



The Coalition Weekly Report Wednesday, October 23, 2019

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Incidents

Yellowstone NP Man Severely Burned In Fall Into Hot Spring

A 48-year-old man suffered severe burns after falling into a hot spring near Old Faithful geyser on September 29th.

Rangers who were called to the Old Faithful Inn on Sunday found that Cade Siemers suffered severe burns to a significant portion of his body. Siemers told rangers that he went for a walk without a flashlight and tripped and fell into the thermal water.

Rangers found evidence that Siemers may have been drinking alcohol at the time. When they went back to the scene Monday, they found Siemers' shoe, hat, and a beer can along with footprints leading to and from the geyser.

Siemers was taken to the Burn Center at Eastern Idaho Regional Medical Center.

Source: Doha Madani, [NBC News](#).

Crater Lake NP Concession Employee Sentenced For Sickening Coworkers

A former concession food service worker has confessed to severely sickening two coworkers by putting Visine eye drops in their water bottles in 2016 and has been sentenced in federal district court.

Christopher Morrison was sentenced to 200 hours of community service and two years' probation after pleading guilty to two misdemeanor assault charges.

Morrison worked in the park's employee dining room, which was near a prep kitchen where several employees kept water bottles. On two occasions in 2016, Morrison put Visine drops in the water bottles of two coworkers, including his supervisor. Both became extremely sick, with the supervisor saying she experienced severe nausea and pain that she described as "almost like hot pokers, almost like labor pain."

A few days after becoming ill, the supervisor overheard Morrison bragging about putting Visine in her water bottle. Investigators tested the water bottle and found it contained tetrahydrozoline, the active ingredient in Visine, which can cause respiratory distress, coma, blurred vision, diarrhea, seizures and other complications when ingested.

When questioned, Morrison admitted he intentionally put the Visine in one of the victim's water bottles as a "harmless prank" after first researching Visine poisoning on the internet. The investigation revealed that at least a dozen employees experienced similar symptoms during the same period.

Morrison could have faced up to six months in federal prison, but prosecutors did not recommend prison time because of Morrison's willingness to admit his guilt and his minimal criminal history, which included one conviction for selling counterfeit videos.

Source: Mark Freeman, [Mail Tribune](#).

Grand Teton NP Rangers Rescue Man Injured In Fall From Hammock

On October 16th, Preston Reidy and his girlfriend were hanging in a hammock above a rock field at Surprise Lake when the tree broke, dumping them onto the rocks and knocking Reidy unconscious. Another visitor came upon the accident, ran to a place with cellphone reception, and called for help.

As Reidy regained consciousness, he began having seizures, likely stemming from the head injury. Rangers were soon on scene and summoned a contract helicopter.

Reidy was short-hauled to the Jenny Lake Ranger cache, then taken by park ambulance to St. John's Medical Center in Jackson. He was disoriented and didn't know where he was or what had happened. He also lost hearing in one ear but eventually regained it.

Despite these injuries, he quickly recovered and was released that evening.

Source: Emily Mieure, [Jackson Hole Daily](#).

Mammoth Cave NP Former Park Employee Gets Two Years In Jail For Theft Of Fee Money

A former park fee program employee has been sentenced to two years in prison for stealing from the park.

Leslie Lewis, 61, a former 30-year employee at Mammoth Cave, was charged by a grand jury last January with one count of theft of public money. Lewis pleaded guilty to the charge, admitting that she had stolen more than \$1,000 from the park. She was sentenced to two years imprisonment and three years of supervised release following the sentence; she must also pay restitution of \$169,322 for theft of public money.

Lewis was employed to supervise, track, reconcile, and safeguard recreational fees to the park. According to a victim impact statement from the park, she repeatedly used her position to steal publicly collected funds. She also manipulated the fee collection system and the employees she supervised. In a five-year period, examined by investigators, it was determined that Lewis stole nearly \$170,000.

Lewis confessed to using several means to steal from the park, including cutting and pasting to create false deposit documents, filling out false deposit reports, and utilizing a duplicate check scheme, allowing her to take cash for a check amount that didn't exist.

Source: Ashley Smith, [KFVS News](#).

Congaree NP Man Who Dumped Poisonous Waste In Creek Sentenced To Jail Term

South Carolina truck driver Michael Greene was sentenced on October 2nd to 90 days in prison for illegally unloading poisonous landfill waste into a creek system near the park. He was also fined \$25,000 and put on a year's probation.

