



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

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Incidents

Hawaii Volcanoes National Park Damage To Park Infrastructure Increasing As Eruption Continues

Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park entered day 66 of the partial park closure last Thursday, with damage being inflicted on park infrastructure on a daily basis.

The Kilauea Volcano summit area is shaken every day due to the ongoing collapse/explosion events at Halema'uma'u and resulting earthquake activity. More than 18,000 earthquakes were recorded near the summit over the 30-day period ending July 12th.

Geologists from the University of Hawai'i at Hilo, in cooperation with USGS's Hawaiian Volcano Observatory and the park, surveyed some park trails early last week. Notable damage was observed to Crater Rim Trail between Kilauea Military Camp and Jaggar Museum near Kilauea Overlook, as well as to Crater Rim Trail and Earthquake Trail near Waldron Ledge, Halema'uma'u Trail and more. Rockfalls have occurred along Kilauea caldera walls, disrupting boulders loosened by the 1983 earthquake on Halema'uma'u Trail.

The geologists were allowed to conduct their work after submitting a risk assessment to the park's emergency operations team and worked during periods of reduced seismicity. The team stayed in continual communication with park dispatch and all members were outfitted with personal protective equipment.

Source: [Big Island Video News](#).

Zion National Park Heavy Rains Cause Flooding, Slides And Trail Damage; Closures In Effect

Several park roads were closed by flash floods last Wednesday after the area received three inches of rain in a short period of time. There also were several rock and debris slides on the switchbacks before the Zion-Mt. Carmel tunnel on the southeast side of the park.

As of Friday, the Zion-Mount Carmel Highway and several trails, including Angels Landing, Kayenta, Upper Emerald Pools, and West Rim from the Grotto to Cabin Spring, remained closed; the Riverside Walk had reopened.

Mud and debris on the highway was three to four feet deep in several areas, overwhelming the road drainage culverts and making the road impassable. Dozens of vehicles were initially stranded in the

mile-long tunnel and some were stuck in the mud flow. Roads crews were able to plow a path to the vehicles to get them out late Wednesday night.

Further engineering assessments are planned to be done on remaining damaged areas. The damaged areas include:

- The West Rim Trail, in the area of Refrigerator Canyon. A section of retaining wall failed, causing an 18-foot gap in the trail that is more than five feet deep.
- The West Rim between Cabin Spring (near campsite #1) and the Grotto is closed. This includes Zion's popular Angels Landing Trail. Visitors are encouraged to use Observation Point Trail or Hidden Canyon Trail as alternatives. The West Rim campsites are open and accessible from Lava Point.
- Much of the Emerald Pools Trail complex is also closed due to major damage. Just past the alcove at the end of Lower Emerald Pools Trail, a 20 foot by 10 foot boulder that was supporting part of the trail fell, leaving a deep void in the trail. Two large retaining walls also failed.
- On the Kayenta Trail, numerous large boulders completely crushed approximately 50 feet of trail.
- The Lower Emerald Pools waterfall is still visible from the Lower Emerald Pools Trail, but visitors can no longer walk behind it. Watchman Trail, Weeping Rock, and Riverside Walk are suggested alternatives.

The Kayenta Trail, Upper Emerald Pools Trail and a small section of Lower Emerald Pools Trail will remain closed until repairs can be made. Shuttles are running normally. The Watchman, South and Lava Point Campgrounds and the Zion Lodge are fully open.

Sources: [KSL News](#); [KUTV News](#).

Grand Canyon National Park Hundreds Of Campers Evacuated Due To Havasupai Canyon Flash Flood

Flash flooding in the Grand Canyon caused by heavy monsoon rains prompted evacuations at the Havasupai Campground and surrounding areas Wednesday night.

According to the Havasupai Tribal Council, the canyon will be closed to visitors for seven to ten days.

Two waves of flooding and about seven feet of floodwater hit Supai just before dark on Wednesday evening. Most of the 200 tourists stranded by the flash flood were subsequently flown out of the canyon. All campgrounds were evacuated and nearby buildings, including the community building and school, were opened for people to sleep in; the tribe provided food and supplies to those evacuated. The flooding did not hit nearby Supai Village.

See the website below for photos and a video of the flooding.

Source: [AZFamily.com](#).

