



## The Coalition Weekly Report Wednesday, June 26, 2019

Volume 3

Number 23

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### Incidents

#### **Glen Canyon NRA Woman Killed In DUI Boating Accident**

Jayla Hiatt, 18, was killed on June 14th when the boat she was riding in struck a rock and ejected her from the vessel.

Park dispatch received a report of the accident in mid-afternoon. Rangers from Halls Crossing and Bullfrog responded. They found that Hiatt had already expired from her injuries, but that the other seven passengers in the boat had suffered only minor and non-life-threatening injuries. They were all taken to the Bullfrog Medical Clinic for further evaluation and later released.

According to the initial report, 21-year-old Triston Harrison was driving the boat when it struck a rock and landed on the beach, ejecting Hiatt. Harrison was arrested for driving under the influence, automobile homicide and criminal negligence, along with failure to maintain proper lookout on a boat.

Deputies said that Harrison failed to obey navigation buoys, traveled on the wrong side of the lake, and failed to keep a safe distance from another boat that was towing a tube. They also reported that they could smell alcohol on his person and that his eyes were glossy and bloodshot. Several field tests also indicated that he was intoxicated at the time of the accident.

Source: Hunter Geisel, [KUTV News](#).

#### **Ozark NSR One Killed, Two Injured When Tree Falls On Boat**

One person died and two other people were injured when a tree fell on a boat on the Current River on the afternoon of Friday, June 21st.

The incident occurred near the Waymeyer Shute access. According to a preliminary report from the state highway patrol, Levi Mayberry, 22, was the boat's operator. He was killed while headed downstream when a tree fell, hitting him.

A 26-year-old woman and a 25-year-old man, who were in the boat with Mayberry, suffered moderate injuries and were taken by EMS to a Poplar Bluff hospital.

Source: James Long, [KFVS News](#).

#### **National Park System Park Operating Status Summary**

A summary of recent openings, closures and other changes in the status of parks and their facilities:

- *Sequoia NP* – The Bearpaw High Sierra Camp in Sequoia National Park will remain closed for the entire 2019 season due to damage to tent cabin structures as a result of above-average snowpack (175% of normal) and delayed access for pack animals critical for repairs and supplies. Source: [Porterville Recorder](#).
- *Rocky Mountain NP* – The on-again, off-again status of Trail Ridge Road this year continues. The road was closed over the weekend due to snowfall in the mountains, but was expected to reopen Monday. Snowplows reached Lava Cliffs on Sunday but had to turn around due to 50 mph winds and heavy snow. The road had one- to five-foot snowdrifts this weekend; temperatures overnight were in the 20s. Source: Carina Julig, [Denver Post](#).
- *Glacier NP* – Meanwhile, up in Montana, the entire 50-mile length of Going-to-the-Sun Road reopened to vehicles last Sunday morning, allowing visitors to drive to Logan Pass for the first time this year. Last summer Sun Road opened on June 22nd; it opened on June 28th in 2017. Source: [Daily Inter Lake](#).
- *Yosemite NP* – And over in California, Tioga Road reopened to all vehicles, including bicycles, on Friday, June 21st. The Tuolumne Meadows Visitor Center, Wilderness Center, and Tuolumne Meadows Campground remain closed. Opening dates for the 2019 season have not been determined. Source: [Sierra News Online](#).

## **National Park System**

### **Follow-ups On Previously Reported Incidents**

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

- *Sequoia NP* – The body of Ling Dao, who'd been missing since June 13th, was found on Tuesday, June 18th, on the north side of Mount Whitney. The cause of death remains under investigation. Dao flew into Las Vegas on Tuesday, June 11th, planned to summit Mt. Whitney on June 12th and drive back to Las Vegas after summiting, then catch a red-eye flight back home in order to be at work on June 13th. The search consisted of about 30 square miles of high mountain terrain. The search teams included staff from the park, Inyo County Sheriff's Office, Inyo Search and Rescue, Mono Search and Rescue, China Lake Mountain Rescue, and aerial reconnaissance from CHP- Inland Division Air Operations. Source: [KMPH News](#).

