



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

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### Incidents

#### **Hawaii Volcanoes National Park Park May Reopen Some Closed Areas As Eruption Quiets**

Although most of the park remains closed, a phased reopening is being considered. That's in part because the summit of Kilauea has been quiet since the last collapse that occurred there on August 2nd.

Reopening portions of the main park area will depend on the Geological Survey giving the park confirmation that the collapse events have ended. There have been 68 such events since this eruption began, substantially increasing the size of Halema'uma'u crater.

The park will also have to deal with infrastructure issues, particularly the provision of water to visitors. Repairs to the water system could cost \$40 million.

In order to connect with more people, the park will crowd fund a mobile visitors center to travel the island while the park is partially closed. Superintendent Cindy Orlando said it would be crowd-funded because the eruption has made it harder for the park to secure federal dollars, noting that the "federal government is skeptical right now in investing in a park situated on an active volcano."

Postscript: As if the park hasn't had enough to deal with already, they must now look at the possibility of a major hurricane hitting Hawaii. As of this writing (Tuesday evening), the odds were increasing that Category 4 Hurricane Lane would make a direct or indirect hit on the Big Island, where the park is located, sometime late this week.

Source: [Hawaii Tribune-Herald](#).

#### **Zion National Park Hikers Rescued After Ignoring Ranger Advice**

Hikers in two separate groups visiting the popular rock formation known as The Subway needed rescuing on Monday, July 30th.

One hiker who received a knee injury on the hike spent the night with rescuers before being airlifted by a helicopter. Another group spent the night in the canyon after getting lost. They were found and rescued Monday morning.

The Subway is a tubular formation within the Left Fork of North Creek in the park. Because of the popularity of the canyon, there is a lottery system for permits. For hikers starting at the top of the canyon, there is a necessary 30-foot rappel that requires ropes and technical canyoneering gear.

One of the groups that required a rescue had disregarded and mocked a ranger's advice when they picked up their permit to visit The Subway. The ranger recommended they bring a rope and multiple harnesses for at least one of the rappels, but the leader of the group, who had been there before, said that they could cross the log and find an easier way down. The ranger told them that the log had washed out last year and once again recommended the gear, but the group dismissed the information and started the 9.5-mile hike without ropes or harnesses.

When the group reached the 30-foot rappel, they attempted to make the 6- or 7-foot jump to the other side of the drop, but one person landed badly and received a knee injury. A medic and two other rescuers responded and spent Monday night with the hiker. A helicopter from the Grand Canyon evacuated him the next day.

Another group whose members were wearing "inappropriate footwear" got lost several times while hiking toward The Subway. They finally reached the famous formation late Sunday night, so they spent an unexpected night in the canyon. On Monday morning, they got lost again and missed the trail that leads out of the canyon to the trailhead. Instead, they continued farther downstream. At some point, they decided to try to climb a cliff face to reach the road. Heat exhaustion started to set in, so members of the group activated their emergency locator and reported a heat-related illness. Search and rescue responders were able to locate the group, give them water and help them find their way back to the trailhead.

Source: [KSL News](#)

### **Glacier National Park Teen Dies In Fall Down Waterfall**

A 15-year-old boy died after falling down a waterfall along the Going-to-the-Sun Road on Tuesday, July 31st.

Spencer Flerchinger of Kamiah, Idaho, was exploring a culvert draining Haystack Creek under the mountain roadway when he slipped and fell about 100 feet. He did not survive the fall.

Going-to-the-Sun Road was restricted to one lane of travel for three hours on Tuesday evening near the incident and temporarily closed for approximately 10 minutes to vehicles in both directions while rangers secured the scene of the accident and recovered the victim's body from a ledge below the road via litter carryout.

The incident was similar to another fatality in 2017 when a photographer fell into Haystack Creek above the culvert and was swept over the waterfall.

Source: [The Missoulian](#).

### **Upper Delaware Scenic and Recreational River Dozens Rescued In Rough Day On Delaware River**

Rescuers from several agencies were kept busy on Saturday, August 4th, as rafters took to the Delaware River despite elevated water levels and swiftly flowing currents.

Dozens found themselves stranded, capsized or otherwise in need of rescue. Fortunately, all were wearing mandatory life jackets.

