



## The Coalition Weekly Report Wednesday, April 24, 2019

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### Incidents

#### **Bering Land Bridge NP Pilot Injured When NPS Cessna Crashes**

On April 15th, a National Park Service aircraft crashed on the Seward Peninsula, injuring the pilot, who then had to wait out bad weather that kept rescue crews from reaching him. The Cessna 185 crashed approximately four miles northeast of Serpentine Hot Springs and sustained significant damage.

The Kotzebue-based pilot, whose name has not been released, was flying from there to Nome when the Cessna went down. The pilot was able to contact a plane that was flying overhead and report that he'd suffered only minor injuries and that there were no passengers on board.

The Alaska Region Communications Center in Denali was monitoring the mission. When the pilot did not check in as scheduled, the center's staff relayed the exact location of the airplane to the Alaska Rescue Coordination Center. An Alaska Air National Guard HH-60 Pavehawk helicopter and a C-130 refueling tanker were dispatched to the site of the crash, but were turned back by high winds and blowing snow. Alaska State Troopers then activated a ground-based SAR team in Shishmaref, but ground rescue operations were also blocked by whiteout conditions. The weather finally improved enough for the Pavehawk to land safely at the crash site.

The downed pilot was treated at the scene, then flown first to Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson and then to Providence Hospital in Anchorage, where he received further treatment and was subsequently released.

Source: [Fairbanks Daily News-Miner](#).

#### **Zion NP Body Of Missing Man Found Below Angels Landing**

A body found below Angels Landing last Thursday has been identified as that of hiker who'd been previously reported as missing.

Crews spent Thursday searching for Pradeep Solomon, 35, who'd told his friends he was planning to visit the park and was going to hike up to Angels Landing on Tuesday.

Solomon's roommate reported him missing on Wednesday afternoon when he didn't come home from his trip. At that point, rangers began looking for him and found his car in the parking lot. A search was conducted at the base of Angels Landing, where they found his body below the north side of the trail that leads to the top.

According to a preliminary investigation, Solomon's injuries were consistent with a high elevation fall, likely from Angels Landing Trail.

Source: Carter Williams, [KSL.com](http://KSL.com).

### **Lewis and Clark NHP Archeological Site Excavated And Severely Damaged**

Park staff recently discovered unauthorized digging at a listed archeological site near the Netul River Trail within the park. The site was severely damaged and many artifacts are missing. The most serious damage occurred along the bank of the tidal river, where approximately 15 cubic yards of soil was disturbed – the amount carried in one and a half dump trucks. Evidence at the scene indicated that a metal detector had been used to locate artifacts and dig nine other holes.

The impacted area is also home to a rare salt marsh plant association containing Lyngbye's sedge and Pacific silverweed. This plant community is classified as imperiled in the state of Oregon.

Investigators would like to talk with anyone who was hiking on the Netul River Trail around March 20th (call or text the ISB tip line at 888-653-0009, go online to [www.nps.gov/ISB](http://www.nps.gov/ISB) and click “Submit a Tip”, or email [nps\\_isb@nps.gov](mailto:nps_isb@nps.gov)).

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

### **National Park System Weekly Weather Impacts Update**

The increasing frequency of climate-change-related severe weather closures and incidents in NPS areas has warranted the creation of a weekly – or maybe intermittent – Servicewide summary:

- *Great Smoky Mountains NP* – A flash flood warning issued for Sevier County last Friday prompted the evacuation of the Elkmont Campground. More than three inches of rain fell in and around the county before noon, with more expected that night. Water levels at the Chimneys Picnic area on the West Prong of the Little Pigeon River jumped three feet between midnight and noon Friday. In Gatlinburg, the river reached its minor flood stage. Source: Andrew Capps, [Knoxville News Sentinel](#).
- *Yosemite NP* – Hundreds of families who'd planned early spring camping trips in Yosemite have been forced to make other arrangements, as park crews are still repairing the damage from the most destructive winter season in recent memory. It may be weeks before Half Dome Village fully reopens. Two weeks into spring and the winter cleanup continues in several Yosemite Valley campgrounds. Heavy snow toppled trees, damaged bear boxes, shattered picnic tables and pulled campfire rings with concrete footings out of the ground. The story includes a video. Source: George Warren, [CBS Sacramento](#).
- *Shenandoah NP* – Crews have been working to clean up Skyline Drive since last November, when an ice storm closed the South District from Elkton to Waynesboro. Although there was damage throughout the park, only the South District was still closed as of earlier this month. At one point this winter, trees were covered with three-quarters of an inch of ice, causing massive tree damage. A video is included with the story. Source: [WHSV News](#).

