



## The Coalition Weekly Report Wednesday, July 3, 2019

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### Incidents

#### **Grand Canyon NP Search In Progress For Missing Hiker**

Rangers are searching for 66-year-old Peter Schwab, who was last seen on a river trip last Friday on a small beach downriver from National Canyon (river mile 167).

Schwab was reported missing following a day hike to a location called the Narrows. He was last seen wearing a tan, full-brim hat with a white long-sleeve shirt, gray cargo shorts and older-style Teva shoes.

Anyone who may have seen Schwab is asked to contact the NPS at 888-653-0009.

Source: [KPNX News](#).

#### **Mount Rainier NP Man Training To Climb Rainier Dies On Conditioning Hike**

The body of a 69-year-old man who died while hiking in the park was recovered last Friday near the base of the Nisqually chute.

The man had been missing since Wednesday, when family members reported him overdue from a solo hike above Paradise. Rangers launched a search on Thursday and located his body from the air that afternoon. It was recovered when weather conditions improved on Friday.

The man had undertaken several hikes recently to condition himself for a summit attempt of the 14,410-foot-high mountain. His family believes that he set out on Wednesday for a day hike to Pebble Creek, located above Panorama Point. Weather conditions on Wednesday included rain, sleet, hail, and lightning.

Source: Craig Sailor, *Tacoma News-Tribune*.

#### **Fort Smith NHS Flooding Arkansas River Damages Historic Area**

On June 1st, the Arkansas River, which was at a high flood stage, flowed through the park at an estimated 570,000 cubic feet per second, cresting at 40.79 feet at a nearby gauge. It caused considerable damage within the park, particularly at its Trail of Tears overlook, which commemorates

one of the last stops in the Chickasaw, Choctaw, Cherokee, Muscogee Creek and Seminole tribes' "Trail of Tears" forced removals to what is now Oklahoma.

The river's waters dislodged five plaques at the site and reduced most of the overlook to a pile of rubble and fallen trees. The plaques told the stories of each of the five tribes and their journeys from their original homelands in the South after the Indian Removal Act of 1830. The overlook also gave visitors a panoramic view of the Arkansas River, which was used as a waterway in the removal.

"It wasn't just an overlook," said Lisa Conrad Frost, the park's superintendent. "It was a whole story, a cultural landscape, that told a bigger story."

The park will be consulting with the five tribes in determining how to rebuild the site, and, of course, will be seeking money to underwrite the costs.

Source: Max Bryan, [Times Record](#).

### **Great Smoky Mountains NP Driver Killed By Falling Tree On Little River Road**

Patrick Elliott, 64, was driving through the park on Little River Road on the afternoon of June 24th when a tree fell on his car. He died shortly thereafter.

The accident occurred at a spot about seven miles from Sugarlands Visitor Center. Elliott was driving west in a 2016 Jeep Grand Cherokee when it was hit by the tree. The woman in the passenger seat was not hurt.

According to investigators, there were no obvious signs of blunt force trauma due to the impact of the fallen tree. The cause of death is under investigation.

Source: Mark Price, [Charlotte Observer](#).

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

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

- *Fire Island NS* – The 168-foot Fire Island Lighthouse tower reopened to the public last Saturday, bringing to an end a three-week closure while researchers conducted tests to assess the structure's long-term viability. During that period, workers installed monitoring devices and examined the impact that years of primarily weather-related damage has had on the structural integrity of one of Long Island's most popular attractions. Source: [Newsday](#).
- *Lassen Volcanic NP* – The park's main road opened on June 22nd despite an abundance of snow still on the ground (snow banks towered as much as 20 feet above the road in the vicinity of Lake Helen and Lassen Peak). Most of the trails in the park are still covered with snow, but they are open. The Bumpass Hell trail will remain closed this year for an ongoing rehabilitation project. Source: Steven Schoonover, [Chico Enterprise-Record](#).
- *Glen Echo Park* – Dentzel Carousel at Glen Echo Park has shut down for the rest of the season as crews work to replace its roof and make other structural updates. Its expected to reopen next spring. The park is owned by the NPS, but the county – acting through the Glen Echo Park Partnership for Arts and Culture – handles management of the site and day-to-day operations. The county took over a greater role in park management following a new 10-year agreement signed in July 2018. Source: Charlie Wright, [Bethesda Magazine](#).

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

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

- *Rocky Mountain NP* – The family of Micah Tice, who disappeared while hiking in the park on November 24th, continues to be strongly critical of the NSP regarding its management of the search and decision to terminate efforts after six days due to extreme weather conditions. Micah’s mother, Janet, said that they should have done more, particularly in calling in help from the Air Force (Tice was a cadet at the USAF Academy). She says that “more should be done in the search and rescue stage to save people who are lost in the mountains, especially for members of the military, like her son. The Tices, who first criticized the park's decision back in December to not accept aid offered by the U.S. Air Force, are now working to get a bill that would allow military personnel to lead search and rescue efforts on U.S. soil if the missing person is a member of the military.” The article includes much more on the challenges of search and rescue in the parks. Source: Sady Swanson, [Fort Collins Coloradoan](#).
- *Yellowstone NP* – The family of the kayaking guide who died in Yellowstone Lake two years ago is suing the company that employed him, its owners and several of its employees. In the suit, Timothy Conant’s mother alleges that negligence by OARS and its workers caused the 23-year-old’s death. Conant fell into the lake on the afternoon of June 14, 2017, while working to help a client who had capsized. He was unable to get back into his kayak and remained in the water for an extended period of time, ultimately becoming hypothermic and drowning before rescuers arrived. It was the first death on the lake in roughly 20 years. The family contends that OARS breached its duty of caring for Conant by “forcing” him to guide a trip in dangerous conditions, sending him out with two other “extremely novice” guides and failing to adequately train all three guides on safety equipment and emergency procedures. Source: CJ Baker, [Powell Tribune](#).
- *Death Valley NP* – The park is still working to recover from the storm that dropped about three inches of rain in five hours in October, 2017, causing serious damage to Scotty’s Castle and environs (the tab for storm recovery costs parkwide has so far come to \$52 million). Most of the damage occurred in the hacienda-guest house, which was flooded with two feet of mud, and the historic garage that is now used as a visitors center, parts of which were flooded with four feet of mud and debris. The storm also destroyed five miles of the road to Scotty's Castle, caused water damage to buildings around the Castle, and wiped out water, electricity and heating, ventilation and air conditioning systems in the main building. The park hopes to reopen at least portions of the site by the end of next year. Source: Associated Press via [Greenwich Time](#).

