



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

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Volume 2

Number 41

Incidents

Rocky Mountain NP Major Search Underway For USAF Academy Cadet

A major search is underway for Air Force Academy cadet candidate Micah Tice, 20, who was last seen on Saturday, November 24th.

On Monday, November 26th, rangers were notified that the Air Force Academy was asking for assistance in locating Tice. His vehicle was found at the Longs Peak trailhead late on Monday afternoon. Tice's planned destination and route were both unknown. Weather for Longs Peak on Saturday included extremely high winds, bitter cold temperatures and snow.

Search operations continued all last week. On Sunday, when the park's last update was posted, searchers were focusing on the Boulder Field, Mount Lady Washington, Battle Mountain, Storm Pass Trail and the Boulder Brook drainage. Due to the best flying conditions since the search began, two Colorado National Guard helicopters from Buckley Air Force Base were able to assist with aerial reconnaissance. The search area now covers about ten square miles.

Also assisting the park are Rocky Mountain Rescue, Alpine Rescue Team, Douglas County Search and Rescue, Grand County Search and Rescue, Larimer County Search and Rescue, the Colorado Search and Rescue Board, a Summit County Rescue Group dog team, and teams from Front Range Rescue Dogs.

The park has been contacted by hikers who spoke and hiked with Tice for approximately 20 minutes on November 24th. They reported that he was wearing a black sweatshirt, black sweatpants, a black hat, black lightweight gloves, and tennis shoes, and that he was carrying a light blue backpack. Tice told them that he'd started out from the Longs Peak trailhead at 6:30 a.m. that morning. When they last saw him in the Battle Mountain area around 8 a.m., visibility and weather conditions were deteriorating.

Rangers would like to hear from anyone who has been in the Longs Peak area since the morning of November 24th, or who may have had contact with Tice regarding his planned route on Longs Peak. Please call Rocky Mountain National Park at (970) 586-1204.

On a related note, a local radio station ran a report on November 27th concerning the commonality in this and three other major searches in the park this year – hiking alone. See the link below for more.

Source: [Rocky Mountain National Park](#); [KUNC News](#), Greeley, Colorado.

Indiana Dunes NL Park Beaches Closed Due To Spill

Beach areas in the park were closed on Monday following reports of a foamy, scummy discharge flowing into the Burns Waterway from the U.S. Steel Midwest plant and thence out into Lake Michigan. They will remain closed until the discharge has been identified.

U.S. Steel's Portage plant has been at the center of a controversy since April 2017, when it spilled nearly 300 pounds of hexavalent chromium — or 584 times the daily maximum limit allowed under state permitting laws — into the Burns Waterway.

Recent groundwater tests at area wells, which are required by the government because of the 2017 spill, have shown elevated levels of hexavalent chromium.

Source: [NWI.com](#).

National Park System Parks Afflicted By Recent Weather Woes

Issues related to severe weather of one type or another have been reported at several areas since the last issue of this newsletter:

- *Cumberland Island NS* – On December 2nd, a tornado struck the Kings Bay Naval Base on the Georgia coast, then crossed the inland waterway and hit the park, leaving debris there that made roads impassable. A full assessment was underway at the time of the report on Monday. Although injuries occurred on the base, none were reported on the island. Source: [AllOnGeorgia.com](#).
- *Blue Ridge Parkway* – Long stretches of the parkway and locations along it were closed for extended periods during the last week of November due to snow, ice, extreme cold and sub-zero wind chills (the temperature on November 28th dropped to nine degrees). Source: [The Charlotte Observer](#), Charlotte, North Carolina.
- *Yosemite NP* – Heavy rains at the end of November led CalTrans to close Route 140 for a couple of days from a point south of Briceburg to El Portal due to the risk of slides in areas burned by last summer's Ferguson Fire. The El Portal Road remained open, though. No significant damage was reported. Source: [KFSN TV News](#).

