



## Coalition To Protect America's National Parks Weekly National Park System Report

Wednesday, May 23, 2018

Volume 2

Number 17

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### **Editor's Note**

There will be no edition on Wednesday, May 30th. The newsletter will next appear on Wednesday, June 6th.

### **Incidents**

#### **Hawaii Volcanoes National Park**

##### **Kilauea Eruption Continues, Causing Some Damage In Park**

The eruption of Kilauea Volcano that began on May 3rd continues with undiminished vigor and the park remains closed. Since the eruption is being covered comprehensively and in a more timely manner by all media, coverage in this newsletter will remain limited to the park's situation.

Earthquakes emanating from Kilauea's summit have caused cracking in park roads and some damage to park buildings. Many employees are working from home, and rangers are currently greeting and serving visitors at the Mokupāpapa Discovery Center in downtown Hilo. An IMT 3 (Robert Wissinger, IC) is in the park to provide assistance.

A section of Highway 137, located to the east of the park, has been closed, cutting off one of the access points for those living east and south of Leilani Estates, the center for much of the rift eruption. Those communities include Kehena, Kaimu and Kalapana. The residents can still leave the area through Highway 130; nonetheless, the state Department of Transportation and National Park Service officials are working on a plan to reopen Chain of Craters Road as an emergency route out of the area. Doing so, however, would require the removal of seven-tenths of a mile of lava, which could take weeks.

For more information, go to the following sites:

- Hawaii Volcanoes NP – <https://www.nps.gov/havo/index.htm>
- Hawaiian Volcano Observatory (HVO) – <https://volcanoes.usgs.gov/observatories/hvo/>
- HVO webcams – [https://volcanoes.usgs.gov/volcanoes/kilauea/multimedia\\_webcams.html](https://volcanoes.usgs.gov/volcanoes/kilauea/multimedia_webcams.html)
- HVO photos/videos – [https://volcanoes.usgs.gov/volcanoes/kilauea/multimedia\\_chronology.html](https://volcanoes.usgs.gov/volcanoes/kilauea/multimedia_chronology.html)
- HVO maps – [https://volcanoes.usgs.gov/volcanoes/kilauea/multimedia\\_maps.html](https://volcanoes.usgs.gov/volcanoes/kilauea/multimedia_maps.html)

Sources: Email from Superintendent Cindy Orlando; [Honolulu Star-Advertiser](#); above webpages.

#### **Sequoia National Park**

##### **Hiker And Climber Die In Separate Accidents**

A hiker and a mountain climber fell to their deaths in separate incidents in the park the week before last. One death occurred on Mount Whitney and the other on the Watchtower section of the Lakes Trail out of Lodgepole.

On May 5th, two people descending Mount Whitney found two ice axes and what appeared to be a blood trail leading to a body 1,500 to 2,000 feet below the ice axes. Rangers recovered the body the next day and transported it to Ash Mountain, where it was turned over to the Tulare County Coroner's Office. The victim was identified as Eric Juliani, 29, of New Jersey.

On May 6th, the park was notified of a hiker who had fallen from the Lakes Trail. Anton Dokov, 29, of San Diego, slipped on ice and snow and slid over a cliff. Rangers responded that same day, but dangerous ice and snow conditions with a very steep slope forced them to turn around. The next day, rangers found the body, but could not retrieve it due to the complexity and technical aspects of the recovery. It was recovered on Tuesday.

Source: [Fresno Bee](#).

### **Bryce Canyon National Park Park Drinking Water System Deemed Health Threat**

Garfield County officials have declared the park's public drinking water system to be a "significant threat to the health" of residents and visitors and have issued a formal resolution to that effect.

Officials say the park's water system has tested positive for E. Coli contamination multiple times in the past seven years and that the problem still has not been resolved. They say the contamination is due to Utah prairie dogs that have burrowed into the ground near the spring source.

Photographs released by the county appear to show that the animals have been in the area burrowing around the water sources.