## National Fire Situation

### **National Interagency Fire Center Fire Activity Increases In Alaska, Arizona**

NIFC remains at PL 2. Two new large fires were reported on Monday. Fire activity continues to center on Alaska, where 38 large fires have burned more than 418,000 acres. There are eight large fires burning in the Southwest; California, Colorado and Utah each reported one.

No large fires were reported in NPS areas.

### **Resource Commitment Trend**

Category	June 18th	June 25th	July 2nd
Area Command Teams	0	0	0
NIMO Teams	0	0	0
Type 1 Teams	1	1	1
Type 2 Teams	2	3	3
Crews	40	65	94

Engines	79	104	137
Helicopters	24	31	35
Total FF/Overhead	1,841	2,689	3,313

### **Fires/Acreage**

<b>Category</b>	<b>2019 Total</b>	<b>2009-2018 Ave</b>	<b>2019 Variance</b>
Year-to-Date Fires	19,667	30,406	- 10,739
Year-to-Date Acres	1,068,210	2,321,389	- 1,253,179

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**

**July 25** – The Committee on Energy and Natural Resources held a hearing to examine the implementation of the Land and Water Conservation Fund program. Testimony was given by Susan Combs, DOI assistant secretary for policy, management and budget; Chris French, acting deputy chief of the national forest system for USFS; and public witnesses.

**June 26** – The Committee on the Budget held a hearing on fixing a broken budget and spending process, focusing on securing the nation's fiscal future. Testimony was given by Gene L. Dodaro, GAO's comptroller general of the United States.

**June 27** – The Senate passed S. 1790, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2020 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, and to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year. The bill passed by a vote of 86 yeas to 8 nays. The following provisions are of interest to the National Park Service:

- Sec. 2812, 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 Army, which runs the cemetery. The Service would receive just over one acre adjacent to Arlington House -The Robert E. Lee Memorial, which includes wooded land and an historic building.
- Sec. 2814, to establish White Sands National Park as a unit of the National Park System.
- Sec. 5305, to require the Secretary of Defense to submit to the Committees on Armed Services of the Senate and the House of Representatives a plan for real-time monitoring of noise relating to field carrier landing practice from flights associated with the Naval Air Station Whidbey Island, Washington, and conducted above or adjacent to Olympic National Park, Olympic National Forest, and Ebey's Landing National Historical Reserve. The secretary is required to work with the director of the National Park Service and the chief of the Forest Service in developing the plan.

**June 27** – The Senate agreed to S. Res. 270, recognizing the 50th anniversary of the Stonewall uprising.

**June 27** – The Senate confirmed the nominations of Robert Wallace as DOI assistant secretary for fish and wildlife and Parks, and Aimee Kathryn Jorjani to be chairman of the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation.

**June 27** – The Committee on Energy and Natural Resources approved the nominations of Daniel Habib Jorjani to be the solicitor for the Department of the Interior, and Mark Lee Greenblatt to be inspector general for the Department of the Interior.

## **House Actions**

**June 25** – The House passed H.R. 3055, making appropriations for the Departments of Commerce and Justice, Science and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2020, by a vote of 227 yeas to 194 nays. This bill includes the FY 2020 Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, which provides funds to the National Park Service. The funding levels and major provisions of the bill were previously noted in the [May 22nd](#) and [June 5th](#) editions of this newsletter. During House debate on the bill, the following amendments were adopted:

- Grijalva (AZ) – To prohibit the Department of the Interior from transferring jurisdictions of national parks, wildlife refuges, and other public lands along the border pursuant to President Trump’s declaration of a national emergency to build a wall along the southern border in contravention of Congress.
- Grijalva (AZ), Haaland (NM), Lowenthal (CA) – To state that none of the funds made available by this act may be used to implement Executive Order 13817, which treats uranium as a critical mineral for the purposes of expedited permitting under the administration’s critical mineral strategy.
- Lujan (NM) – To prevent any of the funds made available by this act to be used for further mineral development around the Chaco Culture National Historical Park on federal lands. This amendment does not affect the mineral rights of an Indian tribe or member of an Indian tribe to trust land or allotment land.
- Jeffries (NY) – To state that none of the funds made available by this act to the National Park Service may be used to increase the sales of plastic bottles.
- Jeffries (NY), Cunningham (SC) – To prohibit funds made available to the National Park Service to be used for the purchase or display of a Confederate flag, with the exception of specific circumstances where the flags provide historical context.
- Beyer (VA) – To prohibit funds to eliminate the requirement that newly built coal power plants capture carbon dioxide emissions.
- Beyer (VA), Norton (DC) – To use \$5,000,000 from the Office of the Secretary account for the purpose of maintaining the Interior Department's body camera pilot program.
- Horsford (NV) – To use \$1,000,000 from the National Park Service construction account in order to fund the construction of a visitor’s center at Tule Springs National Monument in Nevada.
- McEachin (VA), Huffman (CA) – To withhold funds for the Department of the Interior’s Executive Resources Board unless it’s voting members are less than fifty percent career SES members.
- Casten (IL) – To prohibit the United States Geological Survey from using funds to limit the use of climate modeling tools.
- Stevens (MI), Schrier (WA) – To use \$2,000,000 from the environmental programs and management account for the purpose of instructing the Environmental Protection Agency to prioritize funding to develop a national recycling strategy to ensure the long-term economic and environmental viability of local recycling programs.
- Wasserman Schultz (FL), Crist (FL), Frankel (FL), Castor (FL), Mucarsel-Powell (FL), Gaetz (FL), Diaz-Balart (FL), Hastings (FL), Shalala (FL), Deutch (FL), Wilson, Frederica (FL), Murphy (FL), Buchanan (FL), Mast (FL), Bilirakis (FL), Soto (FL), Lawson (FL), Rutherford (FL), Demings (FL),

Spano (FL), Webster (FL), Rooney (FL), Posey (FL) – To prohibit any funds from being expended by the Department of the Interior to conduct oil and gas pre-leasing, leasing, and related activities in outer continental shelf planning areas around Florida.

- Pallone (NJ), Payne, Jr. (NJ), Golden (ME), Van Drew (NJ), Kim (NJ), Cunningham (SC), King, Peter (NY), Rutherford (FL), Smith, Christopher (NJ), Cicilline (RI), Langevin (RI), Luria (VA), Pappas (NH), Rice, Tom (SC), Price (NC) – To establish a Department of Interior moratorium on oil and gas drilling and related activities in the Atlantic, including the North Atlantic, Mid-Atlantic, and the South Atlantic Outer Continental Shelf Planning Areas. The amendment passed by a vote of 247 yeas to 185 nays.
- Scott, Bobby (VA), Lee, Barbara (CA), Lewis (GA), Tlaib (MI) – To increase funding by \$500,000 for the 400 Years of African-American History Commission in order for them to carry out their mandate.
- Schweikert (AZ) – To increase funding in the environmental programs and management account by \$1 million for air quality management and decrease funding for the Department of Interior's Office of the Secretary account by \$1 million.
- Brownley (CA), Cisneros (CA) – To increase funding for the wildland fire management account by \$1 million, with the intent it be spent on the joint fire science program, and to decrease funding for the Office of the Secretary of Interior's administrative account by \$1 million.
- Kuster (NH), Tipton (CO) – To use \$1 million in the National Forest System account to highlight the National Avalanche Center, which provides training and support to prevent snow avalanche casualties.
- McAdams (UT) – To use \$1 (yes, you read that correctly – it is only \$1.00) in the wildland fire management account for the purposes of recognizing the important needs of rural counties to be able to properly rehabilitate and remediate burned areas after severe wildfire burn, to ensure our rural communities are prepared for wildfires.
- Cunningham (SC), Torres Small, Xochitl (NM), Neguse (CO) – To provide an additional \$5,000,000 to the National Park Service from the Land and Water Conservation Fund while decreasing it by a similar amount for other federal agencies or programs that were designated to receive funds from the Land and Water Conservation Fund. The amendment passed by a vote of 325 yeas and 178 nays.
- Carbajal (CA), Cisneros (CA), Rouda (CA), Hill, Katie (CA), Huffman (CA), Porter (CA), Kilmer (WA), Levin, Mike (CA) – To state that none of the funds made available by this act may be used on offshore oil and gas leasing off the Washington/Oregon, Northern California, Central California, and Southern California Outer Continental Shelf (OCS) Planning Areas for FY2020. The amendment passed by a vote of 238 yeas by 192 nays.
- Hill, Katie (CA) – To increase by \$7 million DOI and Forest Service accounts for wildfire preparedness, wildfire suppression operations, emergency rehabilitation and hazardous fuels management, and decrease by \$7 million the increase to the working capital fund. The amendment passed by a vote of 377 yeas to 55 nays.
- Schrier (WA), Castor (FL), Schakowsky (IL), Barragán (CA), Doyle (PA), Cox (CA) – To prohibit funds to be used for undermining the EPA mercury and air toxics standard (MATS), which has been implemented by the power sector and has protected children and communities from mercury, lead, arsenic and other air toxics from power plants. The MATS standard prevents up to 11,000 fatalities and 130,000 asthma attacks each year. The amendment passed by a vote of 253 yeas to 177 nays.

During House debate on the bill, the following amendments were rejected:

- Young (AK) – To state that none of the funds made available by this act may be used to enforce EPA's regulations for emissions from small remote incinerators in Alaska.
- Mullin (OK), Duncan (SC) – To prohibit funds from being used to enforce the Obama Administration's methane rule, entitled "Oil and Natural Gas Sector: Emission Standards for New, Reconstructed, and Modified Sources." The amendment was rejected by a vote of 191 to 241.
- Hice (GA) – To decrease each amount made available by this act (other than an amount required to be made available by a provision of law) by 23.6 percent to match the President's budget request. The amendment was rejected by a vote of 128 yeas to 304 nays.



