



## The Coalition Weekly Report Wednesday, January 30, 2019

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### Incidents

#### **National Park System Shutdown Ends, Long Road To Recovery Begins**

The shutdown officially ended late last week and we can now log its exact length in the record books, courtesy of the *Washington Post* – 34 day, 21 hours and 18 minutes. The recovery may well take longer in some parks. Since it has now ended, this weekly summary of articles on the shutdown is limited to just a few stories, mostly critiques or reports on collateral impacts:

- *Federal Employees React To End Of Shutdown* – On January 25th, the day the shutdown ended, the *New York Times* ran a story entitled “[Our Country Is Being Run by Children’: Shutdown’s End Brings Relief and Frustration](#).” The paper’s reporters talked with a dozen federal employees about how they had survived the shutdown and the uncertainties they now face. They include a Coast Guardsman (“The faith in our leadership to be able to negotiate with each other has been broken...I certainly question the hostage-taking of government employees’ paychecks”); a wildland firefighter (“Our country is being run by children”); and an IRS worker (the president and Congress “are so out of touch with the American people that it’s unacceptable”). Source: Jack Healy, Kate Taylor and Tara Siegel Bernard, [New York Times](#).
- *Concerns About Long-Term Impacts On Employees* – “Much attention has rightly been paid on the immediate financial toll the shutdown has had on individual government workers,” reports the *Washington Post*, “as well as the questions it’s raising about the long-term promise of government employment. But as federal workers return to work, a vast army of federal managers will suddenly be tasked with supervising people who’ve been furloughed for weeks...[They] will face the monumental task of helping people wade through an overwhelming backlog of work, perform without being overly distracted by questions about their futures, and grapple with the sudden uncertainty of once-stable jobs.” The article also cites a number of professionals concerning the long-term impacts of shutdowns on employees. Source: Jena McGregor, [Washington Post](#).
- *Unpaid Feds Called Back To Pay Contractors* – Although the shutdown is over, we’d be remiss in not including this gem, written just before it ended on Friday. “In a policy reversal sure to sting suffering federal employees, the Trump administration is calling some furloughed feds back to work with no pay so agencies can pay federal contractors,” reported the *Washington Post*. Although OMB said this was permissible under their guidelines, particularly as the feds would get paid later, it in fact reversed a policy implemented a year ago in which OMB told agencies that the need to make payments on a timely basis didn’t by itself qualify as a reason for doing so during a shutdown. In fact, it’s likely illegal, according to Sam Berger, a senior official who provided government-wide guidance during the 2013 shutdown: “This new

guidance is directing government officials to break the law. Payments can only go out the door during a shutdown in the rarest of circumstances: when they're necessary to protect life or property, to preserve the president's constitutional functions, or because not doing so immediately would significantly damage a funded program. Otherwise, payments have to wait until the shutdown ends and agencies have the authority and funding to pay the federal workers they're asking to do the job." Source: Joe Davidson, [Washington Post](#).