Rangers rescued 11 people by mid-afternoon, transporting them all at once in their large river patrol boat. The Port Jervis Fire Department transported four others from the same area, including an injured woman who was taken by ambulance for treatment. Meanwhile, a rescue boat from Mill Rift

saved two people who had capsized and were carried down the river. There also were calls for stranded boaters on Cherry Island.

Source: [Times Herald-Record](#).

### **Glen Canyon National Recreation Area Man Drowns After Getting Entangled In Anchor Line**

A 47-year-old man disappeared in Warm Creek Canyon on the morning of July 25th while attempting to retrieve a boat anchor in about 10 feet of water approximately 30 feet from the shore. Family members dove into the water but their attempts to save him were unsuccessful.

Rangers responded from Wahweap Marina and retrieved the anchor line. They found that the man was entangled in it.

Resuscitation efforts began immediately and continued as the man was transported to a hospital in Page, Arizona, where he was declared dead.

Source: [Fox 13 Salt Lake City](#).

### **Isle Royale National Park Dehydrated Hikers Rescued From Park**

A severely dehydrated teenage hiker who was described as slipping in and out of consciousness was among three people rescued by the U.S. Coast Guard from a remote area of Isle Royale earlier this month.

A ranger from the park contacted the Coast Guard late on Monday, August 6th, saying they had gotten a call for help from a group of hikers, who'd sent an emergency message using a hand-held satellite communicator.

A helicopter from Air Station Traverse City arrived on the Lake Superior island around midnight and a rescue swimmer was lowered to help three hikers into the aircraft.

The person having the most trouble appeared to be an 18-year-old woman who was reportedly severely dehydrated and going in and out of consciousness. Two other hikers also had symptoms of dehydration.

All three were taken to the Duluth airport, and helped by waiting emergency medical workers.

Source: [Grand Rapids Press](#).

### **Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve Austrian Visitor Dies In Packrafting Accident**

A 22-year-old Austrian man died last week in a packrafting accident in the park. Aidan Don, who was from Salzburg, Austria, died on August 2nd after his raft capsized. His body was recovered the next day.

Don and a friend, who were both novice packrafters, were dropped off at a lake near the base of the Nizina Glacier for a daylong packrafting trip that day. Three miles downriver, the two men became separated by more than 100 yards. The friend then spotted a capsized raft, but no sign of Don. The friend landed on an island and called for emergency assistance via satellite phone.

Don's body was spotted by aerial searchers four miles further downstream on the south side of Nizina River near Mile High Cliffs. The surviving man was picked up, and searchers called for additional help with the recovery. Rangers recovered Don's body the next day.

Source: [Anchorage Daily News](#).

### **Katmai National Park and Preserve Three Face Criminal Charges For Approaching Feeding Bears**

Three people are facing criminal charges after they approached feeding brown bears in the popular Brooks Falls viewing area.

One man was shown taking a selfie on the Brooks Falls live stream, which broadcasts to a global audience throughout the summer. The man used an emergency exit on the bear viewing platform to get down to the riverbank below. Several bears were feeding on salmon at the time.

Katmai rangers started getting reports from visitors and people watching the Katmai bear cam. Rangers contacted the three people and will be charging them with several violations, including a regulation prohibiting people from getting within 50 yards of a bear that is "using a concentrated food source" like the migrating salmon at Brooks Falls.

"People need to recognize that these are wild brown bears," said Mark Sturm, the park's superintendent. "These visitors are lucky that they escaped the situation without injury. The possible consequences for the bears and themselves could have been disastrous."

The news article below includes a 90-second video of the incident.

Source: [Anchorage Daily News](#).

### **National Fire Situation**

#### **National Interagency Fire Center More Than 100 Fires Currently Burning In West**

##### **Synopsis**

NIFC remains at PL 5, the agency's highest preparedness level.

As of yesterday morning, there were 111 large fires active in 13 states; together, they have so far burned more than two million acres. Extreme fire behavior caused the South Sugarloaf and Sheep Creek fires in Nevada to burn thousands of acres on Sunday. Evacuation orders are in effect for residents who live near 23 large fires in California, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, Oregon, and Washington.

