



## The Coalition Weekly Report Wednesday, July 29, 2020

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### Incidents

#### **Padre Island NS Park Closes Due To Hurricane Damage**

Hurricane Hanna caused significant damage is on both the Laguna and Gulf sides of the island. The park has therefore been closed and will remain closed until further notice.

The park will be conducting a full assessment to decide when it will be able to reopen. That may occur as early as the end of this week.

Source: [KIII News](#).

#### **Glacier NP Fire Destroys Historic Patrol Cabin**

A historic patrol cabin near Polebridge was destroyed by fire last Thursday. Firefighters from the park , Flathead County and the state fought at least seven fires in the area that day; all were contained or extinguished by Friday.

According to the park, the 1928 Ford Creek patrol cabin was destroyed by “suspicious” fires. The cabin served as an administrative building. Detectives from the FBI and Park Service Investigative Services Branch are involved in the investigation.

The Inside North Fork Road from Polebridge to Logging Creek and the Kintla Lake Road were both closed during the investigation, but reopened to the public on Friday.

Source: [Fire Engineering](#).

#### **Voyageur NP Two Boats Crash On Lake Kabetogama**

A pair of boats crashed on Kabetogama Lake last Friday afternoon, with the trailing boat going up and over the front boat and coming to a rest on top of it. A woman on one of the boats sustained a non-life-threatening injury and was transported to Rainy Lake Medical Center in International Falls for treatment. All told, there were ten occupants in the two boats.

Four boats were all traveling together across the lake when an object blew out of one of the lead boats. One of the trailing boats turned to retrieve the item. The driver of the last boat in line didn't notice the boat in front of him turn and collided with it.

Appropriate life jackets were aboard both boats. The boats remained afloat and were towed back to the shore. The incident remains under investigation.

Source: [Duluth News-Tribune](#).

### **Grand Teton NP Group Of Dirt Bikers Trash Park Field**

A band of dirt bike riders shredded an open field along historic Mormon Row last Saturday. The field is part of a long-running restoration project to erase thousands of acres of hayfields that once grew there.

The incident is believed to have been an organized event involving about 50 people and a drone.

An onlooker who filmed part of the event called the park's dispatch center to report the activity, but by the time rangers could arrive the group was gone. In their wake they left approximately 1,000 feet of track that is two to ten feet in width.

Park rangers are seeking additional information from anyone who might know the participants. Information can be provided by call or text to the National Park Service Investigative Services Branch Tip Line at 888-653-0009 or email [nps\\_isb@nps.gov](mailto:nps_isb@nps.gov). Information can be provided anonymously.

The historic hay fields along Mormon Row are part of a ten-year project that started in 2014 to remove the non-native grasses and replant the area with 37 species of native plants to restore the site to sagebrush steppe habitat. The investment in the habitat restoration represents several years of effort to collect native seed and treat invasive plants prior to seeding the native species.

This area is important habitat for elk, bison, pronghorn, moose, sage grouse, and a variety of other wildlife, which all depend on sagebrush steppe habitat. The area that was damaged by the dirt bikes was reseeded in 2019. This project is a collaborative effort between the National Park Service, Grand Teton National Park Foundation, National Fish and Wildlife Foundation and Teton Conservation District.

The onlooker's video was shared with rangers. [You can see it at this Facebook link](#).

Source: Kurt Repanshek, [National Parks Traveler](#).

### **Rocky Mountain NP Seriously Injured Hiker Flown From McHenry Peak**

On Sunday, July 12th, rangers were notified that a 55-year-old man from Estes Park had taken a 75-foot tumbling fall below the summit of McHenry Peak on the west face at an elevation of 12,900 feet.

The man was traveling from the summit to Stone Man Pass when he fell and sustained numerous serious injuries. Rangers reached him early the following morning and provided advanced medical care.

Due to his location and injuries, the park's SAR team sought assistance from a Colorado National Guard helicopter from Buckley Air Force Base to extricate him via a hoist operation. Rocky Mountain Rescue assisted with the helicopter hoist operations.

The man was flown to Upper Beaver Meadows, transferred to a Northern Colorado Med Evac air ambulance and then flown to St. Anthony Hospital.

Source: [Estes Park News](#).

### **Grand Teton NP**

## Two Hikers Injured In 500-Foot Sliding Fall

Two hikers from Michigan were rushed to a hospital after falling about 500 feet down a slope on July 11th.

Samantha Edgcombe and Mackenzie Finton, each 19 years old, were hiking from Cascade Canyon to Paintbrush Canyon over the Paintbrush Divide when they slipped on snow and slid down the slope into some large rocks.

Another hiker found them and called for help. He transmitted GPS coordinates to park rangers and emergency crews, who reached them on a Teton Interagency Helicopter.