The county's resolution demands that the National Park Service fix the problem and remove the prairie dogs from the water source's 100-foot primary protection by May 31st. It also demands that the animals be removed from the source's secondary protection area no later than July 31st.

Source: [Good4Utah.com](#).

### **Natchez Trace Parkway Driver Who Hit Cyclist To Plead Guilty**

The driver who's been charged with causing a bike crash on the Natchez Trace Parkway last year will change his plea to guilty later this month.

A motion was filed to change Marshall Neely's plea from not guilty to guilty, according to an order filed in the U.S. District Court for Middle Tennessee. The charges Neely faces stem from a July 2017 accident in which he's accused of striking a bicyclist with his vehicle and leaving the scene. A federal grand jury charged Neely with reckless aggravated assault, lying to a federal agent, and obstruction of justice.

If convicted of the federal charges, Neely could face prison time. He could spend two to twelve years in prison on the reckless aggravated assault charge, up to five years in prison for lying to a federal agent, and up to 20 years in prison for obstructing justice.

Source/full story: [Nashville Tennessean](#).

## **National Fire Situation**

### **National Interagency Fire Center**

## NIFC Remains At Preparedness Level 2

### Synopsis

NIFC is at PL 2. Large fire activity continues in Alabama, Arizona, Florida and Virginia. Firefighters have contained all the large fires in Texas.

### National Park Service Fires

The Avian Complex continues to burn in Big Cypress; the Pinery Fire continues to burn, but Chiricahua NM has reopened:

- *Big Cypress NP* – The Avian Complex includes the Buzzard, Flamingo, Curlew, Vulture and Caracara fires. The Vulture and Caracara Fires are 100% contained; firefighters continue to work on the other three fires. The fires have burned 82,461 acres and are 45% contained. A Type 3 IMT (Matt Martens, IC) is managing the incident; 181 firefighters and overhead personnel are currently committed.
- *Chiricahua NM* – The park reopened to the public last Saturday. It had been closed due to the Pinery Fire and related fire cleanup efforts. The fire began on Saturday, May 12th, on private land, but quickly spread into the park. Some of the burned area overlaps with that burned by the 2011 Horseshoe II Fire. Source: [Arizona Range News](#).

### Active Incident Resource Commitments

Category	May 1st	May 14th	May 21st
Area Command Teams	0	0	0
NIMO Teams	0	0	0
Type 1 Teams	2	1	0
Type 2 Teams	0	1	0
Crews	36	33	7
Engines	147	133	33
Helicopters	18	24	4
Total FF/Overhead	1,699	1,686	444

### Fires/Acreage

Category	2018 Total	2007-2017 Ave	2018 Variance
Year-to-Date Fires	22,330	23,470	- 1,140
Year-to-Date Acres	1,625,209	1,113,698	+ 511,511

Sources: [National Interagency Fire Center](#).

### News From Around Washington

Reports on official actions and activities from Capitol Hill, the White House, the Department of the Interior, the National Park Service and other related agencies and NGO's.

#### Capitol Hill

#### Weekly Legislative Roundup

#### New Public Laws

Nothing to report.

## **Senate**

In last week's report, it was noted that the Senate received notification on May 10th of the withdrawal of the Trump administration's nomination of Ryan Douglas Nelson of Idaho to be solicitor of the Department of the Interior. News reports said that the administration intended to nominate him for a federal judgeship instead. On May 15th, he was nominated to be a United States circuit judge for the Ninth Circuit.

On May 15th, the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources held a hearing to examine the nomination of Aimee Kathryn Jorjani of Wisconsin to be chairman of the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation.

On May 16th, the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs approved S. 1400, to increase penalties for those exporting Native American cultural heritage items and to encourage the voluntary return of tangible cultural heritage to Indian tribes and Native Hawaiian organizations by collectors, dealers, and other individuals and non-Federal organizations that hold such heritage.