## **National Fire Situation**

### **National Interagency Fire Center**

#### **Increased Fire Activity Centers On Alaska**

NIFC remains at PL 2. As of yesterday, 27 large fires were reported nationwide; collectively, they'd burned 263,177 acres in six states – 114,000 of those acres in Alaska and Arizona. NIFC has dispatched five crews to help Canadian firefighters with blazes in Alberta.

No large fires were reported in NPS areas.

**NPS/Interagency Fire News** – Stories pertaining to wildland fire and fire-related activities that involved the NPS and its fellow agencies.

- *NFPA Releases Annual Summary Of Firefighter Fatalities* – NFPA's annual summary of firefighter fatalities, this one covering 2018, reports a total of 64 on-duty firefighter deaths during that year. Overexertion, stress, and medical issues accounted for by far the largest share of deaths. Of the 28 deaths in this category, 25 were classified as sudden cardiac deaths (usually heart attacks), a high number but the third consecutive year that the toll has been below 30. The second-largest number of on duty deaths stemmed from vehicle crashes, with 11

deaths in 2018. The full 26-page report can be read at this link: [Firefighter Fatalities in the United States – 2018](#). Source: [Sierra Sun Times](#).

- *BLM Proposes Plan To Stop Rangeland Fires* – BLM has released a draft EA for a proposal intended to stop rangeland wildfires in a huge swath of the West that hosts cattle ranching and recreation and is home to imperiled sage grouse. The analysis, released on June 21st, examines the impact of altering or removing vegetation on strips of land up to 165 yards wide and 11,000 miles long in Idaho, Washington, Oregon, California, Nevada and Utah. BLM hasn't estimated the cost yet because it's not yet clear what types of fuel breaks field managers might choose. Public comments on the analysis are being taken until early August. Source: Keith Ridler, Associated Press, via [KOMO News](#).
- *DOI Issues FY 20 Fire Management Budget Proposal* – DOI has issued its wildland fire management “budget justifications and performance information” for FY 2020. It's too long (51 pages) to offer any kind of an adequate summary here, but if you're so inclined you can read the entire PDF document at the following link. Source: [Department of the Interior](#).

### Current Incident Resource Commitments

Category	June 7th	June 18th	June 25th
Area Command Teams	0	0	0
NIMO Teams	0	0	0
Type 1 Teams	0	1	1
Type 2 Teams	1	2	3
Crews	39	40	65
Engines	158	79	104
Helicopters	16	24	31
Total FF/Overhead	1,902	1,841	2,689

### Fires/Acreage

Category	2019 Total	2009-2018 Ave	2019 Variance
Year-to-Date Fires	18,205	28,811	- 10,606
Year-to-Date Acres	579,901	1,862,117	- 1,282,216

Sources: [NICC Incident Management Situation Report](#); [National Interagency Fire Center](#); [IMSR Archives](#); [InciWeb Incident Information System](#).

### 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

**June 18** - The Senate passed H.J. Res. 60, requesting the Secretary of the Interior to authorize unique and one-time arrangements for displays on the National Mall and the Washington Monument during

the period beginning on July 16, 2019 and ending on July 20, 2019. The resolution asks that the secretary authorize the display of NASA and Smithsonian artifacts, digital content, film footage, and associated historic audio and imagery in and around the vicinity of the National Mall, including projections onto the surface of the Washington Monument for five nights of public display in commemoration of the first moon landing. The joint resolution now goes to the president to be signed into law.

**June 18** – The Committee on Energy and Natural Resources held a hearing to examine deferred maintenance needs and potential solutions on federal lands administered by the Department of the Interior and the USFS in the Department of Agriculture. Testifying were Scott Cameron, principal deputy assistant secretary for Policy, Management and Budget at DOI, Denise Lago, associate chief of the Forest Service, and public witnesses.

**June 19** – The Senate agreed to S. Res. 253, designating June 19, 2019, as “Juneteenth Independence Day” in recognition of June 19, 1865, the date on which news of the end of slavery reached the slaves in the southwestern states.