Rocky Mountain National Park Search In Progress For Hiker Missing For Two Weeks

A search is in progress for a hiker who's been missing since June 30th.

Brian Perri, 38, evidently got lost while hiking in the park. He hasn't been heard from since he summited Mount Meeker on June 30th, but wasn't reported missing until July 5th.

Up to 65 people have been involved in the operation, and searchers have employed a drone to extend the area being covered. Dog teams have also been employed.

Perri is 5-feet 9-inches tall and was last seen wearing a tan full-brim hat, sunglasses and a red backpack. He may also be wearing a yellow puffy jacket or yellow rain jacket. Searchers are asking

anyone who may have been hiking in the Mount Meeker area and saw Perri or other clues, including abandoned gear, to call 970-586-1204.

Friends of Perri also have created a [Facebook page](#) to track the search and a [GoFundMe fundraising campaign](#) to help with the efforts.

Source: [Daily Camera](#).

Death Valley National Park Plantation With 4,000 Marijuana Plants Found In Park

Over 4,000 illegal marijuana plants were found during a raid in Death Valley National Park on July 3rd.

Hikers came upon three men installing an irrigation hose near a spring in Hanaupah Canyon. The hikers thought that the men worked for NPS, so they asked them what they were doing. One of the men answered, "Growing marijuana. You won't tell the cops, will you?"

Rangers from NPS and the Bureau of Land Management raided the site and found four garden plots, but no workers.

"Even though California and Nevada have passed laws legalizing marijuana sale, it remains illegal at the federal level," said Superintendent Mike Reynolds. "Our biggest concerns in Death Valley are that grow sites decimate vegetation around springs, poison wildlife, and are dangerous for the public."

Workers on the illegal grow site cleared away vegetation to make room for crops, and diverted water from nearby springs for the garden plots. Each marijuana plant can use up to six gallons of water per day.

Rangers were especially worried about finding carbofuran, which is a pesticide that's highly toxic to humans and wildlife.

Source: [KTNV News](#).

Cape Hatteras National Seashore Man Arrested For Growing Marijuana Among Sea Oats

An Ocracoke man has been arrested on federal charges for growing weed among the [sea oats](#) within the park.

James Garrish was arrested last Tuesday and charged with cultivating marijuana on federal property. If convicted, he would face a maximum term of five years in prison, a \$250,000 fine and a term of up to three years of supervised release.

Garrish also was charged with introducing plants into the park ecosystem, littering, trespassing, and defacing and damaging real property. Each charge carries a potential penalty of up to six months' imprisonment, a \$5,000 fine, up to one year supervised release, and/or up to five years' probation.

The indictment in the case indicates that the marijuana was planted in August and September 2017 in a wooded area adjacent to a commercial fishing site off N.C. 12 on Ocracoke Island known as Quork Hammock. The indictments says the area is not open to the public except by express permission of the national seashore superintendent and that the culprit dug up plants in the area and left holes unfilled.

Source: [Charlotte Observer](#).

Grand Canyon National Park Man Dies In 500-Foot Fall At Mather Point

Andrey Privin, a 24-year-old Illinois man, died on July 3rd after falling 500 feet near a park viewpoint on the South Rim.

Rangers initially responded to reports that a visitor had lost his footing after climbing over a railing at a viewpoint near Mather Point.

Source: [Fox News](#).

Great Smoky Mountains National Park Sentence Delivered In 2015 Murder In Smokemont

A Cherokee resident was sentenced to four years in federal prison and two years of supervised probation for his involvement in the 2015 stabbing death of a man in the Smokemont Baptist Church, located about three miles from the Oconaluftee Visitor Center.

Johnathan Hill, who previously pled guilty to one count of accessory after the fact to second-degree murder in the killing of 25-year-old Tyler Gaddis, was sentenced on June 15th in federal district court.

According to court documents, Johnathan Hill was not the one who stabbed Gaddis — that was Forrest Dakota Hill, 22 at the time of the crime, and also a Cherokee resident. Dakota Hill pled guilty to second-degree murder in 2016 and was sentenced to 200 months – nearly 17 years – in prison and five years of supervised probation.

Gaddis was killed in the early morning hours of Sunday, March 29, 2015, in the Lufty Baptist Church, also known as Smokemont Baptist Church. Built in 1912, the church remained in active use until becoming part of the national park in 1935 and has been restored since. It's typically left open for visitors to enjoy.

