



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

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Incidents

National Park System Hurricane Florence Updates

Reports are beginning to come in on Hurricane Florence's impact on parks, most of them pertaining to closures and reopenings. At the time of writing (Tuesday morning), however, the storm's remnants were still moving up through New York toward New England and hadn't yet brought anticipated heavy rains to a number of sites along its projected route. Over the weekend, the NPS mobilized an incident management team to begin coordination of recovery operations for affected parks. Plans called for it to move to a location in North Carolina sometime on Monday.

Here are reports from some of the larger areas in or near the storm's path – see the link below for further reports from smaller sites and additional details and updates from all areas:

- *Appalachian NST* – All NPS-owned trail corridor lands in North Carolina through Virginia were closed last Thursday, and hikers were strongly advised to get off the trail and to seek shelter or postpone their hikes, as rescue services might be unable to reach them in the event of an emergency.
- *Blue Ridge Parkway* – The entire 469-mile Blue Ridge Parkway and all associated facilities, with the exception of the Pisgah Inn and Peaks of Otter Lodge, were closed last Friday in anticipation of high winds and heavy rains due to the remnants of Hurricane Florence.
- *Outer Banks Group* – The majority of visitor services and facilities at Cape Hatteras, Fort Raleigh, and Wright Brothers reopened on Sunday.
- *Cape Lookout NS* – The park will remain closed for the next two weeks, as flooding and road damage restrict access. Harker's Island Road, which provides the only vehicle access to Harker's Island, is closed due to damage. The park's cabin camps will also remain closed for the next two weeks.
- *Great Smoky Mountains NP* – Park roads and facilities are quickly reopening. Maintenance crews have swept up light debris and removed a few large trees from roadways, and all primary roads are now open. Campgrounds, facilities, and outlying areas will reopen as soon as they are determined to be safe.

- *Shenandoah NP* – Skyline Drive and facilities throughout the park have reopened following their closure in anticipation of possible significant impacts from the hurricane. The park was nonetheless still keeping an eye on its remnants and prepared to take necessary action.

Source: [NPS Hurricane and Severe Weather Response webpage](#).

Cape Cod National Seashore Man Dies Of Shark Bites Off Newcomb Hollow Beach

Around midday on Saturday, September 15th, Arthur Medici, 26, was attacked and severely injured by a suspected great white shark off Newcomb Hollow Beach in Wellfleet. He was taken to Cape Cod Hospital, where he pronounced dead.

The incident is under investigation by the park, the Wellfleet Police Department, and the Cape and Islands District Attorney's Office. The public will be notified when the species of shark has been confirmed. Wellfleet beaches are currently closed to swimming.

A witness told the *Cape Cod Times* that Medici and another man were riding the waves on boogie boards about 30 to 50 feet offshore when the attack occurred. Medici suffered severe bites on each of his legs. By the time he was brought to shore, no blood was issuing from the wounds. Beachgoers, a vacationing doctor, and several off-duty lifeguards attempted a tourniquet and CPR, but were unsuccessful in their efforts to save him.

Sources: [Cape Cod National Seashore](#); [Cape Cod Times](#).

Yellowstone National Park Elk Charges Visitors, Injures One

A park visitor videoed an incident at Mammoth Hot Springs last week in which a bull elk who'd been fighting another bull apparently got agitated at the nearby presence of visitors photographing him and crossed the road to where they were standing. The bull didn't charge them right away, though, affording visitors time to retreat and give him room; not surprisingly, most of them did not move. The bull finally charged and struck one of them. According to a later report, he was not seriously injured. The video can be seen at the link below.

Park regulations state that when an animal is near a trail, boardwalk, parking lot, or in a developed area, people must give it space. Visitors are told to stay 25 yards away from all large animals – bison, elk, bighorn sheep, deer, moose, and coyotes – and at least 100 yards away from bears and wolves, and, if necessary, turn around and go another way to avoid interacting with a wild animal in close proximity.

Source: [KTVQ News](#).

Yellowstone National Park Man Arrested After Walking Up To Old Faithful Cone

Visitors to Old Faithful last Friday saw and videoed a man dressed in black leave the boardwalk and stand on the geyser.

The video shows him walking up to the edge of the geyser cone. Although he stands with his back to the crowd, his body language suggest he's urinating into it. He then lies down at the edge and looks down the geyser's throat, briefly steps down into it, and walks back toward the visitors.