**June 25** – The Committee on Natural Resources Subcommittee on Energy and Mineral Resources held a hearing entitled “Uranium Mining: Contamination and Criticality.” Testimony was heard from Steve Fortier, director of the National Minerals Information Center for USGS, and public witnesses.

**June 25** – The Committee on Natural Resources Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations held a hearing entitled “Chronic Wasting Disease: The Threats to Wildlife, Public Lands, Hunting, and Health.” Testimony was provided by public witnesses; there were no witnesses from federal agencies at the hearing.

**June 25** – The Committee on Oversight and Reform Subcommittee on Environment held a hearing entitled “Recovery, Resiliency and Readiness--Contending with Natural Disasters in the Wake of Climate Change (Climate Change, Part III).” Testimony was heard from Christopher Currie, director of emergency management, disaster recovery and DHS management issues, for GAO; Omar Marrero, executive director for the Central Office of Recovery and Reconstruction of Puerto Rico; Adrienne Williams-Octablien, director of the Office of Disaster Recovery for the U.S. Virgin Islands Public Finance Authority; and public witnesses.

**June 25** - The Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure Subcommittee on Water Resources and Environment held a hearing entitled “Protecting and Restoring America's Iconic Waters.” Testimony was heard from public witnesses; there were no witnesses from federal agencies at the hearing.

**June 26** – The Committee on Natural Resources approved:

- 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 Curecanti National Recreation Area (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. 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 Service would receive 80 percent of the total funding.

## **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.

- *NPS Staffing Shortages Examined* – *USA Today* ran a story last week with this provocative headline: “Death on the trail: More Americans visit national parks, but fewer rangers on patrol.” Although staffing in all divisions has dropped substantially over past years, the newspaper wanted to know how it had affected rangers in particular. They accordingly submitted a FOIA to the Service and obtained the relevant numbers. They found that the number of commissioned rangers has declined by more than 20% since 2005, dropping to just 1,766 full-time and seasonal rangers last month. They also found, though, that overall NPS staffing had declined by the same percentage – 20% – over the past nine years. The NPS at present has 22,076 FTES, down from 27,484 in 2010. Phil Francis, CPANP chair, is quoted regarding the challenges posed by this across-the-board drop in staffing: “It’s a tough time. The superintendents are having to make tough decisions about what jobs to fill due to inadequate

funding. Do you fill a maintenance job or do you fill law enforcement or run visitor centers?” Despite this larger staffing issue, the paper focuses on the drop in the number of rangers and a perceived correlation with increased danger in parks, citing in particular the murder on the AT this spring. Source: Trevor Hughes and Karen Chavez, [USA Today](#).

- *New NPF National Park T-Shirts* – Hanes has introduced its first collection of T-shirts supporting the National Park Foundation in Walmart stores near nine national parks – Acadia, Blue Ridge, Grand Canyon, Grand Teton, Great Smoky Mountains, Olympic, Rocky Mountain, Yosemite and Zion. Those living in other areas of the country can purchase these and other T-shirts designs that support NPF on Hanes.com. Source: [PromoMarketing.com](#).

## **Around The Parks**

Park reports are in alphabetical order. Included are proposals in the works for new areas or changes in designation for current NPS units.

- *Cape Hatteras NS* – The park is seeking comments on a proposal to install a steel wall and groins at the north end of Ocracoke Island to keep the ferry landing area from going under water. Erosion from Pamlico Sound has damaged the ferry basin bulkhead and stacking lanes; the North Carolina Department of Transportation accordingly proposes to install a 1,000-foot-long sheet pile wall, which was recently permitted as an emergency action, and to build groins interspersed with submerged concrete structures. Comments will be taken until July 22nd at the park’s [PEPC webpage](#). Source: [Outer Banks Voice](#).
- *Cedar Breaks NM* – The park is in the process of completing plans for a new visitor contact station to replace the small cabin that’s been in use for nearly 50 years. Park staff have been providing visitor information out of the 650-square-foot ranger station at Point Supreme since 1972. The cabin only has room for a small book sale area, one exhibit and a handful of people, and the park has struggled to provide for its nearly 700,000 annual visitors. Once the designs are finalized next year, the park will award a contract with a construction company and begin building the center in 2021. It should take around two years to complete and is projected to open by the end of 2022. Source: Mikayla Shoup, [St. George News](#).
- *Chisolm NHT/Great Western NHT* – Although not yet units of the system, the NPS has determined that both historic cattle trails meet the criteria to become national historic trails. Starting in 1867 and lasting into the 1880s, these trails carried upwards of 10 million head of cattle as they traveled northbound from Southern Texas to Kansas communities such as Caldwell, Wichita, Abilene, Ellsworth, Dodge City, and many others. Legislation authorizing the trails is likely in the near future. Source: [Salina Post](#).
- *Denali NP* – Ecuadorian mountain climber Karl Egloff, a 38-year-old who is chasing a speed record for ascent’s of the world’s Seven Summits, bagged the Denali record by making the ascent and descent in 11 hours, 44 minutes on Thursday, June 20th – just barely eclipsing the record of 11 hours, 48 minutes, set in 2014 by Kilian Jornet, who made his descent on skis. Egloff did it on snowshoes. Source: Beth Bragg, [Anchorage Daily News](#).
- *Golden Gate NRA* – Five groups have submitted preliminary applications to revamp and operate the park’s historic boat shop at Fort Baker, which includes a marina, an event space and a pub. Applicants include the Air Force’s 60th Force Support Squadron, which is the current operator, and a group that developed and manages the Cavallo Point Lodge, a resort at Fort Baker. The Service could take up to two years to select the operator; the review process will include a mix of public input and analysis from NPS experts. The operator is expected to sign a proposed 20-year lease for the 1.3-acre site near Sausalito. Source: Matthew Pera, [Marin Independent Journal](#).
- *Grand Teton NP* – The Snake River Gateways campaign, a renovation project launched by the park and its nonprofit partner, the Grand Teton National Park Foundation, has raised enough