**June 19** – The Committee on the Budget held a hearing to examine fixing a broken budget process, focusing on lessons from states. There were public witnesses at the hearing, but none from federal agencies.

**June 19** – The Committee on Energy and Natural Resources Subcommittee on National Parks held a hearing to examine:

- S. 225, to provide for partnerships among state and local governments, regional entities, and the private sector to preserve, conserve, and enhance the visitor experience at nationally significant battlefields of the American Revolution, the War of 1812, and the Civil War.
- S. 298, to establish the Springfield Race Riot National Historic Monument in the state of Illinois as a unit of the national park system upon acquisition of sufficient lands to constitute a manageable unit. The department testified in opposition to the bill so as to focus on the deferred maintenance backlog and other critical needs.
- S. 327, to amend the Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act to provide for a lifetime national recreational pass for any veteran with a service-connected disability.
- S. 389, to authorize the Society of the First Infantry Division to make modifications to the First Division Monument located in President’s Park in the District of Columbia.
- S. 641, to update the map of and modify the maximum acreage available for inclusion in Yucca House National Monument to allow the acquisition of an additional 160 acres.
- S. 774, to adjust the boundary of the Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area to include the Rim of the Valley Corridor, which would add 191,000 acres to the park. The department testified in opposition to the legislation in order to focus on the deferred maintenance backlog and other critical needs.
- S. 849, to provide for the inclusion on the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Wall of the names of the lost crew members of the *U.S.S. Frank E. Evans* killed on June 3, 1969. The department deferred to the Department of Defense on this legislation, as they have jurisdiction over which names go on the memorial wall and they have determined that the lost crew members of the *Evans* do not meet the criteria for inclusion.
- S. 1152, to provide for the transfer of administrative jurisdiction over certain parcels of federal land in Arlington, Virginia. The bill would transfer just over 16 acres encompassing Memorial Avenue – the road leading into Arlington National Cemetery – from the National Park Service to the the Army, which runs the cemetery. The National Park Service would receive just over an acre adjacent to Arlington House – The Robert E. Lee Memorial, which includes wooded land and an historic building, from the Secretary of the Army.
- S. 1582, to establish White Sands National Park in the state of New Mexico as a unit of the National Park System.
- S. 1705, to authorize the Every Word We Utter Monument in the District of Columbia (or its environs) to commemorate the passage of the 19th Amendment to the Constitution, which gave women the right to vote. The department asked the committee to defer action on the bill until

the organization that would be authorized to establish the memorial attains 501(c)(3) status under the Internal Revenue Code.

Deputy Director P. Daniel Smith was the witness for the Department of the Interior.

**June 19** – The Committee on Environment and Public Works approved the following, among other business items:

- S. 1014, to establish the Route 66 Centennial Commission.
- S. 349, to require the Secretary of Transportation to request nominations for, and make determinations regarding, roads to be designated under the national scenic byways program.
- S. 1689, to permit states to transfer certain funds from the state's clean water revolving fund to the state's drinking water revolving fund in certain circumstances.
- The nomination of Robert Wallace to be DOI's assistant secretary overseeing the NPS and USFWS.

**June 19** – The Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs approved the following bills, among other business items:

- S. 1419, to require agencies to publish an advance notice of proposed rulemaking for major rules.
- H.R. 150, to modernize Federal grant reporting.

**June 20** – The Senate agreed to S. Res. 257, designating June 20, 2019, as "American Eagle Day," celebrating the recovery and restoration of the bald eagle, the national symbol of the United States.

**June 20** – The Committee on Energy and Natural Resources approved the nomination of Robert Wallace as DOI assistant secretary for fish and wildlife and parks.

**June 20** – The Committee on Energy and Natural Resources held a hearing to examine opportunities and challenges for advanced geothermal energy development in the United States. Testifying were Daniel R. Simmons, assistant secretary for energy efficiency and renewable energy, and Katherine R. Young, geothermal program manager at the National Renewable Energy Laboratory (both from of the Department of Energy) and public witnesses.