The park has not yet released a statement, but visitors say that rangers soon showed up and arrested the man.

Sources: [NBC Montana](#).

Great Smoky Mountains National Park Body Of Ginseng Hunter Found Near Cades Cove

Rangers found the body of William Lee Hill, Jr., 30, of Louisville, Tennessee, off Rich Mountain Road, about two miles north of Cades Cove, on the afternoon of Wednesday, September 12th.

Hill and a companion entered the park on Friday, September 7th, to hunt for ginseng (harvesting ginseng is illegal in the park). At some point during the day, the two separated and Hill was not heard from thereafter.

Rangers searched the area until Monday, looking in drainages near the area where Hill was last seen. On Tuesday, his body was found off-trail, about half a mile from Rich Mountain Road and near a residential area. They also found a bear that was near the body, which showed signs of having been scavenged. The bear displayed signs of aggressive behavior.

Wildlife managers trapped the bear for long enough to recover human DNA later that day, then placed a GPS collar on the bear and released it while they reviewed the evidence and mulled over whether to euthanize it. Once the decision was made to do so, they attempted to track it down. Though it still wears its GPS collar, the bear has so far eluded wildlife managers, who have shut down Rich Mountain Road and the surrounding area.

No determination has yet been made regarding Hill's cause of death.

Source: KnoxNews.com.

Big Bend National Park Lost Hiker Found After Two-Day Search

Edilberto "Beto" Lopez was found alive on September 3rd after a two-day search. Lopez headed out on the Emory Peak trail in the Chisos Mountains on September 1st; when he did not return, his friends reported him missing.

Rangers found him with the help of Customs and Border Protection officers. Lopez told them that he made a wrong turn after descending the trail and ended up in the open desert. He eventually made his way to where he last knew the trail to be and was located shortly thereafter.

Source: NewsWest9.

National Park System Missing Person Searches Conducted In Several Parks

Several reports have recently come in from across the Service regarding unsuccessful (as of yet) searches for missing persons. Rather than itemize each individually, here's a summary, including the relevant parks and links for additional information:

- *Timpanogos Cave NM* – On February 18th, Jerika Binks, 24, was last seen the morning at a residential treatment center in American Fork, which is near the park. She told roommates she was going running, left all her belongings except for her cellphone in her room, and never returned. National Park Service photos and cellphone data indicate that she was running down a park trail in American Fork Canyon that day, but she has not been found. The family recently established a [Facebook page](#) seeking information on her. Source: [Provo Daily Herald](#).
- *Biscayne NP* – Rangers, assisted by the Coast Guard, conducted a search of the waters near Caesar's Creek on September 5th after another mariner spotted a capsized 20-foot boat and called it in. Searchers found a floating, empty flare box and a diver found fishing gear, a cooler and a fresh chum bag underneath the vessel, but no sign has been found of the occupant(s). Source: [Miami Herald](#).

- *Grand Canyon NP* – A California man remains missing after disappearing while trying to rescue his wife during a river rafting trip in the Grand Canyon on September 7th. Mike Howard, 67, and his 65-year-old wife were on a Canyoneers commercial river excursion at Clear Creek that Friday morning. They were preparing for a day hike when the woman went into the river while disembarking. Both swam through Clear Creek Rapid; she was rescued, airlifted to the South Rim, and taken to a Flagstaff hospital, but there’s been no sign of him since then. Source: [AP via Arizona Republic](#).
- *Kennesaw Mountain NBP* – A white Land Rover belonging to Valerie Maynard, 53, was found on September 5th in the Pigeon Hill parking lot on Burnt Hickory Road. The SUV was found unlocked, and personal items like her cell phone and purse were still inside. It was subsequently determined that she’d not been seen since September 3rd. Rangers searched the surrounding park area with the help of a canine unit from the Cobb County Sheriff’s Office K9 Unit. They found no trace of her. Source: [Atlanta Journal-Constitution](#).

Sources: As indicated above.

National Fire Situation

National Interagency Fire Center

IMT’s Deployed To Southeast To Assist In Hurricane Florence Recovery

Synopsis

NIFC remains at Preparedness Level 3, the third highest of five preparedness levels.

According to NIFC’s main fire information page (Tuesday morning), “an incident management team is working with the North Carolina National Guard and emergency management officials to support emergency response in North Carolina. Emergency responders from at least 25 states have arrived and are helping with recovery efforts.”