money – over \$8 million – to create safer, more accessible facilities along the river and address environmental damage in those areas. The project will target three locations – the Moose, Pacific Creek and Jackson Lake Dam launches and landings. Two of the project’s priorities are increasing safety and accessibility, but it will also address visitor education, shoreline habitat restoration, added capacity and an improved visitor experience. Source: Leonor Grave, [Jackson Hole News & Guide](#).

- *Haleakalā NP* – Haleakalā has officially released a new park film called “Haleakalā: A Rare and Sacred Landscape.” The 12-minute film features highlights of the park, ranging from the summit of Haleakalā to the rainforest and ocean at Kīpahulu, and a rare glimpse of Kīpahulu Valley Biological Reserve. It will provide visitors insights into the park’s Hawaiian heritage, its unique geology, and its native species, including rare native birds and plants. The film also provides tips for hiking and visiting the park. Source: [MauiNow.com](#).
- *Homestead NM* – Senators Ben Sasse and Deb Fischer, both from Nebraska, have introduced legislation to rename the site as Homestead National Historical Park. The monument was established in 1936 to honor the Homestead Act of 1862. The NPS has endorsed the legislation. Source: [KPTM News](#).
- *Mount Rainier NP* – For what is believed to be the first time ever recorded, a medical service dog has reached the summit of Mount Rainier. “Loki” belongs to Elizabeth Johnson, who lives in Colorado. Together, the pair have summited the state’s famous “14ers” – Rocky Mountain summits over 14,000 feet – a total of 80 times. Johnson and “Loki” were joined by two other climbers on the ascent. The climb of Rainier was done with the support of rangers, who were “fantastic” about having the dog ascend the mountain. “Loki” reportedly has great climbing skills; during the climb, he wore a dog harness certified for climbing as well as sun protection goggles. There are some great photos at the following link. Source: Scott Sistek, [KOMO News](#).
- *Stonewall NM* – NBC Left Field has produced a 10-minute-long video – entitled “‘Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell’ Veteran Becomes First Stonewall Monument Park Ranger” – that tells the story of Jamie Adams, a third-generation military veteran who’s become the first ranger at Stonewall National Monument, the scene of the 1969 Stonewall riots, which marked a shift in the struggle for gay rights. It’s available at the following link. Source: NBC Left Field via [YouTube](#).
- *Vicksburg NMP* – At a ceremony held on July 2nd, the state of Mississippi transferred more than 800 acres of land to the park, greatly expanding the size of the Champion Hill Battlefield. The transfer marked the largest expansion of the park in its history. See the following for details on the battle and the parts of it that the newly acquired land will protect. Source: Associated Press, via [MagnoliaStateLive.com](#).
- *Yellowstone NP* – Steamboat Geyser set a record earlier this month for the shortest recorded interval between eruptions. The June 15th eruption came just three days, three hours and 48 minutes after a major eruption on June 12th. The eruption was the sixth to occur in June and the 24th this year for the world’s tallest active geyser. Steamboat lay dormant from October 1991 to May 2000 and from February 2007 to July 2013. Its eruption last March ended just over three-and-a-half years of dormancy. The geyser is known to have erupted 56 times since then. The longest interval between eruptions since May 3rd has been just over seven days. Source: Brett French, [Billings Gazette](#).

## **The Federal Government**

### **The Administration**

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

- *Fourth Of July On The Mall: Schedule Of Events* – Here’s the most current info on the sequence of events for tomorrow’s Fourth of July celebration(s) on the National Mall and its environs, most of which will be televised nationwide (for those of you outside of the NPS, this is a huge event for the agency, requiring extensive planning, significant funding, and the efforts of hundreds of employees – from interpretive rangers to maintenance workers to US Park Police officers). The main events will be the annual parade along Constitution Avenue at noon, the president’s “Salute To America” at the Lincoln Memorial from 6:30 to 7:30 p.m., the “Capitol Fourth” concert on the Capitol’s west lawn from 8 to 9:30 p.m., and the fireworks around 9 p.m. Source: [Department of the Interior](#).
- *Fourth Of July On The Mall Continued: More Events* – A number of new and potential activities have surfaced over the past week, with some still up in the air as of Tuesday. On June 28th, DOI announced that the Navy’s Blue Angels will be conducting a flyover during the “Salute to America.” At the same time, news media reported that “several groups” have applied for and received permits to protest the administration; most interesting is an event planned by an activist group called Code Pink, which owns a 20-foot long “Baby Trump” balloon and plans on flying it over “any open grassy area near the Lincoln Memorial.” On Monday, the *Washington Post* reported that the president has asked that additional aircraft, tanks and other military hardware be included, thereby “dramatically escalating the gathering’s cost and sparking concerns about the potentially damaging impact on the Mall and other infrastructure.” He’s asked that flyovers include Air Force One, F-35 stealth fighters and Marine Helicopter Squadron One, which flies the presidential helicopter. That will increase the tab for the show a bit, particularly for the aircraft – the F-35 costs about \$30,000 per hour to fly, each Blue Angel jet costs at least \$10,000 per hour to operate, and the cost of flying an Air Force One jet is more than \$140,000 per hour. Sources: [KOMO News](#), [WKRG News](#), [Washington Post](#).
- *Fourth Of July On The Mall Continued: Comment And Criticism* – The Coalition has joined others in weighing in publicly on this hugely expensive event. “It’s irresponsible to ask the National Park Service to absorb the costs of an additional and political event when there are so many unmet needs in the parks,” said CPANP Chair Phil Francis. “The men and women of the National Park Service have been asked to do more with less for too long. Funds should be directed to the agency’s highest needs such as operation of the parks and the maintenance backlog and should not be directed to support political objectives.” An op-ed published by the *New York Times* has accused Trump of “hijacking” the Fourth of July festivities: “He is trampling a longstanding tradition of keeping these events nonpartisan — apolitical even — and focused on bringing the nation together.” And the District of Columbia Council has again voiced its opposition to tanks being driven on the city’s streets, sending out this memorable tweet: “We have said it before, and we’ll say it again: Tanks, but no tanks.” Sources: [Washington Post](#), [Newsweek](#).

