



The Coalition Weekly Report Wednesday, April 10, 2019

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Incidents

Death Valley NP Canyoneer Dies In Fall While Rappelling

Matthew Yaussi, 41, was rappelling down a 380-foot cliff on the evening of March 22nd when he fell to his death.

Yaussi and a companion were [canyoneering](#) in the park when the accident occurred. They had hiked about 4,000 feet up a ridge before starting their descent into Bottomless Pit Canyon, the informal name of a canyon south of Titus Canyon in the Grapevine Mountains. This canyoneering route, which requires 19 rappels down cliffs or dry waterfalls, was first descended in 2012 and is a route that's not commonly taken.

The two canyoneers planned to break the 380-foot rappel into stages by setting up an anchor on a ledge partway down. Yaussi's companion had already rappelled to the ground when Yaussi fell to his death. His companion activated an emergency locator beacon and was extracted later that night by a Navy VX-31 helicopter from China Lake.

Yaussi's body was recovered the next day by an Inyo County Sheriff's Office deputy and the crew of a California Highway Patrol H-80 helicopter.

Source: Abby Wines, [Death Valley NP](#).

Grand Canyon NP Visitor Falls To His Death At Grand Canyon West

A helicopter lifted the body of the Hong Kong man from a point a thousand feet below the rim last Thursday afternoon at Grand Canyon West, a popular tourist destination on the Hualapai Reservation outside the boundaries of the park.

The fall happened earlier Thursday when not many visitors are at Eagle Point, a remote site best known for the Skywalk, a horse-shoe shaped glass bridge that juts out from the canyon wall. The rim has some ledges and outcroppings below but no barrier between tourists and the edge.

The man, who was in his 50s, was taking photos when he stumbled and fell. Signs at Eagle Point warn tourists not to get too close to the edge.

Source: [Associated Press](#).

Noatak NP Idaho Man Indicted On Lacey Act Violations

An Idaho man – Paul Silvas, 51 – was indicted in federal court on four counts of felony Lacey Act violations on March 22nd.

According to the US Attorney's Office, Silvas violated the act by "illegally guiding, filing false state of Alaska Department of Fish and Game hunt records in order to conceal the illegal take of brown bears and to conceal illegally guided hunts, along with transporting illegally taken game across state lines."

According to the indictment, Silvas guided fellow Idahoans on a hunting trip within the park without appropriate permits. According to the law, non-resident hunters need to be guided by a licensed big game guide and have the appropriate state-issued big game tags. Silvas is not a licensed guide and his out-of-state clients did not possess the tags. The incidents occurred on three separate dates in 2013 and 2014.

The National Park Service and Alaska Wildlife Troopers conducted the investigation leading to the indictment in this case. If convicted, Silvas can be sentenced to five years in prison and a quarter-million dollar fine on each of the four counts.

Source: [Alaska Native News](#).

Glacier NP Missing Man's Body Found In Lake

A missing Arizona man's body was found by divers in Lake McDonald on Tuesday, March 26th.

The park received a report earlier that day that 48-year-old Wei Liu of Tempe, Arizona, was missing and thought to be in the park. Rangers began looking for him; they soon located his car near Lake McDonald Lodge, but found no sign of him.

A county dive team was summoned to check the lake. By the time they arrived, rangers had found the man's camera and phone on a dock, confirming suspicions that he might be in the water. The lake is partially frozen and conditions under the water were treacherous, but the team had been to Lake McDonald a couple of weekends earlier to practice ice diving and was prepared. The man's body was soon found.

Foul play is not suspected. The investigation is ongoing, but it appears that the man slipped or fell through the ice.

Source: Nick Mott, [Montana Public Radio](#).

National Park System Follow-ups On Previously Reported Incidents

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

- *Golden Gate NRA* – A body found at Fort Funston on March 25th proved to be that of 22-year-old Kyra Sunshine Scarlet, who disappeared in a landslide that occurred while she and a friend were walking on the beach on February 22nd. The family had this to say in a statement made after her body was recovered: "The family would like to thank the many public safety agencies that have worked tirelessly to help find Kyra Sunshine, watch over the site and the kindness they have shown the family." Source: [Associated Press](#).
- *Glacier NP* – The park is beginning a number of projects rehabbing or repairing damage in the 14,000-acre area burned last year by the Howe Ridge Fire. Telephone service is being restored along North McDonald Road, electric service will be extended to Kelly Camp (which previously got its electricity from water-powered generators), and new road culverts are being installed to

handle increased runoff from the burn area. This summer, park staff will rebuild a number of hiking trails in the area. Wooden culverts will need to be rebuilt, trail surfaces will be restored, and a number of wood-plank bridges will be reconstructed. Source: Justin Franz, [Flathead Beacon](#).