On May 17th, by a vote of 21 yeas to 76 nays, the Senate rejected a motion by Sen. Paul (R-KY) to proceed to consideration of S. Con. Res. 36, a concurrent resolution setting forth the congressional budget for the United States government for fiscal year 2019 and setting forth the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2020 through 2028.

On May 17th, the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee approved the following:

- S. 1459, to establish the Fort Sumter and Fort Moultrie National Historical Park in South Carolina. The bill would place Fort Moultrie and the Sullivan's Island Life-Saving Station Historic District, both of which NPS has managed for many years, within the boundary of the park and redesignate the park as a national historical park as the NPS had recommended in its testimony at the hearing on the bill, instead of a national park as the sponsor of the bill had requested when the bill was introduced. Fort Sumter, Fort Moultrie, and the Sullivan's Island Life-Saving Station Historic District would be managed as a single unit of the national park system.
- S. 1573, to authorize the Secretary of the Interior and the Secretary of Agriculture to place signage on Federal land along the trail known as the "American Discovery Trail".
- S. 1645, to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to conduct a special resource study of Public School 103 in West Baltimore, Maryland, which former Supreme Court Justice Thurgood Marshall attended as a youth, and any other resources in the surrounding neighborhood that relate to his early life.
- S. 1646, to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to conduct a special resource study of President Street Station, a railroad terminal in Baltimore, Maryland.
- S. 2102, to clarify the boundary of Acadia National Park, Maine, and to allow traditional taking of marine species, marine worms, and shellfish on certain land in the park.
- H.R. 965, to redesignate the Saint-Gaudens National Historic Site as the Saint-Gaudens National Historical Park.
- H.R. 995, to require, among other provisions, the Department of the Interior to modernize terms used to describe the racial background or place of origin of people, in regulations concerning the 1974 development plan for Pennsylvania Avenue in Washington, DC.
- H.R. 2897, to authorize the mayor of the District of Columbia and the director of the National Park Service to enter into cooperative management agreements for the operation, maintenance, and management of units of the National Park System in the District of Columbia.

The committee also approved the nomination of Aimee Kathryn Jorjani of Wisconsin to be chairman of the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation at this same meeting.

## **House**

On May 15th, the House passed:

- H.R. 4895, to establish the Medgar Evers Home National Monument in Mississippi upon donation of the lands and a determination that they constitute a manageable unit of the national park system.
- H.R. 1417, to amend the National Law Enforcement Museum Act to allow the museum in Washington, D.C. to acquire, receive, possess, collect, ship, transport, import, and display firearms.

On May 15th, the Committee on Appropriations Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies marked up the FY 2019 Interior, Environment and Related Agencies Appropriations bill. The bill was forwarded to the full committee, without amendment. As approved by the subcommittee, the bill would appropriate \$3.25 billion for NPS in FY 2019, which is an increase of \$53 million above the FY 2018 level, and which is well above the president's proposed \$2.4 billion. Of the \$3.25 billion, there is an additional \$50 million for park operations, and a \$175 million increase above FY 2018 to address deferred maintenance.

Within the \$3.25 billion, appropriations are provided as follows:

- Operations of the National Park System (ONPS) - \$2.527 billion (\$2.4 billion in FY 2018)
- Natural Recreation and Preservation Programs (NRP) - \$63.6 million (same as FY 2018)
- Historic Preservation Fund (HPF) - \$91.9 million (\$96.9 million in FY 2018)
- Construction - \$369.3 million (\$359.7 million in FY 2018)
- Land Acquisition (LWCF) - \$172.36 million (\$180 million in FY 2018)
- Centennial Challenge - \$30 million (\$23 million in FY 2018).

The bill also extends the Chesapeake Bay Initiative by another year through FY 2020, and the federal lands fee program (FLERA) through FY 2021.

The committee provided the secretary's request of approximately \$18 million for the departmental reorganization (the NPS only has a small part of this amount - less than \$1 million - as the other bureaus within DOI are more affected by the reorganization). At the markup, the Democrats expressed their unhappiness with this money, saying the department has not been transparent about what they were doing with this reorganization while they ignored the wishes of the tribes and others.