### **House Actions**

**June 19** – The Committee on Natural Resources approved the following bills, among other business:

- H.R. 1088, to authorize the Society of the First Infantry Division to make modifications to the First Division Monument located in President's Park in the District of Columbia.
- H.R. 1225, to establish, fund, and provide for the use of amounts in a National Park Service and Public Lands Legacy Restoration Fund to address the maintenance backlog of the National Park Service, United States Fish and Wildlife Service, Bureau of Land Management, and Bureau of Indian Education. The bill would provide up to \$6.5 billion from FY 2020 through FY 2024 for these agencies to deal with their deferred maintenance backlogs. The NPS would receive 80 percent of the total funding.
- H.R. 2427, to reauthorize the Chesapeake Bay Gateways and Watertrails Network grant assistance program from FY 2020 through FY 2025.
- H.R. 3195, to provide permanent, dedicated funding for the Land and Water Conservation Fund. The bill would require that the full \$900 million going into the fund, primarily from Outer Continental Shelf revenues, would have to be available for expenditure each fiscal year without further appropriation or fiscal year limitation.

**June 20** – The Committee on Natural Resources Subcommittee on Energy and Mineral Resources held a hearing entitled "Oil and Gas Development: Restoring Community Input and Public Participation in

Leasing Decisions.” Testimony was heard from Mike Nedd, deputy director of operations for BLM, and public witnesses.

## **The National Park Service**

### **National Park System**

A summary of articles pertaining to management and oversight of the NPS, to current trends and issues affecting the National Park System, or to either all or parts of the entire system:

- *The Spreading Tidal Wave Of Tourism* – The coinage of a new word, confirmed in its legitimacy by its appearance as a search term on Wikipedia, is a sure sign that a trend has become universal. The words “over” and “tourism” are now formally joined in the word [overtourism](#), which is defined, logically enough, as too many visitors in one place at the same time. The national parks, it turns out, are far from alone in this respect. Annie Lowery writes in the June 4th *Atlantic* that, worldwide, massive crowds are causing environmental degradation, dangerous conditions, and the impoverishment and pricing-out of locals. Example: Late in May, the Louvre closed because its workers had walked out, arguing that overcrowding had made the place dangerous and unmanageable. Its reached crisis proportions in Mallorca, Venice, Reykjavik and scores of other locations. The causes include increasing middleclass affluence, business trends like cruise ships and super cheap airlines, and social media (Instagram, Yelp and TripAdvisor). “International-tourist arrivals around the world have gone from a little less than 70 million as of 1960 to 1.4 billion today,” she reports. “Mass tourism...is a very new thing and a very big thing.” As for solutions to the problems – well, we’re working on that. Source: Annie Lowery, [Atlantic](#).
- *George Wright Society Launches New Journal* – GWS has a new journal – [Parks Stewardship Forum: The Interdisciplinary Journal of Place-Based Conservation](#). The journal is being produced through a partnership between the society and the University of California Berkeley’s Institute for Parks, People, and Biodiversity. Between 1981 and 2018, GWS published *The George Wright Forum*, an interdisciplinary journal devoted to discussion of crucial topics affecting parks, protected areas, and cultural sites,” says Dave Harmon, executive director of the society. “Now, we are transitioning that journal to a new identity and new publication platform and significantly expanding its scope and reach.” The journal will be published on the University of California’s [eScholarship Open Access Publications platform](#), which can be found at <https://escholarship.org>. Proposals are now being accepted for several departments in the Parks Stewardship Forum, including options for peer-reviewed publication. The deadline for abstracts of proposed submissions for the inaugural issue is July 15th. Proposals are also being accepted for future issues. [Submissions can be made to this website](#). Source: Dave Harmon.
- *Denver Service Center Issues Annual Report* – DSC’s annual report for 2018 has been released. If you’re interested in reading this online report, [click on this link](#).