- *Significant Economic Impacts* – The National Park Service lost an estimated \$400,000 per day in entrance fees during the shutdown. Since the shutdown lasted about 35 days, that works out to an estimated \$14 million in entrance fees alone. But, says John Garder, NPCA's senior director for budget and appropriation, the total economic impact is likely to exceed that number. "We fear that the costs to the park service will be worse than initially expected due to the administration's decision to rob fee accounts to prolong its damaging effort to keep parks partially open. There will be other costs to the already underfunded park service, including cleanup and condition assessments after the shutdown, the loss of labor and backlogged work during the shutdown, and challenges involving preparing for the busy season." Source: Kyla Mandel, [Think Progress](#).
- *Feds Silent On Shutdown Due To Reprisal Fear* – Reporter Wes Siler opens his article on the shutdown in the January 23rd edition of *Outside* (two days before it ended) with this question: "The most surprising emotion I've encountered while reporting on the partial government shutdown?" His answer: "Fear." Siler says that this is totally atypical; that federal workers normally are quite willing and prompt in providing him with sought after information. The reason, of course, is that the administration can be quick with reprisals against anyone who says anything that deviates even mildly from its positions – or against anyone who tells the truth. Siler quotes a fellow reporter's observation regarding the seriousness of this change: "When a culture of fear and reluctance to engage with the public has reached such a level that even frontline firefighters and park rangers doing taxpayer-funded work are afraid to engage with the public that they serve, then we have real problems." Source: Wes Siler, [Outside](#).
- *LWCF Legislation On Hold* – The January 24th *Washington Post* has a story on the holdup of bipartisan Land and Water Conservation Fund renewal legislation as an example of a side effect of the shutdown – and of the general operations of Congress: "[Despite] its popularity, the fund...is right where so much other legislation is: in shutdown purgatory... But what happened to the Land and Water Conservation Fund is a reminder that the shutdown has also effectively halted one of the most important duties of the government: the passage of laws. The political dysfunction in Washington has reached the point where Congress might struggle to pass a resolution endorsing apple pie. (Imagine the outrage from the powerful Cherry Pie Lobby.)" Meanwhile, the lag in authorization for LWCF has held up land deals currently being negotiated due to lack of funding. "Normally, the Treasury diverts oil and gas fees into the fund, but that hasn't been happening since Oct. 1, according to the fund's supporters. They're fuzzy on whether that lost funding will ever be replaced. They fear the money is lost forever." Source: Joel Achenbach, [Washington Post](#).

Reports on impacts to the parks themselves appear in the "Around The Parks" section further on in the issue along with other news.

### **Bryce Canyon NP Unprepared Hikers Rescued From Canyon**

Two hikers who got lost in the park on the Monday before last were rescued by the country's SAR team.

According to the Garfield County Sheriff's Office, "the conditions were extreme and these two individuals who were from California were not prepared for the winter weather we were having at the time."

County dispatch received a call around 6 p.m. from rangers who had been contacted about the lost and stranded hikers by other visiting park hikers. The county's search and rescue team was sent out and the two hikers were subsequently found and retrieved.

Source: Mori Kessler, [St. George News](#).

## 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

**January 25** – The Senate passed H.J. Res. 28, making further continuing appropriations for fiscal year 2019. The joint resolution makes continuing appropriations for the remaining federal agencies that are affected by the federal government shutdown, including the Department of the Interior, through February 15th.

### House Actions

**January 23** – The House agreed to H. Res. 67, electing majority members to certain standing committees, including the Committee on Oversight and Reform. Members: Representatives Carolyn B. Maloney of New York, Norton, Clay, Lynch, Cooper, Connolly, Krishnamoorthi, Raskin, Rouda, Hill of California, Wasserman Schultz, Sarbanes, Welch, Speier, Kelly of Illinois, DeSaulnier, Lawrence, Plaskett, Khanna, Gomez, Ocasio-Cortez, Pressley, and Tlaib.

**January 23** - The House passed H.J. Res. 28, making further continuing appropriations for fiscal year 2019. The joint resolution makes continuing appropriations for the remaining federal agencies that are affected by the federal government shutdown, including the Department of the Interior, through February 28th, or whenever their individual appropriations bills are enacted. The bill passed by a vote of 229 yeas to 184 nays. The joint resolution was originally passed by the House on January 17th by a voice vote, but due to a dispute between the Democrats and the Republicans about whether to pass the resolution by a voice vote versus a recorded vote, the House vacated the initial vote that allowed the bill to pass and agreed to hold a recorded vote on the resolution on January 23rd.

**January 23** – The House passed H.R. 648, the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2019, to make continuing appropriations for the fiscal year ending September 30th. This bill includes appropriations for the remainder of the fiscal year for a number of federal agencies whose appropriations bill had not yet been signed into law, including the Department of the Interior. The bill passed by a vote of 234 yeas to 180 nays. The bill includes almost similar amounts for NPS programs as found in H.R. 21, which passed the House on January 3rd, and as found in H.R. 266, which the House passed on January 11th, but there were some changes. Below are the amounts provided for the National Park Service in Division D of H.R. 648. The bill appropriates \$3.22 billion for NPS in FY 2019 (NPS had \$3.215 in FY 2018 – the appropriation for FY 2019 is well above the president's proposed \$2.7 billion for FY 2019). The bill includes the following funding levels:

- Operations of the National Park System (ONPS) - \$2.5 billion in FY 2019 (NPS had \$2.4 billion in FY 2018).
- Natural Recreation and Preservation Programs (NRP) - \$64.1 million in FY 2019. (NPS had \$63.05 million in FY 2018).
- Historic Preservation Fund (HPF) - \$102.6 million in FY 2019. (NPS had \$96.9 million for FY 2018). Within the Historic Preservation account, \$49.6 million goes to the State Historic

Preservation Offices and \$11.7 million to Tribal Historic Preservation Offices, equal to the fiscal year 2018 enacted level. The bill also provides the following grant program funding: \$15.25 million for competitive grants, of which \$750,000 is for grants to underserved communities and \$14.5 million is for competitive grants to document, interpret, and preserve historical sites associated with the Civil Rights Movement; \$8 million for competitive grants to Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs); \$5 million for preservation grants to revitalize historic properties of national, state and local significance in order to restore, protect and foster economic development of rural villages and downtown areas; and \$13 million for Save America's Treasures.

- Construction - \$364.7 million in FY 2019 (NPS had \$359.7 million for FY 2018).
- Land Acquisition (LWCF) - \$168.4 million in FY 2019 (NPS had \$180 million in FY 2018). Within the land acquisition account, funding is provided as follows: \$124 million for State Conservation Grants; \$34.4 million for federal land acquisition; \$10 million for the American Battlefield Protection Program (ABPP); and \$4.9 million for inholdings, donations, and exchanges.
- Centennial Challenge - \$20 million in FY 2019 (NPS had \$23 million in FY 2018).
- The bill also redesignates Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore as Indiana Dunes National Park and redesignates the Miller-Woods Trail in the park as the Paul H. Douglas Trail (Sec. 115); extends the authorization of appropriations for the Tennessee, Augusta Canal, and South Carolina National Heritage Areas for an additional two years through September 30, 2019 (Sec. 117); requires the Secretary of the Interior to designate the rest area bounded by Alexandria Avenue, West Boulevard Drive, and the George Washington Memorial Parkway on the Mount Vernon Trail within the George Washington Memorial Parkway as the 'Peter B. Webster III Memorial Area' and requires the installation of a plaque honoring Peter B. Webster III at the site (Sec. 118); and provides \$1 million for the work of the Women's Suffrage Centennial Commission.

**January 23** – The House agreed to H. Res. 68, electing minority members to certain standing committees of the House, including the following:

- Committee on Appropriations. Members: Representatives Rogers of Kentucky, Aderholt, Simpson, Carter of Texas, Calvert, Cole, Diaz-Balart, Graves of Georgia, Womack, Fortenberry, Fleischmann, Herrera Beutler, Joyce of Ohio, Harris, Roby, Amodei, Stewart, Palazzo, Newhouse, Moolenaar, Rutherford, and Hurd of Texas.
- Committee on Energy and Commerce. Members: Representatives Upton, Shimkus, Burgess, Scalise, Latta, Rogers of Washington, Guthrie, Olson, McKinley, Kinzinger, Griffith, Bilirakis, Johnson of Ohio, Long, Bucshon, Flores, Brooks of Indiana, Mullin, Hudson, Walberg, Carter of Georgia, Duncan, and Gianforte.
- Committee on Oversight and Reform. Members: Representatives Amash, Gosar, Foxx of North Carolina, Massie, Meadows, Hice of Georgia, Grothman, Comer, Cloud, Gibbs, Higgins of Louisiana, Norman, Roy, Miller, Green of Tennessee, Armstrong, and Steube.

**January 24** – The House passed H. Res. 73, electing majority members to certain standing committees of the House, including the Committee on Natural Resources. Representatives Napolitano, Costa, Sablan, Huffman, Lowenthal, Gallego, Cox of California, Neguse, Levin of California, Haaland, Van Drew, Cunningham, Velázquez, DeGette, Clay, Dingell, Brown of Maryland, McEachin, Soto, Case, Horsford, and San Nicolas.

