



## The Coalition Weekly Report Wednesday, September 4, 2019

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### Incidents

#### **Eastern Areas**

#### **Parks Prepare For Hurricane Dorian**

Forecasters continue to predict that Hurricane Dorian will closely follow the coastline from Florida to North Carolina before it moves out into the open ocean. Watches and warnings have been issued for portions of the Florida coast and evacuation orders are in place for coastal areas in the Southeast. National parks from Big Cypress to Cape Hatteras are preparing for potential impacts and implementing storm plans. The parks below have closed or will soon close in preparation for the storm:

- Florida – Big Cypress National Preserve, Biscayne National Park, Canaveral National Seashore, Castillo de San Marcos National Monument, Everglades National Park, Fort Caroline National Memorial, Fort Matanzas National Monument, Timucuan Ecological and Historic Preserve
- Georgia – Cumberland Island National Seashore, Fort Frederica National Monument, Fort Pulaski National Monument
- South Carolina – Charles Pinckney National Historic Site, Fort Sumter and Fort Moultrie National Historical Park, Reconstruction Era National Historical Park
- North Carolina – Cape Hatteras National Seashore, Cape Lookout National Seashore, Fort Raleigh National Historic Site, Moores Creek National Battlefield, Wright Brothers National Memorial

No reports of damage have been received from parks in the Caribbean.

Source: [National Park Service](#).

#### **Channel Islands NP**

#### **At Least 25 Killed In Commercial Dive Boat Fire**

At approximately 3:30 a.m. on Monday morning, the Coast Guard and partnering agencies responded to a vessel fire off the north shore of Santa Cruz Island near Platt's Harbor in Santa Barbara County.

Emergency responders found the vessel – the *Conception*, a 75-foot commercial diving boat based out of Santa Barbara Harbor – fully engulfed in fire. The vessel sank to the ocean floor about four hours later.

Five of the 39 people on board – six crew members and 33 passengers – were rescued and a total of four bodies had been recovered at the time of the park report; later news stories, however, upped the latter number to 25.

Unified command was established between the Santa Barbara County Sheriff's Office, Santa Barbara County Fire, the Coast Guard and National Park Service. A one-mile safety zone has been established around the area as search and rescue efforts continue. A 3,000 foot temporary flight restriction has also been established around the site of the fire. The cause of the incident is under investigation and names are being withheld pending notification of kin.

A Family Assistance Center (FAC) has been established at the Earl Warren Showgrounds located at 3400 Calle Real, Santa Barbara, 93105. Family members may call the County's Call Center at 833-688-5551 for more information. The public can call 2-1-1 or if outside of the 805 area code, call toll free (800) 400-1572.

Source: Yvonne Menard, [Channel Islands NP](#).

### **Crater Lake NP Man Charged \$60K For Damage Caused By ATV**

In July 2018, Evan Metz of Grants Pass, Oregon, took his ATV to the Pumice Desert and drove in circles that dug ruts a foot deep while a friend took pictures of him. His action caused widespread vegetation mortality, destroying plants from at least 15 different native species.

Metz was assessed \$60,000 for the damage he caused. Last week, he paid \$200 out of his own pocket; his insurance company paid the rest.

The Pumice Desert once was a glacial valley. It was buried by pumice during the eruption of Mount Mazama, the Cascade peak that imploded and left behind Crater Lake.

The park has recently seen an increase in vehicles illegally driving off-road. Restoring the damaged areas is costly and takes years.

Source: [KOMO News](#).

### **Acadia NP Three Killed In Accident; Driver Charged With Manslaughter**

During the early hours of Saturday, August 31st, a rollover crash occurred on the Park Loop Road, killing all three passengers. The driver has been arrested on manslaughter charges. He allegedly spent Friday night drinking in downtown Bar Harbor before hitting the road with his friends.

Rangers have charged the driver, Praneeth Manubolu, with three counts of manslaughter. In Maine, manslaughter is a Class A felony punishable by up to 30 years in jail.