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

Significant fires are currently burning in these national parks:

- *Glacier NP* – The Howe Ridge Fire has now burned over 11,000 acres in the park and remains completely uncontained. A Type 1 IMT (Pierson) is managing the fire. A total of 213 firefighters and overhead personnel have been committed. On Sunday, August 12th, windy and dry conditions caused the fire to rapidly expand. Evacuation orders were issued for North Lake McDonald Road, the Lake McDonald Lodge area, Sprague Creek and Avalanche Campgrounds and the Going-to-the-Sun Road from the foot of Lake McDonald to Logan Pass (32 miles). On Sunday, August 19th, an additional evacuation order was issued for Fish Creek Campground. [More information](#).
- *Yosemite NP* – The Ferguson Fire was declared fully contained on August 18th, though nearly 900 firefighters remain engaged in fire operations. Yosemite Valley reopened to visitors on August 14th. Glacier Point remains closed. [More information](#).

- *Whiskeytown NRA* – The Carr Fire has burned nearly 230,000 acres and is now 90% contained. The park is beginning the process of reopening. The visitor center and some roads have reopened; however, all other park facilities and areas remain closed until further notice, including all trails, campgrounds, pull-offs, and marinas. Overall, 39,000 of the park’s 42,000 acres were burned by the fire. A detailed preliminary damage summary can be found on the [Whiskeytown webpage](#). Information on the fire can be found at this [Cal Fire web page](#).
- *Grand Canyon NP* – The Obi Fire is fully contained. Many of the temporary road and trail closures that were in effect were lifted last Saturday. [More information](#).

**Active Incident Resource Commitments**

Category	August 7th	August 16th	August 21st
Area Command Teams	0	0	0
NIMO Teams	0	1	2
Type 1 Teams	13	14	15
Type 2 Teams	15	20	21
Crews	552	590	528
Engines	1,944	1,545	1,461
Helicopters	170	195	172
Total FF/Overhead	27,543	27,339	26,010

**Fires/Acreage**

Category	2018 Total	2008-2017 Ave	2018 Variance
Year-to-Date Fires	41,563	45,473	- 3,910
Year-to-Date Acres	6,000,148	4,933,621	+ 1,066,527

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 August 15th, the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources Subcommittee on National Parks held a hearing on the following bills:

- S. 599 and H.R. 1488, to redesignate the Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore as the “Indiana Dunes National Park”. The department stated it opposed the bills as the area is not sufficiently large and does not contain a variety of resources found in other national parks.
- S. 1644, to clarify the status of the Captain John Smith Chesapeake National Historic Trail as a unit of the National Park System. The bill would count the trail as a unit of the park system, but the department said it opposed the bill since the trail is a water trail and its exact route

cannot be precisely determined and the protection of such an imprecise, continuous route is not feasible. The department also objected that unlike the situation with the scenic trails, conferring unit status on the Captain John Smith Chesapeake trail would make it the only national historic trail, out of all 17, that is a unit of the National Park System. That could raise new perceptions of unequal treatment among the historic trails.