Greene, 45, faced up to three years in prison for repeatedly dumping chemicals, including mercury and lead, into the Wateree River drainage basin, which flows past the park. He did so in an effort to “save time.”

Greene was employed by an environmental company specializing in hauling away hazardous waste disposal. His job was to transport the liquid runoff to a wastewater management facility.

Source: Storm Gifford, [New York Daily News](#).

**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 search for James Pruitt, 70, who disappeared in the park last February, resumed again on October 9th in advance of a snowstorm forecast for the following day. Forty SAR team members searched the Prospect Canyon area and the Glacier Gorge drainage above Jewel Lake, but were unsuccessful in finding any clues as to Pruitt’s whereabouts. Source: [Sky-Hi News](#).

National Fire Situation

**National Interagency Fire Center
Fourteen Large Fires Currently Burning In Eleven States**

NIFC remains at National Preparedness Level 2. As of yesterday, there were 14 large fires active in eleven states; together, they’d burned about 63,000 acres. Six of NIFC’s geographic areas reported active large fires.

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

- *Grand Canyon NP* – The lightning-caused Ikes Fire, which began in July and has now burned 16,416 acres, is being utilized to achieve a variety of resource objectives, including reducing hazardous fuels, promoting forest regeneration, improving wildlife habitat, and restoring more open forest understory with grasses and forbs. Some closures remain in effect. For additional details, see the following. Source: [InciWeb](#).

Resource Commitment Trend

Category	September 17th	September 24th	October 22nd
Area Command Teams	0	0	0
NIMO Teams	0	1	0
Type 1 Teams	1	0	1
Type 2 Teams	4	3	1
Crews	134	68	49
Engines	380	161	125
Helicopters	39	23	13
Total FF/Overhead	6,524	3,001	2,069

Fires/Acreage

Category	2019 Total	2009-2018 Ave	2019 Variance
United States: YTD Fires	43,746	53,636	- 28%

United States: YTD Acres	4,467,200	6,470,671	- 31%

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

September 22 – The president signed into law H.R. 831, to direct the Secretary of Transportation to request nominations for and make determinations regarding roads to be designated under the national scenic byways program (Public Law 116–57).

September 27 – The president signed into law H.R. 4378, making continuing appropriations for fiscal year 2020 (Public Law 116–59). The bill makes continuing appropriations to all federal agencies, including the National Park Service, through November 21, 2019.

Senate Actions

September 24 – The Senate confirmed the nomination of Daniel Habib Jorjani of Kentucky to be solicitor of the Department of the Interior by a vote of 51 yeas to 43 nays.

September 24 – The Committee on Appropriations Subcommittee on Department of the Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies approved for full committee consideration an original bill making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, the Environmental Protection Agency, and Related Agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2020. An original bill is one that is written by the subcommittee prior to be filed in the Senate. This bill was given the number S. 2580 after it was introduced in the Senate. See item dated September 26, below, for further information about funding levels in the bill.

September 25 – The Committee on Environment and Public Works approved, among others, the following business items:

- S. 2260, to provide for the improvement of domestic infrastructure in order to prevent marine debris.
- The nomination of Aurelia Skipwith, of Indiana, to be Director of the United States Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of the Interior.

September 26 – The Senate passed, among other items, the following:

- H.R. 4378, making continuing appropriations for fiscal year 2020, by a vote of 81 yeas to 16 nays. The bill extends funding for all federal agencies through November 21, 2019. During consideration of the legislation, the Senate defeated an amendment of Sen. Paul to reduce the appropriations in the bill by 2 percent. The amendment was defeated by a vote of 24 yeas to 73 nays. The bill now goes to the president to be signed into law.
- S. Res. 347, designating October 2, 2019, as “Energy Efficiency Day” in celebration of the economic and environmental benefits that have been driven by private sector innovation and Federal energy efficiency policies.
- S. Res. 348, proclaiming the week of September 23 through September 27, 2019, as “National Clean Energy Week.”
- S. Res. 352, recognizing Hispanic Heritage Month and celebrating the heritage and culture of Latinos in the United States and the immense contributions of Latinos to the United States.