## **Department of the Interior**

News about DOI policies, practices and people.

- *Rob Wallace Confirmed As AS/FWP* – The Senate has unanimously confirmed Rob Wallace as DOI’s new assistant secretary for fish, wildlife and parks. He received broad bipartisan support for his nomination throughout the confirmation process (including an endorsement from the Coalition). Wallace, a native of Wyoming, brings 45 years of experience to the position, having served as head of congressional affairs for the National Park Service, worked on Capitol Hill, and led government affairs operations in the private sector. He also worked as a seasonal ranger early in his career. Source: [Department of the Interior](#).
- *Secretary Pushing To Open DOI Lands To Hunting And Fishing* – At the president’s behest, Secretary Bernhardt is spearheading an effort to open 1.4 million acres of DOI lands at 74 national wildlife refuges and 15 national fish hatcheries to hunting and fishing, and to eliminate 7,500 regulations limiting access to DOI lands (that’s right, 7,500). “The president fundamentally gets that hunters and anglers are the true conservationists in our society,” said

Bernhardt. “He understands that history and that we need to act in efforts to expand hunting and fishing while at the same time being respectful of private land rights, respectful of state law.” Source: Paul Bedard, [Washington Times](#).

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

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

- *BLM Issues Online Climbing Maps* – BLM has just released a series of interactive online maps designed to promote climbing and other recreational opportunities on BLM-managed public lands. Developed in cooperation with Access Fund and Mountain Project, the maps allow individuals to easily plan exciting climbing experiences at sites around the western United States. Now climbers can pull information about specific BLM-managed climbing areas through a centralized online tool while on the go. The maps, available at [this link](#), include useful site information such as photos, season of use, area characteristics, and difficulty levels. Visitors can also find a number of nearby attractions for each climbing site. Source: [Sierra Sun Times](#).

### **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**

Reports on the national and international climate and conservation crisis – both the much-reported bad news and the less commonly reported good news.

- *Disappearing Oceanic Islands* – NBC News reports that three small islands have disappeared over the past year due to rising sea levels and increasingly severe tropical storms. Gone are a remote 11-acre Hawaiian Island, a small island in the Arctic Ocean, and an islet off the coast of Japan. Although small and uninhabited, their disappearance is seen as a harbinger of things to come. Most scientists now agree that even if countries take steps today to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, average sea levels will still rise by up to 6.5 feet by the end of the century. A Canadian coastal geomorphologist and his colleagues have surveyed thousands of islands in the Pacific. While islands have always been at the whim of the waters that surround them, they’ve found that erosion is accelerating as a result of rising seas and intensifying storms; although larger islands are more stable than smaller ones, they, too, will likely experience dramatic changes. Said another researcher: “What’s happening to these islands is the same thing that is going to happen to New Orleans, Los Angeles and all sorts of coastal cities. The sooner we start thinking about this, the less painful it’s going to be.” Source: Denise Chow, [NBC News](#).
- *Solar Energy Taking Off As Power Source* – A recent report from Wood Mackenzie Power & Renewables and the Solar Energy Industries Association revealed that the first quarter of 2019 was the strongest in the U.S. solar industry’s history, with 2.7 gigawatts of solar capacity added to the grid. Large scale utility solar projects, such those taking place in Florida and the Carolinas, accounted for 61 percent of this expansion and are expected to increase by another 46 percent. And Los Angeles city officials have just struck a deal on the largest and cheapest and highest capacity solar/battery-storage project in the world, which will serve 7% of the city’s power demand at a cost of half that of a new natural gas plant. Source: Monica Medina and Miro Korenha, [Our Daily Planet](#).
- *Wind Power Dramatically Expanding As East Coast Power Source* – An offshore wind boom is underway off the East Coast. New Jersey utility regulators have awarded a contract for an offshore wind farm that would be the largest in the country. The 1,100-megawatt project is being led by Ørsted, a Norwegian energy company that is a leader in offshore wind. The project,

called Ocean Wind, sets a new bar, topping the 800-megawatt Vineyard Wind project in Massachusetts — set to begin construction late this year — as the largest of all the projects that have made it to the point of receiving a state contract. If both projects remain on schedule, Vineyard Wind would go online in 2022 and Ocean Wind would follow in 2024. This is part of a ramp-up in offshore wind development happening from Massachusetts to Virginia, energized by state development targets. New Jersey's target, set in state law, is to develop 3,500 megawatts of offshore wind by 2030. By comparison, the country's sole current operational offshore wind farm off the Rhode Island coast, which started in 2016 and has just five turbines, produces 30 megawatts of power. The scale of the growth we are about to see is breathtaking. Source: Dan Gearino, *Clean Economy Weekly*.