A ranger accompanied each of the hikers on a rope suspended below the helicopter to a nearby meadow, where a waiting ambulance rushed them to a hospital in Jackson, Wyoming. Their conditions are not known.

Source: [WJRT News](#).

## Olympic NP Injured Woman Rescued From Mount Angeles

On July 10th, a Coast Guard helicopter crew helped rescue an injured hiker from Mount Angeles. The 62-year-old woman had injured her ankle on the mountain and could not safely descend from a 5,000 foot elevation. Rangers could not safely carry her down the mountain with a stokes litter due to the terrain.

A USCG MH-65 Dolphin helicopter crew responded to assist. They hoisted the woman into the helicopter and transported her back to the airbase.

"This was a really challenging rescue," said a member of the Coast Guard rescue aircrew. "Our partners at Olympic National Park did a fantastic job caring for the woman by preparing her for and assisting her with the difficult hoist. We are happy to be able to help."

Source: [KOMO News](#).

## National Fire Situation

### National Interagency Fire Center Lava Beds NM Closed Due To Proximity To Fire Complex

The national preparedness level remains at PL 3.

Fire activity continues in 11 states, where 38 large fires have burned more than 155,000 acres. New large fires were reported earlier this week in Idaho, Nevada, and Utah.

### Park And Park-Related Fires

*Lava Beds NM* – The nearby Caldwell Fire, part of the July Complex, has burned over 13,000 acres, causing the park to close. Complex fires have collectively burned more than 66,000 acres. For more information, go to the relevant [InciWeb web page](#).

### Resource Commitment Trend

Category	July 7	July 21	July 28
Area Command Teams	0	0	0
NIMO Teams	1	1	1

Type 1 Teams	1	3	3
Type 2 Teams	4	2	4
Crews	98	152	203
Engines	256	396	657
Helicopters	66	53	71
Total FF/Overhead	4,232	5,759	9,520

### **Fires/Acreage**

<b>Category</b>	<b>2010-2019 Ave</b>	<b>2020 Total</b>	<b>Difference</b>
United States: YTD Fires	34,206	30,760	- 3,446
United States: YTD Acres	3,731,145	1,942,015	- 1,789,130

Sources: [NICC Incident Management Situation Report](#); [National Interagency Fire Center](#); [IMSR Archives](#); [InciWeb Incident Information System](#).

### **Congressional Actions**

Reports on legislation, upcoming hearings and new public laws of relevance to the national parks, prepared by Don Hellmann, former assistant director, legislative and Congressional affairs for the National Park Service.

#### **New Public Laws**

Nothing to report.

#### **Senate Actions**

**July 20** – The Senate confirmed the nomination of Russell Vought, of Virginia, to be Director of the Office of Management and Budget, by a vote of 51 yeas to 45 nays.

**July 21** – The Senate passed [S. 3989](#), to amend the United States Semiquincentennial Commission Act of 2016 to modify certain membership and other requirements of the United States Semiquincentennial Commission.

**July 21** – The nomination of John Gibbs, of Michigan, to be Director of the Office of Personnel Management for a term of four years was transmitted to the Senate.

**July 21** – The Committee on Appropriations Subcommittee on State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs held a hearing to examine United States government efforts to address ocean plastic pollution internationally, after receiving testimony from Senators Sullivan and Whitehouse; Jonathan Moore, Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary, Bureau of Oceans and International Environmental and Scientific Affairs, Department of State; and Michelle Bekkering, Assistant Administrator of the Bureau for Economic Growth, Education and Environment, United States Agency for International Development.

**July 21** – The Committee on the Budget approved the nomination of Derek Kan, of California, to be Deputy Director of the Office of Management and Budget.

**July 21** – The Special Committee on Aging held a hearing to examine the COVID-19 pandemic and seniors, focusing on racial health disparities, after receiving testimony from public witnesses. There were no witnesses from federal agencies at the hearing.

**July 22** – The Senate passed [S. 906](#), to improve the management of driftnet fishing.

**July 22** – The Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation: Committee approved, among other bills, the following:

- [S. 933](#), to improve data collection and monitoring of the Great Lakes, oceans, bays, estuaries, and coasts.
- [S. 1730](#), to direct the Administrator of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration to make grants to State and local governments and nongovernmental organizations for purposes of carrying out climate-resilient living shoreline projects that protect coastal communities by supporting ecosystem functions and habitats with the use of natural materials and systems.