### **National Park System Follow-ups On Previously Reported Incidents**

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

- *Grand Teton NP* – Four people who illegally ventured into the park from a nearby ski area and had to be rescued could each be assessed a \$5,000 fine and face some jail time (see the [March](#)

[27th edition](#) for the initial report). Each of the four received two citations requiring a mandatory court appearance. Citations are for violation of an emergency boundary closure and disorderly conduct with creation of a hazardous condition. Each citation carries a maximum penalty of up to \$5,000 fine and/or six months in jail. Source: [National Parks Traveler](#).

- *Delaware Water Gap NRA* – Jeffrey Steigelman, 26, has been charged with fleeing from park rangers after he nearly hit a ranger last October, then led police from several agencies on an interstate chase. He faces up to two years in prison if found guilty. Source: Fran Maye, Exton [Daily Local News](#).

## **National Fire Situation**

### **National Interagency Fire Center Fire Activity Picks Up In Central States**

#### **Synopsis**

At present, NIFC is posting a weekly incident management situation report each Friday. As of last Friday, the national preparedness level was set at PL 1, the lowest of five levels. Large fires were burning in a number of central states, including Oklahoma, Missouri, and Kentucky.

#### **National Park Service Fire News**

No wildfires were reported in NPS areas.

#### **Seasonal Forecast**

On April 1st, NIFC's Predictive Services Office issued a national significant wildland fire potential outlook report, which included a summary of the month of March and a forecast for the months of May through July. First, some highlights of the March overview, then a two-paragraph forecast summary.

Here's the summary of NIFC's March observations:

- *Activity* – Fire activity remained low across the nation in March. Year to date fire statistics showed below average activity for both number of fires and acreage burned. What little occurred was focused across the Southwest, western Oregon, and the Southeast.
- *Snowpack* – Mountain snowpack levels were historically good as most basins reported levels greater than 130% of average across central portions of the West. Snowpack averages trended closer to average and even below average levels along the Canadian border. Snowpack deficits continued across Alaska's southern interior and along its gulf coast.
- *Drought* – Diminishing drought conditions continued except along the Canadian border across the Pacific Northwest.
- *Temperatures* – Overall, temperatures nationwide were 3 to 10 degrees below average.
- *Precipitation* – Precipitation received was generally above average across the central and western states and below average in the East and along the Gulf coast. An area of drier than average conditions was observed along the Canadian border.

As the spring green-up begins to take hold across the West in April, mountain snowpack will begin to melt. Snowpack melting rates are a more important factor than snowpack levels in assessing potential fire season activity ahead. An average or slower than average melting rate can allow for a late entry of the timbered elevations into the fire season, whereas a faster melting rate will allow for high elevation fuels to become receptive to fire sooner. In 2019, an average to cooler than average spring is expected, so melting rates should be near average which could result in a delayed fire season entry in areas that have abundant snowpack. An early entry is possible along the Canadian border in areas that have a below average snowpack. In the middle and lower elevations, abundant winter and spring moisture

should translate to a heavy crop of fine fuels that will become increasingly receptive to fire activity across the West from south to north in May, June, and July.

In Alaska, warmer than average temperatures should lead to an early snowpack loss and early entry into the fire season. A possibility exists that precipitation could become above average from June onward. This could lessen some of the state’s peak season fire potential during the second half of the season. After an active early start to the season, fire activity across the state should trend toward average conditions. Hawaii and Puerto Rico will continue to see slightly elevated potential early in the outlook period until the impacts of tropical weather conditions begin to be felt. The Southwestern fire season should begin to end in early July as a below average and perhaps late monsoon arrives.

The full summary, including forecast maps for each month from May through July, can be found at [this link](#).

**Current Incident Resource Commitments**

Category	April 12th	April 19th	April 26th
Area Command Teams	0	0	--
NIMO Teams	0	0	--
Type 1 Teams	0	0	--
Type 2 Teams	0	0	--
Crews	0	0	--
Engines	49	9	--
Helicopters	0	1	--
Total FF/Overhead	205	60	--

Sources: [Predictive Services, National Interagency Fire Center](#); [NICC IMSR, Friday, April 19th](#).

**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**

**April 8** – The Senate passed S. 1057, to direct the Secretary of the Interior to execute and carry out agreements concerning Colorado River Drought Contingency Management and Operations. Further, a unanimous-consent agreement was reached that when the Senate receives the papers on H.R. 2030, a similar House bill, if the text is identical to S. 1057, the bill be considered read three times and passed, with no intervening action or debate. This bill requires the Department of the Interior (DOI) to carry out the Colorado River Drought Contingency Plan which was submitted to Congress on March 19, 2019, by Arizona, California, Colorado, Nevada, New Mexico, Utah, and Wyoming. DOI must execute the plan without delay and operate applicable Colorado River System reservoirs accordingly.

