



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

Wednesday, June 20, 2018

Volume 2

Number 20

---

### **Incidents**

#### **Hawaii Volcanoes National Park Park Remains Closed As Eruptions Contine**

Most of Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park remains closed due to increased and damaging earthquakes, corrosive volcanic ash, and continuing explosions from Halema'uma'u, the summit crater of Kilauea Volcano.

The ongoing seismic activity continues to degrade park buildings and infrastructure on a daily basis. Earthquakes have cracked parking lots and roadways, including Highway 11 (open to through traffic), Hilina Pali Road and more. The outdoor overlook at Jaggar Museum has sustained significant fractures to its concrete deck and rock walls. The museum has foundation damage, and other buildings are damaged. Currently the park is without running water.

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)

Source: [Hawaii Volcanoes NP](#).

#### **National Park System Man Sentenced To Prison Term For ARPA Violations**

An investigation by NPS special agents has resulted in a prison term for a man who trafficked in prehistoric artifacts looted from public lands.

Gary Womack, 60, was recently sentenced to serve 15 months imprisonment for three felony ARPA violations. Court records show that Womack bought approximately 30 artifacts illegally removed from a Hopewell culture burial mound in Indiana. Such mounds are sacred spaces built by American Indians almost 2,000 years ago. Hopewellian people gathered at earthwork complexes for feasts, funerals, and rites of passage.

Womack also trafficked in artifacts from American Indian burial sites in Kentucky and along the Ohio and Mississippi Rivers, and was implicated in the trafficking of artifacts from Channel Islands National Park, Lake Mead National Recreation Area, and other public lands in Arizona and New Mexico. The cultural artifacts included prehistoric chert blades, stone tools, ancient ceramic pots, and a ladle.

During the sentencing hearing, the federal judge told Womack that he was disturbed that Womack had chosen to dig the graves of the ancestors of American Indians for profit, and had done so while being well aware of the laws he had chosen to violate.

Special agents from across the National Park System conducted the three-year investigation with assistance from the FBI's Bowling Green Resident Agency and prepared the case for prosecution by the US Attorney's Office for the Western District of Kentucky. Womack pleaded guilty to the charges in March.

Source: [National Park Service Investigative Services Branch](#).

### **Joshua Tree National Park Woman Shot By BLM Officer While Assisting Rangers**

A woman was shot and injured by a BLM officer who was assisting rangers with an off-roading incident in the area of Berdoo Canyon Road near Indio Hills on the evening of Sunday, June 10th.

A preliminary investigation revealed that BLM officers came to the area to assist rangers with an illegal off-roading and failure to yield investigation. A BLM officer attempted to stop the off-roading vehicle and an officer-involved shooting occurred.

The woman in the off-roading vehicle sustained non-life threatening injuries and was transported to a local hospital. A man was detained at the scene. The identities of the suspects have not been released.

The BLM officer who discharged the weapon has been placed on administrative leave. The officer's name has not been released. The investigation is ongoing.

Source: [KESQ News](#).

### **Cape Hatteras National Seashore Two Drownings Occur In Park Within Four Days**

On June 6th, a 55-year-old North Carolina man became the second swimming-related death in the park during a four-day period. A 79-year-old Pennsylvania man died in the surf at Buxton on June 3rd.

The 55-year-old man's family called for help while he stood on a sand bar about 50 yards off the beach just south of the Frisco day use area. A bystander attempted to help, but the man was swept away by what could have been a rip current before help could arrive. The bystander eventually retrieved the unresponsive man and attempted to revive him without success. Emergency responders followed with resuscitation efforts.

Rip currents are a leading cause of drowning on the Outer Banks. The park reports the deaths as swimming-related rather than as drowning before an autopsy report can verify the cause. Education on the dangers of rip currents and how to deal with them is available at park visitors centers and online [at this link](#).

Source: [The Virginian-Pilot](#).

### **Great Smoky Mountains National Park Woman Survives 40-Foot Fall**

On the morning of June 11th, a 63-year-old woman survived a 40-foot fall from a point near Laurel Falls on the Tennessee side of the park.

The Florida woman was secured into a backcountry litter and lifted back up to the trail by the park's technical rescue team using ropes and pulleys. Sixteen emergency responders carried her more than a mile to the trailhead, where she was transported by Gatlinburg Emergency Medical Services to the University of Tennessee Medical Center in Knoxville for the treatment of multiple injuries.