**January 24** - The House passed H. Res. 74, electing minority members to certain standing committees of the House, including the Committee on Natural Resources. Representatives Young, Gohmert, Lamborn, Wittman, McClintock, Gosar, Cook, Westerman, Graves of Louisiana, Hice of Georgia, Radewagen, Webster of Florida, Cheney, Johnson of Louisiana, González-Colón of Puerto Rico, Curtis, Kevin Hern of Oklahoma, and Fulcher.

**January 25** – The House agreed to the Senate amendment to H.J. Res. 28, making further continuing appropriations for fiscal year 2019. The joint resolution makes continuing appropriations for the remaining federal agencies that are affected by the federal government shutdown, including the

Department of the Interior, through February 15, 2019. The bill now goes to the president to be signed into law.

## National Park Service

### National Park System

**Deputy Director Issues Statement On End Of Shutdown** – On January 25th, the day the shutdown ended, P. Daniel Smith, the Service’s deputy director, issued this statement: “Following the enactment of the continuing resolution, the National Park Service is preparing to resume regular operations nationwide though the schedule for individual parks may vary depending on staff size and complexity of operations. Many parks which have been accessible throughout the lapse in appropriations remain accessible with basic services. Visitors should contact individual parks or visit park websites for their opening schedules and the latest information on accessibility and visitor services. Some parks which have been closed throughout the lapse in appropriations may not reopen immediately, but we will work to open all parks as quickly as possible. We appreciate the support of state and local partners nationwide who stepped up to offer support to national parks. We are grateful to have the dedicated men and women of the National Park Service back at work, serving the American people and welcoming visitors to their national parks.” Source: [National Park Service](#).

**America’s Best Beaches** – An article on CNN’s travel webpage ranks the “13 offshore destinations around the nation [that] are standouts for a variety of solid island-ish reasons: Beautiful beaches with crazy seashell collections, giant bears, no cars, bewitching bike paths and carriage roads, idyllic national parks, veritable Victorian vibes, and oyster cocktail pubs among them.” Five of them – Cumberland Island, Fire Island, Mount Desert Island, Ocracoke Island and St. John – are all partially or wholly within NPS units. For more on them (and to see what other islands made the list), click on the following. Source: [CNN Travel](#).

### 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.

- *Acadia NP* – The park has received federal funding to upgrade the Island Explorer fleet of free shuttle buses. Island Explorer, which is a seasonal service that serves the park and is owned and operated by Ellsworth's Downeast Transportation, has received the first three of 21 new buses on order for 2019. The cost is \$240,000 per bus, for a total of \$5.4 million. Funding comes from the DOI and from the Federal Transit Administration through the Maine Department of Transportation. The new fleet replaces the system's existing buses, which are more than a decade old, and expands the fleet by one bus. Source: Laurie Schreiber, [Maine Biz](#).
- *Death Valley NP* – Last week, Laura Cunningham, head of the Western Watersheds Project, a not-for-profit conservation organization, visited the park with her husband, a retired Death Valley ranger, to assess the damage caused during the shutdown. Several of the photos she took of damage caused by ORV’s were posted in *The Guardian* on January 25th. Take a look. Source: Gabrielle Canon, [The Guardian](#).
- *Joshua Tree NP* – Curt Sauer, a former superintendent at Joshua Tree, spoke out at a “Shutdown the Shutdown” rally last Saturday regarding the environmental toll the shutdown had on the park: “What’s happened to our park in the last 34 days is irreparable for the next 200 to 300 years...You were told that the park was adequately staffed and protected. That was a false statement from Washington. It was a kind of, you know, fake news!” Source: Jared Gilmour, [Sacramento Bee](#).
- *Yellowstone NP* – There’s a new report in *Science Digest* on “risk-enhancing behaviors associated with human injuries from bison encounters at Yellowstone National Park,” based on data from the years 2000 through 2015. The researchers’ four key findings are bulleted at the

top of the report: 1) bison injure more persons at Yellowstone National Park than any other animal; 2) park visitors approached bison at closer distances than prior reports from previous years; 3) photography was the most common activity that led park visitors to approach bison; and 4) injury prevention campaigns should incorporate behavior change models and social marketing. The full report can be read at the link that follows. Source: Cara Cherry, Kirsten M. Leong, Rick Wallen, and Danielle Buttke, [Science Digest](#).