Manubolu called 911 to report the crash at 2:47 a.m. on Saturday. Investigators who arrived at the crash site found that he had suffered some cuts and scrapes and that he smelled of alcohol. He reportedly told investigators that he had been out drinking with friends in Bar Harbor and that they had ended the night around 1 a.m. "with a couple of shots of alcohol" at the Carmen Verandah bar and nightclub. He said that he lost control of the vehicle on a curve and hit a tree.

Evidence at the scene, including skid marks and damage, suggest that Manubolu was driving well over the posted speed limit of 25 mph.

Source: Charles Eichacker, [Bangor Daily News](#).

## **National Fire Situation**

**National Interagency Fire Center  
NIFC Remains At PL 2**

As of yesterday, there were fifty large fires burning nationwide; together, they'd burned 336,000 acres. New large fires were reported in Alaska, Arizona, Idaho, Nevada and Texas.

The following resources have been mobilized to the Southern Area in support of Hurricane Dorian recovery efforts: A NIMO team (Atlanta) and two fire suppression crews staged in Florida; a Type 1 IMT (NR Team 2) and two fire suppression crews staged in Georgia; a Type 1 IMT (SA Blue Team) and two fire suppression crews mobilizing to North Carolina.

**Current NPS Fires** – Reports on NPS fires that appear on the NICC summary.

- *Bandelier NM* – The Redondo Fire has burned 317 acres (up from 195 acres last week) and is 80% contained.
- *Grand Canyon NP* – The Ikes Fire has burned 6,500 acres (up from 6,000 acres last week) within a defined planning area of 7,785 acres on the Kaibab Plateau. The IMT overseeing the fire has met most of its planning objectives and operations have been scaled back.

**Resource Commitment Trend**

| Category           | August 20th | August 27th | September 3rd |
|--------------------|-------------|-------------|---------------|
| Area Command Teams | 0           | 0           | 0             |
| NIMO Teams         | 0           | 0           | 2             |
| Type 1 Teams       | 2           | 2           | 4             |
| Type 2 Teams       | 2           | 3           | 4             |
| Crews              | 78          | 128         | 139           |
| Engines            | 247         | 294         | 267           |
| Helicopters        | 34          | 54          | 62            |
| Total FF/Overhead  | 3,820       | 5,707       | 7,063         |

**Fires/Acreage**

| Category                 | 2019 Total | 2009-2018 Ave | 2019 Variance |
|--------------------------|------------|---------------|---------------|
| United States: YTD Fires | 33,234     | 45,054        | - 28%         |
| United States: YTD Acres | 4,042,018  | 5,438,653     | - 26%         |
| Canada: YTD Fires        | 3,938      | ---           | ---           |
| Canada: YTD Acres        | 4,465,515  | ---           | ---           |

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**

The Senate is in recess until September 9th.

## **House Actions**

The House is in recess until September 9th.