**April 9** – The Senate passed H.R. 2030, to direct the Secretary of the Interior to execute and carry out agreements concerning Colorado River Drought Contingency Management and Operations, pursuant to the order of Monday, April 8, 2019.

**April 10** – The Committee on Environment and Public Works: Committee ordered favorably reported the following business items, among other bills:

- S.383, to support carbon dioxide utilization and direct air capture research, to facilitate the permitting and development of carbon capture, utilization, and sequestration projects and carbon dioxide pipelines.
- S. 747, to reauthorize the diesel emissions reduction program.

**April 11** – The Senate agreed to S. Res. 167, designating the week of April 20, 2019, through April 28, 2019, as “National Park Week.”

**April 11** – The Senate confirmed the nomination of David Bernhardt, of Virginia, to be Secretary of the Interior, by a vote of 56 yeas to 41 nays.

**April 11** – The Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources held a hearing to examine opportunities for energy innovation and other potential solutions to help address global climate change. There were no witnesses from federal agencies at the hearing.

### **House Actions**

**April 8** – The House passed H.R. 2030, to direct the Secretary of the Interior to execute and carry out agreements concerning Colorado River Drought Contingency Management and Operations. See Senate action, above, on S. 1057, for further information about this bill.

**April 9** – The Committee on Oversight and Reform held a hearing entitled “The Need for Leadership to Combat Climate Change and Protect National Security.” Testimony was heard from public witnesses. There were no witnesses from federal agencies.

**April 9** – The Committee on Oversight and Reform Subcommittee on Environment held a hearing entitled “Climate Change, Part I: The History of a Consensus and the Causes of Inaction.” Testimony was heard from public witnesses. There were no witnesses from federal agencies.

## **National Park Service**

### **National Park System**

**The Dozen Best Parks** – In 2016, former *National Geographic* travel photographer Jonathan Irish and NASA employee Stephanie Payne decided to visit all 59 national parks within 52 weeks – and were successful in doing so. The pair, who had regularly visited national parks as children, spent as many as nine days in some of these parks to see the sites that many travelers never get to visit. In a recent article in *Travel + Leisure*, reprinted by *SFGate*, they named the twelve parks that they considered the best of the 59. Check out the article at the following link to see which ones they picked. It includes a slideshow of the parks. Source: Talia Avakian, [Travel + Leisure](#).

### **Around The Parks**

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

- *Cape Lookout NS* – Strong easterly winds have created unusually large, layered sand pedestals at the north end of North Core Banks. According to the park’s Facebook page, sand pedestals are formed when the sand is not uniformly hardened or resistant. Wind blows away the loose sand, leaving domes or pedestals which are more wind resistant due to moisture or cementation that are called “salcrete” (sand stuck together by salt crystals). These pedestals consist of layers of light-colored minerals, such as quartz, and darker minerals, such as magnetite or ilmenite, creating a layer-cake look. The wind then cuts through the layers, leaving the designs. See the following for pictures and a short video of the pedestals. Source: Mark Price, [Raleigh News and Observer](#).