September 26 – The Committee on Appropriations approved several bills, including an original bill (subsequently given the number, S. 2580) making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2020. As approved by the committee, the bill includes \$3.35 billion for the National Park Service, which is \$133 million above the FY 2019 appropriation and \$614 million above the president’s budget request. (The House bill has \$3.39 billion for the National Park Service, \$168 million above the FY 2019 enacted level and \$649 million above the President’s budget request). Within the Senate committee’s recommended amount, the bill appropriates:

- \$2.565 billion for Operation of the National Park System, which is an increase of \$139 million over the president’s budget request. (The House bill has \$2.65 billion.)
- \$68 million for National Recreation and Preservation. (The House bill has \$74 million.) Within this account, the committee recommends \$21.9 million for the national heritage areas program and \$3 million for the Chesapeake Gateways and Watertrails program.
- \$113 million for the Historic Preservation Fund, (the House bill has \$122 million.) Within this amount, the bill includes \$52.67 million for State and Tribal Historic Preservation Offices (the House bill had \$67 million); \$14 million for Save America’s Treasures grants (the House bill has \$16 million); \$750,000 for competitive grants for the survey and nomination of properties to the National Register of Historic Places and as National Landmarks associated with communities currently under-represented (the House bill has a similar amount); \$7.5 million for competitive grants for the restoration of historic properties of national, state, and local significance listed on or eligible for inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places (the House bill has \$17.5 million, with \$5 million earmarked to establish a new civil rights sites and stories grant program); and \$9 million for grants to Historically Black Colleges and Universities (the House bill has \$10 million).
- \$392 million for Construction. (The House bill has \$319.7 million).
- \$199.9 million for Land Acquisition, with \$140 for the state grant program, and \$49.9 million for federal land acquisition and acquisition management, and \$10 million for the American Battlefield Protection grants program. (The House bill had \$208.4 million, total with \$140 million for the state grant program, \$53.4 million for federal land acquisition, and \$15 million the battlefield grants).
- \$20 million for the Centennial Challenge program. (The House bill had a similar amount).

Additionally, the bill includes Section 426, an extension of the Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act authority to collect fees on public lands through September 30, 2021.

In the committee report for the bill, the committee directed the Bureau of Land Management not to conduct any oil and gas leasing activities within the 10- mile radius of Chaco Culture National Historical Park pending completion of planning activities and tribal consultation.

October 15 – The nomination of Katharine MacGregor of Pennsylvania to be Deputy Secretary of the Interior was submitted to the Senate. According to a previous press release from the department, MacGregor served as “...Deputy Assistant Secretary for Land and Minerals Management. Before joining the Department, MacGregor was a senior staff member of the Subcommittee on Energy and Mineral Resources of the House Natural Resources Committee. Prior to that, MacGregor served as the Legislative Director for then-Majority Leader Eric Cantor. She is a graduate of the University of Pennsylvania with a Bachelor of Arts and Sciences.”

October 16 – The Committee on Environment and Public Works held a hearing to examine the impacts of diseases on wildlife conservation and management, after receiving testimony from Stephen Guertin, Deputy Director for Policy, Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of the Interior; and public witnesses.

House Actions

September 24 – The Committee on Natural Resources Subcommittee on Energy and Mineral Resources held a hearing entitled “Fossil Fuel Development: Protecting Taxpayers and Eliminating Industry Giveaways.” Testimony was heard from Representatives DeGette, Cartwright, and McAdams; Frank Rusco, Director, Natural Resources and Environment, Government Accountability Office; and public witnesses.

September 24 – The Committee on Natural Resources Subcommittee on Water, Oceans, and Wildlife held a hearing on several bills, including:

- H.R. 925, to extend the authorization of appropriations for allocation to carry out approved wetlands conservation projects under the North American Wetlands Conservation Act through fiscal year 2024.
- H.R. 1747, to encourage partnerships among public agencies and other interested persons to promote fish conservation.
- H.R. 2748, to establish an integrated national approach to respond to ongoing and expected effects of extreme weather and climate change by protecting, managing, and conserving the fish, wildlife, and plants of the United States, and to maximize Government efficiency and reduce costs, in cooperation with State, local, and Tribal Governments and other entities.
- H.R. 2918, to create dedicated funds to conserve butterflies in North America, plants in the Pacific Islands, freshwater mussels in the United States, and desert fish in the Southwest United States.
- H.R. 3399, to amend the Nutria Eradication and Control Act of 2003 to include California in the program.
- H.R. 4348, to terminate certain rules issued by the Secretary of the Interior and the Secretary of Commerce relating to endangered and threatened species,

Testimony was heard from members of Congress, Stephen Guertin, Deputy Director for Policy, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of the Interior; and public witnesses.