## **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.

- *WASO Announces New Policy On Electric Bicycles In Parks* – On August 30th, the Service announced a new electric bicycle (e-bike) policy for national parks that expands recreational opportunities and accessibility. A majority of states have adopted e-bike policies, most following model legislation that allows for the three classes of e-bikes to have access to bicycle trails. The NPS e-bike policy seeks to provide some consistency with the state rules applying where park units are located. This new policy will enable visitors to use e-bikes (low-speed electric bicycles with power assistance) in the same manner as traditional bicycles, allowing them on park roads, paved or hardened trails, areas designated for off-road motor vehicle use and administrative roads. The operator of an e-bike may only use the motor to assist pedal propulsion. The motor may not be used to propel an e-bike without the rider also pedaling, except in locations open to public motor vehicle traffic. Similar to traditional bicycles, e-bikes are not allowed in designated wilderness areas. Park superintendents will retain the right to limit, restrict, or impose conditions of bicycle use and e-bike use in order to ensure visitor safety and resource protection. A copy of the new four-page policy memorandum can be found [at this link](#). Source: [National Park Service](#).
- *Determining The Economic Value Of Parks* – There's a new book out entitled [Valuing US National Parks and Programs: America's Best Investment](#), edited by Linda J. Bilmes and John B. Loomis, that provides "the first comprehensive economic valuation" of America's national parks. The book contains a series of case studies that the authors believe will be of interest to professionals and students in environmental economics, land management and nature conservation and to those interested in the national parks. Here's a summary of the contents: "The book develops a comprehensive framework to calculate the economic value of protected areas, with particular application to the U.S. National Park Service. The framework covers many benefits provided by NPS units and programs, including on-site visitation, carbon sequestration, and intellectual property such as in education curricula and filming of movies/ TV shows, with case studies of each included. Examples are drawn from studies in Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area, Golden Gate National Recreation Area, Everglades National Park, and Chesapeake Bay. The editors conclude with a chapter on innovative approaches for sustainable funding of the NPS in its second century. The framework serves as a blueprint of methodologies for conservationists, government agencies, land trusts, economists, and others to value public lands, historical sites, and related programs, such as education. The methodologies are relevant to local and state parks, wildlife refuges, and protected areas in developed and developing countries as well as to national parks around the world." Source: [Mossavar-Rahmani Center for Business & Government, Harvard Kennedy School](#).

### **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.

- *Grand Canyon NP* – Installation of the waterline to the North Rim will result in the closure of the lodge entry road by the North Rim visitor center this month. The project consists of the installation of 16,000 linear feet of various sized main and lateral water lines as well as 60 service connections to North Rim facilities. This is the second phase of a multiphase water utility improvement project on the North Rim; it will continue through the end of the 2019 North Rim operating season and will resume again on May 15th. Source: [St. George News](#).
- *Joshua Tree NP* – The Mojave Desert Land Trust has just purchased 40 acres of pristine desert that it will be conveying to the park. “That land is down in the southern part of the park in Riverside County, in the Little San Bernardino mountain range,” said David Smith, the park’s superintendent. “It’s an isolated little pocket that did not have road access to it, but any inholding within the park boundary holds the potential for (outside private) development... [The] parcel is in an area that’s all wilderness, so for someone to potentially develop that area using mechanized tools and machinery would violate the whole spirit of the Wilderness Act. For the park to acquire a plot like that helps protect the wilderness, and it’s within the long-term mission of the NPS to acquire in-holdings (whenever possible).” Source: Kevin Fitzgerald, [Coachella Valley Independent](#).
- *Organ Pipe Cactus NM* – During the last week of August, contractors put up the first 30-foot panels of a new border wall on a two-mile stretch within the park. The contractors began at the east end of the pedestrian fence that runs along the park and worked west, using construction equipment to scrape a roadway along the federally owned easement known as the Roosevelt Reservation. “The project is a further sign that Trump administration officials are pushing forward on a long-made promise to build a border wall,” reported the *Tucson Sentinel*, “despite congressional refusal to appropriate the funds and a lawsuit launched by three environmental groups, including the Tucson-based Center for Biological Diversity.” The *Sentinel* article also provides a good deal of detail about the project. Meanwhile, a spokesperson for Defenders of Wildlife has written an impassioned editorial about the new wall in this issue of *High Country News*. “As Borderlands organizers and activists,” writes Erica Prather, “we have struggled to keep pace with lawsuits and outreach efforts. Sometimes we wonder: If a more recognizable national park or wildlife refuge were slated for such construction, would the public cry out? Would the outrage at these atrocities happening to the communities and biodiversity in and around the parks be loud, clear and direct?” Prather calls upon Congress to ensure that no border wall funding is included in the 2020 federal budget and asks that others do likewise. Sources: Dylan Smith and Paul Ingram, [Tucson Sentinel](#); Erica Prather, [High Country News](#).
- *USS Arizona Memorial* – The memorial reopened last Sunday for the first time since its closure in May, 2018, due to damage to the dock. Thousands of people reportedly visited the memorial that day. Source: [ABC News](#).
- *Yellowstone NP* – The major renovation of the Mammoth Hot Springs Hotel has been completed and the hotel is now fully open. The hotel started hosting guests in mid-August and rooms are now open for reservations. Xanterra Travel Collection, which operates the hotel, and the National Park Service, which owns it, partnered to make the \$30 million renovation a reality. Source: Rachel Louise Just, [ABCFoxMontana.com](#).
- *Yosemite NP* – The park has designated several new wildlife protection zones on stretches of roadway throughout Yosemite where bears and other animals have been hit by vehicles. The new signs advise drivers that they’re in wildlife protection zones and that speed limits in those areas will be strictly enforced. Several zones have been established in the valley, with others along sections of Big Oak Flat Road, El Portal Road, Wawona Road and Tioga Road. These zones will remain in effect until further notice. As of August 28th, 11 bears had been hit by vehicles this calendar year; more than 400 bears have been hit by vehicles in Yosemite since 1995. But other animals are in danger as well, including owls, Pacific fishers, butterflies, rare