The woman remained alert throughout the rescue operation. Laurel Falls Trail was closed during the rescue operation and was reopened early in the afternoon.

Source: [Asheville Citizen Times](#).

### **Grand Teton National Park Climber Rescued After Being Injured In 30-Foot Fall**

On Tuesday, June 12th, rangers rescued a Missouri teenager who was injured in fall while descending a mountain next to Jenny Lake.

Derek Wilcock, 18, fell about 30 feet around 9:30 p.m. on Tuesday evening. The accident occurred at about 10,200 feet. Wilcock's climbing partner called for help and rangers reached the pair on foot at about 1 a.m. with food and shelter. Climbers and rescuers then awaited a morning evacuation.

Wilcock and his partner were flown by helicopter off the mountain at 9 a.m. on Wednesday. Wilcock was taken to St. John's Medical Center in Jackson, where he was listed in good condition the following day.

Source: [Associated Press](#).

### **Sequoia National Park First Drowning Of The Summer Occurs In Kaweah River**

A 36-year-old man died on the afternoon of Sunday, June 10th, after he was swept down the Middle Fork of the Kaweah River.

Rangers were alerted around midday after the man went into the river near the park entrance parking lot. Swiftwater rescuers were called in. The man's body was found not far from where he entered the river. It's unclear if he fell in or went in voluntarily. The circumstances and cause of death are under investigation.

This was the first river death this year at Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks, where rivers fed by snowmelt are running much faster than most people expect. The higher discharge levels, combined with the slickness of the rocks at the water's edge, pose dangers not only for the public but also for rescuers.

Source: [Los Angeles Times](#).

## **National Fire Situation**

### **National Interagency Fire Center Fires Now Burning Across Western States And In Alaska**

#### **Synopsis**

NIFC remains at PL 2. As of yesterday, 41 large fires were burning in eight states. Alaska currently has 27 large fires burning. Firefighters contained the Ute Peak Fire in New Mexico on Monday.

#### **National Park Service Fires**

*Valles Caldera National Preserve* – The lightning-caused San Antonio Fire, which is burning in the northwest corner of the preserve, has grown to 426 acres. A Type 3 IMT (Ryan Romero, IC) and 263 firefighters and overhead are currently committed. It's 20% contained. The Valle Grande entrance station and bookstore remain open to the public, and ranger-led tours and hikes are still being offered in the park's cabin district. All other access and activities have been suspended. Because of the location and elevation, smoke from the burn may be visible from all directions coming into the Jemez Mountains area. Smoke is expected to linger in neighboring communities, including Los Alamos, La Cueva, Sierra Los Pinos, Jemez Springs, Ponderosa, Jemez Pueblo and areas near NM State Route 4. Communities surrounding the Jemez Mountains may also see smoke.

**Active Incident Resource Commitments**

Category	June 5th	June 12th	June 19th
Area Command Teams	0	0	0
NIMO Teams	0	0	0
Type 1 Teams	1	3	1
Type 2 Teams	3	2	2
Crews	78	123	101
Engines	193	280	191
Helicopters	36	48	36
Total FF/Overhead	3,248	4,865	4,204

**Fires/Acreage**

Category	2018 Total	2007-2017 Ave	2018 Variance
Year-to-Date Fires	26,434	28,003	- 1,569
Year-to-Date Acres	2,142,488	1,635,860	+ 506,628

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***

On June 11th, the Senate passed:

- S. Res. 544, celebrating June 11, 2018, as the 20th anniversary of the establishment of the United States Coral Reef Task Force.
- H.R. 2229, to provide permanent authority for judicial review of certain Merit Systems Protection Board decisions relating to whistleblowers, with a committee amendment. The bill now returns to the House for further action.

On June 11th, the 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, Environmental Protection Agency, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019.