**July 22** – The Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs: Committee approved the following, among other bills:

- [S. 4204](#), to establish an Interagency Task Force to analyze preparedness for national pandemics.
- [S. 4210](#), to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to authorize the transfer of certain equipment during a public health emergency.
- [S. 4153](#), to require the Federal Emergency Management Agency to evaluate the National Response Framework based on lessons learned from the COVID-19 pandemic.
- [S. 4158](#), to examine the extent of the reliance of the United States on foreign producers for personal protective equipment during the COVID-19 pandemic and produce recommendations to secure the supply chain of personal protective equipment.
- [S. 4200](#), to establish a program to facilitate the adoption of modern technology by executive agencies.
- [S. 4077](#), to amend the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act of 1995 to provide for regulatory impact analyses for certain rules.
- [S. 92](#), to amend chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, to provide that major rules of the executive branch shall have no force or effect unless a joint resolution of approval is enacted into law.
- [S. 4222](#), to amend chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, to require Federal agencies to submit to the Comptroller General of the United States a report on rules that are revoked, suspended, replaced, amended, or otherwise made ineffective.
- [S. 3287](#), to modify the governmentwide financial management plan.
- [S. 2967](#), to establish the Commission on Intergovernmental Relations of the United States to facilitate the fullest cooperation, coordination, and mutual accountability among all levels of government.
- [S. 3896](#), to amend title 5, United States Code, to require the Director of the Office of Personnel Management to establish and maintain a public directory of the individuals occupying Government policy and supporting positions. This would replace the so-called PLUM Book, which lists positions that may be filled with political appointees in an administration, with an on-line public directory.

**July 22** – The Committee on Rules and Administration held a hearing to examine 2020 general election preparations, after receiving testimony from Tre Hargett, Tennessee Secretary of State, Nashville; Mac Warner, West Virginia Secretary of State, Charleston; Rick Stream, Saint Louis County Election Board, St. Louis County, Missouri; and Kristen Clarke, Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law, Washington, D.C.

**July 23** – The Senate passed S. 4049, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2021 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, and to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, by a vote of 86 yeas to 14 nays. As of the time for this report, the text of the bill that was passed, with the dozens of amendments that were adopted, was unavailable. A list of the provisions of interest to the National Park Service will be in a future weekly report. One amendment that was adopted by the House was from Sen. Angus King (D-ME), that would make the National Parks and Federal Recreational Lands Pass free to Gold Star families.

**July 23** – The Senate passed [S. 3841](#), to protect from assignment, levy, or garnishment a stimulus payment made to individual taxpayers and their dependents who have been affected by the COVID-19 (coronavirus disease 2019) pandemic.

**July 23** – The Committee on Energy and Natural Resources held an oversight hearing to examine the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on users of public lands, forests, and national parks, after receiving testimony from Kelly R. Hepler, Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies, Pierre, South Dakota; Will Shafroth, National Park Foundation, and other public witnesses. There were no witnesses from federal agencies at the hearing.

## **House Actions**

**July 17** – The Committee on House Administration held a hearing entitled “Exploring the Feasibility and Security of Technology to Conduct Remote Voting in the House”. Testimony was heard from Cheryl L. Johnson, Clerk, House of Representatives; and public witnesses.

**July 17** – The Committee on Oversight and Reform Select Subcommittee on the Coronavirus Crisis held a hearing entitled “Former Federal Reserve Chairs on Responding to Our Nation’s Economic Crisis”. Testimony was heard from public witnesses. There were no witnesses from federal agencies at the hearing.

**July 17** – The Committee on Science, Space, and Technology Subcommittee on Energy held a hearing entitled “From Lab to Market: Accelerating our Progress toward Economic Recovery and a Clean Energy Future”. Testimony was heard from public witnesses. There were no witnesses from federal agencies at the hearing.

**July 20** – The House observed a moment of silence in memory of the late Honorable John Lewis and agreed to [H. Res. 1054](#), expressing the profound sorrow of the House of Representatives on the death of the Honorable John Lewis.

**July 20** – The House passed [S. 3607](#), to extend public safety officer death benefits to public safety officers whose death is caused by COVID-19. The bill now goes to the president to be signed into law.

**July 20** – The Committee on Oversight and Reform Subcommittee on Government Operations held a hearing entitled “Federal IT Modernization: How the Coronavirus Exposed Outdated Systems”. Testimony was heard from public witnesses. There were no witnesses from federal agencies at the hearing.

**July 21** – Representative-elect Chris Jacobs (R-NY) was administered the Oath of Office by the Speaker having been elected on June 23, 2020, as Representative to Congress for the Twenty Seventh Congressional District, State of New York. Rep. Jacobs replaced former Rep. Chris Collins (R-NY), who resigned on Oct. 1, 2019 after pleading guilty to insider trading along with his son.