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 26 – By a unanimous vote of 57 yeas, with 43 other senators voting present, the Senate rejected a motion to close debate on S.J. Res. 8, recognizing the duty of the federal government to create a Green New Deal, thus killing the resolution. This vote was a political vote created by Majority Leader Mitch McConnell to put all Democrats on record on where they stood on the so-called Green New Deal climate change issue. The Democrats saw the vote for what it was and decided to vote present instead of voting in the affirmative. The four Democrats who voted with the Republicans on this resolution were Sen. Manchin (D-WV), Sen. Jones (D-AL), Sen. Sinema (D-AZ), and Sen. King (D-ME).

March 27 – The Senate agreed to S. Res. 125, designating March 2019 as “National Women's History Month”.

March 27 – The Committee on Natural Resources held a hearing entitled “Examining the Department of the Interior's Spending Priorities and the President's Fiscal Year 2020 Budget Proposal”. Testimony was heard from Scott Cameron, Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for Policy, Management, and Budget, Department of the Interior; and Denise Flanagan, Director, Office of Budget, Department of the Interior.

March 28 – The Senate agreed to S. Res. 100, recognizing the heritage, culture, and contributions of American Indian, Alaska Native, and Native Hawaiian women in the United States.

March 28 – The Committee on the Budget favorably reported the original concurrent resolution on the budget for fiscal year 2020.

March 28 – The Committee on Energy and Natural Resources held a hearing to examine the nomination of David Bernhardt of Virginia to be Secretary of the Interior. The nominee, who was introduced by Senator Gardner, testified and answered questions on his own behalf.

April 1 – The nomination of Daniel Habib Jorjani of Kentucky to be solicitor of the Department of the Interior was transmitted to the Senate.

April 3 – The Committee on Energy and Natural Resources ordered favorably reported the nominations of David Bernhardt of Virginia to be Secretary, and Susan Combs of Texas to be an Assistant Secretary for Policy, Management, and Budget, both of the Department of the Interior, and Aimee Kathryn Jorjani, of Wisconsin, to be Chairman of the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation.

House Actions

March 26 – The Committee on Appropriations Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies held a budget hearing on the Department of the Interior. Testimony was heard from Scott J.

Cameron, Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for Policy, Management and Budget, Department of the Interior; and Denise Flanagan, Director, Office of Budget, Department of the Interior.

March 26 – The Committee on Natural Resources Subcommittee on Water, Oceans, and Wildlife held a hearing on a number of bills, including H.R. 1326, to provide for the preservation of America’s outdoor heritage and enhance recreation opportunities on Federal land. Among other provisions, the bill has the following provisions of interest to the National Park Service:

- Title VII would establish the Wildlife and Hunting Heritage Conservation Council Advisory Committee to advise the Secretary of the Interior and the Secretary of Agriculture on wildlife and habitat conservation, hunting, and recreational shooting. The director of the National Park Service would be an ex-officio member of the committee.
- Title VIII would exempt commercial use authorization or special recreation permit holders from having to pay an additional fee for filming on public lands if the filming is incidental to the permitted activity and the holder of the permit is an individual or a small business concern. Small business concerns of three or fewer individuals that use only a camera or tripod would also be exempt from filming fees as would any news gathering operations.
- Title IX would reauthorize the Chesapeake Gateways and Watertrails Network through the end of fiscal year 2024.
- Title X would require the secretary of agriculture to provide grants to state and tribal agencies responsible for wildlife management to support state and tribal efforts to develop and implement management strategies to address chronic wasting disease.

March 28 – The Committee on Natural Resources Subcommittee on Energy and Mineral Resources held a hearing entitled “Abandoned Mine Land Reclamation: Innovative Approaches and Economic Development Opportunities”. There were no witnesses from federal agencies at this hearing.

April 2 – The Committee on Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Environment and Climate Change held a hearing entitled “Lessons from Across the Nation: State and Local Action to Combat Climate Change”. There were no witnesses from federal agencies at this hearing.

April 2 – The Committee on Foreign Affairs held a hearing entitled “How Climate Change Threatens U.S. National Security”. There were no witnesses from federal agencies at this hearing.