On June 14th, the Committee on Appropriations approved an original bill, S. 3073, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, Environmental Protection Agency, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019. The bill appropriates \$3.215 billion for NPS in FY 2019, which is an increase of \$13.4 million above the FY 2018 level and 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 (the House version of the bill appropriates \$2.527 billion in FY 2019; NPS has \$2.4 billion for the current FY 2018). Included in the recommended \$2.5 billion is a \$22.4 million increase for park operations.
- Natural Recreation and Preservation Programs (NRP) - \$64.1 million in FY 2019 (the House version of the bill appropriates \$63.6 million in FY 2019; NPS has \$63.05 million for the current FY 2018). Within this account, the committee stated it had restored all the proposed reductions in the president's budget, including those for the Chesapeake Gateways and Water Trails program, and the Rivers and Trails Conservation Assistance program as well as providing \$20.3 million for national heritage areas, the same as the FY 2018 level.
- Historic Preservation Fund (HPF) - \$88.9 million in FY 2019 (the House version of the bill appropriates \$91.9 million in FY 2019; NPS has \$96.9 million for the current FY 2018). Within the Historic Preservation account, funding levels are as follows: \$48.9 million for State Historic Preservation Offices and \$11.48 million for Tribal Historic Preservation Offices, equal to the fiscal year 2018 enacted level; \$13.5 million for competitive grants, of which \$500,000 is for grants to underserved communities and \$13 million is for competitive grants to document, interpret, and preserve historical sites associated with the Civil Rights Movement; \$5 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 \$5 million for the Save America's Treasures competitive grant program for preservation of nationally significant sites, structures, and artifacts.
- Construction - \$364.7 million in FY 2019 (the House version of the bill appropriates \$369.3 million in FY 2019; NPS has \$359.7 million for the current FY 2018).
- Land Acquisition (LWCF) - \$174.4 million in FY 2019 (the House version of the bill appropriates \$172.36 million in FY 2019; NPS has \$180 million for the current FY 2018). Within the land acquisition account, funding is provided as follows: \$124 million for State Conservation Grants (the House version of the bill appropriates \$100 million in FY 2019); no funding for the competitive Outdoor Recreation Legacy Partnership (ORLP) grant program (the House version of the bill appropriates \$20 million in FY 2019); \$50.4 million for federal land acquisition (the House version of the bill appropriates \$22 million in FY 2019); \$15 million for the American Battlefield Protection Program (ABPP), equal to the fiscal year 2018 enacted level (House version of the bill appropriates \$10 million in FY 2019); and \$4.9 million for inholdings, donations, and exchanges, with the Park Service encouraged to prioritize acquiring inholdings at national battlefield parks (the House version of the bill appropriates \$4 million in FY 2019).
- Centennial Challenge - \$23 million in FY 2019 (the House version of the bill appropriates \$30 million in FY 2019; NPS has \$23 million for the current FY 2018). Within the \$23 million provided for the Centennial Challenge, NPS is encouraged to make \$5 million available to the National Park Foundation to help leverage additional funding for projects.

The bill also includes authorizing language to extend the federal lands fee program (FLERA) through FY 2020.

### **House**

Nothing to report.

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

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

### **NPS Alumni**

#### **Passing Of Joe Rumburg**

Joe Rumburg, Jr., 97, a career NPS ranger who also served as deputy regional director, regional director and deputy associate director of operations in WASO, passed away on June 4th.

Joe was born in May of 1921 in Lewis, Colorado. He enlisted and served in the Marine Corps from 1941 to 1945 and was stationed in the South Pacific.

After returning from war, Joe became a seasonal employee at Mesa Verde before getting his permanent assignment at Big Bend. Subsequent ranger assignments included Zion and Bryce Canyon, Grand Canyon, and Rocky Mountain. His first superintendency was at George Washington Carver and was followed by tours as superintendent of Bighorn Canyon and Natchez Trace.

In 1968, Joe was appointed the assistant regional director of operations for Western Region and became regional director in 1970. He was then assigned to Washington as deputy associate director of operations. Following that he served as regional director for Southwest Region from 1974 until his retirement in 1976.

He was a recipient of the Department of Interior's distinguished service award for his contributions to the National Park Service.

Joe enjoyed fishing, gardening, golfing, birdwatching, and the company of family and friends. He was an avid reader. His good humor and caring nature were a gift to all who were lucky enough to encounter him.

The family is honoring his request for no services. Contributions can be sent to the National Parks Conservation Association (NPCA), the Nature Conservancy, or Habitat for Humanity.

Source: Obituary forwarded by Bill Wade.

## **Coalition News and Activities**

News and actions taken by CPANP on behalf of the National Park Service and National Park System, plus news about members of the Coalition:

**Book On Park Wives Published** – Phel Jacobsen, the wife of former Shenandoah National Park superintendent Bob Jacobsen, has written a book entitled *I Married A Park Ranger And Became A Park Wife* that tells her story of a life married into the National Park Service. The book comes out this month. Source: Larry Hakel.