A number of bad riders on clean water, delisting the gray wolf, not allowing the listing of the Trestles Historic District, California, to be listed on the National Register of Historic Places, and a few others are in the bill again this year. It is expected that some of them will drop out when the bill reaches the Senate or in conference just as they did last year.

The full appropriations committee will mark up the bill on May 22nd. The committee report has not yet been issued, which usually includes more background about the bill and the various funding levels. Further details will be provided in the next report.

On May 16th, the House Committee on Natural Resources approved:

- H.R. 857, to provide for conservation and enhanced recreation activities in the California Desert Conservation Area. The bill makes several changes to the California Desert Conservation Act (P.L. 103-433), including provisions to expand the Death Valley National Park Wilderness by 88,000 acres (the Senate bill, S. 32, proposes 92,000 acres); designate one acre of land, the Mormon Peak Microwave Facility, within Death Valley National Park, as potential wilderness; transfer 35,292 acres from BLM to NPS to add to the boundary of Death Valley National Park (S. 32 proposes 40,000 acres); transfer 25 acres from BLM to NPS in Mojave National Preserve where an NPS-owned maintenance facility exists (S. 32 has the same provision); transfer 2,900 acres from BLM to NPS along the northern boundary of Joshua Tree National Park and the adjustment of the boundary for a donation of 1,600 acres from the

Mojave Desert Land Trust (S. 32 has the same provisions); authorize the NPS to acquire the Joshua Tree Visitor Center outside the boundary of the park, now owned by the Joshua Tree National Park Association (S. 32 has the same provision); designate, as part of the Wild and Scenic Rivers System, 7.5 miles of Amargosa River and 7 miles of Surprise Canyon Creek, both near Death Valley National Park (S. 32 has the same provision).

- H.R. 3045, to amend the National Trails System Act to extend the Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail.
- H.R. 3186, to establish a program, to be known as the “Every Kid Outdoors program”, to provide free access to federal land and waters for fourth-grade students and up to three accompanying individuals or all accompanying adults in a car. The bill would codify the program begun under the Obama administration to allow every fourth grader free access to federal lands and waters.
- H.R. 3916, a bill that would move responsibility from the secretary of commerce or the National Marine Fisheries Service to the secretary of the interior with respect to species of fish that spawn in fresh or estuarine waters and migrate to ocean waters, and species of fish that spawn in ocean waters and migrate to fresh waters.

On May 17th, the Committee on Natural Resources Subcommittee on Federal Lands held a hearing on H.R. 5023, to redesignate the Civil War defenses of Washington as the Civil War Defenses of Washington National Historical Park, and to authorize additional areas in the District of Columbia, Maryland, and Virginia to be affiliated with the park.

Source: Don Hellmann, former assistant director, legislative and congressional affairs for the National Park Service.

## **Park People, Friends and Allies**

### **Midwest Region**

#### **Three New Superintendents Named**

Midwest Region has announced the selection of three new superintendents – Mark Foust at Buffalo National River, Laura Miller at Hot Springs National Park, and Lauren Blacik at Pipestone National Monument.

Foust will move to his new position in late July. For the last four years, he’s been the superintendent at Dinosaur National Monument. Prior to his assignment at Dinosaur, he was the chief ranger at Glacier National Park in Montana for eight years. Foust served in numerous supervisory and ranger positions and as chief ranger at Chickasaw National Recreation Area in Oklahoma, Oklahoma City National Memorial, and Padre Island National Seashore during his 29-year career. He is an incident commander for the Service’s Type II all-risk incident management team. He’s a third generation NPS employee.

Miller is currently the acting superintendent at Buffalo National River, where she’s worked as deputy superintendent since 2014. She will take over at Hot Springs in August. While at Buffalo National River, she led efforts to develop new partnerships and to begin several new plans, including a visitor use study, to help the park better serve visitors and to provide guidance for the park’s future development. Prior to joining the team at Buffalo National River, Miller was instrumental in the establishment and development of two other National Park Service units in Arkansas – Little Rock Central High School National Historic Site and the President William Jefferson Clinton Birthplace Home National Historic Site.