April 2 – The Committee on Natural Resources Subcommittee on National Parks, Forests, and Public Lands held a hearing on the following bills:

- H.R. 823, to provide for the designation of certain wilderness areas, recreation management areas, and conservation areas in the State of Colorado. Among other provisions, the bill removes a 15.5-acre parcel of land from potential wilderness within Rocky Mountain National Park (section 109); and establishes in statute the Curecanti National Recreation Area in CO (title IV). Curecanti NRA is one of just a couple of National Park System units that have never been legislatively established by Congress. Currently, the NRA is managed under a cooperative agreement between the NPS and the Bureau of Reclamation.
- H.R. 1708, to adjust the boundary of the Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area to include the Rim of the Valley Corridor.
- H.R. 434, to require the secretary of the interior to study the proposed Emancipation National Historic Trail, extending approximately 51 miles from Galveston, Texas, to Freedmen’s Town and Emancipation Park in Houston, Texas, following the migration route taken by newly freed slaves and other persons of African descent from the major 19th century seaport town of Galveston to the burgeoning community of Freedmen’s Town, located in the 4th Ward of Houston, Texas. The bill also requires the study to be completed within one year of the enactment of the bill, and then, regardless of the results of the study, the bill designates the Emancipation National Historic Trail as part of the National Trails System upon receipt by Congress of the study.
- H.R. 306, to direct the secretary of the interior to conduct a special resource study of the site of the Kettle Creek Battlefield in Wilkes County, Georgia, and adjacent property. This site is a

Revolutionary War battlefield that has been characterized as the only significant Patriot victory in Georgia in 1779.

Testimony was heard from Chris French, Acting Deputy Chief, National Forest System, U.S. Forest Service, Department of Agriculture; Dan Smith, Deputy Director, National Park Service, Department of the Interior.

April 3- The Committee on Appropriations Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies held a budget hearing on the National Park Service, Fish and Wildlife Service, and U.S. Geological Survey. Testimony was heard from the following Department of the Interior officials: Margaret Everson, Principal Deputy Director, Fish and Wildlife Service; Jim Reilly, Director, U.S. Geological Survey; and Daniel Smith, Deputy Director Exercising the Authority of the Director, National Park Service.

April 3 – The Committee on the Budget approved H.R. 2021, to amend the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985 and to establish a congressional budget for fiscal year 2020. Among other provisions, the bill increases the domestic discretionary spending caps by \$53 billion in FY 2020, giving Congress additional flexibility to provide sufficient funding for domestic spending programs, including the National Park Service.

April 3 – The Committee on Natural Resources: Subcommittee on National Parks, Forests, and Public Lands held a hearing entitled “Examining the Spending Priorities and Mission of the National Park Service”. Testimony was heard from Dan Smith, Deputy Director, National Park Service, Department of the Interior.

April 4 - The Select Committee on the Climate Crisis held a hearing entitled “Generation Climate: Young Leaders Urge Climate Action Now”. There were no witnesses from federal agencies at this hearing.

National Park Service

National Park System

Dining In The Parks – On March 25th, *Cowboys & Indians*, which bills itself as “the premier magazine of the West,” posted a story to its webpage on “great national park restaurants.” The article provides a guide to a dozen national parks that have restaurants “worth a meal or two” – Badlands, Big Bend, Bryce Canyon, Crater Lake, Death Valley, Glacier, Mount Rainier, Mount Rushmore, North Cascades, Rocky Mountain, Yellowstone and Zion. Click on the link to see the restaurants that are featured (some with pix). Source: José R. Ralat, [Cowboys & Indians](#).

Around The Parks

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

- *Cuyahoga Valley NP* – A 215-acre golf course that closed down permanently last year may become part of the park. The owners of Brandywine Country Club are collaborating with the Trust for Public Land to turn the golf course into an open area that would be a piece of the park. Source: Alana Whelan, [Cleveland Scene](#).
- *Fort Vancouver NHS* – “The mystery of where the Hudson’s Bay Company built the first Fort Vancouver in the 1820s might have been solved,” reports *The Columbian*. “Amy Clearman, a Portland State University graduate student, believes the first fort was built in what today is a residential area in the Edgewood Park neighborhood. More specifically, the fort likely was built near Cedar and Date streets and Clark and Lewis avenues about four blocks east of the Washington School for the Deaf. Clearman searched for the first Fort Vancouver for her graduate thesis toward a master’s degree in archaeology. Her thesis adviser is Doug Wilson, a

National Park Service archaeologist and adjunct associate professor at Portland State.” Source: Jeffrey Mize, [The Columbian](#).