\*\*\*\*\*

Other CPANP news, including Coalition actions, can be read about in the May edition of [Coalition Briefs](#).

## **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**

**NPS Employees React To DOI Ouster Of Dan Wenk** – A letter to Secretary Zinke from one or more NPS employees regarding the action against Yellowstone Superintendent Dan Wenk, who was forced to leave his job, has been making the rounds. It's reprinted below in its entirety:

“We, your staff, across the National Park Service, are appalled at the way Superintendent Dan Wenk and other SES managers are being treated and dismissed. Hundreds of us have had the pleasure and honor of working for Dan Wenk. After 43 years of dedicated service to this country and to the National Park System, and to the American public, this is how you treat him? Is this what we can all expect? Dan has done nothing but stick up for what is right, treat employees well and fairly, and ensured that places like Yellowstone endure for future generations to come. He performed as a leader!

“It is time you hear from the ‘troops.’ First of all, we are not your ‘troops’! No matter what our discipline or grade level or where we work in the system, you will be hard-pressed to find employees that are not passionately dedicated to the National Park Service mission and the Organic Act. And we are like this no matter what the flavor of the Administration. Stop saying disparaging things about us. We would like some of that respect and support that you supposedly learned about in the Navy as a leader.

“We are not in your army. We are not in the Armed Forces. Again, we are not ‘troops’ in the field. We are generally trained professionals in the American public’s national parks who know how to do our jobs better than anyone. Why do you think we are respected by not only the American public, but around the world? And how did we get this way? From having real leaders like the Dan Wenks’ of the Service.

“And how do you think that anonymous person in the hallways of the Main Interior building who witnessed the Acting Director perform a lewd act feels? Do you understand that the message you just sent to the field is that there is a ‘no tolerance policy’ (that both you and the Acting Director wrote and committed to) for everyone but your friends who you have put in senior positions? Not only did he admit he conducted this act, but also has little integrity as a senior leader for his previous illegal actions as proven with the illegal removal of trees to pander to a friend at the Ohio and Chesapeake Canal. If this is your idea of a senior leader to an entire National Park Service, you are sorely mistaken. How about prove that you care about your message in regards to no tolerance for a hostile work environment and remove him immediately so we can all raise our heads a little bit higher and try to regain some of the pride we are rapidly losing?

“Dan Wenk never conducted himself in this manner, nor any of the other SES managers. How about as our ‘leader’ you lead like they have. Show them the respect they deserve? How about when you visit the parks, you try to build up staff instead of trying to tear us down? And stop trying to undo all the hard and good work that employees have been working on for years...not just in the last Administration but even well before that. If you want to be respected as a leader, start treating us all as the dedicated professionals we are and practice what you preach in regards to a hostile work environment starting at the top in NPS.

“And of course, this is anonymous. Retaliation, obviously, is real and alive and healthy, especially at Main Interior.”

## **National Park System**

Stories and articles pertaining to the parks, regions, technical and training centers, and WASO.

**Every Kid In A Park Program To Continue** – Despite concerns that the Service’s Every Kid in a Park program might soon be discontinued, the Department of the Interior has decided to carry on the initiative, which grants fourth-graders and their families free passes to the national parks. The *Seattle Times* reports that the NPS has confirmed that the program has been renewed for another year. Secretary Zinke’s comment in a hearing this spring that was interpreted as a potential threat to the

program's funding prompted a number of organizations to rally in support of the program. "The Outdoors Alliance for Kids, a national collaborative dedicated to connecting youth with the outdoors, delivered over 15,000 comments from member organizations in support of the program to Zinke, including 1,000 handwritten postcards from children..." The program was begun by the Obama administration three years ago. "According to the Outdoors Alliance for Kids, more than 2 million fourth-graders downloaded the free Every Kid in a Park pass in the program's first year..." Source: [Seattle Times](#).