National Park System Follow-ups On Previously Reported Incidents

Below are short follow-ups on incidents previously reported in this newsletter:

- *Whiskeytown NRA* – The park continues to recover from the ravages of last summer's Carr Fire, which burned 39,000 of the park's 42,000 acres. Three trails on the east side of the park – the Guardian Rock, Buck Hollow and Mule Mountain Pass trails – were reopened to the public on December 1st. Other areas, particularly the Brandy Creek, Boulder Creek, Paige Boulder Creek, Mill Creek, and Crystal Creek watersheds, have been identified as areas with a high potential for hazardous debris flows and remain closed. The park's most recent press release on the recovery, including upcoming steps it will be taking, can be found in the following article. Source: [News Café.com](#).
- *Olympic NP* – Jory Barclay has pleaded guilty in U.S. District Court to breaking into a park entrance station and using an acetylene torch to attempt to open a safe. Barclay pleaded guilty to charges of theft of government property and burglary. He said that he and co-defendant Brandon Hall, who is being held in the Clallam County jail on various burglary and theft

charges, broke into the Heart o' the Hills entrance station in September so that they could steal money and property. The government will recommend that Barclay be sentenced to seven months in federal prison, although he is facing a maximum of up to ten years for the burglary charge and up to ten years for the theft of government property charge. He'll be sentenced in February. Hall has been charged with three counts of theft of government property and two counts of burglary, but has not yet appeared in federal court for this case. Source: [Peninsula Daily News](#).

- *Hawaii Volcanoes NP* – The park's reopening has brought visitors back, but perhaps not as quickly as some expected. Tourism to the area is still down from before Kilauea's recent eruption, which began on May 3rd. Businesses reported erratic visitor numbers, as the island's tourist industry remains sluggish. Source: [West Hawaii Today](#).

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

Zinke Contends Forests Can No Longer Be Left "Unmanaged"

On November 30th, DOI issued a press release entitled "New Analysis Shows 2018 California Wildfires Emitted as Much Carbon Dioxide as an Entire Year's Worth of Electricity" in which the secretary offered his insights into fire management. The full text follows:

U.S. Secretary of the Interior Ryan Zinke today announced that according to data analyzed by the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS), the 2018 wildfire season in California is estimated to have released emissions equivalent to roughly 68 million tons of carbon dioxide. This number equates to about 15 percent of all California emissions, and it is on par with the annual emissions produced by generating enough electricity to power the entire state for a year. The recent Camp and Woolsey fires have produced emissions equivalent to roughly 5.5 million tons of carbon dioxide.

"We know that wildfires can be deadly and cost billions of dollars, but this analysis from the U.S. Geological Survey also shows just how bad catastrophic fires are for the environment and for the public's health," said Secretary Zinke. "There's too much dead and dying timber in the forest, which fuels these catastrophic fires. Proper management of our forests, to include small prescribed burns, mechanical thinning, and other techniques, will improve forest health and reduce the risk of wildfires, while also helping curb the carbon emissions. The intensity and range of these fires indicate we can no longer ignore proper forest management. We can and must do a better job of protecting both the forests and the communities on the urban-wildland interface. Leaving forests unmanaged is no longer a safe option."

These preliminary estimates were produced using provisional data from this year's wildfire season. The USGS compared that to the emissions produced by California's electricity (imported and produced in-state) during the entire year of 2016, which was roughly 76 million tons according to data provided by the California Greenhouse Gas Emission Inventory.

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

Congress Weekly Legislative Roundup

New Public Laws

On November 20th, the president signed into law, H.R. 2615, to authorize the exchange of certain land located in Gulf Islands National Seashore, Jackson County, Mississippi, between the National Park Service and the Veterans of Foreign Wars (P.L. 115-279).

Senate

On November 26th, the Senate passed S. Res. 702, recognizing National Native American Heritage Month and celebrating the heritages and cultures of Native Americans and the contributions of Native Americans to the United States.

On November 27th, the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources approved the nomination of Raymond David Vela, of Texas, to be director of the National Park Service.

House

Nothing to report.

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

Park People, Park Friends

NPS Alumni

Passing Of Carolyn O'Hara Kriz

Career NPS employee Carolyn O'Hara Kriz, 74, died on November 29th at Avow Hospice in Naples, Florida.

She was born in Marion, Ohio, on December 9, 1943. She grew up on a dairy farm near Marion and attended elementary and high school in Ohio, then attended Ohio State University, where she earned a BS degree in teaching in 1965.

Upon graduation she taught in elementary school in Ohio and Virginia and then public schools in Washington, DC. There she observed the work of the National Park Service in and around DC and decided to make a career move.