- S. 1926 and H.R. 2156, to provide for the establishment of a national memorial and national monument to commemorate those killed by the collapse of the Saint Francis Dam on March 12, 1928. The department deferred to the Department of Agriculture on this bill since the memorial would be on land within the Angeles National Forest.
- S. 1987 and H.R. 2600, to provide for the conveyance to the State of Iowa of the reversionary interest held by the United States in and to certain land in Pottawattamie County, Iowa, and to express the sense of Congress relating to the continued provision of information relating to certain national historic trails.
- S. 1993, to adjust the boundary of the Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area to include the Rim of the Valley Corridor. The department opposed the bill, even though the special resource study found the resources met the criteria for addition to the national park system, in order to focus resources on the deferred maintenance backlog and other critical national park needs.
- S. 2015, to clarify the status of the North Country, Ice Age, and New England National Scenic Trails as units of the National Park System. The bill would allow these three national scenic trails to be counted as units of the park system like the other three national scenic trails that are already counted as units (Appalachian, Potomac Heritage, and Natchez Trace).
- S. 2441, to amend the Steel Industry American Heritage Area Act of 1996 to repeal the funding limitation. The department opposed extending the authority for the heritage area to continue to receive federal funding, saying it wanted to focus resources on reducing the deferred maintenance backlog and addressing other critical national park needs.
- S. 2570, to repeal the funding authorization sunset and the total funding cap for the Essex National Heritage Area. The department opposed extending the authority for the heritage area to continue to receive federal funding, saying it wanted to focus resources on reducing the deferred maintenance backlog and addressing other critical national park needs.
- S. 2604, to amend the Oil Region National Heritage Area Act to reauthorize the Oil Region National Heritage Area. The department opposed extending the authority for the heritage area to continue to receive federal funding, saying it wanted to focus resources on reducing the deferred maintenance backlog and addressing other critical national park needs.
- S. 2672, to authorize the Society of the First Infantry Division to make modifications to the First Division Monument located on Federal land in President's Park in Washington, DC.
- S. 2870, to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to conduct a special resource study of the site known as "Amache" in the State of Colorado. The department opposed the bill in order to focus resources on the deferred maintenance backlog and other critical national park needs.
- S. 2876, to amend the National Trails System Act to provide for the study of the Pike National Historic Trail. The department opposed the bill in order to focus resources on the deferred maintenance backlog and other critical national park needs.
- S. 2889 and H.R. 4895, to establish the Medgar Evers National Monument in the State of Mississippi.
- S. 2831 and H.R. 5751, to redesignate Golden Spike National Historic Site and to establish the Transcontinental Railroad Network.
- S. 3176 and H.R. 5979, to establish the Mill Springs Battlefield National Monument in the State of Kentucky as a unit of the National Park System.
- S. 3287 and H.R. 5655, to establish the Camp Nelson Heritage National Monument in the State of Kentucky as a unit of the National Park System.
- S. 3298, to extend the authority of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund, Inc., to establish a visitor center for the Vietnam Veterans Memorial.
- H. Con. Res. 33, designating the George C. Marshall Museum and George C. Marshall Research Library in Lexington, Virginia, as the National George C. Marshall Museum and Library. The department deferred to the Department of Defense (DoD) on this bill since the library is on land under DoD's jurisdiction.

P. Daniel Smith, Deputy Director, Exercising the Authority of the Director, National Park Service, was the witness for the department.

On August 16th, the Senate passed S. Res. 607, reaffirming the vital and indispensable role the free press serves.

### **House**

Nothing to report. The House was in recess from August 13th to August 17th.

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

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

### **Big Bend National Park Bob Krumenaker Named Superintendent**

Robert “Bob” Krumenaker has been named superintendent of Big Bend National Park. Krumenaker, superintendent of Apostle Islands National Lakeshore in northern Wisconsin since 2002, will assume his new duties on September 17th.

The promotion marks his return to Texas, where Krumenaker held his first permanent NPS job at Big Thicket National Preserve in the early 1980s. His 41-year Park Service career has taken him from half a dozen seasonal jobs in several western parks and monuments to resource and leadership roles in NPS Washington headquarters and two regional offices and at major national parks from Zion in Utah to Shenandoah in Virginia and the Everglades in Florida.

At Apostle Islands, Krumenaker has forged key partner alliances. He helped complete a landmark treaty-rights agreement with 11 Chippewa tribes, and he helped build a highly successful local partnership to handle tens of thousands of winter visitors when extended deep freezes opened access to spectacular ice caves along miles of frozen Lake Superior.

Krumenaker began his NPS career in 1977 as a full-time volunteer at Canyonlands National Park. He has worked in more than 10 national parks in a variety of positions, from field ranger to superintendent. He also served in leadership roles in two different NPS regional offices.

A Senior Executive Fellows graduate of the Harvard Kennedy School of Government, Krumenaker earned his bachelor’s degree in science at Brown University and his master’s in forest science at Yale’s School of Forestry and Environmental Studies. He is also a graduate of the Department of the Interior Senior Executive Service Candidate Development Program.

Krumenaker enjoys woodworking and furniture craft, history and good fiction, hiking and other outdoor pursuits.

Source: [Big Bend National Park](#).

## **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.

### **National Park System**

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



**NPS Looking At Using Mobile Data To Improve Planning** – “The National Park Service wants to use the data coming from mobile devices on federal lands to help improve its long-range transportation and visitor experience plans,” writes the author of a recent article in Fed Scoop, which bills itself as the leading tech media brand in the federal government market. “The agency is asking for industry insight on a system it can deploy to collect and analyze location-based services data, navigation-GPS data, contextual data and wireless network signaling data. The move is part of the agency’s efforts to improve visitor experience while preserving federal lands in the face of growing popularity and to maintain accurate transportation records across the parks.” Source: [Fed Scoop](#).