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

- *Valles Caldera NP* – The forest supervisor for the Santa Fe National Forest, which abuts Valles Caldera, has said no to the prospect of geothermal development ([click here to see the record of decision](#)). The decision follows years of study and public testimony prompted by a proposal by a Nevada-based company and others to lease areas with geothermal resources within the Jemez Mountains. The decision comes as the National Park Service weighs a proposal that would allow for extra federal protection to limit or prevent any negative effects from tapping geothermal energy on land surrounding Valles Caldera, which is located in the heart of the Jemez Mountains. Source: [ABC News](#).
- *Western Region* – The Fund for People in Parks, a nonprofit sponsorship group founded in 2014 to help enhance the visitor experience at smaller park sites across the West, has to date raised more than \$800,000 for 30 projects in 11 parks. It was established by Bob Hansen, former president of the Yosemite Conservancy. The fund is currently funding projects in Death Valley and Great Basin. Source: [Las Vegas Review-Journal](#).
- *Santa Fe Office* – A multimillion-dollar project to repair the exterior adobe walls and other historic elements of the Service's landmark building on Old Santa Fe Trail could begin in the early fall. A \$4.2 million contract has been awarded to two Tucson-based companies that specialize in history preservation. The iconic building, the largest in-use adobe office building in the United States, was constructed in the 1930s by the CCC. Source: [Santa Fe New Mexican](#).
- *Yosemite NP* – The Mariposa Grove reopened to visitors last Friday, nearly three years after restoration work began. The park has been working to improve natural hydrology, construct an ADA-accessible boardwalk, construct an improved welcome plaza, and improve the overall visitor experience. Work on the site, which began in July 2015, also included the removal of sections of asphalt and improved access to the famed Grizzly Giant and California Tunnel Tree. Source: [SFGate.com](#).
- *Glacier NP* – A \$4 million contract has been awarded to Dick Anderson Construction out of Great Falls to begin rebuilding the historic Sperry Chalet dormitory. The chalet was badly burned last August during the Sprague Fire, which burned thousands of acres in the park. Construction will be completed in two phases, beginning this summer and continuing into 2019. Work will likely begin early next month and continue through mid-fall, weather permitting. Denver Service Center will oversee the upcoming project. Source: [Flathead Beacon](#).
- *Delaware Water Gap NRA* – After a 70-year absence, peregrine falcons have successfully nested this year in the Milford Cliffs area of the park, which is at its north end on the Pennsylvania side. The chicks were born late last month. Peregrines have not been seen in this area since the 1940s. The chicks have been banded and will be monitored. The story includes photos of the birds. Source: [WNEP News](#).
- *Fort Vancouver NHS* – The city of Vancouver and the National Park Service have received a \$1.8 million grant to rehabilitate a half-mile portion of East Fifth Street within the park between Fort Vancouver Way and East Reserve Street. The project also will redevelop the national park's main parking area. The project will improve pavement quality and add a multimodal path along



the south side of East Fifth Street. The design phase is expected to start later this year, with construction completed about 2022. Source: [The Columbian](#).

- *Yosemite NP* – American climbers Tommy Caldwell and Alex Honnold have set a new speed record on The Nose, climbing El Capitan in Yosemite in 2:10:15. While this is the first time that Caldwell has set a record, Honnold reclaims the "title" that he attained in 2012 when he raced up the route with Hans Florine in 2:23:46. Source: [PlanetMountain.com](#).
- *Obed W&SR* – Oak Ridge-based Tennessee Citizens for Wilderness Planning recently gave two parcels totaling 114 acres of land to the park. One of the parcels is a 90-acre tract along the Obed River, a few miles upstream from Obed Junction; it reportedly features extensive river frontage, giant riverside boulders and mature hardwood forests. The second parcel is a 24-acre tract located about halfway down Clear Creek along the whitewater run from Barnett Bridge to Jett Bridge. Source: [OakRidger.com](#).
- *Channel Islands NP* – The remains of a Native American man who died 10,000 years ago have been returned to a burial site on San Miguel Island by the Santa Ynez Band of Chumash Indians. The remains were inadvertently discovered near an old Chumash campsite in 2005 by archeologists from the University of Oregon who were surveying an archeological site on the island. The park consulted the Chumash, who have strong ties to the Channel Islands, and together they decided to excavate the unprotected bones to prevent them from falling from the eroding cliff and being lost in the sea. Source: [Santa Maria Times](#).
- *Theodore Roosevelt NP* – North Dakota's Health Department issued a permit last Wednesday allowing construction of an oil refinery about three miles from the park – a project opposed by several national and regional conservation groups. The Davis Refinery still has other hurdles, but the permission to build that followed a year-and-a-half state review is a major victory for the project, which is being planned by Meridian Energy Group, based in California and North Dakota. Source: [Seattle Times](#).
- *Perry's Victory and International Peace Memorial* – The memorial has reopened after being closed all of 2017 for maintenance work. The observation deck atop the granite column reopened to visitors last month, following \$2.4 million in maintenance work, which included repointing the exterior masonry, repairing water damage, replacing interior wall tiles and rehabilitating five exterior bronze doors. Source: [Cleveland Plain Dealer](#).
- *Lincoln Memorial* – Progress continues on the rehabilitation of the memorial, a project that began two years ago – probably the most significant overhaul of the building since the structure was dedicated 96 years ago. It is being funded largely through an \$18 million donation from billionaire philanthropist David Rubenstein. The main focus of the project will be replacement of the failing roof and repair of the damage done by the 2011 earthquake. The current exhibit space will be greatly expanded, along with the memorial's tiny bookstore and antiquated restrooms. New exhibits will also be added. The plan is to have the work finished for the memorial's 2022 centennial. Source: [Washington Post](#).