Authorities were alerted to the crime when a caller who identified himself as Raven York — authorities would later find out the caller was actually Johnathan Hill — called the Cherokee Indian Police Department through 911 that same day. Cherokee police and EMS responded to the scene and found Gaddis dead. Because the church is inside the park, Cherokee officers notified the National Park Service, which then turned the investigation over to the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

Source: [Smoky Mountain News](#).

National Fire Situation

National Interagency Fire Center Fifty-Six Large Fires Burn In Fourteen States

Synopsis

Note: All of the following information is as of Sunday, July 15th.

NIFC remains at Preparedness Level 3. As of Sunday morning, 56 large fires were burning in 14 states and together had consumed nearly a million acres. Three large fires were contained, including the County Fire in California.

National Park Service Fires

No large fires are reported anywhere in the national park system.

Active Incident Resource Commitments

Category	July 2nd	July 10th	July 15th

Area Command Teams	0	0	0
NIMO Teams	1	1	0
Type 1 Teams	2	5	2
Type 2 Teams	5	8	4
Crews	238	374	172
Engines	687	871	496
Helicopters	100	136	74
Total FF/Overhead	10,237	15,162	7,994

Fires/Acreage

Category	2018 Total	2007-2017 Ave	2018 Variance
Year-to-Date Fires	33,379	34,474	- 1,095
Year-to-Date Acres	3,338,691	3,137,229	+ 201,462

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

On July 7th, the president signed into law H.R. 2229, to make permanent the authority for a federal employee (or applicant for federal employment) or the Office of Personnel Management to appeal, in any federal appeals court of competent jurisdiction, a final order or decision of the Merit Systems Protection Board on a claim alleging reprisal for making a protected disclosure (i.e., whistle-blowing) or for engaging in certain protected activities (e.g., refusing to obey an order that requires a violation of law), (P.L. 115-195).

Senate

On July 9th, the nomination of R. Clarke Cooper, of Florida, to be an Assistant Secretary of State (Political-Military Affairs) was submitted to the Senate. Clarke formerly was the Assistant Director, Legislative and Congressional Affairs, National Park Service, for the first few years of the administration of President George W. Bush.

On July 11th, the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources Subcommittee on National Parks held a hearing on S. 3172, to amend Title 54, United States Code, to establish, fund, and provide for the use of amounts in a National Park Service Legacy Restoration Fund to address the maintenance backlog of the National Park Service. Lena McDowall, Deputy Director, Management and Administration, National Park Service, was the witness for the department.

On July 12th, the Senate passed S. Res. 558, designating July 30, 2018, as "National Whistleblower Appreciation Day".

On July 19th, the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources is scheduled to hold a hearing to conduct oversight of Administration reorganization and modernization proposals related to the Department of Energy and the Department of the Interior.

House

On July 11th, the Committee on Natural Resources approved, among other bills, H.R. 5613, to designate the Quindaro Townsite in Kansas City, Kansas, as a National Historic Landmark.

On July 12th, the Committee on Natural Resources Subcommittee on Federal Lands held a hearing entitled "The Essential Role of Livestock Grazing on Federal Lands and its Importance to Rural America". There was no witness from the department at this hearing.

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

Park People, Friends and Allies

DOI Alumni

Passing Of Nat Reed

Nathaniel "Nat" Reed, 84, an environmentalist who led conservation fights throughout Florida and helped turn the Endangered Species Act into law while serving as an assistant secretary of the Interior in the 1970s, died of a brain injury on Wednesday in Quebec City after falling while fishing on a Canadian river. Excerpts from his *New York Times* obituary follow:

"Mr. Reed, who was known as Nat, bemoaned the damage that land developers, polluters, politicians and the Army Corps of Engineers had done to Florida by the early 1960s. Wetlands were being drained, mangrove jungles cleared and swamps filled to build roads and homes. The Everglades were being threatened.

"Man was remaking my Florida with the heaviest of hands!" he wrote in *Travels on the Green Highway* (2017), a memoir of his decades of environmental campaigns. 'Development at any cost was the goal of our politicians in Tallahassee and Washington, D.C.'