**July 21** – The House passed [H.R. 6395](#), to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2021 for military activities of the Department of Defense and for military construction, and to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, by a vote of 295 yeas to 125 nays. As of the time for this report, the text of the bill that was passed, with the dozens of amendments that were adopted, was unavailable. A list of the provisions of interest to the National Park Service will be in a future weekly report. One amendment that was adopted by the House was from Rep. Jared Golden (D-ME), that would make the National Parks and Federal Recreational Lands Pass free to Gold Star families.

**July 21** – The Committee on Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations held a hearing entitled “Pathway to a Vaccine: Efforts to Develop a Safe, Effective and Accessible COVID-19 Vaccine”. Testimony was heard from public witnesses. There were no witnesses from federal agencies at the hearing.

**July 21** – The Committee on Natural Resources Subcommittee on National Parks, Forests, and Public Lands held a hearing entitled “Monumental Decisions: A Long Overdue Reckoning with Racist Symbols on Our Public Lands”. Testimony was heard from Representatives Brown of Maryland and Norton; and public witnesses. There were no witnesses from federal agencies at the hearing.

**July 22** – The House agreed to the Senate amendments to [H.R. 1957](#), to amend title 54, United States Code, to establish, fund, and provide for the use of amounts in a National Parks and Public Land Legacy Restoration Fund to address the maintenance backlog of the National Park Service, the United States Fish and Wildlife Service, the Bureau of Land Management, the Forest Service, and the Bureau of Indian Education, and to provide permanent, dedicated funding for the Land and Water Conservation Fund, by a vote of 310 yeas to 107 nays. The bill now goes to the president to be signed into law.

**July 22** – The House passed [H.R. 7573](#), to direct the Joint Committee on the Library to replace the bust of Roger Brooke Taney in the Old Supreme Court Chamber of the United States Capitol with a bust of Thurgood Marshall to be obtained by the Joint Committee on the Library and to remove certain statues from areas of the United States Capitol which are accessible to the public, and to remove all statues of individuals who voluntarily served the Confederate States of America from display in the United States Capitol.

**July 22** – The Committee on Homeland Security held a hearing entitled “Examining the National Response to the Worsening Coronavirus Pandemic: Part II”. Testimony was heard from Peter T. Gaynor, Administrator, Federal Emergency Management Agency.

**July 23** – The Committee on the Judiciary approved, among other matters:

- [H.R. 2678](#), the “No President is Above the Law Act”, to amend title 18, United States Code, to provide for the tolling of the statute of limitations with regard to certain offenses committed by the President of the United States during or prior to tenure in office.
- [H.R. 7694](#), the “Abuse of the Pardon Prevention Act”, to provide increased Congressional oversight of certain pardons, and to clarify the applicability of bribery prohibitions to pardons and commutations.

**July 24** – The House passed [H.R. 7608](#), the consists of four FY 2021 appropriations bills: State-Foreign Operations, Agriculture-Rural Development-FDA, Interior-Environment, and Military Construction and Veterans Affairs. The bill passed by a vote of 224 yeas to 189 nays. Details about the Interior Appropriations section of H.R. 7608 (Division C), can be found in the [coalition’s report of July 22, 2020](#) (see House action on July 7th for H.R. 7612 in that report). During the House floor debate of H.R. 7608, the following amendments were added to the Interior appropriations division of the bill:

- Rep. Courtney (D-CT) amendment that highlights the importance of funding for the New England National Scenic Trail.
- Rep. Cohen (D-TN) amendment that prohibits the use of funds to enter into any new contract, grant, or cooperative agreement with any Trump-related business listed in the President Trump’s Annual Financial Disclosure Report submitted to the Office of Government Ethics as well as certain Trump-related properties listed on the Trump Organization’s website.
- Rep. Beyer (D-VA) amendment that intends to ensure the U.S. Park Police match other Interior law enforcement and adopt body cameras.
- Rep. Beyer (D-VA) amendment that highlights the need for a GAO study of the civil rights of protesters and the effects of the use of non-lethal tactics during protests on the protesters.
- Rep. Dingell (D-MI) amendment that prohibits funds from being used to implement, administer, or enforce the final rule entitled “Update to the Regulations Implementing the Procedural Provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act” published by the Council on Environmental Quality in the Federal Register on July 16, 2020.