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

- *Great Smoky Mountains NP* – The Department of Justice has assigned a team of attorneys to fend off a growing list of federal lawsuits blaming the National Park Service for allowing a small fire near Gatlinburg in 2016 to grow into Tennessee’s largest natural disaster and one of the nation’s deadliest blazes. Class-action attorneys have now filed three lawsuits in U.S. District Court against the federal government – the U.S. Department of Interior officially – on behalf of the citizens whose lives were taken or property lost in a night of wind-driven wildfires in November 2016. Late last month, the attorneys filed two more on behalf of 210 property owners who sustained damages ranging from millions to tens of thousands of dollars. Source: [Knoxville News Sentinel](#).
- *Colonial NHP* – The park is talking with a preservation group about how, and whether, to repair or replace the Yorktown Victory Monument, which is now almost 140 years old and has suffered much damage from lightning and exposure to the elements. A maintenance expert will be examining the statue to determine the best course to take. Source: [Daily Press](#).
- *Golden Gate NRA* – Earlier this month, Alcatraz Island held its final alumni gathering, an event in which former convicts, guards and their families gathered on the island for an official reunion. These gatherings have been held for about 30 years, but the tradition is coming to an end because it is getting harder and harder to find alumni to come to the island. The prison closed in 1963, and many of the island’s former residents have passed away or moved out of the Bay Area. Source: [San Francisco Chronicle](#).
- *Grand Canyon NP* – Wildlife biologists at the park will soon begin tracking ten adult elk, which will help lead to an eventual management plan for the animals within the South Village. GPS collars will be used to gather data on the movement of the elk and make it possible for biologists to determine which areas in the South Village the elk are attracted to and how they move around the Village seasonally. The data on the elk’s movement will be used to inform the development of an elk management plan. A management plan is needed due to the willingness of the elk to forage and move among people in developed areas within the Village, which, says the park, can result in “dangerous situations and negative outcomes.” Source: [Arizona Daily Sun](#).
- *Yosemite NP* – A new podcast from Capital Public Radio, entitled "YosemiteLand", takes a look at the challenges affecting the park today, from wildfires to worsening traffic to Corporate America’s influence on the park’s identity. The podcast is hosted by reporter Ezra David Romero and can be found at [capradio.org](#). Source: [PolitiFact.com](#).

**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:

- *Zion NP: South Entrance Fee Station Reconfiguration* – The park is developing an environmental assessment to consider alternatives to redesign the South Entrance Fee Station and adjacent roadway to decrease park entry wait times for vehicular traffic, reduce localized vehicle congestion, improve employee safety, develop a renewable energy source to sustain park



operations, and replace faulty culverts to improve roadway conditions during weather events. Closes: **September 3rd**. [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](#).

## **Editorial Opinions**

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

- [“In Praise Of Park Rangers,”](#) Geoffrey Norman, *Weekly Standard*. Norman writes about the rangers he met during a swing through six western parks. Although the parks were different, “all of [them] had this in common: the excellence, professionalism, and good nature of the rangers who staffed them.”
- [“Hunters Should Hate This Proposed Pro-Hunting Rule,”](#) Dan Ashe and Jon Jarvis, *Washington Post*. Ashe and Jarvis, respectively past directors of USFWS and the NPS, write strongly in opposition to the proposed changes in hunting regs in Alaska, speaking largely to fellow hunters and fishermen: “The legacy of the ethical hunter is on the line. A nation of mostly non-hunters is watching. Will they see our community stand proudly and loudly for humane, scientific and ethical policy? Or will they see the opposite? Hunters should stand with the non-hunting community and demand that this policy be withdrawn.”
- [“Zinke’s Patriotic Duty To Protect Land And Water Conservation Fund,”](#) Max Clelland, *Billings Gazette*. The former senator from Georgia writes in passionate support of the LWCF, saying that it’s Secretary Zinke’s sworn duty to protect America’s public lands – but that he’s failing to meet this obligation: “I am deeply disappointed that Zinke has failed to champion this program. LWCF has protected our outdoor access and heritage for decades. Its existence is in doubt, but we the people have the opportunity to ensure the program can continue to provide benefits to future generations. I encourage my fellow Americans to fight for LWCF by letting Zinke and our members of Congress know that this is one program the government has a moral obligation to protect.”