Tuesday’s IMSR (incident management situation report), though, says that three Type 2 incident management teams have mobilized in support of Hurricane Florence. One team (Goff) is staged in Columbia, South Carolina; two others (Parrish and Rabe) are staged in Atlanta, Georgia.

Further on in the IMSR, it’s noted that two Southern Region Type 2 incident management teams (Smith and Harvell) have also been mobilized to Raleigh, North Carolina.

In the West, 82 large fires have burned more than 1.3 million acres. Firefighters continue to work toward containment goals.

National Park Service Fires

Glacier NP – Two fires continue to burn in the park:

- *Howe Ridge Fire* – The fire, which was started by lightning on August 11th, has burned 14,522 acres and is now 39% contained. It is being managed by the Northern Rockies Type 1 IMT (Goicoechea); 135 firefighters and overhead personnel are currently committed. For information on the fire, evacuations and closures, see the IMT’s [most recent press release](#).
- *Boundary Fire* – The 2,911-acre fire, which began on August 23rd, is also being managed by the Northern Rockies IMT. It’s 32% contained. Three firefighters are currently committed. For additional details, see the IMT’s press [most recent press release](#).

Active Incident Resource Commitments

Category	September 4th	September 11th	September 18th
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Area Command Teams	0	0	0
NIMO Teams	1	1	0
Type 1 Teams	7	5	6
Type 2 Teams	12	12	14
Crews	344	330	193
Engines	805	813	498
Helicopters	162	122	84
Total FF/Overhead	15,793	14,089	9,842

Fires/Acreage

Category	2018 Total	2008-2017 Ave	2018 Variance
Year-to-Date Fires	47,861	50,283	- 2,422
Year-to-Date Acres	7,245,601	5,805,655	+ 1,439,946

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

Official 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.

Department Of The Interior

Thirty National Wildlife Refuges Opened To Hunting And Fishing

On September 7th, the Department issued a press release entitled “Secretary Zinke Expands Hunting and Fishing Opportunities at 30 of America’s National Wildlife Refuges.” Excerpts follow; the full release, including a listing of all the refuges, can be read at the “Source” link.

“Continuing his efforts to increase access to public lands, U.S. Secretary of the Interior Ryan Zinke will open more than 251,000 acres to new or expanded hunting and fishing opportunities at 30 national wildlife refuges across the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service’s National Wildlife Refuge System. This will now bring the number of units where the public may hunt to 377, and the number where fishing is permitted to 312.

“This will open more new acres to hunting and fishing than in the past and takes steps to simplify regulations to more closely match state hunting and fishing regulations. The final rule also outlines expanded hunting and fishing opportunities at 136 national wildlife refuges. The changes will be implemented in time for the upcoming 2018-2019 hunting seasons...

“Under the National Wildlife Refuge System Improvement Act of 1997, the Service permits hunting and fishing along with four other types of wildlife-dependent recreation, including wildlife photography, environmental education, wildlife observation and interpretation, when they are compatible with an individual refuge’s purpose and mission. Hunting, within specified limits, is currently permitted on 340 wildlife refuges and 37 wetland management districts. Fishing is currently permitted on 278 wildlife refuges and 34 wetland management districts.”

Source: [Department of the Interior](#).

National Park Service

Bow And Crossbow Transport Rule Finalized

On September 17th, the Office of Communications in WASO issued a news release entitled “National Park Service Finalizes Updates to Rules on Transporting of Unarmed Bows and Crossbows.” It is reprinted below in its entirety:

“The National Park Service will publish a final rule tomorrow in the Federal Register regarding the transportation of unloaded bows and crossbows. Individuals on foot or horseback no longer need to obtain a permit to carry unloaded bows and crossbows across National Park Service property. The new rule will take effect on October 18, 2018.

“Regulations previously allowed bows and crossbows to be transported through a national park without a permit only if an individual was in a motor vehicle or other form of mechanical transport. An individual on foot or horseback was required to have a permit.

“Some roads maintained by the National Park Service bisect private property, making it necessary to enter park land in order to cross the street from one section of private land to another. When other means of approach are otherwise impractical or impossible, those transporting bows and crossbows across national park lands will now have equal access.

“This adjustment to the rule removes an unnecessary requirement and cost for responsible sportsmen seeking access to remote land and waters adjacent to national parks,” said National Park Service Deputy Director P. Daniel Smith.