### **Around The Parks**

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

- *Katmai NP&P* – The park has completed a new elevated bridge and boardwalk across the Brooks River, replacing a river-level bridge that was often closed to human tourists “because it was occupied by locals – brown bears.” The replacement for the old floating bridge was more than a decade in the making. The park has three sites where you can watch bears fishing, but you have to cross the river to get to all three. That often became a bottleneck, as rangers had to close it any time a bear got closer than 50 yards. The new bridge is 1,200 feet long and varies in height from eight to ten feet, allowing bears to pass below. The cost was \$5.6 million. The bridge features bear-proof gates on both ends. Source: Dan Joling, Associated Press, via [Minneapolis Star Tribune](#).

- *Mount Rainier NP* – The *Nisqually Valley News* ran an article on June 21st commemorating the 38th anniversary of the 1981 avalanche that killed ten climbers and their guide while ascending Mount Rainier – the worst mountaineering accident in American history. The avalanche was so massive and the victims buried so deep that they remain on the mountain to this day. The article contains a chronology of the day’s events and includes the results of an NPS board of inquiry. Source: Daryl C. McClary, [Nisqually Valley News](#).
- *National Mall* – Questions that have been in the air over the past several months about how two planned Fourth of July events would play out on the Mall – the annual televised “A Capitol Fourth” and the president’s new and separate “Salute To America” – have been resolved. Last week, Secretary Bernhardt issued a press release providing a schedule of how the two events would fit together. The annual parade takes place at noon along Constitution Avenue, the “Salute To America” will be at the Lincoln Memorial from 6:30 to 7:30 p.m., the “Capitol Fourth” concert will be on the Capitol’s west lawn from 8 to 9:30 p.m., and the fireworks will begin around 9 p.m. The latter will now be staged in West Potomac Park, though, instead of at the west end of the Mall. The new “Salute to America” event “will honor each of the nation’s five service branches with music, military demonstrations, flyovers and much more. Participants include the Old Guard Fife and Drum Corps, the U.S. Army Band (“Pershing’s Own”), the Armed Forces Chorus, the United States Marine Corps Silent Drill Team, and many others.” Source: [Department of the Interior](#).
- *National Mall* (continued) – Along with the two above-noted events on the Fourth, there will also in all probability be a remembrance of the 50th anniversary of the moon landing in 1969. As reported above in Don Hellmann’s summary of Congressional activities, Congress has passed a joint resolution asking the Secretary of the Interior to authorize unique and one-time arrangements for displays on the National Mall and the Washington Monument from July 16th to July 20th. The resolution asks that the secretary authorize the display of NASA and Smithsonian artifacts, digital content, film footage, and associated historic audio and imagery in and around the vicinity of the National Mall (including projections onto the surface of the Washington Monument) commemorating the first moon landing. The joint resolution has gone to the president to be signed into law.
- *North Country NST* – The *Grand Forks Herald* has posted a story on the status of the trail, which, when completed, will be the longest contiguous hiking trail in the nation, stretching from Vermont to North Dakota. About 3,100 miles of trail have been finished, with 1,500 miles to go. See the article for a status report. Source: John Myers, [Grand Forks Herald](#).
- *Fredericksburg and Spotsylvania NMP* – The Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation has received a grant of almost \$100,000 from the National Park Service’s American Battlefield Protection Program to help preserve 14.4 acres of the Spotsylvania battlefield – the Fifth Corps Brock Road Tract. The department is partnering with Central Virginia Battlefields Trust on the acquisition. CVBT invested \$205,000 last year to purchase and preserve the three adjoining parcels south of Brock Road and immediately above Hancock Drive that make up the Fifth Corps tract. It then launched a fundraising appeal to cover the outlay. The five-day Battle of Spotsylvania Court House in 1864 included numerous attacks back and forth across the tract. Source: Cathy Jett, [Free Lance-Star](#).
- *Yellowstone NP* – On June 12th, Cam Sholly, the park’s superintendent, made good use of the emergency response skills learned early in his career when he employed the Heimlich maneuver to save the life of a choking visitor at the Old Faithful Snow Lodge. Another person made a fruitless attempt at performing the maneuver on the young man, who soon lost consciousness. Sholly then stepped in, successfully cleared his airway, then went back to his dinner meeting and to completing plans for a visit the next day by Vice President Pence and Secretary Bernhardt. All in a day’s work. Source: Mark Davis, [Powell Tribune](#).