- *Hawaii Volcanoes NP* – A state-authorized program permitting the issuance of specialty license plates featuring the park’s Kilauea volcano has proven very popular – and a significant fundraiser for Hawaii Volcanoes. Vehicle owners can opt to pay extra for the plates to help finance resource protection and educational programs within the park. Maui company Sae Design created the images as a donation to the National Park Service, which also offers specialty license plates at a handful of mainland national parks, including Yosemite, Yellowstone and Rocky Mountain. There’s one for Haleakala, too. The plates are available statewide through each county’s participating DMV office. The designated park gets \$18 from both the initial \$35.50 fee and the annual \$25 renewal charge. Hawaii Volcanoes has so far received \$135,000 from the program. Source: Jason Armstrong, [Honolulu Civil Beat](#).
- *National Mall and Memorial Parks* – The Peace Corps Commemorative Foundation proposes to establish a permanent memorial on the Mall commemorating the founding of the Peace Corps and the ideals on which the Peace Corps was founded. The NPS and the foundation are working together to prepare an EA identifying potential sites and design guidelines for the memorial and assessing the proposed projects potential impacts. They’ll be working on 106 compliance at the same time. Comments are being taken until April 26th at the park’s [PEPC webpage](#). Source: National Park Service.
- *Salem Maritime NHS* – On April 16th, the park’s replica East Indiaman merchant ship, the *Friendship*, returned to the water for the first time after more than two-and-a-half years of repairs at Gloucester Marine Railways. The project took longer than expected as workers from the Maine-based Boothbay Harbor Shipyard, tasked with making the repairs, found more rot in the hull and other parts of the ship that needed to be fixed. What started as a four-month, \$226,000 project for hull work, engine maintenance, and mast seating repairs ended up costing more than \$1.5 million. The *Friendship* was scheduled to return to its home dock in Salem on April 22nd. Source: Dustin Luca, [Salem News](#).
- *Yellowstone NP* – Satellite imagery has revealed a new thermal area in the Tern Lake area of the park. Because Yellowstone is so large and because there are so many thermal areas, researchers only recently identified this one, confirming its presence by comparing current satellite images with those from past decades. A thermal area is a contiguous geologic unit that includes one or more thermal features (like fumaroles, hot springs, or geysers) surrounded by hydrothermally altered ground, hydrothermal mineral deposits, geothermal gas emissions, heated ground, and/or a lack of vegetation. “Its discovery not only helps scientists better understand how the park is evolving,” reports the *New York Times*, “but it cements the notion that there really is nowhere else like [Yellowstone] on the planet.” The newly emerging thermal area is located at 44.6635° N latitude, 110.279° W longitude, and can be seen using Google Earth. Source: Robin George Andrews, [New York Times](#).

## **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**

**Court Blocks DOI Coal Leasing Initiative** – The March 27th edition of this newsletter carried a *Washington Post* story on the administration’s “extraordinary record of legal defeat” in the courts on environmental and other issues due to its “failure to follow the most basic rules of governance for shifting policy, including providing legitimate explanations supported by facts and, where required, public input.” An April 21st *New York Times* validated that observation under this headline: “Judge Delivers Major Setback to Trump Policy to Increase Coal Mining on Federal Land.” Here are the first paragraphs of the story: “A federal judge late Friday delivered a significant setback to the Trump administration’s policy of promoting coal, ruling that the Interior Department acted illegally when it sought to lift an Obama-era moratorium on coal mining on public lands. The decision, by Judge Brian



Morris of the United States District Court of the District of Montana, does not reinstate President Barack Obama's 2016 freeze on new coal mining leases on public lands. That policy was part of an effort by the Obama administration to curtail the burning of coal, a major producer of greenhouse gases contributing to climate change. But the court ruling does say that the 2017 Trump administration policy, enacted by former Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke, to overturn Mr. Obama's coal mining ban did not include adequate studies of the environmental effects of the mining, as required by the National Environmental Policy Act of 1970, or NEPA, one of the nation's bedrock environmental laws... The decision means that 'the Interior Department has to go back to the drawing board if they want to continue to sell coal mining leases on public lands — they have to do a better job of legally and scientifically justifying this,' said Jenny Harbine, an attorney for Earthjustice, who took part in the oral arguments against the Trump administration." Source: Coral Davenport, [New York Times](#).

## **House and Senate**

**Congressional Support Grows For Fixing Parks** – On April 16th, the Pew Charitable Trusts posted this story on its webpage: “[Momentum] is building in Congress for passage of legislation to provide funding for deferred maintenance across the park system, and numerous members of Congress are touring parks in their states to raise awareness of the need to fix these sites. Over half of park assets—from trails, historic buildings, visitor centers, and roads to other infrastructure such as water, sewer, and electrical systems—are in disrepair. The estimated cost of making all overdue repairs is \$11.9 billion. Since Feb. 14, when a bipartisan group of representatives and senators introduced bills (H.R. 1225 and S. 500) to restore our parks, one-third of senators and over one-third of House members from both sides of the aisle have signed on as co-sponsors. The White House has also expressed support for the legislation. That enthusiasm reflects the will of the voters: A poll by The Pew Charitable Trusts found that more than 75 percent of Americans back the proposal to provide up to \$6.5 billion over five years to address deferred maintenance issues. More than 3,000 local elected officials, organizations, and businesses, including veterans' groups, state tourism societies, hotel and restaurant associations, contractors, and recreation industry companies, have endorsed the legislation.” Source: [The Pew Charitable Trusts](#).