Blacik has been acting superintendent at Pipestone National Monument and now takes over as superintendent. Before that, she was special assistant to the regional director, focusing on coordination of activities for the Service’s Centennial in 2016. She also led efforts to expand internal communications, develop new tools for management accountability, and build new partnerships. Prior to moving to Omaha, Blacik managed the visitor services division at Aztec Ruins National Monument in New Mexico, where she worked closely with tribal and local leaders and educators; projects included the development of an annual youth cultural exchange, the New Mexico Youth Summit, and many

other collaborative efforts. She began her National Park Service career at Chaco Culture National Historical Park in 2009.

Sources: [Buffalo NR](#), [Hot Springs NP](#), and [Pipestone NM](#).

## **NPS Alumni**

### **Passing Of Hugh Manar**

Hugh Manar, 69, a career National Park Service ranger, passed away in Kingsville, Maryland, on May 13th.

Hugh was born on September 2, 1948, in Washington D.C. When he was seven years old, the family moved to New Orleans, where Hugh was active in Boy Scouting and earned the rank of Eagle Scout. He graduated from Louisiana State University with a degree in history. Hugh was an artillery officer in the U.S. Army during the Vietnam War, serving with distinction on a Sergeant Missile Battalion near Seoul, Korea.

After his discharge, he joined the National Park Service and worked at many historic sites, including: Gettysburg National Military Park, Nez Perce National Historical Park, Guilford Courthouse National Military Park, Fort Necessity National Battlefield, and Fort McHenry National Monument and Historic Shrine. While working at Fort McHenry, Hugh met many US presidents and received the White House Certificate of Appreciation for “outstanding support provided to the president of the United States.” He retired as Ft. McHenry’s supervisory park ranger after a 35-year career.

In his retirement, Hugh remained active in scouting, serving as the Harford County Commissioner of Special Needs Scouting, a troop committee member, and mentor for many Fallston Troop 899 scouts working toward the rank of Eagle Scout. In addition, Hugh was an active member of the Western Front Association, East Coast Chapter, an organization to share and remember the history of the Great War. He also served as a member of the Vestry of St. John’s Episcopal Church, Kingsville, where he chaired the parish’s 325th anniversary committee.

Hugh met his wife, Karen, at Fort McHenry where they resided in the historic fort for the first years of their 26-year marriage. He enjoyed attending her orchestral performances with the Annapolis and Maryland Symphonies. Hugh was also extremely proud of his son, Travis, a graduate of the West Nottingham Academy, an Eagle Scout, and an accomplished blacksmith.

He is survived by his wife, Karen Smith Manar, and son Travis Conway Manar; his sister, Josette Manar Lester, of St. Francisville, Louisiana; nephew, Cyrus Graham Lester, and wife, Maggie of St. Francisville, Louisiana; and niece, Rosemari Lester, and husband, Kyle Tuminello, of Denham Springs, Louisiana. Hugh is also survived by many great nieces and nephews.

A memorial service will be celebrated at St. John’s Episcopal Church, Kingsville, on May 26th, at 1 p.m., with a reception immediately following. Cards marked to the attention of Karen Smith Manar may be sent and contributions made in Hugh’s memory to: St. John’s Episcopal Church, P.O. Box 187, Kingsville, MD 21087; contributions may also be sent to Boy Scout Troop 899, c/o Mike Hayden, Treasurer, 2541 Hess Road, Fallston, MD 21047. Online tributes may be made at [www.lassahnfuneralhomes.com](http://www.lassahnfuneralhomes.com).

Source: Karen Smith Manar.

## **News Reports and Releases**

A brief summary of recent news stories, web postings and agency press releases pertaining to the federal government, the administration, DOI, the National Park Service, public lands and the climate and environment.