- *Lake Roosevelt NRA* – The park has announced that it has stopped taking reservations for this summer for its facilities and will offer refunds to those who’ve already reserved their campsites. It’s been deemed possible that a parkwide repaving project may take unpredictable turns due to weather and other factors, so the park has decided to not offer reservations at all rather than have campers show up and find their spots unavailable. Beginning July 8th, contractors will begin resurfacing and restriping all park-managed asphalt surfaces within the boundaries of the park. Source: Scott Hunter, [The Star](#).
- *National Mall* – A \$15 million memorial will open on the Mall next year to honor Native American military service members and veterans. The steel and stone structure, called the “Warriors’ Circle of Honor,” will be built outside the Smithsonian’s National Museum of the American Indian on the Mall. The memorial will honor the more than 156,000 active military service members and veterans who are Native Americans and Alaska Natives. Plans for a memorial to Native American service members have been in the works for years and design details are still being finalized. A groundbreaking ceremony is set for September, followed by a dedication on Veterans Day in November 2020, when the memorial will open to the public. Source: Dana Hedgpeth, [Washington Post](#).
- *North Cascades NP* – KOMO News reports that a study by the Davis Law Group of 4,000 motorcycle-involved crashes in Washington between 2016 and 2018 has shown that the route with the most crashes – by far – was North Cascades Highway. There were six fatal crashes, 21 crashes involving an injury and two non-injury crashes. A road at Mount Rainier came in a distant second. Source: [KOMO News](#).
- *Olympic NP* – The park is taking comments on a draft revised wildland fire management plan. Comments are due by April 24th and can be submitted electronically at [the park’s PEPC website](#). Source: [Peninsula Daily News](#).
- *River Raisin NBP* – The River Raisin National Battlefield Park Foundation has announced that most of the construction for the historic Michigan site's estimated \$100 million redevelopment will begin next year. The first step will be a \$2 million upgrade to the education center located at the site of the Battle of Frenchtown, an important engagement during the War of 1812. Historically accurate barns, houses and a trading post will be constructed as part of the recreation of Frenchtown. The Wyandot of Anderdon Nation will also build a \$10 million tribal center at the site, which will include a boardwalk for kayaking and fishing. Source: [Detroit Free Press](#).
- *USS Arizona Memorial* – The NPS has awarded a \$2.1 million contract for repairs to the faulty USS Arizona Memorial dock and anticipates that it should be completed by fall. That means, however, that there will be no walk-on visitation through the busy summer season. The Service added a caveat that repairs are projected to be completed by fall – provided, of course, that no additional complications arise during construction. Source: William Cole, [Honolulu Star-Advertiser](#).
- *Western Regional Office* – The administration has halted an effort to relocate the regional office due to language House Speaker Nancy Pelosi put in a budget bill to block the move. Federal officials recently signed a lease extension for Pacific West Regional Office, allowing the office to stay at its current downtown San Francisco location. Last year, staff at the office were told that the local unit was moving from its current location to Vancouver, Washington — a relocation they said then could save millions of dollars. The Service has struggled with recruitment in San Francisco because of its high cost of living; by moving to federal property in Vancouver, PWRO would have saved money by not having to pay rent and by being able to pay reduced salary and benefits regional staff. Source: Ted Goldberg, [KQED News](#).

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

Federal Pay Raise Signed Into Law – The president signed an executive order on March 28th authorizing the implementation of an across-the-board federal pay raise, reports the *Federal Times*, over a month after Congress formally enacted the 1.9 percent increase through government appropriations legislation. “[The president] initially proposed freezing federal pay at the previous year’s rates for 2019 and signed an executive order to ensure just that at the end of December 2018. Congressional legislation, however, supersedes such an order.” The administration is again proposing a pay freeze for next fiscal year, “with administration officials arguing that such action would help federal agencies realign pay based on performance rather than length of service.” The raise applies to the first applicable pay period beginning on or after January 1, 2019. It is now up to the Office of Personnel Management to instruct federal agencies on how to implement the new pay tables. Source: Jessie Bur, [Federal Times](#).