In the NPS, Carolyn quickly advanced to positions of increasing responsibility, including site manager for the National Mall, site manager of President's Park, and assistant to the regional director for National Capital Region. She was highly regarded and well known throughout the region simply as "O'Hara."

In 1986, Carolyn met a fellow National Park Service employee, Will Kriz, and got him to the altar on August 8, 1987. They were married for 31 years.

In May, 1994, the couple moved to Naples when she was promoted to the position of deputy superintendent at Big Cypress National Preserve. In that position she was essentially the park's operations chief, managing the park and a staff of more than 100. She retired at the end of 1999 after 30 years of federal service.

Carolyn was smart, quick-witted, and funny but also had the courage and strength to battle the cancer that tortured her for much of her life. She endured numerous surgeries and other treatments but eventually lost the fight. The family is grateful to the many medical doctors, nurses, and technicians, especially Dr. Douglas B. Paone of Naples and Dr. James W. Orr of Fort Myers, who helped her in her fight. Gratitude also goes to Avow Hospice, which cared for her in her final days.

Carolyn is survived by her husband, Will, and by other family members. He can be reached at 770 Waterford Drive, Unit 303, Naples, FL 34113, or via email at wkriz2934@gmail.com.

Funeral services will be held on Friday, December 7th, at 11:00 a.m. at Claridon Methodist Church, 4856 Marion-Mt. Gilead Road, Claridon, Ohio, with a viewing before and lunch after. This is the church where Carolyn was baptized and which she attended her youth. The family asks that, in lieu of flowers, contributions be made in Carolyn's name to Claridon United Methodist Church in an envelope marked "Donation" in care of Judy Penix, 712 Brookpark Road, Marion, OH 43302.

Source: [Legacy.com](https://www.legacy.com).

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.

Administration

Threat Of Government Shutdown Temporarily Averted – The *Washington Post* reported on Monday that the prospect of a partial government shutdown on Friday has been temporarily averted. “Congressional leaders and White House officials agreed Monday to extend a government funding deadline by two weeks, until Dec. 21, setting up the possibility of a shutdown showdown just ahead of Christmas,” writes Erica Werner. “The decision, confirmed by aides involved in the talks, was made because of the observances surrounding the death of former president George H.W. Bush. The former president will lie in state in the Capitol Rotunda ahead of a service at Washington National Cathedral on Wednesday. The House has canceled all votes for this week. The current deadline is midnight on Friday, Dec. 7. The House and Senate are expected to approve the new deadline at some point this week.” Source: [Washington Post](https://www.washingtonpost.com).

Federal Government

OPM Issues Guidance For Day Of Mourning For President Bush – Most federal employees will receive an excused day off from work when the government closes today for the national day of mourning for former president George H.W. Bush. An executive order has been issued closing federal offices and excusing all federal employees from duty for the scheduled workday on Wednesday. OPM has issued [detailed guidance](#) on particulars. Source: [Washington Post](https://www.washingtonpost.com).

OPM To Rebid Identity Theft Contract – “Millions of current and former federal employees could soon have a new company providing them with credit monitoring and identity theft protections, as the Office of Personnel Management plans to rebid a contract worth hundreds of millions of dollars,” reports Eric Katz in *Government Executive*. “The current contract, which OPM signed with ID Experts in the wake of two data breaches unveiled in 2015 that affected more than 20 million federal employees, retirees and their family members, is set to expire at the end of the year. OPM has already obligated the full \$340 million value of that contract. The agreement lasted only for three years, but Congress has since mandated that the hack victims receive 10 years of protections.” Source: [Government Executive](https://www.governmentexecutive.com).

Federal Employees Are Warned Not To Discuss Trump ‘Resistance’ At Work – That’s the headline in a *New York Times* article by Charlie Savage that appeared last weekend. Although conversations about the president have been the norm at federal workplaces since his election, federal employees “have now been told that it may be illegal for them to participate in such discussions at work — a pronouncement that legal specialists say breaks new ground, and that some criticized as going too far.” Federal employees can still express opinions about policies and legislation at work (as long as they don’t, of course, advocate voting for or against candidates in an election), but [a new guidance document](#) from the agency that enforces the Hatch Act warns “that making or displaying statements at work about impeaching or resisting Mr. Trump is likely to amount to illegal political activity.” The article reviews the pros and cons of this ruling with a number of people. Source: [New York Times](https://www.nytimes.com).