“The National Park Service sought feedback from the public on the proposed rules during a formal public comment period earlier this year. After careful consideration of the comments received the National Park Service determined it was appropriate to move forward with the rule changes. The updated regulation does not impact existing hunting regulations within national parks and possessing bows and crossbows would still be subject to applicable state laws.”

Source: [Office of Communications](#).

Capitol Hill Weekly Legislative Roundup

New Public Laws

Nothing to report.

Senate

Nothing to report.

House

On September 12th, the House passed the following bills:

- H.R. 6287, to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to award grants, through a competitive process, to tax-exempt, nonprofit organizations for the operation and maintenance of memorials located within the United States established to commemorate the events of, and honor the victims of, the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center, the Pentagon, and United Airlines Flight 93 on September 11, 2001, at the site of the attacks. The bill is drafted in such a way that the funding will most likely go to the 9/11 Memorial in NY, and which could provide up to \$25 million per year for the next five fiscal years of the memorial’s \$72.4 million annual budget. The funding would likely come out of the NPS budget even though the foundation managing the memorial made it clear that it wanted NPS to have nothing to do with managing the memorial when it first opened and subsequently as the legislation was being drafted.
- H.R. 3186, to establish a program, to be known as the “Every Kid Outdoors program”, to provide free access to federal land and waters for fourth-grade students and up to three accompanying individuals or all accompanying adults in a car. The bill would codify the

program begun under the Obama administration to allow every fourth grader free access to federal lands and waters. The bill passed by a vote of 383 yeas to 2 nays.

- H.R. 5532, to redesignate the Reconstruction Era National Monument in South Carolina as the Reconstruction Era National Historical Park. The bill also establishes the Reconstruction Era National Historic Network to consist of any federal, state, local, or private sites related to the Reconstruction Era where educational materials can be produced and disseminated, where additional research on the Reconstruction Era may be conducted, and where the National Park Service may provide technical assistance through cooperative agreements.

On September 13th, the Committee on Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Environment held a hearing entitled "Air Quality Impacts of Wildfires: Mitigation and Management Strategies".

On September 13th, the Committee on Natural Resources approved the following bills:

- H.R. 6510, to establish, fund, and provide for the use of amounts in a National Park Service and Public Lands Legacy Restoration Fund (Fund) to address the maintenance backlog of the National Park Service, United States Fish and Wildlife Service, Bureau of Land Management, and Bureau of Indian Education. As approved by the committee, the bill provides that up to \$1.3 billion would be deposited in the Fund for each of FY 2019 through FY 2023, and the money would be available for backlog maintenance projects of each of the federal agencies noted above. Eighty percent of each year's deposits would be available to the National Park Service for its deferred maintenance projects with the remainder would be available to the other named agencies.
- H.R. 502, to permanently reauthorize the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF). The bill also would amend the LWCF by requiring that 40 percent of the receipts deposited into the fund would be available for grants to the states. Current law only requires that 40 percent of the fund be available for federal land acquisition purposes and is silent on the amount to be used for state grants.
- H.R. 6771, to amend the Gulf of Mexico Energy Security Act of 2006 (GOMESA), to increase the Gulf of Mexico states' share of offshore oil and gas revenues from 37.5% to 50%, to expand the authorized uses of shared revenues, and to eliminate the limitations on revenues shared with Gulf-producing states and the Land and Water Conservation Fund. Revenues that go into the LWCF from GOMESA are for state grant purposes and are in addition to those funds Congress provides to for state grants through its annual LWCF appropriation.

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

Park People, Friends and Allies

Glacier National Park Resource Manager Receives National NPS Award

Mark Biel, the park's natural resource program manager, has received the 2017 National Park Service Director's Award for Professional Excellence in Natural Resource Stewardship. Biel won the regional award last November and competed with finalists from six other regions for the national award.

Biel was recognized for his leadership on several fronts, including his work to initiate a wildlife shepherding program, dark sky conservation, and mountain goat research.

Biel launched the wildlife shepherding program in 2016. The program uses a trained border collie, "Gracie," to move bighorn sheep and mountain goats out of areas of high visitor use, such as the Logan Pass parking lot. It also gives Biel the chance to talk about the importance of wildlife safety with visitors, schools, and community groups.

Biel also coordinated recent mountain goat research at Logan Pass and was instrumental in Glacier's recent designation as the world's first transboundary International Dark Sky Park along with Waterton

Lakes National Park in Canada. Both projects are also partially funded by the Glacier National Park Conservancy.