September 25 – The Committee on Natural Resources approved the following bills:

- H.R. 729, to amend the Coastal Zone Management Act of 1972 to authorize grants to Indian Tribes to further achievement of Tribal coastal zone objectives.
- H.R. 925, to extend the authorization of appropriations for allocation to carry out approved wetlands conservation projects under the North American Wetlands Conservation Act through fiscal year 2024.
- H.R. 1472, to rename the Homestead National Monument of America near Beatrice, Nebraska, as the Homestead National Historical Park.
- H.R. 1487, to direct the Secretary of the Interior to conduct a special resource study of portions of the Los Angeles coastal area in the State of California to evaluate alternatives for protecting the resources of the coastal area. The bill would study the coastline and adjacent areas to the Santa Monica Bay from Will Rogers State Beach to Torrance Beach, including the areas in and around Ballona Creek and the Baldwin Hills and the San Pedro section of the City of Los Angeles, excluding the Port of Los Angeles north of Crescent Avenue.
- H.R. 1492, to authorize the inclusion of 160 acres of land by donation as part of the Yucca House National Monument in Colorado.
- H.R. 1747, to encourage partnerships among public agencies and other interested persons to promote fish conservation.
- H.R. 3115, to direct the Administrator of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration to make grants to State and local governments and nongovernmental organizations for purposes of carrying out climate-resilient living shoreline projects that protect coastal communities by supporting ecosystem functions and habitats with the use of natural materials and systems.
- H.R. 3541, to amend the Coastal Zone Management Act of 1972 to require the Secretary of Commerce to establish a coastal climate change adaptation preparedness and response program.

- H.R. 3596, to amend the Coastal Zone Management Act of 1972 to establish a Working Waterfront Task Force and a working waterfronts grant program.

September 25 – The Committee on Natural Resources Subcommittee for Indigenous Peoples of the United States held a hearing entitled “Advance Appropriations: Protecting Tribal Communities from the Effects of a Government Shutdown.” Testimony was heard from members of Congress, Jason Freihage, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Management, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs, Department of the Interior; Rear Admiral Michael D. Weahkee, Principal Deputy Director, Indian Health Service, Department of Health and Human Services; and public witnesses.

September 25 – The Committee on Oversight and Reform Subcommittee on Government Operations held a hearing entitled “NextGen Feds: Recruiting the Next Generation of Public Servants.” Testimony was heard from Representative Carolyn B. Maloney of New York; Robert Goldenkoff, Director of Strategic Issues, Government Accountability Office; and public witnesses.

September 26 – The House passed the following, among other bills: H.R. 335, to require the Inter-Agency Task Force on Harmful Algal Blooms and Hypoxia to develop a plan for reducing, mitigating, and controlling harmful algal blooms and hypoxia in South Florida.

September 26 – The Committee on Natural Resources held a hearing entitled “The Department of the Interior's Failure to Cooperate with Congressional Oversight Requests.” Testimony was heard from Daniel Jorjani, Principal Deputy Solicitor, Department of the Interior.

September 26 – The Committee on Science, Space, and Technology held a hearing entitled “Understanding, Forecasting, and Communicating Extreme Weather in a Changing Climate.” Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

September 26 – The Select Committee on the Climate Crisis held a hearing entitled “Solving the Climate Crisis: Reducing Industrial Emissions Through U.S. Innovation.” Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

October 17 – The Committee on Natural Resources Subcommittee on Energy and Mineral Resources held a hearing entitled “The Case for Climate Optimism: Realistic Pathways to Achieving Net Zero Emissions.” Testimony was heard from public witnesses. There were no witnesses from federal agencies at the hearing.

October 17 – The Committee on Natural Resources Subcommittee on Water, Oceans, and Wildlife held a hearing on H.R. 2794, the Wildlife Corridors Conservation Act of 2019, and H.R. 3742, the Recovering America's Wildlife Act of 2019. Testimony was heard from members of Congress; Stephen Guertin, Deputy Director for Policy, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of the Interior; and public witnesses.

October 17 – The Select Committee on the Climate Crisis held a hearing entitled “Solving the Climate Crisis: Cleaner, Stronger Buildings.” Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

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.