- Rep. Jayapal (D-WA) amendment that prohibits use of funds for enforcement of the National Park Service’s final rule that will allow trophy hunting practices to kill hibernating bears and wolf pups on Alaska’s federal lands.
- Rep. Porter (D-CA) amendment that prevents funds from being used to reject any application for a grant due to the use of the term “global warming” or the term “climate change” in the application.
- Of additional interest to coalition members, the following amendments were also added to H.R. 7608:
- Rep. Panetta (D-CA) amendment that prohibits the use of funds to withdraw the United States from NATO.
- Rep. Panetta (D-CA) amendment that prohibits use of funds to withdraw the United States from the World Health Organization.
- Rep. Lowenthal (D-CA) amendment that limits funds toward oil and gas leasing in the NPRA to protect the Special Areas designated in the 2013 Integrated Activity Plan of the National Petroleum Reserve—Alaska (NPRA).
- Rep. Panetta (D-CA) that prohibits funds from being used to nominate or accept a nomination or an expression of interest for any Federal lands for oil and gas leasing within the areas covered by the Bureau of Land Management’s Final Central Coast Resource Management Plan Amendment, the Resource Management Plan for the Bakersfield Field Office, or the Carrizo Plain National Monument Resource Management Plan.

## National Park Service

### National Park System

A summary of articles pertaining to management and oversight of the NPS, to current trends and issues affecting the National Park System, or to either all or parts of the entire system.

- *NPS Proposes To Change Concessions Regs* – On July 20th, the *Federal Register* [published a notice](#) from the NPS regarding proposed changes to concession contracting and management of commercial services. Here’s the summary taken from the register: “The National Park Service proposes to revise regulations that govern the solicitation, award, and administration of concession contracts to provide commercial visitor services at National Park Service units under the authority granted through the Concessions Management Improvement Act of 1998 and the National Park Service Centennial Act. The proposed changes would reduce administrative burdens and expand sustainable, high quality, and contemporary concessioner-provided visitor services in national parks.” Details follow on eleven proposed changes; guidance is also provided on how to comment on the proposal. Comments will be taken until [September 18th](#). There’s a good article on this proposal in the following publication. Source: Brett French, [Independent Record](#).
- *Women’s Suffrage Podcasts To Be Aired* – In honor of the centennial of the ratification of the 19th Amendment and women’s right to vote, the Women’s Suffrage Centennial Commission, the National Park Service, and public media organization PRX have developed two new history-driven podcasts inspired by the courageous suffragists who worked to secure the right to vote for American women. The podcasts will premiere on Wednesday, August 5th. New episodes will be released weekly through September 16th, featuring the untold stories of the women’s suffrage movement and the generations of activists who championed equal rights. In support of these stories, the National Park Service will create companion materials for each podcast, available free alongside each new episode. The guides will also include lesson plans for elementary and middle school teachers to support their use of the podcasts in the classroom. The podcasts will be available free to audiences via Apple Podcasts, Google Podcasts, Spotify, and across audio platforms where podcasts may be found. Source: [National Park Service](#).

### Around The Parks



Park reports are in alphabetical order. Included are proposals in the works for new areas or changes in designation for current NPS units.

- *Abraham Lincoln Birthplace NHP* – Renovation work is scheduled to begin next month on Knob Creek Tavern. It's expected to take approximately six to twelve months to complete. The grounds at the site will be closed during the rehabilitation project, which begins August 3rd. There will be no visitor services this summer or next. Resumption of services and reopening of the park unit are planned for fall of 2021 once the historic tavern is rehabilitated. After new interpretive exhibits are installed, the park plans to conduct a grand reopening ceremony. Source: [The News-Enterprise](#).
- *Klondike Gold Rush NHP* – The park is seeking feedback on preliminary conceptual designs for proposed recreational facilities in Dyea. Recreational facilities in the vicinity of the Chilkoot Campground and the trailhead of the Chilkoot Trail would be renovated or constructed. A parking area would be constructed at the trailhead of the Chilkoot Trail, an adjoining day use site would be updated, a trail connection between the Dyea Campground and trailhead/day use area would be improved and brought to accessibility standards, and a road segment would be constructed at the north end of the campground. Comments are being taken until August 15th. Source: Annie Matsov, [Klondike Gold Rush NHP](#).
- *Natchez NHP* – The City of Natchez has formally transferred ownership of the Natchez Visitors Center to the National Park Service. Completed in 1998 as a partnership project between the city, state and NPS, the 25,000 square-foot building presently serves as a state and regional welcome center, providing tourist information services for hundreds of thousands of visitors annually to the greater Natchez region. The park will make no immediate changes in operations at the facility. Located at the eastern end of the Mississippi River bridge, the prominent facility is immediately adjacent to the park's historic Fort Rosalie site. The building also serves as the southern terminus visitor center for the Natchez Trace Parkway. Source: [Natchez Democrat](#).
- *Outer Banks Group* – Several new projects and programs are planned to protect and enhance the group's three parks – Cape Hatteras NS, Fort Raleigh NHS, and Wright Brothers NM. Outer Banks Forever, the nonprofit partner of the three national parks, announced the planned projects last week. They will include a kayak launch from Oregon Inlet, a new exhibit at the Wright Brothers, and webcams to view the park from any location. Source: Jessica Green, [Outer Banks Forever](#).
- *Perry's Victory and IPM* – The park is planning to repair its north and south seawalls in order to cope with rising waters. Action is needed in order to prevent damage from more frequent and more powerful seasonal storm events and to mitigate and remediate the effects of historic and continuing storm damage and subsequent flooding to the Perry's Victory waterfront. The project will stabilize the waterfront and protect Perry's Victory's cultural landscape and associated historic buildings from the imminent threat of failure of the seawalls and associated flooding along the shoreline. Comments on the project are being taken through August 21st. Source: Barbara Rowels, [Perry's Victory and IPM](#).
- *Yellowstone NP* – “A new CEO is to take the helm at Yellowstone Forever next week, a move expected to begin a transition for the troubled nonprofit organization that the National Park Service seriously had considered jettisoning from its role as the main fundraiser for Yellowstone National Park,” reports National Parks Traveler. “The appointment of the CEO, an individual well-versed in nonprofits and fundraising on a national basis who also is very familiar with Yellowstone, is seen as way to pull Yellowstone Forever from the flames of self-immolation spurred largely by a lack of financial oversight. Yellowstone Superintendent Cam Sholly for weeks had been debating whether it made sense to sever the Park Service's operating agreement with Yellowstone Forever. In the end he decided that would create untenable risks, including the loss of key assets used by the Yellowstone Institute.” The article provides further background on the related issues and considerations. Source: Kurt Repanshek, [National Parks Traveler](#).