Biel's career includes 24 years with the National Park Service. He came to Glacier National Park in 2010. Prior to his time at Glacier, he worked at Devils Tower National Monument, Padre Island National Seashore, Bryce Canyon National Park, and Yellowstone National Park, where he started as a volunteer in the park's Bear Management Office. He holds a master's degree in animal science/nutrition from the University of Illinois and a bachelor's in agriculture and natural resources from Michigan State University.

Source: [Glacier National Park](#).

Coalition News

News about CPANP and actions taken by its members on behalf of the National Park Service and National Park System.

CPANP Issues Statement On LWCF Reauthorization – Phil Francis, chair of the Coalition to Protect America's National Parks, issued this statement last week regarding the progress made on reauthorizing the Land and Water Conservation Fund: "Chairman Bishop and Ranking Member Grijalva's agreement to save LWCF is a first step towards protecting access to public lands for all Americans. Our outdoors are for everyone, and our leaders must rise above partisan discourse to protect them. Congress must take up and pass this bill to reauthorize LWCF immediately and without delay." A longer statement will be issued this week.

Member's Op-Ed Piece On LWCF Legislation – On September 12th, the *Bakersfield Californian* ran an op-ed letter by member Dick Martin on the need to permanently reauthorize the Land and Water Conservation Fund. Dick summarizes the huge benefits to both the nation and individual states that LWCF has had over the years and notes that legislation in the House to do so has well over 200 co-sponsors from both parties. His concluding observation: "It is past time for our elected representatives in Washington, D.C. to collectively stand up for communities across the country who agree that permanently reauthorizing and fully funding LWCF is essential to our way of life." Source: [Bakersfield Californian](#).

News Reports and Releases

A brief summary of recent news stories, web postings and agency press releases pertaining to the Service, the federal government, the administration, DOI, and other public land management agencies that have bearing on the NPS.

Federal Government

Stories and articles pertaining to the administration, DOI and other federal agencies and organizations, except for the National Park Service (below).

DOI Preparing To Offer Thousands Of Acres Of Public Lands To Energy Companies – "The Department of Interior is quietly preparing to offer hundreds of thousands of acres of public land for leasing to energy companies," reports *Huffington Post*, "a move critics have charged is being undertaken with minimal public input and little consideration for ecological and cultural preservation. According to data compiled by environmental groups, the Bureau of Land Management will put 2.9 million acres up for potential leasing in the next four months. Because the land in question — in states including New Mexico, Colorado and Arizona — lacks designation as a national park or monument, it can be used for commercial purposes such as mining for minerals and drilling for oil and gas. Supporters say that bolstering the extractive industries will ensure energy independence for the United States, though shifting energy preferences and falling oil prices appear to undermine that assertion." The article also contains this observation: "During his confirmation hearing, Zinke said that he was 'absolutely against transfer and sale of public lands.' But that claim would not prevent

him from issuing leases for oil and gas companies, as the land would technically remain under public control, even as it was being used for private gain.” Source: [Huffington Post](#).

Zinke Seeks More State Wildlife Management On Federal Lands – The Associated Press ran this story on September 11th: “Interior Department land managers have been ordered to review hunting and fishing regulations on department lands to determine how they conflict with state regulations. In a memo [issued on September 10th], Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke ordered the review with an eye toward deferring to state management unless it conflicts with federal law. ‘The Department recognizes States as the first-line authorities for fish and wildlife management and hereby expresses its commitment to defer to the States in this regard except as otherwise required by Federal law,’ Zinke wrote in the memo to heads of bureaus and offices.” PEER, which [published the memo on its web page](#), called this order “a stunning abdication of a more than century-old legal foundation of federal primacy for wildlife management on federal lands.” Added Jeff Ruch, executive director of PEER: “Federal parks, preserves, and refuges have a mission to protect biodiversity and should not be reduced to game farms.” Sources: [Associated Press](#), [PEER](#).

National Park Service and System

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

Webpage Posts Collection Of Bad Yelp Review Of Parks – The Far and Wide webpage has posted a story entitled “Hilarious Terrible Yelp Reviews of National Parks,” which contains some extraordinarily unenlightened (to put it charitably) reviews of a score of national parks that the authors culled from Yelp. Observations include the following: Grand Canyon is “overrated” and suffers because it lacks rollercoasters and [Dippin’ Dots](#); Yellowstone’s geysers are “extremely underwhelming” because you can get the same effect by boiling a pot of water at home; Yosemite shuts off some of its waterfalls in mid-summer to save money. All these and more can be found at the link below. Note that you have to click twice on each entry, once to get a picture of the park and a second time to get the same image with the visitor comment. Source: [Far and Wide](#).