"Mr. Reed's rising profile on conservation issues, which included speaking at rallies to protest projects that threatened the state's environment, led to an alliance with Claude R. Kirk Jr., a Republican running for governor of Florida in 1966. After writing white papers for Mr. Kirk during his successful campaign, Mr. Reed was hired in 1967 as his dollar-a-year environmental adviser. Because he came from a wealthy family, he did not need a salary.

"Governor Kirk 'wanted to change Florida as badly as I wanted to change Florida,' Mr. Reed told *Florida Trend* magazine in an interview in 2007.

"One of their biggest victories was scotching a plan in 1969 to build a large jetport in Big Cypress Swamp (now a national preserve) with federal funds. Conservationists warned that it would damage wildlife in the adjacent Everglades National Park. Governor Kirk, who at first supported the jetport, later changed his mind, Mr. Reed wrote, after realizing that 'he had been taken in by an impossible dream cooked up by schemers and land peddlers.'

"After Governor Kirk lost his bid for re-election in 1970, Mr. Reed was named assistant secretary of the Interior for fish, wildlife and national parks by President Richard M. Nixon... Asked by Nixon what his priorities were, Mr. Reed said that he wanted to ban the pesticide DDT and Compound 1080, a poison that killed coyotes and other animals in the West. The Nixon administration banned them both. But a larger issue galvanized Mr. Reed: endangered species legislation.

"He became the administration's point man, testifying in the House and Senate, briefing members of Congress — and helping to draft the Endangered Species Act of 1973... He remained at the Department of the Interior through 1977, serving President Gerald R. Ford after Nixon's resignation."

For additional details, see the obituary at the link below.

Source: [New York Times](#).

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

Stories and articles about DOI, the government and the administration.

Environmental Law Rollbacks – Kendra Pierre-Louis and Nadja Popovich of the *New York Times* have compiled a list of environmental rollbacks that the administration has either dismantled or targeted for reversal. The listing is updated periodically; the compilation published on July 11th lists more than 75 laws. “Rules targeted for reversal so far,” they write, “have included the Obama administration’s signature efforts to curb planet-warming greenhouse gas emissions, as well as broader air and water pollution controls, protections for threatened animals and habitats and safety regulations for toxic substances.” [Click on this link to read the entire list](#). A summary appears at top, followed by a detailed listing. Source: [New York Times](#).

National Park System

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

“New” Park Adventures – *Backpacker Magazine* has a feature article this month entitled “25 National Park Adventures You Need to Have.” Here’s the introduction: “For more than 100 years, our national parks have provided life-list experiences, adventures, and stop-in-your-tracks views. But not all parks—or hikes—are equal. So what’s a trekker to do? Start with these 25 trips, the new classics of the system. Consider them the merit badges of a very well-traveled backpacker.” The list really isn’t a compilation of “trips” – more a list of new ways to experience parks, including animals to be seen, trails to take, islands to be visited by paddling, and even something to eat – a North Cascades huckleberry cobbler that looks mighty fine. Source: [Backpacker Magazine](#).

Respecting Sacred Native American Sites – A posting on *Outside Magazine*’s webpage deals with respecting sacred Native American sites, a number of them in national parks: “Some of the places most sought after by recreationists are also culturally, spiritually or economically vital to tribes. We need to honor that.” The article includes eight tips for a proper approach to such sites. Source: [Outside Magazine](#).

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

- *Gateway Arch NP* – Hundreds gathered on the St. Louis riverfront on the morning of July 3rd to celebrate the opening of the new museum and visitors center at the Gateway Arch. The ribbon cutting marked the final stage in a five-year project to revitalize the Arch grounds. Speakers emphasized the public-private partnership that planned and funded the \$380 million project. Source: [St. Louis Public Radio](#).
- *Mount Rainier NP* – On July 13th, the Seattle Times ran a story about an incident in which ice recently tumbled down the Ingraham Glacier and across the popular, high-traffic Disappointment Cleaver route. No climbers were injured, largely because the huge fall occurred at night. The guide who came upon it the next day said that it would not have been survivable if he and his group had been caught in it. The article talks about the phenomena of icefalls and how difficult it is to detect when they’re about to cut loose; it also describes the 1981 incident – worst in Mount Rainier’s history – in which eleven climbers died. Source: [Seattle Times](#).