Department of the Interior

The Continuing Adventures Of Ryan Zinke – More recent news stories on the Secretary of the Interior from the nation’s media:

- *Zinke Vs. Grijalva, Round One* – Representative Raúl M. Grijalva, the probable chair of the House Natural Resources Committee in the next Congress, wrote an opinion piece for the November 30th edition of *USA Today* saying that Zinke needs to “resign immediately” from his position as secretary. “I take no pleasure in calling for this step, and I have resisted it even as questions have grown about Mr. Zinke’s ethical and managerial failings. Unfortunately, his conduct in office and President Donald Trump’s neglect in setting ethical standards for his own cabinet have made it unavoidable,” says Grijalva. “The American people need an Interior Department focused on addressing climate change, enhancing public recreation, protecting endangered species and upholding the sovereign rights of Native American communities. These are not matters of personal preference — they are enshrined in law and supported by voters. The department needs someone accountable at the helm who believes in this mission. Mr. Zinke is not that person. Federal agencies cannot function without credible leadership, and he offers none. He needs to resign.” Source: [USA Today](#).
- *Zinke vs. Grijalva, Round Two* – The secretary was not about to take the above lying down. “Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke [last] Friday morning labeled as a drunk the man who is expected to be his chief foe on Capitol Hill, an attack that echoes President Donald Trump’s own name calling style and sets the stage for tense showdowns on Capitol Hill when Democrats take the House in January,” reports CNN. “In his response, Zinke did not address Grijalva’s allegations but instead said that it was ‘hard for (Grijalva) to think straight from the bottom of the bottle. This is coming from a man who used nearly \$50,000 in tax dollars as hush money to cover up his drunken and hostile behavior. He should resign and pay back the taxpayer for the hush money and tens of thousands of dollars he forced my department to spend investigating unfounded allegations,’ Zinke wrote in the tweet.” Grijalva denied the allegations. Source: [CNN](#).
- *Zinke vs. Grijalva, Round Three (Date TBD)* – The above exchanges drew varied responses around Washington, but with general agreement that Zinke went too far in his counterpunch. An article in *The Hill* quoted people on both sides of the political fence. From the right: “An oil industry lobbyist who’s been supportive of Zinke’s policies said the tweet didn’t benefit anyone, and he said it’s stirring more speculation that Zinke, who is under federal investigation for a number of alleged ethical breaches, may be planning to leave office soon.” From the left: “I think [Zinke’s attack on Grivalva] erases any hope that he would cooperate in any good faith with the committee, and escalates the rhetoric at a really inopportune time for him. Even if he does leave soon, I think that this action will damage the relationship between the Interior Department and the committee for future secretaries.” But the last word came from one of Grijalva’s staffers: “The incoming chairman had planned for Zinke’s first hearing to be on the Trump administration’s budget once it is released early next year, and that plan hasn’t changed...” Source: [The Hill](#).

National Park Service and System

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

NPS Advisory Board Set To Reconvene – The National Park System Advisory Board, which hasn’t met since its members resigned last January to protest Secretary Zinke’s disinclination to engage with them, is preparing to reconvene with a new membership. The meeting was to be held today, but has been cancelled due to the closure of the federal government as part of the National Day of Mourning for President Bush. A new date has not yet been announced. You can read short biographies of the new members on the board’s web page (the link follows). Source: [National Park System Advisory Board](#).

Articles Posted On NPS Response To 9/11 Attacks – Two new articles have been published on the NPS response to the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001. The first is a piece by Bill Gabbert in

Wildfire Today. He begins with an overview of NPS historian Janet McDonnell's 132-page report, "The National Park Service: Responding to the September 11 Terrorist Attacks," which was based on numerous interviews, then leads into the text of a section of the report that describes the initial response by the NPS in Washington, mostly centered around the Main Interior building. The second, also by Gabbert and also including excerpts from McDonnell's report, is on the *Fire Aviation* webpage and concerns the responses made by the crews of Eagle I and Eagle II, the two US Park Police helicopters. They can be read at the links that follow. Sources: [Wildfire Today](#); [Fire Aviation](#).

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. The reports are in alphabetical order by park name.