## **Government and Administration**



**DOI Staff Directed To Refrain From Offering Guidance On ESA Permits** – The *Huffington Post* had an article on May 4th about Interior’s latest effort to undercut environmental regulations: “New guidelines issued by the U.S. Department of the Interior now prohibit staff members from informing private interests when they must obtain a permit before they can develop properties where activities may affect habitats of endangered species. A memorandum issued last month by the Fish and Wildlife Service principal deputy director, Greg Sheehan, declared that it’s ‘not appropriate’ for staff to tell developers when they need to obtain such a permit — even though it may be required by law in many circumstances. Under a section of the 1973 Endangered Species Act, businesses and individuals must request what’s called an ‘incidental take permit’ if they believe their developments could interfere with the habitats of endangered species. Sheehan insists in his memo that it’s the ‘decision of the applicant’ whether or not to apply for such a permit. Staff members should not use ‘mandatory language (e.g., a permit is ‘required’),’ the memo warns.” Source: [Huffington Post](#).

## **National Park System**

**Groups Urge Congress To Invest In National Park Infrastructure** – “A coalition of business, conservation and veterans groups is calling on Congress to tackle an \$11 billion backlog of deferred maintenance in America's national parks,” reports the Public News Service. “More than 180 groups have signed a letter asking Congress to invest in National Park Service infrastructure and put their members to work - including architects, electricians, engineers and construction workers.” [Click here](#) for a list of all of the groups. Source: [Public News Service](#).

**Report On Climate Change Impacts Released** – Last Friday, the NPS released a report ([Sea Level Change And Storm Surge Projections For The National Park Service](#)) on the impacts that rising sea levels caused by climate change will have on coastal parks – the report that earlier caused much controversy when a draft of it showed that all references to anthropogenic change had been deleted. An article in *Reveal*, the publication of the Center for Investigative Reporting, details the history of its development and the reasons given by the agency for the changes. The report estimates sea level rise under four different climate change scenarios and also estimates how much flooding 79 parks would face from storm surge. Source: [Reveal](#).

**NPS Launches Website With Thousands Of Technical Records** – The NPS has launched a new public website – <https://pubs.etic.nps.gov/> - that is making more than 32,000 NPS technical documents and records available to the public. Academic researchers, students, history enthusiasts, educators, and the like will discover a multitude of collections, such as the original drawings of the main immigration building at Ellis Island National Monument, a concessionaire shop in 1933 at Muir Woods National Monument, and historical documents of Alcatraz Island. The Service’s Technical Information Center, located at DSC, created the site to accommodate the public’s need to access NPS drawings and documents in a convenient, user-friendly, digital way. Source: [Office of Communications](#).

**Around The Parks** – Brief reports on parks, culled either from park press releases or from newspapers:

- *Apostle Islands NL* – A recent study of 35 national parks found that Apostle Islands National Lakeshore had the highest concentration of microplastics. The NPS teamed up with Clemson University and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Marine Debris Program in 2015 for the two-year study. Park service staff and volunteers collected samples from 37 coastal beaches. The samples collected on the islands contained an average of 170 to 225 pieces of microplastics per kilogram of sand. The results are prompting the park to expand sampling of the tiny plastic pollutant throughout the islands this summer. Source: [Wisconsin Public Radio](#).
- *Fire Island NS* – The Watch Hill marina on Fire Island reopened last Friday after being closed since September 2016 so that electrical and lighting systems damaged by superstorm Sandy could be replaced. The marina was supposed to reopen last summer, but the \$5.4 million project to repair damage inflicted by Sandy was delayed because of unforeseen and necessary repairs to the substructure. Source: [Newsday](#).