**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**:

- *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](#).
- *Oregon Caves Preserve Management Plan* – The park is seeking public comment on the management plan and environmental assessment for the recently designated national preserve, as well as a wild and scenic river study. The legislation that created the 4,070 acre preserve was signed into law on December 19, 2014. This plan addresses management of roads, trails,

commercial activities, hunting, hiking, use of pack animals, and backcountry camping, among other things. Closes: **July 2nd**. [PEPC link](#).

- *Hunting and Trapping in National Preserves in Alaska* – An NPS-proposed rulemaking entitled “Alaska; Hunting and Trapping in National Preserves” was posted in the May 22nd edition of the Federal Register. Here’s the synopsis: “The National Park Service proposes to amend its regulations for sport hunting and trapping in national preserves in Alaska. This proposed rule would remove a regulatory provision issued by the National Park Service in 2015 that prohibited certain sport hunting practices that are otherwise permitted by the State of Alaska. These proposed changes are consistent with Secretary of the Interior Orders 3347 and 3356.” The notice provides background information on the proposed revision and details on the changes that will be made to 36 CFR 13.42. Closes: **July 23rd**. [Federal Register link](#).
- *Space Coast Trail Bike Path* – The Coast to Coast trail network is at its core designed to complement and enhance existing and planned recreation areas. The Space Coast Trail portion of the overall trail would provide a link to/from larger recreation areas such as Merritt Island National Wildlife Refuge, Canaveral National Seashore, Parrish Park, Haulover Canal and other numerous sites currently permitted for public use. Closes: **August 31st**. [PEPC link](#).
- *Gulf Islands Backcountry Stewardship Plan – Access to backcountry camping by hiking in has been temporarily suspended due to increased resource damage by irresponsible campers over the past several years. The park is committed to evaluating a range of alternatives for managing use of the back country camping area at the Perdido Key area. Ideas are solicited from the public.* Closes: **October 31st**. [PEPC link](#).

## **Wildlife and Conservation**

**Invasive Of The Week** – Add a nasty new invasive species to all those that parks are currently fighting. Giant hogweed, which grows from 6 to 15 feet in height, is native to the Caucasus Mountains of western Asia. It evidently found its way to other parts of the world via inclusion in botanical gardens. The plant has been found at several locations in Virginia. It is described thusly by an alert posted in Isle of Wight County: "Giant hogweed makes poison ivy look like a walk in the park. Contact with this plant, combined with exposure to the sun, can produce third degree burns and permanent blindness." Giant hogweed is described as a 15-foot-tall herb topped with fluffy white flowers. See the following article for photos of the plant and additional information. Source: [Charlotte News Observer](#).

## **Climate and The Environment**

**More On Climate Change And Coastal Flooding** – Last week, the Union of Concerned Scientists issued a report entitled [Underwater: Rising Seas, Chronic Floods and the Implications for US Coastal Real Estate](#). According to the report, more than 300,000 homes along the United States coastline could face severe impacts from high-tide flooding within the next three decades. Florida is the most at risk of any state, with nearly 40 percent of the state’s property tax base expected to be "highly exposed" to such flooding within the next 30 years. By 2045, nearly 64,000 residential properties in the state — worth about \$26 billion— are at risk for constant flooding. Source: [Our Daily Planet](#).

## **From The Archives**

This section contains incidents taken from *Morning Report* issues published during the corresponding week (approximately) 25 years ago. This week we go back to June, 1993. All entries appear in the original verb tense.