- *Effigy Mounds NM* – A pair of peregrine falcons were recently spotted nesting in the park. Effigy Mounds was the site of recovery and reintroduction efforts focused on restoring peregrines to their native habitat in the late 90s. A total of 18 were released into the wild from hacking boxes attached to park cliffs; the birds immediately dispersed both up and down river. In 2000, the first documented nest was confirmed in Queens Bluff, Minnesota, however, no nests were ever discovered in Effigy Mounds. Until now. Source: [Effigy Mounds NM](#).
- *Muir Woods NM* – The new parking reservation system at the park, which went into effect in January, appears to have led to a moderate drop in visitation that has equated to an improved visitor experience. Said the park’s spokesperson: “In the peak season, there can be more people than the area can handle. Walking through the redwoods with fewer visitors around makes the experience more enjoyable.” Source: [Marin Independent Journal](#).
- *Great Sand Dunes NP&P* – On Tuesday, July 12th, the federal government delayed a decision on a contentious proposal to allow oil and gas drilling near the park, saying it first wants to consult with the Navajo Nation, which owns land in the area. The park is concerned about the effects drilling could have on air quality, noise and dark skies. The Western Energy Alliance, which represents the oil and gas industry, says that BLM should complete the consultation with the Navajos quickly and put the rights up for auction soon. Source: [Associated Press via KMGH News](#).
- *Zion NP* – Washington County (Utah) has recommitted \$100,000 for a grant to help with a park transportation project. The renovation project will include a widened west entrance to the park, another entrance station, new bike trails that lead into the park from Springdale, a new shuttle fleet and a reconfigured shuttle turnaround. People on bikes, cars, shuttles or their feet will be able to more easily pass from the newly reconstructed state Route 9 from Springdale into the park once the renovations are completed. The entire project will cost nearly \$35 million dollars, and the park will be asking the Department of Transportation for \$15.7 million to help with funding. The other funds will be coming from the National Park Service, UDOT and other local partners like Washington County. Source: [St. George News](#).
- *Coltsville NHP* – The Colt factory complex project is nearing completion, and, with it, the new park there will soon become a reality. Work on the \$14 million conversion of the vacant North Armory — the last major structure set for renovation in the former manufacturing complex just south of downtown Hartford — is now underway with financing in place for 48 market-rate apartments and ground floor commercial space. The park has yet to officially “open,” partly because of a delay in the donation of two buildings — the forge and the foundry — to the NPS for a visitor center. The donation was complicated by having to subdivide the structures from the larger property, reach agreements on parking, and test for any environmental contamination. It may open next year. Source: [Hartford Courant](#).

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:

- *Alaska Region: Hunting and Trapping in National Preserves* – 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](#).

- *Yellowstone NP: Lewis River Bridge Replacement* – The park is looking at the possibility of replacing the existing 273-foot long Lewis River Bridge, built in 1960, in order to address widespread deterioration. Closes: **July 23rd**. [PEPC link](#).
- *Stonewall NM: Draft Foundation Document* – The park’s draft foundation document is open for comments through the rest of the month. Closes: **July 31st**. [PEPC link](#).
- *Assateague Island NS: Campsite Relocation* – The park has prepared an environmental assessment in support of a new flexible design strategy for relocating campsites at its Oceanside Campground that have been lost or repeatedly damaged by coastal storm events. Several new campsite locations within the developed area on Assateague Island have been considered. Closes: **August 6th**. [PEPC link](#).
- *Redwood N&SP: Greater Prairie Creek Ecosystem Restoration* – The NPS and the California Department of Parks and Recreation are beginning the planning process for restoration of the Greater Prairie Creek watershed through forest and aquatic restoration and road removal. Closes: **August 6th**. [PEPC link](#).
- *Canaveral NS: 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 NS: 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

Worldwide Operation Conducted As Part Of Wildlife Crime Crackdown – Nearly 100 countries took part recently in a month-long, globe-spanning crackdown on the illegal wildlife trade, seizing tons of meat, ivory, pangolin scales and timber and exposing the international reach of traffickers. Law enforcement officers also confiscated thousands of live animals, including turtles in Malaysia and parrots in Mexico. Canada intercepted 18 tons of eel meat arriving from Asia. Those arrested included two flight attendants in Los Angeles and a man in Israel whose house was raided after he posted a hunting photograph on social media. Global wildlife crime is worth about \$150 billion annually and is fourth in value after the illegal drug trade, counterfeiting and human trafficking. Criminal syndicates that smuggle flora and fauna often take advantage of porous borders and corrupt officials, transporting illicit cargo at an industrial scale. Source: [Toronto Star](#).