- *Cape Hatteras NS* – The park continues to receive interesting gifts from the sea arriving along its shores. You may recall a report in this publication not too long ago in which a piece of a space rocket washed up in the park; now it's a WWII mine, albeit a training device with no explosives on board. That wasn't immediately obvious, though, so rangers anchored it in place until a Navy explosive ordnance disposal team from Norfolk, Virginia, came by and picked it up. The article has a photo of the mine. Source: [The State](#), Columbia, South Carolina.
- *Glacier NP* – The park is about to undertake a major overhaul of its 33 iconic red buses, products of the White Motor Company. The Model 706 buses, manufactured between 1936 and 1939, will receive new Ford 6.2L, V8 engines that will be assisted by an electric hybrid system designed to reduce fuel consumption and emissions. Each bus will be remounted on a new Ford chassis. The dashboard and gauges will be replaced with historic replicas. Refinishing will include rust removal and painting, using the historic red color of ripe mountain ash berries. A few buses will be rehabilitated each winter and then returned to service for the summer season. The work will require several years. Source: [Daily Interlake](#), Kalispell, Montana
- *Glen Canyon NRA* – The City of Page and the park are working together to address congestion and safety concerns at the Horseshoe Bend Overlook parking lot. The north parking lot has been closed due to construction that will increase its size. Over the last several years, visitation to the overlook has increased dramatically; although the parking lot has been expanded several times, vehicle and pedestrian congestion continue to present safety concerns. The work should be completed by March. Source: [Lake Powell Life](#), Page, Arizona.
- *Great Smoky Mountains NP* – The park is inviting public comment through December 13th on an EA for proposed plant gathering agreement with the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians. The plant the tribe seeks to harvest is the bitter spring green known as sochan. For more information and to comment, go to the [park's PEPC webpage](#). Source: [Citizen-Times](#), Asheville, North Carolina.
- *Olympic NP* – On November 27th, KOMO News in Seattle ran an interesting story that provided a remarkable illustration of the often dramatic differences in precipitation totals between the western and eastern sides of the Olympics due to the mountains' rain shadow. During the 48-hour period between 7 a.m. on November 25th and 7 a.m. on November 27th, when the wind was out of the southwest, a rain gauge near Sequim, located on the park's northeast side, reported just 0.17 inches of rain, while a gauge two miles away and closer to the Olympics reported 3.55 inches of rain over the same period. Other numbers reinforced the disparity between opposite sides of the mountains – to the southwest, Owl Mountain had 8.25 inches, whereas Port Townsend, located on the northeast side, had 0.09 inches. The web page includes some good graphics showing the rainfall totals. Source: [KOMO News](#), Seattle, Washington.
- *Shiloh NMP* – The Harpers Ferry Design Center has awarded a \$639,700 contract to Formations Inc., of Portland, Oregon, to provide planning, design, fabrication, and installation services for the park's visitor center. The goal is to develop new exhibits that feature artifacts from the park's collection, interactive and tactile experiences, and audiovisual presentations that provide visitors with opportunities to make meaningful connections to the park and its story.

The designers will also provide recommendations for any architectural changes in the facility that will be needed to accommodate the new elements. Source: [The Courier](#), Savannah, Tennessee.

- *Yellowstone NP* – When Steamboat Geyser erupted for the 29th time this year on November 28th, it tied a record for most eruptions in a year set in 1964. Over the past few weeks, the geyser has been following a semi-regular pattern of erupting about every five to seven days. The news article also contains an NPS-produced listing of the geyser’s annual eruptions going back to 1878. Source: [KIFI/KIDK News](#), Idaho Falls, Idaho.
- *Zion NP* – The 16-mile-long “top-down” route to the Narrows may become history unless a dispute between a private property owner and the federal government is resolved by December 31st. Local resident Scott Bulloch owns hundreds of acres of land that is cut by the Virgin River and, for about 50 years, he and his family have allowed hikers to traverse through it on their way to the Temple of Sinawava, one of the park’s most popular destinations. The family is interested in selling it and the NPS is interested in acquiring it via the Trust for Public Lands, but the Forest Service – also involved – has rejected the appraisal of the land, though it has been accepted by the other parties. It’s hoped that the issue will be resolved before year’s end. Source: [Los Angeles Times](#).