- *Yellowstone NP* – Visitors to the park are being advised to expect detours and delays in the Old Faithful area due to a bridge being shut down over safety concerns. Traffic is being routed around the Old Faithful Overpass Bridge until further notice. Crews have been working on the bridge — removing and replacing deck drains, replacing expansion joints, installing new approach slabs, replacing and repairing concrete, and resetting the existing bridge rails. While making those improvements, though, the park determined that the structural integrity of the bridge may be compromised and needed further investigation. An evaluation of the bridge is currently underway. Source: [Powell Tribune](#).
- *Yosemite NP* – The park and the Stanislaus National Forest are jointly proposing to take action to reduce erosion and restore wetland functionality at Ackerson and South Ackerson Meadows. The two meadows make up the largest mid-elevation meadow complex in the park. A large erosion gully network, up to 14 feet deep and 100 feet wide, is actively draining 90 acres of former wetlands in the meadow complex and threatening an additional 100 acres of wet meadow habitat. The gully network is a result of over a century of landscape manipulation including domestic water diversion, farming, ranching, and timber harvesting. The park has itemized several proposed actions on its PEPC website. Comments are being taken until August 25th. Source: [Yosemite NP](#).

### **Briefly Noted**

Other matters of interest pertaining to the parks and their people.

- *Drones In National Parks* – *DroneDJ*, a publication that reports on “all the latest developments, news, and reviews in the drone industry,” has posted an article that tells its readers to leave their drones at home if they’re going to national parks. The author provides some background on their ban from national parks and closes with this observation: “[If you use a drone in a park], please be aware you could face being charged – and potentially be fined up to \$5,000. That’s a lot of coin for a drone flight. And remember this: Yellowstone and other national parks are so beautiful that even shots from the ground can look amazing. (Maybe not quite as amazing as a drone, but you get the idea.)” Source: Scott Simmie, [DroneDJ](#).
- *Trail Etiquette* – The *Denver Post* ran an article last week on trail etiquette, with a guide to new hikers posted at the end. A good deal of the article deals with the issues associated with right of way for mountain bikers, runners and hikers when they come upon each other. The author admits that in the end it comes down to whoever is more considerate, but nonetheless cites guidance from the NPS, the Colorado Mountain Club and an organization entitled Jeffco Open Space. It also provides tips for novice hikers. Source: John Meyer, [Denver Post](#).

### **Climate and Conservation**

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

### **National Park System Issues**

Reports on climate and conservation issues impacting the parks, including the impacts of climate change, protection of native flora and fauna, battles against invasive and exotic species, impairment of park ecosystems and habitat, threats to park carrying capacity, impacts on parks from abutting areas, and systemic pollution of all forms.

### **Non-Native Species and Invasives**

- *Olympic NP* – The fourth and final relocation of mountain goats from Olympic to the northern Cascade Mountains began on July 27th. Since September 2018, a total of 275 mountain goats have been translocated. The operation is being conducted jointly by the National Park Service,

the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife and the Forest Service. The group's goal is to remove the non-native mountain goats from the Olympic Mountains and re-establish the goat population in the Washington Cascades. The goats will be released at a dozen sites in North Cascades NF, including nine sites in the Darrington, Preacher Mountain, Mt. Loop Highway and Snoqualmie Pass areas of Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest and three sites in the Chikamin Ridge, Box Canyon and Tower Mountain areas of Okanogan-Wenatchee National Forest. Source: [KOMO News](#).