Department of the Interior

Bernhardt “Sails Through” Confirmation Hearing – That was the opinion expressed by the authors of an article on the hearing that appeared in the March 28th edition of *E&E News*: “Interior secretary nominee David Bernhardt today appeared to move smoothly and unruffled through his Senate confirmation hearing. Shadowed by demonstrators and denounced by some Democrats at the Dirksen Senate Office Building, Bernhardt defended his extensive track record both as a lobbyist and as a public official with a total of about 10 years of experience over two administrations at the Interior Department. ‘I have a very clear understanding of the often-conflicting legal and policy issues that I will face,’ Bernhardt told the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee. Addressing what critics consider his biggest vulnerability, the lawyer and former energy and water lobbyist insisted he has implemented an ‘incredibly robust screening process’ to ensure conflicts of interest are avoided.” It’s very likely that the committee will endorse him. “Republicans praised him, with no sign of any GOP defections, and all indications suggest he’ll pass through the committee and ultimately the Republican-controlled Senate...Underscoring Bernhardt’s apparently bright confirmation prospects, the committee’s senior Democrat, Sen. Joe Manchin of West Virginia, called the nominee with whom he twice met in private ‘well qualified’ and the possessor of a ‘great deal of experience.’” All indications are that he’ll be confirmed by the Republican-controlled Senate. Source: Michael Doyle and Kellie Lunney, [E&A News](#).

Bernhardt Quashed FWS Report On Lethal Pesticides – On March 26th, the *New York Times* ran an article on then-deputy secretary David Bernhardt’s involvement in quashing a USFWS report on the lethal threat that three pesticides pose to hundreds of endangered species, then required Fish and Wildlife to develop much more limited standards for assessing risks. In the report, which took years to complete, scientists “found that two of the pesticides, malathion and chlorpyrifos, were so toxic that they ‘jeopardize the continued existence’ of more than 1,200 endangered birds, fish and other animals and plants, a conclusion that could lead to tighter restrictions on use of the chemicals. But just before the team planned to make its findings public in November 2017, something unexpected happened: Top political appointees of the Interior Department, which oversees the Fish and Wildlife Service, blocked the release and set in motion a new process intended to apply a much narrower standard to determine the risks from the pesticides. Leading that intervention was David Bernhardt, then the deputy secretary of the interior and a former lobbyist and oil-industry lawyer. In October 2017, he abruptly summoned staff members to the first of a rapid series of meetings in which the Fish and Wildlife Service was directed to take the new approach, one that pesticide makers and users had lobbied intensively to promote.” This information was revealed in more than 84,000 pages DOI and EPA documents obtained by the newspaper. Their assessment: “[These] documents provide a case study of how the Trump administration has been using its power to second-guess or push aside conclusions

reached by career professionals, particularly in the area of public health and the environment.”
Source: Eric Lipton, [New York Times](#).

The Courts

Supreme Court Rules In Favor Of Hunter In Alaska Jurisdiction Case – “A hovercraft-riding moose hunter who has been to the Supreme Court twice in recent years finally got what he wanted: a decision affirming his right to use his hovercraft in an Alaskan national preserve,” reports *E&E News*. On March 26th, the Supreme Court ruled unanimously that the Service overstepped its authority when it ordered John Sturgeon to stop using his hovercraft on the Nation River in Yukon-Charley Rivers in 2007. “The unusual case sparked a years-long debate over public lands, water rights and federalism. The court found...that NPS does not have authority over all navigable waters within the boundaries of the national preserve. Justice Elena Kagan wrote for the court that the Nation River does not count as a ‘public land’ and cannot be regulated by NPS as if it were part of the park system. The rules cannot apply to any nonfederal properties, even if a map would show they are within such a unit’s boundaries. Geographic inholdings thus become regulatory outholdings, impervious to the Service’s ordinary authority,” she wrote. The 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals rejected Sturgeon’s arguments in a 2014 decision. Two years later, the Supreme Court reversed the 9th Circuit and told it to take another look. The appeals court again ruled against the moose hunter, this time on different grounds. The justices heard oral arguments for a second time late last year. Sturgeon told E&E News this morning he found the unanimous decision ‘unbelievable’ and was ‘really, really happy’ with the result. His next moose hunting trip on the Nation River is set for September.” Source: Ellen M. Gilmer, [E&E News](#).

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:

- *Melting Permafrost Causing Serious Problems* – Longyearbyen, the world’s northernmost town (it’s located just 800 miles from the North Pole) and the capital of a cluster of Norwegian islands called Svalbard, is dealing with serious problems caused by melting permafrost. This is important not only because it’s a harbinger of things to come, but also because it’s the home of the Svalbard Global Seed Vault, which stores copies of the world’s crop seeds as a backup in case of catastrophes such as disease, pests, war, and climate change (“the ultimate failsafe for biodiversity of crops”). A [new report](#) by the Norwegian Meteorological Institute reveals why – “the climate in Longyearbyen is probably warming faster than in any other town on Earth.” That’s because rising temperatures in the Arctic have reduced ice and snow cover, thereby reflecting less sunlight and making it possible for exposed darker surfaces to absorb more solar energy. Buildings are being destabilized, animals in the wild are starving, the town is beset by more and more avalanches and heavy downpours (formerly snow), and the seed vault is dealing with meltwater infiltration that’s required expensive retrofits. Source: Sarah Lazarus, [CNN](#).
- *Dams Being Overmatched By Climate Change* – An article in the March 21st *New York Times* focuses on dams on the Missouri River and the challenges of managing them in cases of massive runoff (as is going on now), but in a larger sense deals with the problem of dams “designed for a different era, a time before climate change and the extreme weather it can bring.” Do you attempt to hold the floodwaters and risk losing the dam and causing a major flood, or do you save the dam by opening the spillways and thereby cause flooding of another type? The article is built around an interview with the man who oversees six major dams along the 2,000-mile-long river and foresees that problems like this are likely only going to get worse in the future due to climate change. It also discusses the challenges that come with