Climate and The Environment

China Just Handed the World a 111-Million-Ton Trash Problem – That’s the headline of a *Bloomberg* news article on China’s decision to no longer import other countries’ plastic trash. “By 2030,” writes Eric Roston, “an estimated 111 million metric tons of used plastic will need to be buried or recycled somewhere else—or not manufactured at all. That’s the conclusion of a new analysis of UN global trade data by University of Georgia researchers. Everyone’s bottles, bags and food packages add up. Factories have churned out a cumulative 8.3 billion metric tons of new plastic as of 2017... Nearly four-fifths of all that plastic has been thrown into landfills or the environment. A tenth of it has been burned. Several million tons reach oceans every year, sullyng beaches and poisoning vast reaches of the northern Pacific. Just 9 percent of the total plastic ever generated has been recycled. China took in just over half the annual total in 2016, or 7.4 million metric tons.” So far, no single solution has arisen to the problem. Source: [Bloomberg](#).

Extreme Drought Returns To The Southwest – On July 9th, the *Wall Street Journal* ran a story by Jim Carlton with this headline: “Falling Lake Mead Water Levels Prompt Detente in Arizona Feud.” Here are the opening paragraphs: “Arizona is the odd state out in agreeing to dramatically curtail water use from the Colorado River, raising tensions in the Southwest as extreme drought conditions return. At issue are falling water levels at the West’s biggest reservoir, Lake Mead. Having already dropped by more than 150 feet over the past two decades to 1,077 feet, the Nevada reservoir is two feet shy of falling below a federal threshold that can trigger mandatory cutbacks by U.S. officials. Nevada, California—and Mexico—have mostly agreed to a regional Drought Contingency Plan that would adopt more reductions in the amount of water drawn from the river. But bureaucratic infighting between two Arizona agencies had delayed adoption of the plan. The Central Arizona Project, which manages most of the state’s river water, and Arizona Department of Water Resources have been in a year-long dispute over the plan, and in May the two agencies pledged to work together.” The article also provides background on the crisis: “The Colorado River, which supplies water to 40 million people from Denver to Los Angeles, has been gripped in the driest 19-year period on record, according to officials from the Bureau of Reclamation, a multistate agency that manages water and power in the West. With low snowpack and warm conditions again, runoff from the river this year is only about 40% of the long-term average, prompting renewed concerns over the water level in Lake Mead. The risk of the reservoir falling below 1,025 feet by the year 2026—a level once thought unthinkable—has risen to 40%, according to new estimates by the Bureau of Reclamation. Because the lake is funnel shaped, water officials worry it could decline even faster once it gets that low—triggering even bigger cutbacks.” See the full article for additional details. Also see the *Arizona Republic* editorial below. Source: [Wall Street Journal](#).

Editorial Opinions

Links to editorials and op-ed commentary on issues pertaining either directly or indirectly to the National Park Service.

- [“The Disappearing Story Of The Black Homesteaders Who Pioneered The West,”](#) Richard Edwards, *Washington Post*. Edwards laments the decline or outright loss of historic black pioneer communities in the West: “They were once vibrant African American homesteading communities. Today their buildings are falling to ruin, their locations are mostly unmarked, and the achievements of their pioneers are mostly forgotten.” Nicodemus NHS and Homestead NM are referenced.
- [“Arizona's Water Supply Could Face Catastrophic Cuts By 2026 If Something Doesn't Change,”](#) Joanna Allhands, *Arizona Republic*. More on the Southwestern drought, the shrinking Lake Mead reservoir, and the possibility of a real catastrophe for the region: “The reality is water shortages at Lake Mead are looming, and if we don’t do more to mitigate the risk of something catastrophic happening, pain for many will turn into agony for all.”