- *Big Cypress NP* – The NPS, USGS, FWS and Conservancy of Southwest Florida have teamed up to radio-track Burmese pythons in Big Cypress National Preserve, Crocodile Lake National Wildlife Refuge and other areas of Southwest Florida. This new effort marks the first-time pythons are being tracked in so many different habitats to better understand python biology across the region and ultimately find ways to more effectively control this invasive species. The invasive pythons have established themselves throughout South Florida, but they are extremely secretive and difficult to find, even though they can reach 18 feet in length. Individual agencies and organizations have used radiotelemetry since 2006 to locate, remove, and study them, but those efforts have typically been intermittent and local. The year-round data acquired through these new unified efforts will help land and resource managers improve python management. The Burmese python is now estimated to have a breeding population in Florida in the tens of thousands. Source: [US Geological Service](#).
- *Grand Canyon NP* – The park is asking visitors to take caution and not to approach wildlife, especially wild rabbits. Rabbit hemorrhagic disease (RHDV2) was recently detected in a dead jackrabbit found within Grand Canyon, making it the first detected case in the park. RHDV2 is a highly-contagious and lethal viral disease among domestic and wild rabbits. The virus does not infect humans, but other causes of illness and mortality of rabbits can. According to the U.S. Geological Survey National Wildlife Health Center, RHDV2 is considered a foreign animal disease, meaning the disease is not typically found in the United States and is a threat to domestic and wild animal health. Source: [Grand Canyon NP](#).

## **Native Species**

- *Grand Teton NP* – A black bear was euthanized in the park last Thursday. The decision to do so was based on recent activity in which it exhibited no fear of humans and approached humans looking for food. The bear was highly food conditioned and routinely visited campsites, picnic tables and approaching vehicles in the Jenny Lake and String Lake areas. On Wednesday, the bear walked into an occupied campsite where a family with children were, went directly to the picnic table and began eating the campers' food that was set out. Rangers relocated the campers to another site and the area was closed so the bear could be safely captured. The bear was trapped and killed Thursday evening. The female bear was about 1.5 years old and weighed around 60 pounds. Source: Ellen Fike, [Cowboy State Daily](#).
- *Lassen Volcanic NP* – The park has closed a backcountry area to camping due to black bear(s) obtaining food from campers. The closure extends one mile in all directions from the following lakes frequently accessed from Summit Lake Trailhead – Echo, Upper Twin, Lower Twin, Swan, and Rainbow Lake. At least one black bear has obtained improperly stored food and/or scented items from backcountry campers. After multiple incidents, one or more bears have learned to associate humans and their equipment with a food reward. The bear has also been unresponsive to hazing by hikers. In one incident a bear boldly searched a campsite and gear undeterred by backpackers yelling and making loud noises nearby. The closure is in place for 60 days to reduce negative human and bear interactions and provide the bear(s) with a period to return to normal foraging behavior before further action is required. Source: National Park Service.

## **Park Overflights**

- *Montezuma Castle NM* – While the large majority of today's visitors to the Sinaguan archeological site come by car, lately a number of helicopter tours have threatened the integrity

of the cliff dwelling. In early May, one helicopter flew down and hovered practically level with the cliff dwelling. While the helicopter company could be identified from the photo, a park spokesman said that they were withholding that information and the photo while the matter was taken up with the company. According to the park, vibrations from the chopper's rotors could damage the cliff dwelling. Studies have shown that rotor vibrations from close-flying helicopters can cause serious problems; these vibrations could easily damage or destroy 850-year-old wooden ceilings and masonry walls. Source: Kurt Repanshek, [National Parks Traveler](#).

## **The Coalition**

Summary of recent developments within the Coalition, including some of the actions that CPANP took on your behalf. Links to specified documents are at the end of each entry.

- *Utah Oil And Gas Leasing Sales* – CPANP joined the Southern Utah Wilderness Alliance and other environmental groups and signed on to comments submitted regarding the upcoming Utah BLM September 2020 Competitive Oil and Gas Lease Sale. The comments state that the lease EA violates several laws, including NEPA and the Mineral Leasing Act. [Text of comments](#).
- *NEPA Rollbacks* – The Coalition released a statement following the administration's implementation of their proposed NEPA rollbacks, writing that, "by weakening NEPA and allowing projects to move forward without proper review and public input – and ignoring the impacts of these projects on climate change – President Trump and his administration are jeopardizing the health of our environment and the American people." [Text of statement](#).
- *FWS DEIS On Taking Of Birds* – The Coalition joined 35 other organizations and signed on to comments in response to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's DEIS regarding regulations governing take of migratory birds. [Text of comments](#).
- *Oil and Gas Leasing Auctions* – CPANP released a statement of support for Senator Tester's legislation that would require the Bureau of Land Management to issue all oil and gas leases through competitive auction, ending noncompetitive leasing and encouraging government inefficiency. [Text of statement](#).
- *Great American Outdoors Act Passes House* – As noted above in the section on Congressional actions, the House has passed the Great American Outdoors Act. The Coalition issued a statement applauding their action. [Text of statement](#).