amphibians like red-legged frogs and salamanders, and mammals like deer, foxes, and mountain lions. Source: [Sierra Sun Times](#).

- *Zion NP* – Last Saturday, Sting and the Utah Symphony gave a benefit concert for the park at USANA Amphitheatre is a 20,000-seat outdoor amphitheater, located in West Valley City, Utah. Receipts from the concert will go to the Zion Forever Project, which pays for programs and projects not ordinarily covered by the park's budget. Sting spoke in support of the park and the natural world in general. "The preservation of our natural wilderness has never been more important than it is now," he said. Source: Lottie Elizabeth Johnson, [Deseret News](#).

## **Briefly Noted**

Other matters of interest pertaining to the parks and their people.

- *Ten Things Rangers Hate* – A website called TheTravel.com has posted an a listing of "10 Things People Do On Hiking Trails That Park Rangers Can't Stand." Here they are in reverse order – see the article for additional details (not that any really need amplification): 10) Taking wildflowers and other items from the trail; 9) going into areas that are off limits; 8) leaving behind trash; 7) ignoring important rules, like those pertaining to keeping food from bears); 6) taking pix and selfies in dangerous places; 5) coming unprepared; 4) starting fires when its illegal or dangerous to do so; 3) "a general lack of respect"; 2) getting too close to wildlife and bothering animals; and 1) not reading signs. Source: Amanda Steele, [TheTravel.com](#).
- *New NPS Wildlife "Petting" Poster* – If you haven't seen it yet, the Service has put out a [new poster](#) that uses humor to warn visitors about the risks of getting too close to wild animals. It divides a silhouetted bison into seven areas, showing what areas you can safely pet – that is, none. One area reads "How fast are you?"; another asks "Do you have insurance?" Click on the following link or the one above to see the poster. Source: Hyeji Suh, [Fox5NY.com](#).
- *The Next NPS Recreational Fad: Waterslide Kayaking* – A website called Active NorCal has posted a video of a kayaker racing down the Tenaya Creek waterslide in Yosemite at a brisk 36 mph (he had a speedometer with him). The short article with it carries the obligatory note that "officials strongly suggest against going down the waterslide due to the high speeds reached in the steep areas," but the two minute plus video is what people will remember. It can be seen at the following link. Source: [ActiveNorCal.com](#).