simultaneously meeting a legal mandate to follow eight congressionally authorized purposes – flood control, river navigation, hydroelectric power, irrigation, water supply, water quality, recreation, and the preservation of endangered species – without any direction on how to set priorities. Source: Tyler Kelley, [New York Times](#).

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:

- *Americans Favor Green Energy Over Fossil Fuels* – A [recent Gallup poll](#) revealed that 60% of Americans favor reducing our reliance on fossil fuels, including 37% of Republicans and 60% of Independents. The same number – 60% – also believe it is "very likely" (22%) or "likely" (38%) that the country will dramatically reduce fossil fuel usage in the next 10 to 20 years, and roughly the same percentage favor policy proposals that aim to do it. The survey was conducted earlier this month. On the other hand – and in direct opposition to the administration's efforts – only 28% of Americans want the government to put more emphasis on oil and gas and only 22% want more emphasis on coal, while a vast majority of Americans want to see more emphasis placed on the production of green energy sources -- specifically solar power (80%) and wind (70%). Source: Monica Medina and Miro Korenha, [Our Daily Planet](#).
- *More States Move Aggressively Toward Clean Energy* – The schism between the states and the federal government on moving to clean energy continues to grow. Governor Michelle Lujan Grisham of New Mexico has signed a bill that requires investor-owned utilities to generate all of their electricity from carbon-free sources by 2045; rural electric cooperatives must meet this target by 2050. Governor Janet Mills of Maine is about to sign a bill passed last week by the legislature that restores the state's [net metering](#) system, which compensates rooftop solar owners for excess electricity that their solar panels send back into the grid. Upcoming energy legislation in Maine will likely aim to boost the state's renewable portfolio standard, move forward with offshore wind power, and lower barriers to solar system deployment. Consumers Energy of Michigan's proposal to close all of its coal-fired power plants and dramatically increase its renewable energy is moving forward and will likely be approved within a few months. The company all coal-fired power plants by 2040 and increasing renewable energy by 400 percent by 2030. Source: Dan Gearino, [Inside Climate News](#).

National Park System Issues

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

- *Canyonlands NP* – Wondering what this western park might look like a century or so into the future if climate change trends continue? Author, conservationist and political activist Terry Tempest Williams offered her vision of Canyonlands ca. 2155 in this issue of *National Parks Magazine* as part of a collection of essays on the future NPS. Although speculative, it's not that farfetched given the way things are going. Her chilling description begins as follows – the rest can be read in the magazine: "It is 2155; the Colorado River is now an ephemeral river that runs only in the spring due to the aridification of the American Southwest. Drought is too kind of a word for where we are now... Canyonlands National Park has been left alone and remains a geologic park, though it's accessible only by enclosed viewing stations at Island in the Sky and the Needles Overlook that are cooled by solar power... Virtual-reality glasses are provided at the lookout stations where hearty visitors, many of whom knew these erosional parks as children or from the cherished photographs of their ancestors, come to remember when these red-rock landscapes were places of inspiration and a desert ecology blossomed each year. No longer; the land can't support much life at all. The glasses repopulate the barren landscape with the plants and animals that once lived in this high desert... Source: Terry Tempest Williams, [National Parks Magazine](#).

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:

- *Great Smoky Mountains NP* – The park and the Eastern Band of the Cherokee Indian have reached an agreement allowing sochan (*Rudbeckia laciniata*) gathering within the park. Under the terms of the agreement, 36 permitted tribal members will be allowed to gather the plant, a traditional Cherokee food. The park will monitor populations in harvest zones and non-harvest zones to assess sochan abundance, population health, and incidental impacts of harvesting such as trampling. The park and tribe will meet frequently throughout the gathering period to discuss monitoring results and adjust the terms of the agreement if necessary to limit any unforeseen impacts. Source: [WLOS News](#).
- *Yellowstone NP* – More than 300 bison have been culled from the park during the current effort to keep the herd at a manageable level. As of March 22nd, hunters licensed through seven tribal nations had taken 96 bison. The park's Stephens Creek Capture Facility had trapped and consigned 208 bison to slaughter; one died in the facility. The park plans to remove 600 to 900 bison. About 4,500 bison were counted last summer in Yellowstone. Source: [Associated Press](#).