From The Archives

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

- *Isle Royale National Park* – An explosion occurred on the 26-foot-long, steel-hulled cabin motorboat Pat-Ter-Lie just after 4 a.m. on July 3rd while it was docked for the night at Moskey Basin. On board at the time were the owner, his wife, and two other Canadians. Gas fumes stemming from a leak in the transom gas tank were presumably ignited by the pilot light of the on-board propane stove. Extensive damage was done to the interior of the boat by the explosion and the ensuing fire, but, miraculously, only one of the boat's occupants suffered minor burns. The fire was extinguished within minutes by occupants of another boat at the same dock. Without this quick action, the 40 remaining gallons of gasoline in the fuel tank, three five-gallon jerry cans of gasoline, three 20-pound canisters of propane, ten liters of kerosene and one gallon of white gas would probably have exploded. The boat was towed to

Nipigon on July 4th for repairs. Violation notices were issued for having an illegal fire, unlawful display of fireworks, disturbing the peace, damaging government property, discharging petroleum products into the waters of Lake Superior, and incorrectly displaying a permit.

- *Jefferson National Expansion Memorial* – The 13th Annual Veiled Prophet Fair was held over the three-day Fourth of July weekend on and adjacent to park grounds under a permit issued to the city of Saint Louis. Park law enforcement rangers were augmented by St. Louis police and by four special events teams - three from Midwest Region and a fourth from Southwest Region. The incident command system was utilized to manage the event. All emergency medical services were handled by the regional medical center; of the medical problems which occurred over the weekend, heat-related ailments were the most common. A fair-goer was injured on the bungee jump adjacent to park property after the operators failed to secure a safety hook and he fell 200 feet to an air bag below. The victim was taken to a local hospital, treated for minor injuries, and released. Law enforcement incidents included an attempt to take a ranger's weapon from its holster, concealed weapons violations (both handguns and knives), two felony assaults, and numerous misdemeanor violations, the majority alcohol-related. Over the course of the three-day fair, 27 arrests were made and 58 violation notices were issued. A side window of a patrol car was kicked out by one of those arrested; additional charges have been placed against him. Fair activities included two daily air shows, nightly fireworks, and concerts by Sawyer Brown, Chicago, Melissa Etheridge, James Brown, Levert, and Dolly Parton. Severe flooding caused many last minute changes in fair activities as the Mississippi River encroached on park property and closed the levee.
- *Denali National Park* – On July 4th, members of the Alaska Reclamation Committee (ARC), a splinter group of the Alaskan Independence Party which claims state ownership of the park road, drove into the park in defiance of existing park regulations (failure to obtain a permit) and held a picnic on state and private inholdings in the Kantishna area, some 96 miles from the park's entrance. Prior to the event, there were rumors and threats that up to 300 people would participate in the event, but only 25 people in 11 vehicles participated. The park's staff was augmented by 18 rangers from throughout the Alaska Region. The group drove past the road access check station at mile 15; they remained as a group even though their one oversized recreational vehicle was not permitted to travel beyond mile 30 until all park tour and shuttle buses had passed. The group continued to Kantishna, where they rafted on Moose Creek (the group is also challenging the question of navigability of park waters) and operated a sluice box near the mouth of Eureka Creek. There were no confrontations with park staff, though members did tell reporters that they "feared for their lives" after monitoring park radio frequencies and observing a van load of rangers following their convoy. Park staff were in the position of preparing for all contingencies that might result from this group's visit while still maintaining normal operations during the holiday. A helicopter was available to carry park law enforcement and EMS personnel to any point along the road corridor as needed. ARC claimed that the event was a success and plans to return for another "Drive Denali" weekend in six weeks. Meanwhile, the park is preparing legal action resulting from violations that occurred on the 4th. The park reports that staff "are optimistic that the issues of road ownership, river navigability, and mining claims will be resolved in court rather than on the road." The incident commander was ranger/pilot Ron Purdum.

Acknowledgements

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- Production: Steve Pittleman
- Regular Correspondents: Don Hellmann, Dennis Burnett, Rick Smith, Bill Wade and Duncan Morrow
- Issue Contributors: Larry Frederick, Mike Warren, Mike Murray, Jeff Ohlfs

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

A Closing Observation

“We abuse land because we regard it as a commodity belonging to us. When we see land as a community to which we belong, we may begin to use it with love and respect.”

Author and conservationist [Aldo Leopold](#)

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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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