## **Federal Government And Agencies**

Recent news stories, web postings, statements, and press releases pertaining to Congress (excepting official business, which appears above), the administration, DOI, and other public land management agencies that have bearing on the NPS.

### **Administration and Government**

**Trump Orders More Logging On Federal Lands** – The president issued an [executive order](#) late last year directing that the Departments of Agriculture and Interior increase logging on lands under their agencies' control by 31% above levels of timber harvest in 2017. The order is worded in a way that makes it clear that the president is trying to use the fires last year in California as the rationale for its several directives. But this order is deemed unlikely to reduce fire risk since there is so much land at risk of fire due to climate change. Fires have increased fivefold since the 1970s as temperatures have risen and snowpack has shrunk; on the other hand, there have been wildfires on just two percent of lands treated by the Forest Service between 2004 and 2013. Source: Monica Medina and Miro Korenha, [Our Daily Planet](#).

### **Department of the Interior**

**Mixed Prospects For DOI's Deregulatory Efforts** – “The actions taken by Zinke’s Interior Department have different levels of legal permanence, reports Carl Segerstrom in a January 23rd *High Country News* posting. “Many of the Trump Interior Department policies were either pushed through administratively, and can be easily overturned by a new administration, or have yet to become final rules.” The article looks at the status of a number of regulations according to their status – final rules, proposed rules, and secretarial orders and instructional memoranda. Source: Carl Segerstrom, [High Country News](#).

### **House and Senate**

**Grijalva Takes Over House Natural Resources Committee** – On January 16th, *Audubon* posted a story in its conservation section entitled [“The Trump Administration Can't Ignore Raúl Grijalva Anymore.”](#) As a member of the minority party in the House until the last election, Grijalva’s requests for information and action were routinely ignored by the administration, even though he was the ranking Democrat on the House Natural Resources Committee. “But now Grijalva holds the gavel,” writes Andy McGlashen. “He can issue subpoenas and hold oversight hearings, and says he plans to call on both Zinke and Bernhardt to testify before the committee. He decides which legislation the panel will consider. And although the bills he sends to the Democrat-controlled House will face long odds with both the Senate and White House in Republican hands, the next two years are an opportunity to get them teed up for passage should his party take control in 2020.” See the article for more on Grijalva’s agenda. Source: Andy McGlashen, [Audubon](#).

## **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**



**The Bad News** – The news on climate and conservation issues these days is inevitably grim, but needs to be shared – mitigated, when and where possible, with good news, which follows. First the former:

- *Melting Of Greenland Glaciers Reaching ‘Tipping Point’* – A new study has found that climate change is causing Greenland’s massive ice sheets to melt much faster than previously thought. Michael Bevis, a professor of geodynamics at The Ohio State University and the lead author of the study, told CNN that the research his team conducted “found that humanity may have passed the point of no return when it comes to combating climate change.” Said Bevis: "The only thing we can do is adapt and mitigate further global warming -- it's too late for there to be no effect. This is going to cause additional sea level rise. We are watching the ice sheet hit a tipping point." Bevis’ study examined and refined observations made from the NASA/German Aerospace Center’s twin Gravity Recovery and Climate Experiment (GRACE) satellites between 2002 and 2016. [That report](#) found that the mass of the Greenland ice sheet has rapidly declined in the last several years due to surface melting and iceberg calving. Source: Joshua Berlinger, CNN.

**The Good News** – Despite the continuous drumbeat of bad news on the climate and conservation fronts, some headway is being made in meeting and dealing with related issues:

- *Climate Change Perceptions* – The Yale Program on Climate Change Communication and the George Mason University Center for Climate Change Communication have just published a report entitled [Climate Change in the American Mind](#) that summarizes the findings of a nationally representative online survey of 1,114 American adults regarding their perspectives on climate change. The researchers “found that 73 percent of Americans—a record high and a jump of 10 percentage points since 2015—believe global warming is real and is happening. In addition, 72 percent say that the issue of climate change is personally important to them, and 86 percent don’t think it’s too late to do something about it.” Click on the above link to the report itself and scroll down to pages 3 and 4 to see summaries of the findings on 16 different questions – all of them suggesting we’ve at last come to the point where climate change is perceived as a real danger by most Americans. Source: [NOVA Lens](#).
- *Another Step Taken In Redwood Protection* – Two years from now, a 730-acre tract of redwood trees in northern California formerly in private hands will open to the public as the [Harold Richardson Redwoods Reserve](#). The redwood forest had been under the protection of the Richardson family for over 100 years; when Harold Richardson, the family’s patriarch, passed away in 2016 at age 96, he left the ancient forest to his heirs, who in turn worked with Save the Redwoods League to protect it for future generations. According to the league, this large, complex forest, located about three hours north of San Francisco, looks much as it did thousands of years ago, with large, ancient giants among healthy younger trees. The oldest known coastal redwood south of Mendocino County – also the widest coast redwood south of Humboldt County – has been discovered on the property; it is estimated to be 1,640 years old with a trunk as wide as a two-lane street. Source: Monica Medina and Miro Korenha, [Our Daily Planet](#).

## **National Park System Issues**

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

- *Acadia NP* – A number of projections regarding the likely impacts of climate change on the park and surrounding area show that current forest, dominated by native trees like red spruce, balsam fir and paper birch, could dwindle or die off in a matter of decades, leaving the park vulnerable to invasive weeds and bereft of important species that provide habitat to wildlife. In response, reports *Sierra*, the national magazine of the Sierra Club, researchers and the NPS launched a search up and down the mid-Atlantic last year for tree species that might both survive Acadia’s current harsh winters and tolerate the hotter conditions that will almost certainly exist in the future. About a thousand of these trees are now being grown at a park

site on the Schoodic Peninsula. This process, called “assisted migration,” is also being examined by the Forest Service. The article examines all the pluses and minuses of assisted migration. Source: Madeline Ostrander, [Sierra](#).

**Native Flora and Fauna** – Recent news pertaining to the protection, propagation and advancement of species now or formerly native to the national parks:

- *Yellowstone NP* – The park has released [The Yellowstone Wolf Project Annual Report for 2017](#), its yearly summary on the status of wolf recovery in Yellowstone. Here’s the executive summary: “There were at least 97 wolves in 11 packs (3 breeding pairs) living primarily in Yellowstone National Park (YNP) at the end of December 2017. Overall, wolf numbers have fluctuated little from 2009 to 2017 (83-108 wolves) while breeding pairs (defined as an adult male and an adult female with two pups that survive through the end of the year) have typically been two to three times higher than the 2017 count. Pack size in 2017 ranged from 2 to 21, averaging 8.8 in size. Parkwide, 21 pups survived to year end, only 5 in northern Yellowstone and 16 in the interior of the park. Five packs had total litter loss and over half of the park’s recorded pups were in the Wapiti Lake pack.” Source: [Yellowstone National Park](#).
- *Cape Cod NS* – The park and other areas on Cape Cod are seeing a dramatic rise in stricken and stunned sea turtles washing up on the cape’s shoreline. That’s because they have failed to migrate south soon enough, as they have not perceived the need to do so because waters in their summer habitat in the Gulf of Maine are unusually warm due to climate change. “In the 1980s, the number of sea turtles stranded on the shores of Cape Cod every year averaged in the dozens,” reports *The Guardian*. “That average went up through the 1990s and 2000s, but over the past decade it has risen dramatically: 2014 saw more than 1,200 turtles make landfall. This year, more than 790 sea turtles have washed up on Cape Cod so far. Some 720 of those are Kemp’s ridley sea turtles, a critically endangered species that nests on the shores of the much warmer Gulf of Mexico. It is an event unmatched in magnitude anywhere else in the world.” The Gulf of Maine, which the Cape Cod peninsula juts into like a flexing arm, is warming faster than 99% of the world’s waters. This year marked the gulf’s third-warmest year on record. Source: Josh Wood, [The Guardian](#).
- *Pinnacles NP* – A recent posting by *Science Daily* reports on an important pollinator study conducted in the park. The article begins with this question: “Declines in native bee populations are widely reported, but can existing data really analyze these trends?” It then goes on to partly answer the question. “[In a recent] online edition of *PLOS One*, Utah State University and USDA researchers report findings about pollinator biodiversity in California’s Pinnacles National Park derived from data collected from three separate surveys spanning 17 years. Their results documented 450 species of wild, native bees at Pinnacles, including 48 new to the area since 2002, and 95 detected at the site in the 1990s, but now missing.” The report is a rare example of a comprehensive and extensive evaluation of pollinators. Joan Meiners, the report’s lead author, says that efforts such as theirs are critical to the future of pollinators: “Increased land conservation and systematic, replicated monitoring efforts, similar to those we present from Pinnacles, will be essential to accurately track the extent and nature of widespread declines in our most important pollinators.” Source: Utah State University, [Science Daily](#).
- *Isle Royale NP* – Six wolves from Ontario’s Michipicoten Island in Lake Superior are being moved to the park this month through a \$50,000 grant from the National Parks of Lake Superior Foundation. These wolves will join three Minnesota wolves brought to the island last fall as part of an effort to replenish the island’s native wolf population, which had dwindled to just two animals – a male and female unable to successfully mate due to inbreeding and genetic deformities. The relocations are aimed at restoring some sense of predator-prey balance on the island, which has about 2,000 moose with no other predators. The grant also will pay for ongoing monitoring of the new wolves even if another shutdown occurs. Source: John Myers, [Duluth News Tribune](#).