Around The Parks – Brief reports on parks and regions, culled either from park press releases or from newspapers, with links to the source news articles:

- *Olympic NP* – The long-anticipated relocation of mountain goats from park to the North Cascades began on September 10th. A coalition of state and federal agencies, with support from local tribes, enacted the park’s plan to remove about 725 mountain goats that have long posed an ecological problem in the park. The fatal goring of a hiker by a goat in 2010 also raised new concerns about public safety. This month’s two-week effort to move mountain goats is the first translocation operation; two more two-week periods are planned for next year. Goats are being airlifted in crates directly to alpine habitats chosen for the right characteristics. Several good stories on the removal have been sent along by readers. The first (Q13 Fox News) includes several NPS videos of goats being captured and released; the second (KOMO News) tells how some young “orphan” goat kids who can’t be matched with known mothers will be adopted by local zoos; the third (*Peninsula Daily News*) provides details on the operation. Sources: [Q13 Fox News](#); [KOMO News](#); [Peninsula Daily News](#).
- *Flight 93 NM* – President Trump addressed several hundred dignitaries and family members during a ceremony at the park last Tuesday marking the 17th anniversary of 9/11. In his comments, he said that the passengers who foiled the terrorists on Flight 93 had “joined the immortal ranks of American heroes.” In a related development, the National Park Foundation recently released a video entitled “[Honoring Those Lost At Flight 93 National Memorial](#)” as part of its “Find Your Park” series. Source: [Associated Press](#).
- *Yellowstone NP* – The park and the NPS Greater Yellowstone Inventory and Monitoring Network have released their most recent ‘vital signs’ report, entitled [The State of Yellowstone Vital Signs and Select Park Resources, 2017](#). Vital signs highlighted in the 60-page report include the status of animal species like bison and grizzly bears, ecosystem-altering forces like climate and

fire, and much more. Park and network staff compiled the report with input from park researchers. Source: [Yellowstone National Park](#).

- *Grand Canyon NP* – An effort is afoot to keep the North Rim open year-round instead of just during the summer season. The Associated Press disseminated this report on September 12th: “With snowfall dwindling at the Grand Canyon’s North Rim, tourism promoters see an opportunity to stretch out the visiting season at the less popular side of the canyon so more people experience it and spend money in the region... Advocates of lengthening the visiting season, some blaming or thanking climate change, envision adding a couple of weeks for now to both ends of the tourist season when the highway has little to no snow. They’d like to expand the season even more than that later.” Source: [Saint George News](#).
- *Salem Maritime NHS* – Repairs to the [Friendship of Salem](#), an NPS-owned 171-foot replica of a 1797 East Indiaman, are continuing, but the work needed on the ship has expanded as workmen at Boothbay Harbor Shipyard have discovered more and more damage inside the ship’s hull. The original contract called for an overhaul that would cost just over \$225,000; the estimate is now up to \$1.5 million. All parties agree that the work is needed and worth it. Source: [The Salem News](#).
- *Olympic NP* – “[The] National Park Service has begun the final steps to demolish the now-shuttered resort on the lake’s North Shore Road, much to the dismay of local residents who say it is removing needed business, employment and lodging from the area,” reports the *Aberdeen Daily World*. “The resort, also previously known as the Lake Quinault Resort, was purchased by The Conservation Fund for the Park for \$1.25 million in 2014, after the previous owner went bankrupt during the recession. The 4.35-acre grounds and lake-view lodging buildings have been closed for the past several years, and the Park Service recently confirmed it will be demolished, possibly within the next month.” Source: [Daily World](#).
- *Manassas NBP* – The two Union soldiers whose remains were recently found in the park have been interred in Arlington National Cemetery with full military honors. On September 6th, two horse-drawn caissons, moving side by side, each carrying a flag-draped casket, bore the remains to a new section of the cemetery. Source: [Richmond Times-Dispatch](#).
- *Indiana Dunes NL* – The park has acquired a new Marsh Master amphibious vehicle to hasten the work of removing invasive species. The MM-2LX Marsh Master was purchased through a collaboration by Save the Dunes, which provided \$80,000; NIPSCO, the local power company, which provided \$76,144; and the Great Lakes Restoration initiative, which threw in \$7,121 to acquire the vehicle at a cost of \$163,265. According to Paul Labovitz, the park’s superintendent, the fight against invasive species to restore native wetlands is grave: “We are at war here. This is a war machine.” Source: [Chesterton Tribune](#).
- *Wolf Trap NPPFA* – The [DOI IG released a report](#) last week questioning the Service’s support of the Wolf Trap Foundation for the Performing Arts. The IG found that the park, which was established in 1966 on 130 acres of federal land in Fairfax County, “still receives federal funding even though it appears to be self-sufficient.” “The report also raises concerns about the finances of the foundation, which is a separate entity from the park,” reports the *Washington Post*. “In 2016, the report noted, the Park Service allocated \$4.2 million to the park and awarded the foundation \$594,000 to hire stagehands and ‘theatrical personnel,’ although the foundation netted \$2.7 million, employs more than 90 people and pays its executive director \$580,300 a year.” The foundation has also collected \$2 million from cellphone leases over the last 23 years. Source: [Washington Post](#).
- *Lake Clark NP&P* – The park held a ceremony on September 6th to mark the renaming of its wilderness as the Jay S. Hammond Wilderness Area. Hammond was governor of Alaska from 1974 to 1982 and a conservationist; he died in 2005. Said Susanne Fleek-Green, the park’s superintendent: “It is rare to name a wilderness area after any one individual. It really exemplifies the stature of Governor Hammond and what he’s meant to Alaska’s public servants