- *Olympic NP* – The park will begin removing mountain goats and transporting them to the Cascades this summer; the remainder will then be killed. The objective is to reduce the population to zero. An estimated 625 mountain goats live on the peninsula and the population is growing by eight percent per year. The goats pose a public safety risk (a goat killed a Port Angeles man in 2010) and cause environmental damage. Source: [Tacoma News Tribune](#).
- *White Sands NP* – Scientists have found a string of fossilized footprints in the park that date back to the end of the Ice Age and likely depict adults and children hunting a giant, razor-clawed ground sloth: “At 7- to 8-feet tall, tightly muscled and [with] swinging forelegs tipped with wolverine-like claws, the sloth would tear apart any hunter on direct approach. But in addition to tracks of humans following the sloth, there are more human tracks a safe distance away telling scientists that this was a community action making use of distraction and misdirection to gain the upper hand in deadly close-quarter combat.” Source: [Las Cruces Sun News](#).
- *Niobrara NSR* – The Eighth U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals last week upheld the National Park Service’s designation of protected land along one of only two rivers in Nebraska included in the national Wild and Scenic Rivers system. The decision may also signal an end to more than two decades of legal strife over land development restrictions along a 76-mile stretch of the Niobrara. The ruling stems from a lawsuit in which a private landowner along the river contended that the park service failed to follow federal law in drawing boundaries on his land. The court held that the NPS “engaged in a methodical, time-consuming boundary-drawing process,” and that it “used the appropriate statutory standard to identify outstandingly remarkable values and it drew a boundary line that sought to protect those values.” Source: [Omaha World-Herald](#).
- *Perry’s Victory and IPM* – After being closed for repairs all last season, the memorial’s observation deck, among the tallest in the country, will be hosting its first public visitors in over a year on Saturday. It typically draws between 150,000 and 200,000 visitors a year, but was closed last year while it underwent a \$2.4 million repair project on the exterior of the tower. Source: [Port Clinton News Herald](#).
- *Glacier NP* – Glacier Guides and Montana Raft, a West Glacier-based outdoor guiding and equipment rental company, has been awarded another ten-year contract to lead interpretive day hikes and backcountry guided trips in the park. The company currently holds the contract, which was set to expire on the last day of 2018. Source: [Daily Inter Lake](#).
- *Wright Brothers NM* – Renovations on the park’s visitor center could be finished by the fall. The 48-year-old building was one of many constructed during Mission 66 and is listed as a National Historic Landmark. The 9,900-square-foot center closed in late 2016 for upgrades and to modernize exhibits more than 50 years old with expectations to reopen by this spring at a cost of \$5.2 million. Instead, work will take until the fall and could cost closer to \$6 million. At present, visitors go through a temporary center in a small modular building on site. Source: [The Virginian-Pilot](#).
- *North Cascades NP* – A new book about the park, which turns 50 this year, tells how it almost wasn’t created. The webpage for KUOW, the National Public Radio station in Seattle, has excerpts from a new book by Lauren Danner entitled *Crown Jewel Wilderness*, which focuses on the age-old conflict between the Forest Service and NPS regarding who could better manage the land. Said Danner: “The Forest Service saw the North Cascades as containing a large amount of merchantable timber that could be logged, and the Park Service saw the North Cascades as containing magnificent alpine scenery that needed to be protected.” The article includes a link to the five-minute interview. Source: [KUOW](#).
- *Everglades NP* – The park is working with the Florida Department of Transportation to provide additional freshwater flow within the swamp and improve the ecological conditions in the park

and in the central Everglades north of Tamiami Trail. The \$69.5 million project started in August 2016 and is scheduled to be completed this December. When complete, the 2.6-mile bridge and roadway improvements will allow for increased flow from the L-29 canal into the park. Source: [ConstructionEquipmentGuide.com](http://ConstructionEquipmentGuide.com).