## **Climate and Conservation**

This section covers the myriad interconnected, conservation-related threats that are transforming the national parks, their ecosystems, and the world ecosystem, 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:

- *Alaska Experiencing One Of Warmest Springs On Record* – The last issue of this newsletter contained a reference to a recent article on the rapid warming of Alaska, where temperatures are rising faster than anywhere else in the United States. Last Friday, the *Washington Post* ran a related story, reporting that “one of Alaska's warmest springs on record is causing a dangerous thaw.” The average temperature for March recorded at the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration observatory in Utqiagvik (formerly Barrow) was 18.6 degrees Fahrenheit above normal. These historic warm temperatures have also been linked to vanishing ice on the Bering and Chukchi seas west of Alaska – both areas set records this year for the lowest amount of ice ever recorded in March. The thaw was described as “dangerous” because several people have died due to their snowmobiles crashing through rapidly thinning ice. Source: Sarah Kaplan, [Washington Post](#).
- *Six DRC Park Staff Killed* – Defending parks and protected areas from poachers and other intruders has always been a dangerous business, never more so than in Africa. That fact was borne out again on April 9th, when five rangers and their driver were killed in an ambush in Virunga National Park in the Democratic Republic of Congo, home of rare and endangered mountain gorillas. Over the course of its history, 175 rangers and park staff have died

defending the park and its gorillas, making it hands-down the most dangerous park in the world. Contributions to the rangers' families can be made to the [Fallen Rangers Fund](#). Details about the incident can be read at the following link. Source: Shreya Dasgupta, [Mongabay](#).

**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:

- *Protecting Ocean Habitats* – Last week, The Nature Conservancy announced a \$1.6 billion plan to help ensure the protection of up to 1.5 million square miles of the world's most biodiversity-critical ocean habitats, which is a 15% increase in protected areas of this nature already in existence. As GreenBiz explained, the "Blue Bonds for Conservation initiative will refinance and restructure debt for coastal and island countries, so long as those nations commit to protecting at least 30 percent of their near-shore ocean areas, including coral reefs, mangroves and other important ocean habitats." See [Green Biz article](#) for more information. Source: Monica Medina and Miro Korenha, [Our Daily Planet](#).

## **National Park System Issues**

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

- *Glen Canyon NRA/Lake Mead NRA* – The Bureau of Reclamation and Nevada's Desert Research Institute have teamed up on a new study using remote sensors on floating platforms at Lake Powell to pinpoint how much water is lost to evaporation. Previous techniques for estimating such water loss have been found to be as much as 30 percent off from actual loss. That's significant in a body of water as big as Lake Powell, where even a one-foot change in the water level represents a difference of tens of billions of gallons. Last year, evaporative losses at Lake Powell were estimated at about 386,000 acre-feet using the old calculation. By comparison, evaporative loss estimates for Lake Mead range from about 600,000 acre-feet to as much as 875,000 acre-feet annually. "Accounting for every drop of water in the system has never been more important, as river users prepare to take voluntary cuts under an interstate drought agreement now undergoing congressional review," says the Las Vegas Review-Miner. "Then there is climate change, which scientists warn could further diminish the Colorado by raising temperatures and increasing evaporation. In the long run...access to accurate, real-time data might lead to new management strategies designed to minimize evaporative losses by moving water around and storing it in different places at different times of the year." Source: Henry Breaun, [Las Vegas Review-Miner](#).
- *Yosemite NP* – On April 12th, KQED in San Francisco ran a 12-minute radio story on the dying Lyell Glacier in Yosemite. Here's the abstract on the show that appeared on the station's webpage: "As a geologist, Greg Stock never imagined he'd witness the death of a glacier. The Lyell Glacier is Yosemite National Park's largest ice mass, and Stock has been researching it for more than a decade. The famed California scientist John Muir first studied the Lyell in the 1870s. But the glacier has slowly shrunk. Soon it will completely disappear. What do you call a glacier that no longer moves?" The radio show can be heard at the following link. Source: [KQED News](#).

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

- *Whiskeytown NRA* – The NPS released its after action review of the Carr Fire on April 16th. Investigators interviewed numerous people involved in the fire and examined 19 areas related to the blaze, which broke out west of Redding on July 23rd, burned most of the park, and ended up being among the top 10 deadliest and most destructive fires ever to occur in California. The full text of the 40-page report [can be read at this link](#); the following news story link provides a summary of the findings. Source: Alayna Shulman, [Redding Record Searchlight](#).