## **The Federal Government**

### **The Administration**

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

- *Administration's Track Record On Environment Detailed* – Although the president has repeatedly declared himself to be an environmentalist, the administration's record on environmental issues, as we all know, hasn't exactly supported that claim. On August 29th, the *New York Times* ran an article on just how wide the gap is behind his assertion and the truth: "The move to rescind environmental rules governing emissions of methane, a powerful greenhouse gas, brings to 84 the total number of environmental rules that the Trump administration has worked to repeal," writes John Schwartz. "Half of those environmental rollback attempts, like the new methane reversal, will undercut efforts by previous administrations to reduce emissions and fight climate change." Fortunately, many of these efforts have been successfully challenged in the courts, so its "far from certain" that the administration will succeed in achieving all of its goals. The article provides a link to [a listing of all 84 rules the administration is attempting to roll back](#). Source: John Schwartz, [New York Times](#).



- *President Endorses Pay Raise For Feds* – Last Friday, President Trump issued his alternative pay plan for 2020, endorsing a 2.6% across the board pay increase for civilian federal employees – effectively ending the administration’s push for a pay freeze next year. “Each year, the president is required to submit an alternative pay plan to Congress by the end of August,” reports *Government Executive*, “or else significant automatic pay increases will take effect under the Federal Employee Pay Comparability Act. Had Trump not issued an alternative pay plan, locality pay would rise by 24.01% next year, and base pay would increase 2.6%. Although since the introduction of Trump’s fiscal 2020 budget request, the White House has pushed for a pay freeze next year, Trump reversed course Friday, calling for a 2.6% increase in base pay, but no increases to locality pay.” Source: Erich Wagner, [Government Executive](#).

## **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.

- *Development Driving Amazon Deforestation, Fires* – As of last month, nearly 40,000 fires were burning in the Amazon rain forest; together with previous fires, they’ve burned 1,330 square miles of rainforest this year. “These Amazonian wildfires are a human-made disaster, set by loggers and cattle ranchers who use a ‘slash and burn’ method to clear land,” says Catesby Holmes in *The Conversation*. “Feeding off very dry conditions, some of those fires have spread out of control. Brazil has long struggled to preserve the Amazon, sometimes called the ‘lungs of the world’ because it produces 20% of the world’s oxygen. Despite the increasingly strict environmental protections of recent decades, about a quarter of this massive rainforest is already gone – an area the size of Texas.” While climate change endangers the Amazon, bringing hotter weather and longer droughts, it’s development – deforestation driven by farming, big infrastructure projects and construction of roads – that poses the greatest threat facing the rainforest. The article, reprinted in EarthSky, includes a remarkable photo taken last month by NASA’s MODIS satellite that shows fires burning all across the rainforest. Source: [EarthSky Voices](#).

### **National Park System Issues**

**Climate Change** – News concerning the impacts of climate change on park lands, waters, species and other assets.

- *Haleakalā NP* – Climate change and an avian disease seem to be pushing two bird species endemic to the park towards extinction. A recent forest inventory tallied 312 kiwīkiu, or Maui parrotbill, and fewer than 2,411 ‘ākohekohe, or crested honeycreeper. That represents a 50 percent decline in the parrotbills and a greater than 50 percent decline in the honeycreepers over the past two or three decades. These two native endangered species are endemic to Maui Island and are only found within the surveyed area in East Disease, depredation, and degradation of habitat are responsible for the decline of these two and other native songbird species over the past several decades, but recently introduced avian malaria has been deemed the most significant long-term threat. Malaria continues to spread upward in elevation due to climate change and over time may lead to dramatic declines or the extinction of most native Hawaiian songbird species. Source: [National Parks Traveler](#).

**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* – Late last month, the park transferred 55 wild bison to a Montana Indian reservation under a program that aims to establish new disease-free herds of the animals. The

male bison, also known as buffalo, were transferred in trailers and released onto the Fort Peck Reservation, home of the Assiniboine and Sioux tribes. They had been captured in March 2018 and held in quarantine to ensure they don't carry the disease brucellosis. The relocation program is part of an effort to conserve a species that once roamed North America by the millions. Officials also want to reduce the government-sponsored killing of Yellowstone bison over disease concerns. Source: Matthew Brown, [The Daily Inter Lake](#).