- *Proposal Made To DOI To Privatize, Modernize NPS Campgrounds* – “The Interior Department is considering recommendations to modernize campgrounds within the National Park Service,” reports *USA Today*. “The recommendations posted this week come from an advisory committee created under former Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke. It has been looking at ways for private businesses to operate on public lands. Derrick Crandall is the vice chairman of the Outdoor

Recreation Advisory Committee. He says many campgrounds fail to meet visitors' expectations and allowing the private sector to run them would free up money for maintenance elsewhere in the parks. National parks have more than 1,400 campgrounds combined. About 6% are operated by concessionaires. Environmentalists say the proposal would price out some visitors and benefit special interest groups." Source: Felicia Fonseca, Associated Press, via [USA Today](#).

- *E-Bikes Flap Continues* – On August 29th, Secretary Bernhardt signed Secretarial Order 3376 opening public lands to electronic bicycles, motorized two-wheel bikes that have become common in cities but are a newer and more contentious presence on unpaved trails. The order dictates that e-bikes of all power types are no longer to be defined as off-road motorized vehicles. The order gave DOI agencies 30 days to produce a public policy about how e-bikes can be used, but the NPS has its new policy in place the following day. “[The policy] allows e-bikes on park roads, paved or hardened trails, areas designated for off-road motor vehicle use, and administrative roads and trails where traditional bikes are allowed,” reports *Outside*. “The bikes are not allowed in wilderness areas, nor are they allowed in areas where traditional bikes can’t go. (Unlike other agencies, the Park Service has few single track trails where bikes currently are permitted.) Except on park roads, the policy also requires the rider of an e-bike to use the motor only to assist pedal propulsion and not to use it like a motorbike, with a throttle. It’s unclear how the service would be able to enforce that, however. The Park Service has claimed that superintendents still have the discretion to restrict or impose conditions on e-bikes for protection of the park or public safety—keeping a trail open only to traditional bikes, for instance.” The policy was not received well by the Service’s allies: “Many environmental and conservation groups were stunned and infuriated by the announcement.” For details on the policy and its ramifications, see the full article at the following link. Source: Christopher Solomon, [Outside](#).

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.

- *Federal Retirees Will Get 1.6% COLA in 2020* – This just in from *Government Executive*: “Retired federal workers will receive a cost of living adjustment of 1.6% to their defined benefit pensions next year, according to an announcement from the Social Security Administration. The increase, which also applies to recipients of Social Security benefits, is a downgrade from the 2.8% increase some federal retirees received in 2019, and the 2% boost they saw in 2018...Unlike last year, when Civil Service Retirement System participants received the full 2.8% COLA while Federal Employees Retirement System enrollees only received a 2% increase, the 1.6% increase applies to participants in both FERS and CSRS.” The article explains how the formula works and why the increases are the same. Source: Erich Wagner, [Government Executive](#).

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 And Assaults On Federal Land Employees* – “A report [released Monday] indicates at least 360 threats and assaults against employees of four agencies from fiscal 2013 through 2017,” reports the *Washington Post*. “The FBI investigated ‘under 100’ of these as domestic terrorism cases, a [Government Accountability Office \(GAO\) report](#) said, using a vague, unexplained number that could be anything from zero to 99. The range of intimidation against federal employees included attempted murder. The count of 360 is probably an underestimate and does not fully convey the severity of the problem. Incidents reported to state and local

authorities are not included in the tally.” The report covers the NPS, FWS, BLM and USFS.
Source: Joe Davidson, [Washington Post](#).

Park People

NPS Alumni Passing Of Jim Tucker

Retired Yosemite ranger Jim Tucker unexpectedly passed away on August 2nd. Jim grew up in Yosemite Valley and spent 34 years working as ranger in the park, retiring as the deputy chief ranger in 2006.

Jim was born and raised in Yosemite; he cared deeply for the park and was best known for his leadership and mentorship of rangers over the course of three decades. Jim also cared deeply for the sense of community that brought park employees and their families together. He was a devoted husband, father and grandfather. He raised his own family in Yosemite Valley and saw his eight grandchildren enjoy the Yosemite community.

Jim was a Vietnam veteran and member of the Mariposa Yosemite Rotary Club and the Mariposa VFW. His life was dedicated to “service above self.”

The Tucker family, in partnership with the Yosemite Conservancy and the Mariposa Yosemite Rotary Club, is seeking donations to support the construction of a community area in the lower housing area of Yosemite Valley. This community area will include a small playground area, new picnic tables and outdoor barbeque area. The National Park Service has approved this project.