and the conservation ethics and the tie between the lands and the people.” Senator Lisa Murkowski sponsored a bill that officially named the area after Hammond this past spring. The wilderness area stretches’ from Lake Clark to the western side of Cook Inlet and includes the headwaters of Bristol Bay’s salmon run. Source: [KOLG News](#).

- *Theodore Roosevelt NP* – “North Dakota regulators are enlisting an administrative law judge to help untangle some of the legal questions surrounding whether an oil refinery can be built near Theodore Roosevelt National Park,” reports the *Bismarck Tribune*. “The Public Service Commission on [September 5th] voted 2-1 to have the state Office of Administrative Hearings designate a judge to make a non-binding recommendation on whether a complaint over the \$800 million Davis Refinery should be dismissed. The judge won’t weigh in on whether Meridian Energy Group can build at the site three miles...from the park, but his recommendation could make it more difficult for the company to do so.” Source: [Bismarck Tribune](#).

Environmental and Land Management Agencies

Stories on federal and state agencies that are responsible for environmental oversight or the management of America’s public lands.

GAO Report Recommends That USFS, BLM Review Timber Sale Policies – On September 14th, the Government Accountability Office issued a 27-page report entitled “[Forest Service and BLM Should Review Their Regulations and Policies Related to Timber Export and Substitution](#).” Here’s a summary of their findings: “The Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management sell millions of dollars of timber from federal forests each year. Federal law bans buyers from exporting unprocessed timber from western federal lands, along with related practices. Some agency policies to implement the ban are outdated or unclear. The agencies have also not issued required regulations. While the agencies found no violations of the ban in the past decade, several officials said there might be a risk of future violations if, for example, log prices go up or demand increases. We recommended that the agencies review their regulations and policies related to timber export.” Source: [Government Accountability Office](#).

USFS Revising Regs On ‘Mineral, Oil And Gas Resources’ On National Forests – The Forest Service has announced a plan to revise two parts of the agency’s locatable mineral regulations. The Forest Service seeks public comment on its work to improve outdated and inefficient regulations for locatable minerals and oil and gas resources on national forest lands. Says USFS: “In fiscal year 2017, over \$1.2 billion dollars’ worth of oil and gas were produced from National Forest System lands, resulting in payments to local, state and federal governments of approximately \$145 million, creating significant value for many communities. Outdated regulations are still a barrier however. For example, there is a backlog of nearly 2,000 pending Expressions of Interest in leasing oil and gas on about 2 million acres. Updated regulations and procedures are needed to ensure the Forest Service and stakeholders have an efficient process to support local economies and protect and conserve valuable environmental resources.” No public comment link was included in the notice. Source: [Farm Forum](#).

Climate and The Environment

Stories and articles pertaining to climate and environmental changes and their implications – direct or indirect – for national parks.