- *Gateway NRA* – Earlier this summer, many people were dismayed when the park announced it was canceling the summer concert series held in the Sandy Hook Unit due to the discovery of piping plover nesting grounds in the area. Last week, the park announced that their decision to cancel concerts was the right move, as Sandy Hook's piping plovers have had another successful breeding season — thanks in no small part to being left alone and undisturbed by loud concert music and curious passersby. There were a total of 41 nesting piping plover pairs in Sandy Hook at the end of August; together, they'd hatched 53 chicks. Over the past ten years, Sandy Hook has consistently supported 40 to 50 percent of New Jersey's nesting plover pairs. Of the 145 chicks that fledged in New Jersey in 2018, 59 were from Sandy Hook nests alone. Source: Carly Baldwin, [Rumson-Fair Haven Patch](#).

**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:

- *Mesa Verde NP* – A plan to round up and remove a wild horse herd from the park is currently in the review process. The park is working with the Colorado Chapter of the National Mustang Association in developing a process for their subsequent adoption. Last March, the park announced a phased, proactive approach for removing the horses within five years and for improving the park's boundary fencing over the next ten years to prevent livestock – both horses and cattle – from reentering the park. The park plans to remove 65 to 80 horses from the park and put them up for adoption in horse sanctuaries. Tim McGaffic, an expert in low-stress roundup techniques, has been contacted by the park to run the roundup. The park has agreed to use a pilot program of low-stress gathering methods to mitigate animal welfare issues. Source: Jim Mimiaga, [Durango Herald](#).
- *Delaware Water Gap NRA* – Three species of a small wasp that can attack the eggs of the emerald ash borer were released in the park last week. The borer, an invasive beetle from Asia, is capable of killing a full-grown ash tree within a couple of years and has been found in several nearby locations. The wasps, known in scientific circles as "parasitoids," were supplied by the United States Department of Agriculture's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS). The park also worked closely with agriculture departments in New Jersey and Pennsylvania before releasing the wasps. Source: Bruce Scruton, [New Jersey Herald](#).
- *Lake Mead NRA* – On August 27th, the Western Governors Association kicked off its new Invasive Mussel Leadership Forum. The forum's goal is to create and share strategies to confine quagga mussels to Lake Mead and prevent the spread of them to other bodies of water in the west. According to the Service, quagga mussels invaded the lake at Las Vegas boat harbor in 2007. Since then, they've spread to most parts of Lake Mead and Mohave, clogging boat engines and damaging infrastructure and recreational facilities. The National Park Service says the damage to Lake Mead and Lake Mohave could cost millions to repair. Source: Faith Jessie, [KSNV News](#).

## **The Coalition**

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

- *Bears Ears National Monument Planning Documents* – In partnership Defenders of Wildlife, the Wilderness Society, and numerous other groups, the Coalition submitted comments protesting



the Bears Ears National Monument proposed monument management plan and final EIS. The joint letter, which lists the many shortcomings in those documents, can be read [at this link](#).

- *Action Alert: Support For Bill Assuring Public Comments On Oil And Gas Leasing* – The Coalition also launched a sign-on letter for members to urge their Congressional representatives to support and co-sponsor H.R. 3225, Restoring Community Input and Public Protections in Oil and Gas Leasing Act. The sign-on period is open until September 9th. Please sign it and encourage other members to do so as well. The letter can be found [at this link](#). Signing on only takes a minute.

Source: Emily Thompson, Communications and Advocacy Coordinator.

## **From The Archives**

This section contains incidents taken from *Morning Report* issues published during the corresponding period (approximately) 25 years ago in 1994. All entries appear in the original verb tense; “submitters” are those people who originally submitted the incident report.