New Area And Re-Designation Proposals – At any given time, there are proposals in the works for new areas or changes in designation for current NPS units. Here are the latest:

- *Mill Springs Battlefield* – Efforts to make Mill Springs Battlefield a part of the National Park System continue (the 1862 [Battle of Mill Springs](#) was crucial to keeping Kentucky in the Union). The Mill Springs Battlefield Association is prepared to donate the 900 acres it owns to the new park; now, the attorney for Pulaski County has moved to resolve title to a last small remaining segment. Source: [Commonwealth Journal](#), Somerset, Kentucky.
- *Route 66 National Historic Trail* – Last week, Senators Tom Udall (D-NM) and Jim Inhofe (R-OK) announced the introduction of a bipartisan bill that would amend the National Trails System Act to include Route 66 and thereby help revitalize cities and small towns that sit along the historic corridor. The House passed a similar bill last June. Under the legislation, the Service would assist communities along the highway and award federal funds for preservation, development, and promotion. Source: [The Tribune](#), Seymour, Indiana.

The Conservation Crisis

This section covers the myriad interconnected, conservation-related threats that are transforming the national parks, their ecosystems, and the world ecosystem, often simultaneously.

President Disparages Government’s Climate Report – As was reported in the last issue (and just about everywhere else), the federal government released a report last month entitled [Fourth National Climate Assessment, Volume II: Impacts, Risks, and Adaptation in the United States](#). The *Washington Post* summarized the researchers’ key finding in its article on the report: “The effects of climate change, including deadly wildfires, increasingly debilitating hurricanes and heat waves, are already battering the United States, and the danger of more such catastrophes is worsening.” But not to worry – the president is certain it’s all balderdash, saying that he has “very high levels of intelligence,” and, as such, does not believe in the findings. This came out in a recent interview with writers from the *Washington Post*. The president also made this insightful observation, transcribed just as it was spoken: “One of the problems that a lot of people like myself, we have very high levels of intelligence but we’re not necessarily such believers. You look at our air and our water and it’s right now at a record clean...As to whether or not it’s man-made and whether or not the effects that you’re talking about are there, I don’t see it — not nearly like it is.” Source: [Huffington Post](#).

Report: Climate Change Will Cause Multiple Simultaneous Disasters – A [report published in Nature Climate Change](#) last month forecasts a “broad threat to humanity from cumulative climate

hazards intensified by greenhouse gas emissions” in coming years. Here’s the abstract prepared by the researchers: “The ongoing emission of greenhouse gases (GHGs) is triggering changes in many climate hazards that can impact humanity. We found traceable evidence for 467 pathways by which human health, water, food, economy, infrastructure and security have been recently impacted by climate hazards such as warming, heatwaves, precipitation, drought, floods, fires, storms, sea-level rise and changes in natural land cover and ocean chemistry. By 2100, the world’s population will be exposed concurrently to the equivalent of the largest magnitude in one of these hazards if emissions are aggressively reduced, or three if they are not, with some tropical coastal areas facing up to six simultaneous hazards. These findings highlight the fact that GHG emissions pose a broad threat to humanity by intensifying multiple hazards to which humanity is vulnerable.” A review of the report with perspectives on the findings appeared in the *New York Times* – the link follows. Source: [New York Times](#).

Oil Exploration Set To Begin In ANWR – “For decades, opposition to drilling has left the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge off limits,” reported the *New York Times* on Monday. “Now the Trump administration is hurriedly clearing the way for oil exploration.” Reporters Henry Fountain and Steve Eder provide an overview of what’s going on: “Decades of protections are unwinding with extraordinary speed as Republicans move to lock in drilling opportunities before the 2020 presidential election, according to interviews with over three dozen people and a review of internal government deliberations and federal documents. To that end, the Trump administration is on pace to finish an environmental impact assessment in half the usual time. An even shorter evaluation of the consequences of seismic testing is nearing completion...While actual oil production would be a decade or more away, the turnaround represents a prized breakthrough in the Trump administration’s campaign to exploit fossil fuels and erase restrictive policies protecting the environment and addressing global warming.” The article describes how this has come about and the possible impacts of drilling in that location. Source: [New York Times](#).

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; “submitters” are those people who originally submitted the incident report.