If you'd like to make a donation to the project, visit the family's GoFundMe page [at this link](#).

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.

- *Western Parks* – During the seven-month period from May to November of 1993, Michael David Esakov and Jennifer Ann Sweat-Esakov are believed to have committed numerous car larcenies, check and credit card frauds, thefts from tents in campgrounds, and thefts of fees from campground pipe safes and association donation boxes on NPS, Forest Service, BLM, state park and private lands in Washington, Idaho, Wyoming, Utah, Arizona, New Mexico, South Dakota and Nebraska. Among the areas the couple hit were Yellowstone, Wind Cave, Bryce Canyon, Zion, Grand Teton and Grand Canyon. On August 25th, they were indicted in Salt Lake City on from 10 to 13 counts of five 18 USC violations, including conspiracy, theft and property damage. The Esakovs were arrested separately in Akron, Ohio, and Seneca, South Carolina, earlier this week. They both admitted guilt during subsequent interviews and revealed many more violations, including theft of firearms, stolen money, pawning of stolen items, and a previously unknown and similar crime spree in 1992 which added many more parks to the list of areas which they'd struck, including sites in Georgia, Alabama, Louisiana, Texas, California, Oregon, Colorado, Nevada and Mexico. The investigation into their activities continues. Many NPS rangers contributed information leading to these arrests. Esakov is being held without bond due to the risk of flight; Esakov-Sweat may be released on a \$25,000 surety bond with house arrest and electronic monitoring. They will be brought to Salt Lake City and likely tried there. Submitted by Special Agent Erny Kuncl, Rocky Mountain Regional Office.
- *Crater Lake NP* – Over the course of the four-day period from September 18th to September 21st, rangers wrote eleven citations for commercial harvesting in the park and confiscated 44 pounds of mushrooms and numerous harvesting tools. During an associated consent search,

they also discovered and seized an AR-15 A2 semi-automatic rifle with four 30-round magazines filled with live rounds. The weapon, however, was unloaded. Observations by rangers and Forest Service reports indicate that the mushroom collectors are well-organized and have heavily picked over the north side of the park. Picking crews are being dropped off, then picked up along the boundary. Forest Service officials advise that the peak harvest season has not yet arrived, and that many more pickers will be arriving with the onset of cooler weather and increased precipitation. Submitted by Uwe Nehring.

- *Olympic NP* – Following a magnitude 8.2 earthquake off northern Japan on October 4th, parks in Hawaii and Alaska made emergency preparations for a possible tsunami. Olympic was also called upon to take immediate emergency actions. NOAA predicted that the tsunami would be between two and 24 feet in height when it hit the Washington coast. Due to the difficulty in accurately predicting tsunami heights, all park beaches were temporarily closed as a precautionary measure, and Coast Guard and contract helicopters were employed to warn hikers along the 57 miles of park beaches. Several low-lying coastal communities were also evacuated. When the tsunami struck the coast, waves were less than a foot higher than normal. The alert, however, provided a test of the emergency notification system employed by the park and several communities. It took about 90 minutes to evacuate or individually warn people along a stretch of coast totaling about 100 miles. The only people disappointed by the small tsunami waves were several surfers who went down to the coast in the expectation of great surfing conditions. Submitted by Larry Nickey.

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- Production: Steve Pittleman
- Regular Correspondents: Don Hellmann, Dennis Burnett, Rick Smith, and Duncan Morrow
- Issue Contributors: Mark Forbes, Bill Walters

If you see something that might be of interest to Coalition members, send it to Bill Halainen at the Weekly National Park System Report: BHalainen@gmail.com. Please don't submit them via his personal email address or Facebook page.

A Closing Observation

"We need the tonic of wilderness, to wade sometimes in marshes where the dipper and the waterfowl lurk; to smell the whispering grasses. At the same time that we are earnest to explore and learn all things, we require that all things be mysterious and unexplorable, that land and water be infinitely wild, unsurveyed and unfathomed by us. We can never have enough nature. We must be refreshed by the sigh of inexhaustible vigor, vast and titanic features, the wilderness with its living and its decaying trees, the thunder cloud and the rain that lasts three weeks. We need to witness our own limits surpassed and some life roaming freely where we may never wander."

[Henry David Thoreau](#)

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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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