Source: Emily Thompson, Communications and Advocacy Coordinator.

## **Park People**

### **NPS Alumni Passing Of Jack Chadwell**

Jack Chadwell, 86, a career National Park Service ranger, died on July 17th at his home in Cave City, Kentucky.

After graduating from high school in 1951 and completing a tour in the Army, Jack gave up a promising baseball career with the Washington Senators to pursue his love of the outdoors. He began a career in the National Park Service which would last 36 years.

Jack's assignments included Cumberland Gap, Virgin Islands, Blue Ridge Parkway, and Yellowstone.. The highlight of his career came in 1985 when he presented President Ronald Reagan with a "Smoky Bear" hat at Mammoth Cave, where he ended his NPS career and retired in 1995.

Following his National Park Service retirement, Jack spent another 20 years in service as superintendent of public works for the city of Glasgow.

He was preceded in death by his wife of 47 years, Mary F. Jones Chadwell; two brothers, R.V. and A.B.; and two sisters, Betty Daniels and Joan Price.

Jack is survived by his son, Jack Jr.; grandson Emerson; two brothers, Charles (Sharon) and Jim Chadwell (Beverly); sister-in-law, Georgia; and a host of nieces, nephews, other relatives and friends.

Funeral services were held on July 19th at Cub Run United Methodist Church, with burial in Glasgow Municipal Cemetery.

Source: [\*Glasgow Daily Times\*](#).

## **From The Archives**

This section contains incidents taken from *Morning Report* issues published during the corresponding week (approximately) 25 years ago in 1995. All entries appear in the original verb tense; "submitters" are those people who originally submitted the incident report.

- *Glen Canyon NRA* – Part of Lone Rock Beach was gassed by camper Blake Vitali when he detonated a canister of CS tear gas in the densely populated area on the afternoon of July 2nd. Many visitors jumped into the lake to relieve the burning sensations on their skin and in their eyes. Several children, however, ran into tents and hid under sleeping bags and were consequently more seriously burned, generally on their arms and legs. Vitali told rangers that he'd bought the canister on the street in California. He said that he didn't know what the term CS or the military markings on the canister meant, and that he thought it was just a smoke bomb. Vitali was bent over the canister when it went off, so also reaped what he had sown - a small but significant consolation to neighboring campers. He was arrested and turned over to the county sheriff's office on state felony charges. Submitted by Chief Ranger Tomie Lee.
- *Rocky Mountain NP* – One of two 15-year-old twins visiting the park with a guardian was attempting to drink from the North Saint Vrain River on the afternoon of July 24th when he fell in. His brother and the guardian jumped into the river in an attempt to save him, but became stranded themselves. One twin was swept 75 feet down the river by a strong current before his sweater became snagged on a log and he was able to pull himself to shore. His brother and their guardian remained stranded, clinging to a rock, until the park technical rescue team and local fire department personnel and dive teams were able to rescue them. They were treated for bruises, bumps and chills, but were otherwise okay. The members of the party were very lucky, as the park's rivers are still swollen and running very fast due to runoff from the heavy spring snowfall. Submitted by Chief Ranger's Office.
- *Glen Canyon NRA* – Just before midnight on July 3rd, the Halls Crossing campground host called rangers for assistance with a gang of skinheads who refused to comply with quiet hours and were abusive to the host and other campers when asked to quiet down and to pick up the numerous beer cans and liquor bottles littering their campsites. They also resisted the responding ranger's similar requests. One member of the group, Josh Halverson, reached for a large hunting knife at his side; he persisted despite being told to stop, and the ranger struck him across the hand with his baton. Halverson received a minor laceration and contusion, but was dissuaded from drawing his knife. He fled the area and was not apprehended until the following morning. Other members of the group were cited for disorderly conduct and for interference. Review of the incident found the use of the baton to be justified. Submitted by Chief Ranger Tomie Lee.

## **A Closing Observation**

"There is nothing so American as our national parks. The scenery and wildlife are native. The fundamental idea behind the parks is native. It is, in brief, that the country belongs to the people, that it is in process of making for the enrichment of the lives of all of us. The parks stand as the outward symbol of this great human principle."

President Franklin D. Roosevelt

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

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.

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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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