- *Yosemite NP* – Last week, ten-year-old Selah Schneiter became the youngest person on record to scale El Capitan. She was accompanied by her father, Mike, who is an avid climber – as is her mother Joy. It took the pair five days to reach the top. Said Selah: "Our motto was, 'How do you eat an elephant? Small bites.' So we were just trying to do one day at a time, one move at a time, one pitch at a time." She appeared on the Today Show on June 19th; click on the link that follows to see the interview, plus a video of her making the climb. Source: [Today Show](#).

## **The Federal Government**

### **The Administration**

News from the administration of consequence to federal land management and environmental protection agencies and to their employees.

- *Vice President Speaks In Favor Of Funding NPS Maintenance Backlog* – While visiting Yellowstone on June 13th, Vice President Pence called for Congress to pass legislation to make inroads on the National Park System's roughly \$12 billion maintenance backlog. "The Trump administration included a legislative proposal in its FY20 budget proposal that called for the creation of a Public Lands Infrastructure Fund," reports *National Park Traveler*. "As envisioned, the fund would be tapped to address deferred maintenance not just in the National Park System, but also on wildlife refuges, Bureau of Land Management properties, and national forests. It would draw revenues from federal energy leases and royalty payments (all forms of energy, solar, wind, coal, oil, gas, biomass, geothermal, etc.) to pay for maintenance projects. There is legislation working its way through Congress to establish this fund, though its passage is not guaranteed. Similar legislation died in the last Congress. As drafted, the current legislation would provide up to \$6.5 billion for a five-year-period." You can read the full text of the vice president's comments [at this link](#). Source: [National Parks Traveler](#); [The White House](#).

### **Department of the Interior**

News about DOI policies, practices and people.

- *GAO Investigating If DOI Broke Law In Making National Monument Cuts* – GAO will be looking to whether Interior broke the law by using funds to assess potential resource extraction possibilities on lands that the president cut from Grand Staircase-Escalante NM. According to an appropriations law that's been in effect since 2002, no taxpayer money can be used to do pre-leasing studies on lands in monuments that were created by January 20, 2001. Source: Brady McCoombs, Associated Press, via [U.S. News and World Report](#).
- *DOI Cuts Back On Telework* – Interior will begin curtailing the availability of telework next month, although the plan is more modest than other agencies' initiatives to reduce the practice. There will be two primary changes to how Interior employees can use telework – frontline employees will be required to report to their official work site twice per pay period, and supervisors will no longer be eligible for "core" telework, a term that refers to working remotely on a "recurring, scheduled basis." Core telework agreements will also have to be approved by a higher-level management official, and all telework agreements now must be recertified on an annual basis. Source: Erich Wagner, [Government Executive](#).

### **House and Senate**

News stories on legislation, hearings and other Congressional activities that either supplement or expand upon the "Congressional Actions" section above.

- *Congress Wants To Know When DOI Jobs Will Be Filled* – "Congress is demanding answers about a staggering amount of vacancies in President Trump's Interior Department," reports the *Washington Post*. "About a half-dozen high-level positions in the department sit vacant. And only 47 percent of top positions — ones that require confirmation from the Senate — have been



filled within a department that manages 500 million acres of surface area nationwide. Only one other major federal department, the Department of Homeland Security, has more top-level vacancies...” The vacancies include the directors of the NPS and Fish and Wildlife Service. Source: Dino Grandoni, [Washington Post](#).