**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:

- *Olympic NP* – In 2013, the Elwha and Glines Canyon dams, located on the Elwha River within the park, were breached as part of an effort to reverse decades of environmental damage to an important river system and help restore depleted native salmonid populations. Earlier this month, the park, the Lower Elwha Klallam Tribe and the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife agreed to extend the current fishing closure on the river for two more years in order to better attain this objective. The closure applies to a number of species, including four federally listed fish species that are needed to recolonize habitats between and upstream of the two former dam sites. Mountain lakes in the Elwha basin within the park and Lake Sutherland will remain open to sport fishing from the fourth Saturday in April through the end of October. Source: [National Parks Traveler](#).
- *Redwood NP* – A plan has been developed to reintroduce California condors to the Pacific Northwest that includes a proposed condor release facility in Redwood National Park. This could occur as soon as late 2020. Six birds will be released each of the first years, with the hope that they become a self-sustaining population. The project, a partnership between the NPS and the Yurok Tribe and FWS, proposes the establishment of a collaboratively managed facility in the tribe's ancestral territory. As part of the effort, the federal government is seeking public comments on the proposal to establish a Northwest condor population. Comments will be accepted on the proposal through June 4th. Information on how to do so can be found [at this webpage](#). Source: Ruth Schneider, [Eureka Times-Standard](#).

**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:

- *Mammoth Cave NP* – Visitors and park staff have been seeing an increase in the numbers of invasive Asian carp – an umbrella term for bighead, silver, black and grass carp – in the Nolin and Green Rivers. The fish eat plankton, which native mussels and fish rely on, removing the base source of the food chain that all fish depend upon at some point in their life cycles. That damages the ecosystem and threatens vulnerable populations, including the region's federally endangered freshwater mussel species native to Kentucky waters. There has been particular concern about the Green River, which is considered the fourth-most biologically diverse river system in the country. So far, no methods or plans have been developed for removing the carp from the rivers, or at least limiting their spread. Source: Caroline Eggers, [Bowling Green Daily News](#).

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

- *Yellowstone NP* – Last week, a state court judge in Montana invalidated a permit that would have allowed Lucky Minerals, a Canadian mining company, to develop a gold mine on private land north of the park (you can read the text of the court's decision [at this link](#)). The Greater Yellowstone Coalition and Earthjustice sued the State of Montana to invalidate the permit, which would have allowed the mining operations to begin in July, despite the fact that the permit did not consider the drilling's impact on water quality and wildlife. Lucky Minerals intends to appeal the decision, their CEO told the Associated Press, but unless and until the decision is reversed, the company is barred from exploration. Source: Monica Medina and Miro Korenha, [Our Daily Planet](#).

## **Park People**

### **NPS Alumni**

#### **Deny Galvin Receives NPCA Centennial Award**

On April 3rd, at its 38th Annual Salute to the Parks and a celebration of its 100 years of working for the protection of America's national parks, the National Parks Conservation Association presented former Deputy Director Denis P. Galvin with its Centennial Award for outstanding contributions toward ensuring our national parks are ready for their second century of service. Deny was introduced by former Director Robert Stanton.

"Deny joined the National Park Service in 1963 as a civil engineer at Sequoia National Park and then worked as an engineer at Mount Rainier and training specialist at Grand Canyon," said NPCA in its press release on the event. "Over his distinguished Park Service career, Deny's contributions and his dedication to public service led him to take on the prestigious role of deputy director for the National Park Service and served in that position for nine years under the Reagan, Clinton and George W. Bush administrations."

"During his remarkable career, Deny established the Natural Resource Challenge, creating a new source of funding to increase the role of science in decision-making within the Park Service, and developed a long-term protection plan for Sequoia National Park's giant forest of 3,000-year-old trees that at the time were threatened by sprawling development."

"Deny is a treasure and an institution for America's national parks,' said Theresa Pierno, president and CEO for NPCA. 'From testifying as an expert witness on Capitol Hill to serving on the National Parks Second Century Commission, he has shown time and again that his expertise and broad understanding of national park issues are as relevant as ever. NPCA and our National Park System have benefitted from his unwavering support to protect our nation's heritage and most treasured natural wonders.'

"Advocating for the parks and related programs is always necessary,' said Galvin. 'We are a democracy – advocacy is a duty and a privilege. I am honored to receive this recognition from NPCA. For 100 years they have served the nation by spearheading the protection and growth of our amazing National Park System.'"

The text of Deny's comments follow:

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"Thank you, Bob. You know, he can make anybody sound good.

"Seriously, I've always been proud of the fact that we wound up at the leadership of the NPS together. A director from a farm in rural Texas and his deputy, the son of Irish immigrants from the streets of south Boston. It says something good about the country I think, or at least the country we grew up in.

"The NPCA strategic plan has a goal that that points to broadening the communities that advocate for the parks. Tonight, I'm doing my part by enlisting youth, my two grandsons Kieran and Finn, accompanied by my wife, Martha, who has shared this journey with me, its ups and its downs.

"Looking back on that journey, I am struck by the many outstanding people I have worked with. As representatives of hundreds (if not thousands) of others, let me introduce you to three of them.