## **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.

- *Glacier Bay NP&P* – On the afternoon of August 18th, the *Yorktown Clipper*, a 257-foot tour boat, ran aground on Geikie Rock about half way up Glacier Bay. The ship sustained damage to its forward hull and immediately began to take on water. There were 134 passengers and 42 crew members on board at the time. The captain requested immediate assistance, and vessels throughout the area - including four NPS boats - responded to the mayday call. Park boats transferred all 134 passengers and four of the crew members from the *Clipper* to the *Westerdam*, another cruise ship then in the bay. The *Westerdam* then proceeded on to Sitka with the *Clipper's* passengers. Another 22 crew members were taken to Bartlett Cove. The remaining 16, including the captain, remained on board to stabilize the vessel and move it to shallow waters in case there was a need to beach it. The Coast Guard responded to the mayday with two helicopters from Sitka and the cutter *Woodrush*. The helicopters transported dewatering pumps, environmental assessment teams, damage control teams, an oil spill boom and absorbent pads to the *Clipper*. Crew members, assisted by rangers and Coast Guard personnel, utilized the pumps to minimize flooding. The *Clipper* was moved into Shag Cove off Geikie Inlet so that any fuel or oil spills could be better contained, but only a small amount of

fuel - no more than 100 gallons - appears to have leaked from the ship. About 1500 feet of boom was deployed, and the landing craft *Gumption* was dispatched from June with an additional 1.5 miles of containment boom in case it was needed. The tugboats *Chevelle Rouge* and *Tagish* were dispatched late in the day in order to help pump out the *Clipper's* fuel tanks (it was carrying 23,000 gallons of fuel at the time of the accident) and tow the ship to port for temporary repairs. Salvage divers from Ketchikan were flown into Gustavus that night and transported by rangers to the *Clipper*. They began an assessment of the damage to the hull and assisted with temporary repairs. Many of the ruptures were plugged, and temporary repairs were begun which would enable the ship to make it to port. At last report, repair efforts were still underway.

- *New River Gorge NR* – Around 9:30 a.m. on the morning of August 19th, rangers received a report of a man shooting a sawed-off shotgun and threatening people in the Cunard Landing area along the New River. A park maintenance worker contacted rangers by radio and kept the man in sight for approximately 30 minutes until rangers arrived on scene. The man was apprehended by rangers just after 11 a.m. He was found to be in possession of a ten-inch filet knife and a sawed-off 7.62mm rifle (originally reported as a shotgun) with one round in the chamber. The rifle, which had a barrel length of just under nine inches and an overall length of just under 19 inches, was being carried in a small suitcase/box. The man also had pornographic magazines and girl's underpants in his possession. Upon investigation, it was learned that he is a convicted felon with charges of gross sexual imposition against him in the state of Ohio, that he'd been arrested in the past for rape and kidnapping, and that he was a member of the Hell's Angels. He was charged with possession of an illegal firearm, which is a felony; he'll also be charged with assault with a deadly weapon, threatening, and being a felon in possession of a firearm. Rangers are investigating the possibility of a sexual assault which may have occurred the night before, when the man allegedly accosted two women campers in the Cunard area. It was this incident that led to his use of the illegal weapon.
- *Mount Rushmore NM* – The influx of bikers coming into the area to attend the annual Sturgis Motorcycle Rally (formerly known as the Black Hills Motorcycle Classic) had a significant impact on traffic and operations in the park last week. The approximately 29,000 bikers who visited the park between Sunday, August 8th, and the following Friday pushed the average daily visitation to 26,000. Members of 16 different outlaw gangs wearing "colors" were identified. Rangers were extremely busy with traffic control, crowd control and visitor assists, but there were no serious rally-associated incidents. Official estimates are that at least 150,000 bikers attended the rally, which is held about 50 miles northeast of the park. The event officially ended on August 15th. Other nearby national park areas affected by the rally included Badlands, Devils Tower, Jewel Cave and Wind Cave.

## **Acknowledgements**

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

- Production: Steve Pittleman
- Regular Correspondents: Don Hellmann, Dennis Burnett, and Duncan Morrow

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**

"Everyone needs to play and to play out of doors. Without parks and without outdoor life, all that is best in civilization will be smothered. To save ourselves, to prevent our perishing, to enable us to live at our best and happiest, parks are necessary. Within national parks is room – glorious room – room in which to find ourselves, in which to think and hope, to dream and plan, to rest and resolve."

[Enos Mills](#), *Your National Parks*, 1917

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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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