we got through with it."

President Lyndon B. Johnson, upon the signing the Wilderness Act in 1964

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The *Coalition Weekly Report* is a publication of [The Coalition To Protect America's National Parks](#). 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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