## **National Park System Issues**

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

- *Yellowstone NP* – The June edition of *Popular Science* has a thoughtful piece on the problems involved with managing the park's bison herd, objectively analyzing all sides of the issue, but expresses concern that we're slowly but permanently changing the nature of wild bison and altering the ecosystem in which they live: "The animals in [the park's] herds will keep the species safe from extinction, but if we domesticate the mobility out of this last wild group, the ecology of the landscape will suffer, perhaps irretrievably, and we will have lost our wild buffalo after all...Millions pilgrimage to Yellowstone every year to see the bison, their restoration touted as one of the great conservation success stories of the last century. But evolution marches on, and the next generation of visitors may find a herd that's been intrinsically, irrevocably altered. The people who have dedicated their lives to the buffalo—studying them, conserving them, and, yes, helping to ship them to slaughter—are hopeful we won't let it get that far." Source: Kate Morgan, [Popular Science](#).
- *Redwood N&SP* – A story posted last month in *Bloomberg Businessweek* reports on efforts by rangers – including the use of hidden cameras – to capture thieves who plunder exotic trees and plants from national forests, particularly redwood burls. It documents the efforts of one ranger to make a case, from investigation through arrest and prosecution. The story also talks about other forms of plant poaching, including a succulent called dudleya and saguaro cacti. "Plant theft in U.S. parks is worsening," writes the author. "Instagram and Twitter feeds have helped stoke the desire for obscure flora—not just burls. In Asia demand is growing for various succulents, which until recently nestled inconspicuously in crannies along the coastline parks of California. In the past two years in several busts, agents have intercepted troves of thousands en route to South Korea and Japan. Ginseng and saguaro, found mostly in the eastern U.S. and Arizona, respectively, are also vulnerable to thieves." Source: Sarah McBride, [Bloomberg Businessweek](#).

**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:

- *Olympic NP* – The ongoing effort to remove mountain goats from the park and move them to their native habitat in the North Cascades are about to resume. They will take place from July 8th to July 19th and from August 19th to August 30th. Operations to move as many as possible of the estimated 700 mountain goats in the park began last year. Using helicopters, tranquilizer darts, nets and refrigerated trucks, crews were able to remove 115 mountain goats from the park in September. The goats were relocated last year to the Mount Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest, the Okanogan-Wenatchee National Forest, and the headwaters of the Cedar River Drainage, which is land owned by Seattle Public Utilities. Source: Jesse Major, [Peninsula Daily News](#).

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

- *Grand Canyon NP* – “The Trump administration is signaling a renewed push to consider uranium mining near the Grand Canyon,” reports *The Hill*, “a move that would undoubtedly ignite a political fight involving environmentalists and the mining industry... The administration first indicated in 2017 that it was looking at steps to boost uranium production. Trump that year signed an executive order to ensure there was suitable supplies of what the administration deemed ‘critical minerals,’ or minerals and elements considered key to national security. At the time, there were 23 minerals on the list of critical minerals. Six months later the Interior Department expanded it to 35 and added uranium for the first time.” The Commerce Department subsequently issued guidance on speeding up production of all essential minerals on the list. One last action is needed – a pending decision by the administration on whether or not to put into effect a 25 percent purchasing quota for domestic uranium, thereby requiring the defense and power industries to buy at least that much domestically (rather than from Australia or Canada). A decision is expected this month. Source: Miranda Green, [The Hill](#).

## The Coalition

A summary of recent developments within the Coalition, including some of the actions that CNPCA took on your behalf, with links to the relevant documents.

- *LWCF* – Statement of support to the House Natural Resources Committee following their favorable markup of a provision to authorize mandatory annual funding of LWCF. [Click here](#).
- *Border Infrastructure Project* – Comments to the head of the Border Patrol’s Border Wall Program Management Office on their proposal to upgrade sections of the border wall through NPS lands. [Click here](#).
- *Maintenance Backlog Funding* – Statement of support to the House Natural Resources Committee for its support of increased funding to cover the Service’s maintenance backlog. [Click here](#).

Source: Emily Thompson, Communications and Advocacy Coordinator.

## Park People

### **NPS Alumni Passing Of Cliff Soubier**

NPS career historian and interpretive planner L. Clifford Soubier, 85, passed away on June 5th in Charles Town, West Virginia.

Cliff was a native of Council Bluffs, Iowa. He began his career in the early 1960s when he was hired as staff museum curator at the Western Museum Laboratory in San Francisco.

He then worked as a park historian at Homestead National Monument and at Little Big Horn NM (then Custer Battlefield NM) from 1969 to 1971. He went on to serve as an interpretive planner at Denver Service Center and Harpers Ferry Center.

Cliff was especially known for his gifted interpretive planning and writing skills, as well as for his subtle yet hilarious wit.

He was preceded in death by his wife, Karen. He is survived by his son Jason of Maryland and daughter Aimee of Washington, DC, and their spouses and Cliff’s grandchildren. Services were private.

Source: Member Kathy Ziegenfus.