- *Ozark NSR* – The largest flood in the history of the Current River struck on November 14th and 15th after various sections of the park received over eight inches of rain. Record flood crests of 27.5, 33.4 and 25 feet were recorded, respectively, at Van Buren, Powder Mill and Round Spring. Rangers worked throughout the night to warn campers and hunters of the flood, but dozens were nonetheless stranded. Maintenance employees worked continuously to move equipment, secure buildings and shutdown utility systems. Extensive damage and loss occurred to park facilities and buildings and to numerous private vehicles and trailers that were inundated both within and outside of the park. A successful long-line extraction rescue of a capsized boater was coordinated by park staff and achieved by a state patrol helicopter crew. Other canoeists were also safely located and evacuated. Flood waters are slowly receding, but additional rain is predicted for early this week. Rangers are continuing aerial patrols to search for stranded campers and assess conditions; maintenance crews are beginning damage assessments and salvage and cleanup operations. The governor has declared the south central part of the state a disaster area. Submitted by Tim Blank.
- *Great Smoky Mountains NP* – On the evening of October 30th, a ranger transported a suspected intoxicated driver to the Sevier county jail for a breathalyzer test. He parked his 1992 Crown Victoria patrol vehicle inside the sally port, a brick enclosure with steel entrance and exit doors where prisoners are unloaded or loaded. While inside the jail, the ranger heard a commotion outside; when he returned to the sally port, he discovered that his patrol vehicle was no longer there, but that its blue overhead lights were lying on the floor. He found his vehicle about 150 feet beyond the exit door with an older model Mercury resting against its rear. Damage to both vehicles was extensive. Investigation revealed that the driver of the Mercury had driven through the closed sally port and pushed the Crown Victoria out the exit. He was charged with

driving under the influence, driving on a revoked license, felony vandalism, and reckless endangerment. The Crown Victoria, which had about 25,000 miles on it, sustained from \$6,000 to \$7,000 in damage. Submitted by Chief Ranger's Office.

- *Badlands NP* – On November 19th, a federal grand jury in Sioux Falls, South Dakota, returned a 39-count indictment against a commercial fossil dealer and eight other individuals for illegal taking and sale of fossils from private and public property, including NPS, BLM, Forest Service, Indian and state school lands. The indictment charges Black Hills Institute of Geological Research with illegally collecting and selling fossils to museums and private corporations. Among them were the fossilized remains of triceratops, mosasaur, whales, edmontosaurus, theropods, crinoids, ammonites, acanthoceras, catfish, turtle and fishhead. The eight individuals were indicted on a variety of related charges, including conspiracy, theft of government property, interstate transportation of stolen goods, making false statements, money laundering, wire fraud, and obstruction of justice. According to the U.S. attorney, the defendants conspired with others to collect and sell fossils that were acquired fraudulently, illegally taken from public and private lands, or illegally imported from foreign countries. The conspiracy also involved the use of false documents to facilitate the sale and movement of fossils. The 18-month-long joint investigation was conducted by the NPS, FBI, IRS, Customs, BIA, BLM, Office of the Inspector General and Forest Service. The indictment does not involve the Tyrannosaurus rex named "Sue" which led to this investigation. Submitted by John Donaldson.

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- Production: Steve Pittleman
- Regular Correspondents: Don Hellmann, Dennis Burnett, Rick Smith, and Duncan Morrow
- Issue Contributors: Mark Forbes, Bill Walters

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

"The national parks are charged with the obligation of preserving superlative natural regions, including wilderness areas, for the benefit of posterity. Attentiveness to the pleasure and comfort of the people is essential, but it cannot mean catering to absolutely unlimited numbers unless the second function is to destroy the first. In a theater, when the seats in the house have been sold out and the available standing room also has been pre-empted, the management does not jeopardize the main event by allowing still more onlookers to crowd upon the stage and impede the unfolding of the drama."

C. F. Brockman, *The Recreational Use Of Wildlands*

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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."

To receive a copy of this free publication, join or support the coalition. Any current, retired or former

salaried (GS, wage grade, seasonal, temporary, or SES) employee of the National Park Service can join the Coalition (click on [this link](#)); Coalition supporters can also join and receive the newsletter (click on [this link](#)). If you need to contact the Coalition office on other matters, including changes of address, click on [this link](#).

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