- *Lake Chelan NRA* – A seventeen-foot motorboat struck a rock wall on the shoreline of Lake Chelan at a high rate of speed around noon on August 28th, killing two of its three occupants – a 43-year-old UCLA professor and anesthesiologist and his 73-year-old father a retired brain surgeon who was living in the area. The professor’s six-year-old daughter, who was in a rear facing seat at the time of the accident, survived and suffered only minor injuries. The accident was reported by a local cabin owner who heard the screams of the young girl from the damaged Boston whaler. The girl subsequently told rangers that the boat hit the rocks and turned around several times before the engine stopped. Rangers helped recover the bodies. The accident occurred in the vicinity of Riddle Creek. The Chelan County sheriff is the conducting the investigation with assistance from the NPS. Submitted by Chief Ranger David Spirtes.
- *Yosemite NP* – On August 17th, park investigators examined the wreckage of a downed Piper single engine aircraft discovered in a remote section of Stubblefield Canyon, which is located in the northern section of the park. The wreckage was discovered by a trail crew member hiking cross country on his days off. Working with the FAA and NTSB officials, park investigators discovered the aircraft was reported missing on July 20, 1962, by the families of the four men reported to be on board. The flight reportedly left Fresno on July 19, 1962, at about 11 p.m. after the conclusion of a Billy Graham program attended by the four men, one of whom was to become an ordained minister the following week. The location of the wreck was outside the area of the normal return flight path between Fresno and Sacramento, and the intensive air and ground search for the aircraft that was subsequently conducted did not include the park. The wreckage was discovered at about 9,000 feet on a south facing granite slope of between 35 and 50 degrees. The condition and location of the wreckage was such that the park's contract helicopter pilot was unable to locate the wreckage while examining the mountainside on his initial examination of the site. Trail crew members hiked and climbed for over an hour, covering extremely rugged terrain, to reach the crash site from their base camp, a distance of about 1,000 yards. They directed the helicopter with investigators to the site. Investigators enlisted the assistance of two park archaeologists to construct a map of the crash site as a part of the investigation. A grid search of the 100 by 200 yard wide debris field resulted in the location and collection of several identifying articles, human remains, and aircraft parts bearing serial numbers. The quantity and condition of the recovered human remains makes it unlikely the identification of any of the four men reported to be on board will be conclusive, according to county officials. Submitted by Greg Jablonski.
- *Gates of the Arctic NP&P* – A series of heavy storms dropped almost ten inches of rain on the Brooks Range and surrounding areas during the last two weeks of August, sending flood waters through several villages bordering the park. Damage is severe and it is anticipated that some of the villages will not be habitable this winter. Park staff have been providing assistance in the form of emergency communications, overflights, and supplies. Gates of the Arctic is

looking at the possibility of making some of its housing available to victims of the flooding; Denali is offering the use of heavy equipment and operators to help repair damage in the village of Wiseman, adjacent to Gates of the Arctic. During this period, a number of flood related incidents occurred in the park. One visitor has been missing since August 26th as a result of a rafting accident on the Kobuk River. A number of parties were temporarily stranded in the park when air taxi operators had to suspend flying due to the bad weather. Groups were up to ten days overdue on their pickup dates, but no serious problems were reported. A party of two canoeists lost their boat in the high water on the North Fork of the Koyukuk and flagged down an aircraft for rescue. The park's pilot responded to an emergency signal from a float plane that had been partially sunk in shallow water. Damage to park facilities has been minimal. Submitted by Chief Ranger Glenn Sherrill.

## **Acknowledgements**

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

- Production: Steve Pittleman
- Regular Correspondents: Don Hellmann, Dennis Burnett, Rick Smith, and Duncan Morrow
- Issue Contributors: Mark Forbes, Jon Jarvis, Mike Panz, Bob Martin, Sue Pridemore

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**

"There are certain values in our landscape that ought to be sustained against destruction or impairment, though their worth cannot be expressed in money terms. They are essential to our 'life, liberty, and pursuit of happiness;' this nation of ours is not so rich it can afford to lose them; it is still rich enough to afford to preserve them."

[Newton B. Drury](#), Director, 1940-1951

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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."

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