- *Gateway National Recreation Area* – Just before 2 a.m. on the morning of June 6th, Park Police officers heard people calling for help from the ocean near Fort Tilden and came upon numerous illegal Chinese immigrants swimming to shore from the *Golden Venture*, a small freighter which was grounded on a sandbar 200 yards off shore. By 3 a.m., 250 police officers, 52 ambulances, four helicopters and scores of firefighters had assembled on the beach to pull

swimmers from the 53 degree water. At least seven died. Twenty-nine others were taken to area hospitals suffering from hypothermia and exhaustion, and 295 were treated and released into the custody of the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS). Police are still searching for an estimated 25 people who managed to reach the beach and escape capture. The Indonesian captain of the Honduran-registered freighter and 10 crew members were taken into custody and are scheduled to be charged with immigration violations in hearings this morning. Most of the immigrants were from Fujian, a poor, agrarian province, and had been on the ship since it left that province 112 days ago. INS officials believe that dozens of ships have delivered illegal aliens from China to the U.S. in the past year as part of a multi-million-dollar smuggling operation based in Manhattan's Chinatown.

- *Gulf Islands National Seashore* – Some 900 to 1,000 boats and almost 5,000 people descended on Ship Island on June 6th to attend the second annual Mississippi Coast Boaters Rendezvous. The rendezvous was advertised as a family event with a priest blessing the recreational boating fleet. The event also featured a rock band, a hula-hoop contest, and men's and women's swimsuit contests. The crowd congregated within a narrow stretch of beach about two-thirds of a mile long. The 90 degree temperatures, congestion and ample consumption of alcohol contributed to a number of disturbances. Rangers and other officers responded to six fights, hundreds of incidents of underage drinking, almost 100 boating violations, one SAR, numerous incidents of marijuana possession and use, and a dozen minor and four serious medical problems. Another four boating accidents were reported as people returned to the mainland some four miles away. The Coast Guard, Mississippi Bureau of Marine Resources, and Harrison County deputies assisted in the event.
- *Shenandoah National Park* – Just before 5 p.m. on June 9th, a Pontiac Grand Am driven by an 18-year-old from Annapolis, Maryland, failed to negotiate a curve while heading southbound on Skyline Drive, crossed the center line, and struck a Ford van in an angulated head-on fashion. The van was occupied by one adult and twelve children between ages 12 and 14 from Far Horizons, a privately run adventure program based in Orange, Texas. The driver of the Grand Am and his two juvenile passengers were severely trapped and suffered critical trauma; the driver of the van and eleven of the children suffered varying degrees of injury, ranging from a fractured jaw to lacerations, muscle strains and bruises. The three occupants of the Grand Am were extricated and transported to the University of Virginia Medical Center's Level I Trauma Center in Charlottesville. Two were taken by the center's helicopter; the third was scheduled to be flown, but had to be taken by ambulance when a severe thunderstorm grounded the helicopter. The driver of the Grand Am subsequently died at the hospital. All of the injured from the van were taken by ambulances to Waynesboro Community Hospital in Waynesboro. The group had been headed to the Washington, D.C., area, and planned to camp overnight at Loft Mountain. The accident is still under investigation by South District rangers. They are looking into the possibility that excessive speed, drugs and alcohol may have been contributing factors. Twelve ambulances, three engines, two light rescue units, and one heavy rescue unit responded from the park and six surrounding communities. Two rangers from Blue Ridge Parkway also responded to the accident. It's believed that this incident involved the largest number of injured patients from a single incident since a commercial air crash in the park in the 1950s. A critical incident stress debriefing has been scheduled. Ranger Clayton Jordan was incident commander.

## **Acknowledgements**

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

- Production: Steve Pittleman
- Regular Correspondents: Don Hellmann, Dennis Burnett, Rick Smith and Duncan Morrow
- Issue Contributors: Maureen Finnerty, Bill Wade, Tony Sisto, Elizabeth Oster

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**

"The national park idea represents a far-reaching cultural achievement, for here we raise our thoughts above the average, and enter a sphere in which the intangible values of the human heart and spirit take precedent. Freedom prevails. The foxes are free to dig burrows where they will; to hunt ptarmigan, ground squirrels and mice as the spirit moves. The grizzlies wander over their ancestral home unmolested; dig roots and ground squirrels, graze grass, and harvest berries according to whatever menu appeals to them. The 'bad' wolf seeks an honest living as of yore. He is a respected citizen, morally on par with everyone else. Our task is to perpetuate this freedom and purity of nature, this ebb and flow of life."

Conservationist [Adolph Murie](#)

\* \* \* \* \*

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

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

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

--- ### ---