- *New Historic Park Under Consideration* – On June 13th, Senators Dick Durbin (D-IL) and Rep. Danny Davis (D-IL) jointly introduced the Julius Rosenwald and Rosenwald Schools Study Act (S. 1863/H.R. 3250), which requires a special resources study of the sites associated with the life and legacy of [Julius Rosenwald](#) and the [Rosenwald Schools](#) and to determine the best ways to commemorate that chapter of American history. Between 1912 and 1932, Julius Rosenwald provided partial funding for the construction of over 5,000 school facilities in mostly rural areas throughout 15 southern states. His philanthropy radically improved educational opportunities for African Americans, with one-third of black students in the south receiving their education from Rosenwald schools. A 2011 study by Federal Reserve economists concluded that these schools played a significant role in narrowing the gap between education levels of black and white students in the South. Sources: [National Parks Conservation Association](#); John McCaslin, [RappNews.com](#)

### **Elsewhere In Fedland...**

News items pertaining to other agencies and organizations, both in the nation’s capital and in its far flung outposts.

- *Threats To Federal Agency Employees In Utah Exacerbated By State Officials* – The *Salt Lake Tribune* ran a story on June 12th on the increasing threats to federal employees in Utah, particularly in BLM, and the complicity of rural officials in aggravating the situation. Since 1995, there have been more than 400 instances in which federal land management agency employees in the West have been harassed, threatened or assaulted. Rangers have had their tires shot at and a BLM employee’s home was bombed; they have been shoved, hit, spit on and sent death threats. The state’s actions have made the situation worse. In 2012, Utah became the first Western state to pass legislation demanding that Congress relinquish ownership of more than 30 million acres within its borders, tapping into the same philosophy that led to Cliven Bundy’s standoff with federal officials in Nevada. The legislation was widely dismissed as blatantly unconstitutional by academics and western state attorney generals. According to a recent study, that action – copied by other states – led to an 11% increase in violence directed at feds, and in turn led county officials, particularly sheriffs, to be more openly defiant of the United States. “The big takeaway from [the] study is something that intuitively we knew on some level — that the words and actions of our elected leaders matter...What we need from our elected officials is a reasoned temperament and a recognition that fanning the flames of anti-government resentment can — and the data shows does — provoke actions with serious consequences for men and women who are merely doing their jobs trying to protect our public treasures.” Source: Robert Gehrke, [Salt Lake Tribune](#).
- *FWS Pulls LE From Alaska River Following SCOTUS Decision* – “A U.S. Supreme Court decision is impacting the enforcement of fishing regulations on the Kuskokwim River,” reports KTOO, an NPR station in Juneau. “For the first time in at least seven years, no federal wildlife officers are patrolling the lower Kuskokwim River during king salmon season.” DOI has chosen to keep FWS officers off the river in reaction to the Supreme Court decision in *Sturgeon v. Frost*. The court ruled in favor of moose hunter John Sturgeon, who was driving a hovercraft through the Yukon-Charley Rivers National Preserve when rangers stopped him and ordered him off of his hovercraft (state law allows hovercraft in Alaska, but the Service does not allow them on federal lands). Sturgeon’s attorneys argued that it’s up to the state to decide what kind of transportation can be used in Alaska’s navigable waterways through federal lands under ANILCA. The court agreed and ruled unanimously in favor of Sturgeon. Said the manager of Yukon Delta NWR: “Based on the Sturgeon decision, the Department of the Interior has decided not to send any refuge officers out on the river until we resolve what that Supreme Court decision means.” Source: Anna Rose MacArthur and Steve Heimel, [KTOO News](#).

- *FEMA Struggles As Demands On Agency Increase* – As we head into hurricane and wildfire season, it's comforting to know that FEMA is on the job and ready for anything. Maybe. A new GAO report reveals that the agency "failed to answer 2.3 million phone calls to its disaster assistance helpline during an eight-week period in 2017 when Hurricanes Harvey, Irma, and Maria struck and caused thousands of deaths." But that's not all – FEMA still doesn't have a permanent director, it's been accused of mishandling highly sensitive personal data belonging to 2.3 million people who needed hotel lodging in 2017 as a result of the disasters that year, and, according to its acting administrator, the agency is currently "short a few thousand employees." Source: Monica Medina and Miro Korenha, [Our Daily Planet](#).