- *Olympic NP* – The park’s visitor center and wilderness information center in Port Angeles are to reopen to the public on Tuesday, May 22nd, following an eight-month renovation project. The project, which was largely funded through entrance fees, brought the facility into compliance with the Architectural Barriers Act accessibility standards and current life/safety codes, improved energy efficiency, and improved visitor and employee health and safety. A new exterior restroom facility was also added between the parking lot and the VC to address increased park visitation. Renovations included replacement of the heating and ventilation systems; replacement of existing single-pane windows with double-pane windows; electrical, plumbing and seismic upgrades; replacement of light fixtures with efficient LED lighting; renovation of the existing interior restrooms; installation of a fire suppression system; installation of additional insulation; connection to the city sewer system; replacement and repair of exterior concrete sidewalks and ramps; flooring and door replacement; installation of new interior signage; and exterior painting. Source: [Olympic NP](http://Olympic NP).
- *Vietnam Veterans Memorial* – As Vietnam veterans grow older, there’s been an increase in people leaving cremated remains (cremains) at the Veteran's Memorial Wall, so the NPS has now put up signs asking people to stop. About 70 cremains have been left at the wall over the years. Said NPS curator Janet Folkerts: “A lot of Vietnam veterans feel very connected to the memorial. It speaks to them in a way a lot of other places in the country don't. Cremains are...definitely more sensitive [than other items left at the wall] and need a higher standard of care than we're really equipped to deal with here.” Source: [WCPO News](http://WCPO News).

**Public Comments Solicited** – A listing of planned actions in parks open to public comment, arranged in chronological order by their closing dates. New entries are in **dark red**:

- *Lassen Volcanic Wilderness Stewardship Plan EA* – The park has prepared a range of alternatives on its draft wilderness stewardship plan EA and is accepting comments through the end of May. Closes: May 26th. [PEPC link](http://PEPC link).
- *Mississippi Civil Rights Sites* – The Service has begun to examine key civil rights sites in Mississippi for possible designation as a national park area and invites the public to weigh-in at the start of the project that could run two years. Closes: June 1st. [PEPC link](http://PEPC link).
- *Yosemite Facilities* – Yosemite is soliciting public comments regarding the replacement of the Big Oak Flat visitor contact station and emergency services facilities. Closes: June 4th. [PEPC link](http://PEPC link).
- *Pictured Rocks Visitor Use Management Project* – The park has opened its visitor use management plan to public comment. It focuses on analyzing visitor use issues at high visitation areas from Sand Point to Spray Falls. Closes: June 6th. [PEPC link](http://PEPC link).
- *Big Bend Backcountry Management Plan Update* – The park is updating its 1995 backcountry management plan, which directs park management on wilderness and backcountry use topics, including backpacking, primitive car camping, backcountry use limits, and other considerations. Closes: June 18th. [PEPC link](http://PEPC link).
- *Acadia Draft Transportation Plan and EIS* – The NPS invites the public to provide feedback on the range of management alternatives and potential environmental impacts identified in the Draft Transportation Plan and EIS. Closes: June 26th. [PEPC link](http://PEPC link).

## **Climate and The Environment**

**Climate Change On Track To Devastate Insect Populations** – “Global warming is on track to cause a major wipeout of insects, compounding already severe losses, according to a new analysis,” writes Damian Carrington in *The Guardian*. “Insects are vital to most ecosystems and a widespread collapse would cause extremely far-reaching disruption to life on Earth, the scientists warn. Their research shows that, even with all the carbon cuts already pledged by nations so far, climate change would make almost half of insect habitat unsuitable by the end of the century, with pollinators like bees particularly affected.” The new research, which is the most comprehensive to date, analyzes the impact of different levels of climate change on the ranges of 115,000 species. It found plants are also heavily affected but that mammals and birds, which can more easily migrate as climate changes, suffered less. Source: [The Guardian](#).

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- Issue Contributors: Dick Martin, Cathy Halainen

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**

"If Nature is to survive in all its complexity, an awful lot of people from very diverse groups must agree that it is a mother lode of inner as well as material resources that in some way enriches everyone. Although we often overlook or disparage as romantic the effects of natural stimuli on our well-being, an expanding body of eclectic research shows that almost all of us rely on nature - whether it is sprouting in a pot or stretching as far as the eye can see - to excite our senses, restore our nerves, invite us to play, enhance our social bonds, and supply meaning and metaphor to our lives."

[Winifred Gallagher](#), *The Power of Place*

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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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