"Today the life of Alexander Hamilton is prominent because of the hit musical. His home, Hamilton Grange, an NPS unit, has been restored and relocated to St. Nicholas Park in New York City. But in 1973, when I first visited, it was turned sideways and jammed between a church and an apartment building. One entered through a door cut in the side of the house. That day I encountered Raleigh Daniels, the African American caretaker of the house. He was the only NPS employee there that day. He showed me around. He knew a lot about Hamilton, he called him the general. He knew a lot about the house and its history. He loved the man and the building and had cared for it for many years. It took decades to solve all the issues associated with moving and restoring the house, but as with so many projects, it got done. But it could not have been done without the decades of love and care of Raleigh Daniels.

“Next there is Wilhelmina Harris – Mrs. Harris, I never heard anybody use her first name. She was the first superintendent of Adams NHS in Quincy, Mass. She was also the second woman superintendent in the NPS. She assumed the title in 1950. She came to the NPS with the house, having been Brooks Adams’ (the last Adams to live in the house) executive assistant. Of course, there was some grousing about all of that, but I quickly found out she was a first-rate manager. She could play the Adams family like a piano. The way to her heart was to fix up the ‘old house’ – I took care of that. She retired in 1987.

“Finally, Jim Ellis at the Denver Service Center. I believe his title was soils engineer, I think the only one with that title in the NPS. In the 1980’s, the entrance road to Mesa Verde was subject to chronic closures due to landslides. We called in our highway partners, the FHWA, to do a study and they recommended abandoning the current alignment and moving the entrance road to a new location. The estimate for the move was \$100 million. Jim had another idea, modifying the drainage and widening the road in critical locations to accommodate some of the slides without requiring closure. That’s what we did, for around \$40 million. Jim saved the taxpayers \$60 million! We probably paid him \$2 million for his entire career.

“Aside from the fact that these are good stories about memorable colleagues what’s the purpose of these mini biographies? It’s to remind you that it really does take a village. You are part of that village.

These are difficult times for conservation and the parks. The agency certainly cannot speak for itself. NPCA leads the village that speaks out for this legacy. In bad times to prevent bad things from happening. In good times to enhance our heritage.

“Fellow board member Bob Keiter, in a recent article in the *Harvard Environmental Law Review*, reminds us of the many laws and private efforts that over the last century and a half constitute a pretty impressive national conservation network, not just the national parks, but wilderness, land trusts, wild and scenic rivers, historic preservation, land and water conservation fund, and many others.

“So, we have the tools, but success will continue to require your continued work and your support. The three people I spoke of represent many others we are indebted to. They illustrate the combination of love, skill, persistence and expertise that is required to maintain this village that is our home.

“Twenty years ago, the NPS Advisory Board under John Hope Franklin did a report called ‘Rethinking the National Parks for the 21st Century.’ Its last two sentences encapsulate the task: ‘[By] caring for the parks and conveying the park ethic we care for ourselves and act on behalf of the future. The larger purpose of this mission is to build a citizenry that is committed to conserving its heritage and its home on earth.’”

### **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:

- *Golden Gate National Parks Conservancy* – On April 17th, *National Parks Traveler* posted a story on Christine Lehnertz, “who last month abruptly ended her National Park Service career rather than return to Grand Canyon National Park and a subordinate who made false allegations against her,” being selected as the new CEO and president of the Golden Gate National Parks Conservancy. She’ll take on her new job on May 13th. “Lehnertz, Grand Canyon’s superintendent who had been on administrative reassignment from October through early February while the Interior Department’s Office of Inspector General looked into claims that she had fostered a hostile work atmosphere at the park and spent recklessly on park housing, quit the Park Service in March rather than returning to the park. At the time she said that what she experienced the last few months convinced her she could better impact people’s lives elsewhere. Though the OIG cleared her of any wrongdoing, and in its report created a portrait of her accuser as determined not to follow her directives and even impede them, the

National Park Service took no publicly announced action against him. Lehnertz's Park Service career included serving as superintendent at both Grand Canyon National Park and Golden Gate National Recreation Area, as director of the NPS Pacific West Region, and as deputy superintendent at Yellowstone National Park." Source: Kurt Repanshek, [National Parks Traveler](#).