Low Water Leads To Boat Ramp Closures At Curecanti – Ramps and marinas at Blue Mesa Reservoir have been closed or are operating with limited service to boaters for the rest of the year due to extremely low water levels (the reservoir is at 39% of normal). Colorado’s largest body of water may reach historic lows, so the park asked slip holders to get their boats out of the water by Friday, September 7th. The Lake Fork Marina and boat ramp and Elk Creek Marina closed on September 10th. The Elk Creek boat ramp will be kept open as long as possible. The low water is also creating new navigation hazards, so boaters still on the lake are being advised to use extreme caution. The news story includes a video. Source: [KOMO News](#).

Lake Powell, Lake Mead Waters Dropping To Dangerous Levels – “Water levels at Lake Mead and Lake Powell are dropping to dangerous levels, reflecting the Colorado River’s worsening ‘structural deficit,’” reports Colorado Public Radio. “Scientists from the Colorado River Research Group said Lake Powell has declined because of extra water releases flowing into Lake Mead...I want people to know that what’s going on at Lake Mead is very, very closely tied to what’s going on at Lake Powell,” Doug Kenney said, the group’s chair and a professor at the University of Colorado. “We’re draining Lake Powell to prop it up.” At present, Lake Powell is about 48 percent full and Lake Mead is about 38 percent full. By the end of the year, Powell’s levels are projected to fall 94 feet below where the reservoir stood in 2000 when it was nearly full. Scientists say that the strains on the river and reservoirs are being compounded by growing population, drought and climate change. Source: [Colorado Public Radio](#).

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.

- *Gulf Islands NS* – On September 2nd, a jury in Tallahassee, Florida, found the Florida Department of Corrections liable in the murder of ranger Bob McGhee and awarded \$2.2 million to Linda McGhee, Bob's wife. The department admitted negligence in allowing inmates Woolard and Bruner to escape while on a visit to the eye doctor, but argued that there was no way that the department could foresee that the pair would murder anyone. Woolard and Bruner were classified as closed custody prisoners - the highest security risk classification in the Florida prison system. They were not searched prior to leaving the prison and had in their possession a pair of barber's shears that had been stolen from the prison barber shop in early May, then separated and sharpened. The two also carried a map of their planned escape route and were wearing civilian clothes under their prison garb.
- *Glen Canyon NRA* – A 16-foot Bayliner with four occupants was involved in a serious accident in an unnamed cove adjacent to Lone Rock beach at 9:30 p.m. on the evening of September 3rd. The boat, which was being operated by a 21-year-old woman, was traveling at 30 mph when it struck a sandstone rock, became airborne, rotated 180 degrees to starboard, and landed upside down on a sandstone ledge 56 feet from the water's edge. The operator and two other occupants of the boat were thrown clear; a fourth was pinned underneath the boat but was eventually able to crawl out. Campers across the bay on Lone Rock beach heard the collision and the occupants screaming for help. Four park medics, three rangers, a helicopter and 15 volunteers - including two Oklahoma paramedics and a nurse - responded to the scene. All four were taken to the hospital in Page. The man who was initially pinned under the boat was eventually flown to a hospital in Phoenix with serious injuries. The remaining three victims were treated for a variety of minor injuries and released the following day. Alcohol was not a factor in the accident.
- *Grand Canyon NP* – On the evening of September 9th, a 47-year-old woman was hiking down Bright Angel trail with several companions when she collapsed unexpectedly. One of her friends reported the incident to rangers, who quickly responded. A ranger/paramedic took a blood sample and ran to the clinic for diagnosis. Meanwhile, the woman was evacuated by stokes litter to a waiting helicopter, then flown to the medical center in Flagstaff. The results of the blood sample showed that she was suffering from a severe case of water intoxication, which results from drinking excessive amounts of water without ingesting solid food. The body's electrolytes are therefore washed away, causing alcohol-type intoxication symptoms, unconsciousness, and, in extreme cases, death. She is still in guarded condition at the Flagstaff hospital. Because of the number of such cases which have occurred at Grand Canyon, the park is rethinking the message it gives to Canyon hikers. One new recommendation will be that people eat well and carry high energy foods with them.

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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

“Wilderness is an anchor to the windward. Knowing it is there, we can also know that we are still a rich nation, tending to our resources as we should – not a people in despair searching every last nook and cranny of our land for a board of lumber, a barrel of oil, a blade of grass, or a tank of water.”

[Senator Clinton Anderson](#) of New Mexico, quoted in Stewart Udall's *The Quiet Crisis*

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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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