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

- *Acadia NP* – The park has released a plan for a “timed-entry reservation system” to manage parking at some of its most popular attractions. The plan, which is expected to be approved by the regional director, will require drivers to obtain reservations between mid-June and mid-October before entering Cadillac Summit Road, Jordan Pond’s north lot, or the 1.8-mile stretch of Park Loop Road/Ocean Drive between Sand Beach and the Fabbri picnic area. Drivers will have a window of time to enter those areas but could stay as long as they desired. Reservations will not be required to travel on the rest of Park Loop Road – with the exception of the Ocean Drive corridor that includes Sand Beach and Thunder Hole – and parking at other locations would continue to be available on a first-come, first-served basis. Over time, however, the park aims to eliminate the right-lane parking currently allowed along the busy, one-way stretches of Park Loop Road. Although details have yet to be fleshed out, the plan calls for a “modest” reservation fee of \$10 or less to cover the costs of running the system and to support the Island Explorer bus service that ferries visitors around the park for free. The timed-entry reservation system could be in place for the 2020 season, at the earliest, but other aspects of the plan will take up to a decade to implement. Source: Kevin Miller, [Portland Press-Herald](#).

External Pressures – Management issues related to usage or development in culturally or naturally sensitive areas abutting parks:

- *Grand Canyon NP* – Concerns are being raised about uranium mining claims that lie just outside park boundaries. In February, Rep. Grijalva, chair of the House Natural Resources Committee, introduced another incarnation of a bill that would protect the canyon’s vast watershed by making permanent the 20-year uranium mining moratorium on new claims across a million acres of public lands surrounding the park. The *Arizona Republic* article on this issue also describes other external threats facing the park on its centennial anniversary, including air and water pollution, noise from tour aircraft, and non-native species. Source: Andrew Nicla, [Arizona Republic](#).

The Coalition

Summary of recent developments within the Coalition, including some of the actions that CPANP took on your behalf.

- *Bernhardt Nomination* – At present, most of the Coalition’s communication efforts are focused on the Bernhardt nomination and upcoming hearing. Members of the Executive Committee drafted a letter to the Senate expressing CPANP’s concerns about Bernhardt. This was sent to all members of the Senate.

- *Bernhardt Op-Ed By Member Mike Murray* – Mike’s article appeared in *The Times Record*, a newspaper that covers Maine’s middle coast. Excerpt: “Mr. Bernhardt, who has racked up a conspicuous record of anti-conservation and anti-park decisions during his time with the Trump administration, is not the secretary that Maine or the country needs. What we do need is a Secretary of the Interior who is dedicated to protecting our parks and public lands. We need an advocate, someone who will work tirelessly to ensure that Maine’s irreplaceable resources are preserved and protected for our use today, and for the enjoyment of future generations.” Source: [The Times Record](#).
- *Bernhardt Op-Ed By Member Rebecca Harriett* – Rebecca’s article appeared in the *Charleston Gazette-Mail*, a West Virginia paper. Excerpt: “Mr. Bernhardt has consistently demonstrated disdain for the preservation of our national parks. As deputy secretary, he has refused to act to reduce or adapt to the impacts of climate change which are necessary in managing our natural and cultural resources. He is currently championing a rewrite of the Endangered Species Act that, if adopted, would threaten the long-term protection of imperiled species. His recent decision during the partial government shut-down to allow parks to remain open without the necessary personnel to prevent resource damage was a clear case of mismanagement and demonstrated a disregard for the safety of our resources and park visitors.” Source: [Charleston Gazette-Mail](#).
- *Bernhardt Op-Ed By Member Sarah Bransom* – Sarah’s piece on appeared in *The Colorado Sun*. Excerpt: “Throughout his tenure at DOI, Mr. Bernhardt has shown that oil and gas is just about the only thing he cares about. He made his career representing the very industry and now stands to gain even more as Secretary of the Interior. If he is confirmed, we can expect more of the same. And it might be more than our national parks can bear. His obvious devotion to the energy industry would result in long-term and possibly irreversible damage to our national parks for many generations to come.” Source: [The Colorado Sun](#).