- *Gettysburg NMP* – Kristina Heister is now serving as the park's acting superintendent and will remain in the position until August. She's currently serving as the superintendent at Upper Delaware S&RR. Source: Jason Martz, [Gettysburg NMP](#).
- *Glacier NP* – Pete Webster, who has been chief ranger at Yellowstone since 2015, has been selected as deputy superintendent for Glacier. Webster and his family have strong ties to the region. While still in college, he moved to St. Mary in 1986-87 for a summer job at a local hotel. Webster then returned to Glacier as an intern in 1988, as a seasonal park ranger from 1991-93, and as the subdistrict ranger in St. Mary from 2004-08. Source: [KPAX News](#).
- *Moore's Creek NB* – Matthew Woods, a former high school history teacher who joined the National Park Service through the Teacher Ranger Teacher program, has become the park's superintendent. During his years at the park, Woods served as regional lead coach for interpretation. He is currently a representative on the state board working on the upcoming commemoration of the 250th anniversary of the American Revolution and the Declaration of Independence. Source: [Newport Coastal Review](#).

## **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.

- *Delaware Water Gap NRA* – Around 7:30 a.m. on April 6th, an 18-year-old was found semi-conscious by his father in Worthington State Forest, which is within the boundaries of the park. He'd been abandoned along a nearby roadway by two camping companions and spent the night partially clothed and under the influence of hallucinatory and other drugs. He was taken to Pocono Medical Center, where he was admitted in critical condition. An investigation was immediately begun by Worthington rangers, who learned that another boy, age 16, had been abandoned along the Appalachian Trail on top of Kittatinny Ridge. The foursome had apparently backpacked into the park with the intent of camping out for two nights; for reasons that are as yet unknown, the members of the group separated and the two teens were left in the woods while heavily under the influence of a combination of drugs. An interagency search was begun. The second boy was found by a canine team and NPS ranger Ron Matthews at 7 p.m. that evening about a half mile from the point last seen. He was semi-conscious and suffering from the effects of hypothermia and the drugs he had taken. At the time he was found, there were 50 people from ten state and federal agencies and volunteer groups participating in the search. An NPS overhead team from the park, with ranger Barry Sullivan as incident commander, managed the incident in cooperation with state personnel. Submitted by Chief Ranger Doyle Nelson.
- *Lake Mead NRA* – Just before midnight on April 10th, a 29-year-old Las Vegas man was found floating in the lake's water by a fisherman. He was taken to the Hemenway launch ramp and rangers were notified. According to the rescued man, who was subsequently taken to a hospital for treatment of hypothermia, his wife, their 15-month-old baby, and a second man were with him in a 19-foot ski boat when it began developing problems near the Hemenway Wall area of the lake earlier that evening. While the operator attempted to restart the boat's engine, it began taking on water over the stern and sinking rapidly. The rescued man lost contact with the others in his party shortly after entering the water. A search for the three missing people was immediately begun. Debris believed to be from the boat was found off Promontory Point at the entrance to the Black Canyon area. The body of the infant, who was

wearing a life jacket, was found around 3 a.m., but no sign was found of the other two victims. They were last seen clinging to an ice chest; neither was wearing a PFD. At the time of the report, a search for the pair was continuing. Submitted by Karen Whitney.

- *Statue of Liberty NM* – Three hundred members of the Teamster's union conducted a demonstration on Liberty Island under a special use permit On April 25th. The demonstration was held in conjunction with the union's national trucking strike. The Teamsters gathered on the island for about an hour; near the end of the demonstration, the group's leaders invited members toward the base of the statue for a planned arrest of one of their members. About 80 Teamsters came forward with the intention of entering the statue's lobby. A short standoff ensued, but was brought to a head by the timely arrival of six Park Police officers and a lieutenant. New York police officers also had a response group waiting at the Battery, and the Coast Guard made a strong presence off the island with three vessels. The protest leaders were reminded that they had gotten the media attention they sought and that they were now upsetting visitors who were not able to continue their visits. The Teamsters were asked to move to the ferry terminal and leave the island. They did so. There were no arrests or injuries. Submitted by John Lynch.

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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](mailto:BHalainen@gmail.com). Please don't submit them via his personal email address or Facebook page.

## **A Closing Observation**

"We [in America] enjoy comforts never known before, but they are not enough; somehow, someday, we must make contact with naturalness, the source of all life. The frontiers are still too close to forget and the memory of wilderness goes far back into the eons when man lived close to the earth and was in tune with the ancient rhythms. We still listen to the song of the wilderness and longs for a land we have lost. Civilization has not changed emotional needs which were ours long before it arose. This is the reason for the hunger, the true meaning of wilderness and the search of moderns for places where they can know it again. The battle to save the last remnants is not only a struggle for freedom and beauty, but for the spirit of man in a world that seems to have lost its balance and perspective."

Author and former Wilderness Society president [Sigurd Olson](#)

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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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