## **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.

- *USS Arizona NM* – Just after noon on Sunday, June 12th, a U.S. Navy operated tour boat attempted to leave the visitor center dock without untying its stern line, which broke, whipped about, and struck several of the 150 visitors on board. Rangers immediately summoned emergency services and began administering first aid. At the time of the report, it appeared that as many as seven or eight visitors were hurt, although only four chose to be transported by ambulance to the hospital. No official report on the extent of their injuries has been released. The Navy is investigating the accident. Submitted by Superintendent Donald Magee.
- *Yukon-Charley Rivers NP* – Around noon on June 14th, a local indigent opened fire with a number of weapons in the vicinity of an airstrip on BLM land near park headquarters in Eagle. During the shooting spree, he damaged a parked aircraft belonging to an Eagle resident. After the man disappeared into a forest near the airstrip, park staff evacuated the area and two rangers - the only law enforcement presence in the remote area - monitored the forest and established a protective perimeter until Alaska state troopers arrived around 4 p.m. The shooter was arrested and taken to Fairbanks. He'd apparently threatened to kill the owner of the aircraft earlier in the month. No one was injured in the incident. Submitted by Alaska Regional Law Enforcement Specialist Steve Shackelton.
- *Grand Canyon NP* – On June 9th, several members of the Gypsy Jokers, a motorcycle gang, arrived in the park. Rangers kept tabs on the group at the request of other agencies and looked unsuccessfully for a gang member with a felony warrant against him. While on patrol that evening, rangers observed four of the bikers travelling eastbound on East Rim Drive at a high rate of speed, twice passing vehicles in no passing zones. The rangers attempted to stop the motorcyclists; the biker in the rear of the pack yielded to the patrol car, but the other three accelerated away at speeds of up to 70 mph. The biker who had yielded began to follow closely behind the patrol vehicle as the pursuit continued. At the drive's junction with the Grandview fire tower road, the three bikers turned into the fire road and turned their motorcycles around to face the rangers. One of the rangers covered the trio with a shotgun, while the second ranger contacted the trailing biker, who had stopped several feet behind the rangers' car. When instructed to get off his motorcycle, the biker instead reached into a saddle bag; he reached into the bag three times while at gunpoint before getting down on the ground as ordered. The four were held at gunpoint until backup units from the park and county sheriff's office could arrive. All four were arrested for reckless driving and failure to yield. A loaded revolver was found on one of the motorcycles, and several large wrenches and long, sharpened screwdrivers were found in the saddle bag that the fourth rider had been reaching into. Rangers later learned that this rider was a new gang member, and that an officer safety alert had been issued against him because he is trying to make a name for himself in order to gain acceptance to the gang. Submitted by Steve Martin, Western Regional Office.

## **Acknowledgements**

This newsletter comes to you through the efforts of a number of people:

- Editor: Bill Halainen
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## **A Closing Observation**

"[The Earth] cries out to us because of the harm we have inflicted on her by our irresponsible use and abuse of the goods with which God has endowed her. We have come to see ourselves as her lords and masters, entitled to plunder her at will. The violence present in our hearts...is reflected in the symptoms of sickness evident in the soil, in the water, in the air, and in all forms of life. This is why the earth herself, burdened and laid waste, is among the most abandoned and maltreated of our poor..."

"I urgently appeal...for a new dialogue about how we are shaping the future of our planet. We need a conversation which includes everyone, since the environmental challenge we are undergoing, and its human roots, concern and affect all of us...Regrettably, man efforts to seek concrete solutions to the environmental crisis have proved ineffective, not only because of powerful opposition, but also because of a more general lack of interest. Obstructionist attitudes, even on the part of believers, can range from denial of the problem [to] nonchalant resignation or blind confidence in technical solutions...All of us can cooperate as instruments of God for the care of creation, each according to his or her own culture, experience, involvements and talents."

Pope Francis, *On Care For Our Common Home* (The Encyclical Letter *Laudato Si*).

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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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