Source: Emily Thompson, Communications and Advocacy Coordinator.

Park People

NPS Alumni

Passing Of Frances Reynolds

Frances “Dolly” Reynolds, 87, who was secretary to a number of regional directors during her career with the National Park Service, died on March 20th.

Reynolds was born in Montrose, Colorado, to John and Lois Reynolds, and was the youngest of four children. She graduated from Western State College in 1951 and worked thereafter for the Service.

No further information is available. You can sign the guest book at the link below.

Source: [Horan and McConaty Funeral Home](#).

National Park Service

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:

- *Lake Mead NRA* – Margaret Goodro will take over as the park’s superintendent in mid-May. She replaces Lizette Richardson, who retired in 2018. Goodro, who is currently superintendent at Biscayne, worked as a district ranger at Lake Mead earlier in her career. She has also served as superintendent of Lake Clark and as El Centro field manager for BLM in California. Her NPS career includes tours at Lake Roosevelt, North Cascades, Glacier, Yosemite, Crater Lake, and Glacier Bay. Source: Henry Breaun, [Las Vegas Review-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.

- *Grand Canyon NP* – The original Babbitt's general store at the Grand Canyon burned to the ground in a fire that began at 9 a.m. on Friday, March 18th. The building, which is on the National Historic Register, is a total loss. Although it no longer served as a store, the concessioner, Fred Harvey, was using it as a community library, pub, recreation center and weight training center. The library contained a number of historic documents, including letters from Teddy Roosevelt. Four engines and 20 firefighters responded from the park, the concessioner and the community of Tusayan. Heat threatened to ignite the adjacent magistrate's office, operations center and fee collection building, but firefighters were able to save them. The fire was so hot that the temperature inside the operations center reached 120 degrees at one point. The cause of the fire is not known. In the past, there have been problems with the a butane heater in the building, and with some of its electrical system; an accidental start therefore can not be ruled out. The building had no sprinkler system. Damages are estimated to be in excess of \$1,000,000. The fire is being investigated by the park, the concessioner and the state fire marshal's office. Submitted by Paul Ducasse.
- *Delaware Water Gap NRA* – A 47-year-old man was arrested on December 16, 1993, during a surveillance/sting operation involving NPS rangers, the county prosecutor's office, and New Jersey state police and state park rangers. The man, a known career criminal, was observed and photographed breaking into and removing property from a "bait" car. He was charged with being a fugitive from justice, possession of a stolen vehicle, larceny from a motor vehicle, driving on a suspended license, and possession of marijuana with intent to distribute. Investigators determined that the man had been involved in possibly as many as 100 vehicle break-ins over the preceding three months in a five-county, two-state region. He recently pleaded guilty in county court to burglary, receiving stolen property, and theft, and has been sentenced to seven years' incarceration with a minimum of three years' time due to his lengthy criminal record. Submitted by Chief Ranger Doyle Nelson.
- *Hawaii Volcanoes NP* – A tour helicopter operated by Mauna Kea Helicopters, Inc., crashed about 50 feet from an active lava tube skylight on the southeast side of the Pu'u 'O'o Cone on the afternoon of March 25th while on a routine aerial tour of the eruption site. The accident was initially reported by other tour helicopters in the area. Responding rescuers found the helicopter, a Hughes 500E, lying on its side; there was no sign of either the pilot or his passenger. Heavy fumes produced whiteout conditions and low visibility at the crash site, which hindered search efforts. The missing men were located about two miles downslope from the crash site and were picked up by a county fire and rescue helicopter. They'd reached that point by following the edge of an active lava tube. Neither suffered any apparent injuries. According to the passenger, they'd been hovering about 40 feet above the skylight when the helicopter got caught in steam clouds and crashed. The helicopter was destroyed. The FAA was notified and was to arrive on scene last Saturday. Reported by Gail Minami.

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- Editor: Bill Halainen
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- Issue Contributors: Bob Martin, Mike Murray, 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

"[Our] parklands are more than physical resources. They are the delicate strands of nature and culture that bond generation to generation. They are, moreover, the benchmarks of our heritage by which we may chart a new course of human and corporate behavior in our nation so essential to the restoration of quality in our daily lives and of a sense of community in our society."

Director George Hartzog, *Battling for the National Parks*, 1988

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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."

To receive a copy of this free publication, join or support the Coalition:

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- *Support* – If you never worked for the NPS, you can become a supporter ([click on this link](#)).

If you'd like to contact the Coalition regarding any particular issue or action, please use the form found on the Coalition web page ([click on this link](#)).

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