### **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:

- *National Mall and Memorial Parks* – Jeffrey Reinbold, a national park manager with 28 years' experience and expertise in public-private partnerships, has been selected to serve as superintendent of National Mall and Memorial Parks. He's been the acting superintendent there since March. Reinbold has been with the Service for 28 years. He's worked at DSC and as superintendent of the five national park sites in western Pennsylvania. Before moving to this position on the Mall, he served as the National Park Service's assistant director for partnerships and civic engagement, where he was responsible for partnerships, philanthropy, national trails, and wild and scenic rivers. Source: [National Park Service](#).
- *San Francisco Maritime NHP* – David Brouillette has been selected as the park's new superintendent, replacing Kevin Hendricks, who retired last month. Brouillette brings nearly 40 years of experience to the position – he got his start in 1980 at Lowell NHP, then moved on to Boston NHP. In 2010, he moved to the Bay Area, where he currently serves as the facility manager at Point Reyes NS. His wife, Patricia, is a landscape architect/program manager and a regional accessibility coordinator for Pacific West Region. Source: [SFGate.com](#).

## 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.

- *Glen Canyon NRA* – Although there appeared to be fewer visitors this year to Hobie Cat and Lone Rock beaches – the two beaches that are traditional problem areas on Memorial Day weekend – parkwide visitation and law enforcement incidents were up over 1993. A good indicator of that increase was the level of activity in the dispatch office. Dispatch averaged an outgoing radio transmission every 60 seconds, with incoming calls often covering each other, and averaged one incoming or outgoing phone call every three minutes. There were 43 EMS incidents, 19 accidents requiring investigation, and a high volume of law enforcement incidents, including a rape, eight assaults, 105 alcohol-related incidents, 46 cases of drunk driving, 20 disorderly conducts, 179 traffic offenses, 141 boating offenses, and 86 drug incidents. Overall, rangers made 98 arrests and issued 270 citations. The park's 20 commissioned rangers were augmented by officers from the Coconino and Kane County sheriff's offices, Utah state police, Utah state park rangers, Arizona game and fish officers, Coast Guard auxiliary, U.S. Park Police officers, and rangers detailed to the park from other NPS areas. Volunteers and park interpretive rangers assisted in directing traffic, parking vehicles, and helping out at launch ramps. Submitted by Chief Ranger Tomie Lee.
- *Yellowstone NP* – A 37-year-old TW Recreational Services employee was hiking alone off-trail near Chaw Pass while off-duty on the afternoon of June 20th when he came over a knoll and surprised an adult female grizzly bear with her two yearling cubs. He was listening to a Walkman with headphones at the time of the encounter. The bears were about 20 feet away at the time; they started to leave, but the sow turned and charged when the man ran for a tree. She pulled him from the tree and mauled him as he screamed and yelled, but quit the assault and left the area with the yearlings when he played dead. Although he suffered a fracture of the left shoulder, a laceration of his forehead, and multiple puncture wounds, he was able to walk out to the trailhead, where he was picked up by visitors and taken to the Lamar ranger station. Rangers provided emergency medical treatment, then transported him to Lake Hospital. He was later taken to Deaconess Hospital in Bozeman, Montana, for further treatment. The trail is closed pending monitoring of the area for bear activity. No other management action is planned at this time. Submitted by Assistant Chief Ranger Mike Murray.



- *Yellowstone NP* – A twelve-year-old girl was injured on the morning of June 24th when she was butted by a bison at Bridge Bay campground. The large bull, whose weight was estimated at about a ton, was grazing peacefully near the campground's G loop when she approached to within less than ten feet to take a photograph. In doing so, she inadvertently "cornered" the bison; as she moved to change the angle of light for the photograph, the bison began to move toward her. She turned to move away, but he followed, accelerating until he overtook her, butted her from behind, and lifted her into the air. Rangers responded, immobilized her, and transported her by ambulance to Lake Hospital. She was treated for abrasions and bruises, observed for indications of internal injuries, then released. Rangers will monitor the bison, who, along with many other bulls, is displaying early signs of rutting behavior. Submitted by Assistant Chief Ranger Mike Murray.

## Acknowledgements

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- Production: Steve Pittleman
- Regular Correspondents: Don Hellmann, Dennis Burnett, Rick Smith, and Duncan Morrow
- Issue Contributors: Mike Warren, Bill Walters, Kathy Ziegenfus, Neal Guse, Bob Martin, Maureen Finnerty

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

"To preserve the significant places of beauty and majesty of the very land in which we have our roots; to keep living and accessible and dynamic the steps of our history so that a self-understanding patriotism of the highest order will continue to have throughout the future an effortless and natural flow - this is the covenant by which the National Park Service is bound."

Freeman Tilden, *The Fifth Essence*

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The *Weekly National Park System Report* is a publication of The Coalition To Protect America's National Parks. It is prepared by Coalition member Bill Halainen, former editor of the *NPS Morning Report*, and produced and disseminated by Coalition member Steve Pittleman.

The Coalition is a non-profit organization of past and current NPS employees and their allies that "studies, educates, speaks, and acts for the preservation and protection of the National Park System and mission-related programs of the National Park Service."

To receive a copy of this free publication, join or support the coalition. Any current, retired or former salaried employee (GS, wage grade, seasonal, temporary, or SES) of the National Park Service can join the Coalition ([click on this link](#)). Coalition supporters can also join and receive the newsletter ([click on this link](#)). If you need to contact the Coalition office on other matters, including changes of address, [click on this link](#).

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