**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 Forest Service and National Park Service announced in December that more mountain goats will be airlifted out of the park in 2019 and relocated to the North Cascades. The two agencies worked out particulars on helicopter landings, temporary fencing, salt blocks and other actions needed to move the goats. Crews removed 115 goats from the park in September, releasing 98 at five sites in the North Cascades. Eleven goats died during the process and six goat kids were sent to the Northwest Trek Wildlife Park. Plans call for removing 725 goats this year. Source: [Lewiston Tribune](#).
- *Glen Canyon NRA* – The NPS and the Utah Department of Natural Resources set records in 2018 for vessel inspection and decontamination for quagga mussels. The two agencies contacted over 200,000 visitors, inspected over 64,000 vessels, and decontaminated over 4,200 vessels at five primary launch ramps at Lake Powell. Earlier this year, technicians found quagga mussels on and in boats that had only been in Lake Powell for a day or two, something boaters hadn't experienced in the past. As a result, the two agencies increased inspection, decontamination, and enforcement efforts. These efforts will be increased still further this year. Source: [National Parks Traveler](#).

## **The Coalition**

**Coalition Actions** – Here are some of the actions that the Coalition took on your behalf over the past week or so:

- *Advocacy Training* – The Coalition hosted two successful advocacy training webinars, the second last Wednesday. Slides from the presentation – as well as CPANP's advocacy toolkit – are [posted on our webpage](#). For those that missed the webinars, we will also be posting a recording online.
- *Letter On Shutdown To Senator McConnell* – On January 21st, Coalition chair Phil Francis sent a letter to Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell, urging him to do everything in his power to reopen the federal government and the Department of the Interior. The full text of the letter can be found [at this link](#).

Source: Emily Thompson, Communications and Advocacy Coordinator.

## **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.

- *South Florida Parks* – On January 18th, a 60-year-old man was sentenced in Florida state court for [RICO violations](#) stemming from over ten years of looting archeological sites on state and federal lands. The man and his three accomplices were arrested by Florida state park rangers in July of 1992 after they were discovered illegally digging in Cayo Costa State Park near Fort Meyers. State park officials contacted Big Cypress rangers and a joint investigation was begun which led to the discovery of a multi-state ring involved in looting public lands. One of the members of the ring had been involved in hunting for "treasure" and publishing a diggers' newsletter for over twenty years. NPS rangers and investigators detailed to the case reviewed documents, maps and photographs seized during the investigation and found documentation of illegal forays into Everglades NP, Big Cypress NP, Ding Darling NWR, and other protected public areas. Statute of limitation and dual prosecution considerations led the U.S. Attorney's Office to recommend against federal prosecution and agree to a cooperative effort with the state. The 60-year-old was sentenced to two years' community control (house arrest), three years' probation, and 300 hours of community service; he was also required to

pay \$3,500 in restitution. His accomplices received similar but lesser sentences in earlier pleas. Agreements with the state attorney's office will allow NPS acquisition of forfeited evidence documents for use in an intelligence database and training programs. Submitted by Special Agent Chip Davis.

- *Delaware Water Gap NRA* – Around 8 p.m. on the evening of January 22nd, park dispatch was contacted by a woman who reported that her 28-year-old husband had gone skiing in the Blue Mountain Lakes area of the park and was about three hours overdue. A hasty search was begun by rangers on cross-country skis. The man was found around 11:30 p.m. at a spot about a mile from his vehicle. Rescuers had to drag a litter through snow that was from three- to four-feet deep in sub-zero temperatures to evacuate him to an ambulance, which then took him to a nearby landing zone for helicopter evacuation. He suffered frostbite injuries to his hands and feet and had a low core temperature of 84 degrees. He was not properly dressed for cross-country skiing, nor prepared for a night out. It's unlikely that he would have survived the night if he hadn't been located and rescued. Submitted by Chief Ranger Doyle Nelson.
- *Big South Fork NR&RA* – On January 22nd, a heavily-armed, mentally-disturbed man shot at some kids playing on a road leading to his trailer in an area near the park. The local sheriff's department was immediately summoned, ascertained that additional help was needed, and asked the park to provide assistance. Two rangers were sent to assist, as were representatives of the Tennessee Bureau of Investigation and other sheriffs' departments. A standoff developed, with the man barricaded in the trailer for nearly 20 hours. Numerous attempts to convince him to surrender were unsuccessful; tear gas and other chemical agents were used, but were also unsuccessful. During the standoff, the man fired over 3,000 rounds of ammunition at officers. At daylight on the 23rd, he was shot and killed while attempting to flee his trailer. There were no injuries to law enforcement personnel during the incident. Although the rangers did not participate in the exchanges of gunfire, they kept the trailer under surveillance throughout the night with night vision goggles and the park's three million candlepower infrared Peak Beam searchlight. They also assisted the sheriff with establishing a limited incident command system. Submitted by Chief Ranger John Cannon.

## **Acknowledgements**

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- Production: Steve Pittleman
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- Issue Contributors: David Manski, Bill Walters, Roberta D'Amico, Bob Martin, Chris Nelson, Mark Forbes

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**

Last October 2nd, Terry Gross, who hosts the NPS show "Fresh Air," interviewed author Michael Lewis about his new book, *The Fifth Risk*, which examines the damage being done to three federal departments – energy, commerce and agriculture – by the current administration. At one point, she asks him about the preconceptions people have about federal employees and the experiences he'd had while writing the book. His answer:

"[When a] new administration comes in, they have kind of contempt for the people who are there. And four years later they walk out and say 'Those are the most amazing people I've ever worked with.' I expected to be briefed and informed by these people. I did not expect to be inspired by them.

“The kind of person who is still working in our government, despite all the abuse the government takes, is a mission-driven person. They’re not paid well. They’re there because they’re interested in the task. The people in the National Weather Service are people who have had a passion for the weather since they were little kids. The people in the Department of Energy are scientists who have had a passion for science since they were little kids...

“There’s something really moving about groups of people who are doing what they’re doing, not for money but for mission. They have a purpose in life and it just jumps off the page...

“I came away from this thinking ‘Wow. I can’t believe we as a society have treated this slice of our society, these kinds of people who are really the best among us, as badly as we have...’

“[The structure of the government is] screwed up. That's what's screwed up. It's not the people who [are] screwed up. It's screwed up that it takes 106 days, on average, to hire someone new... or that you don't know your budget when you're planning, or that you make the slightest mistake and you become Public Enemy #1 but you do something really great and no one pays any attention....

“All that’s really screwed up but that’s not their fault, that’s our fault. Because, in a way what we’re doing is wasting the greatest spirits in our society.”

[Michael Lewis](#), excerpted from a [“Fresh Air” interview](#)

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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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