



## The Coalition Weekly Report Wednesday, February 5, 2020

Volume 4

Number 5

---

### Incidents

#### **Everglades NP Searchers Find Missing Solo Kayaker**

A Virginia man who disappeared while on a solo kayaking trip in the park has been found.

Mark Miele, 67 of Williamsburg, Virginia, was located shortly before noon last Monday. He left for his trip on January 23rd and was due back a week ago today, January 29th.

Miele's bag with his wallet and phone washed up on the bank of the Lopez River and were found by rangers on Sunday. Deputies worked with the park and the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission to locate Miele. They downloaded data from Miele's phone Sunday night and found his most recent coordinates logged on January 31st.

The sheriff's office aviation unit then began a targeted search of the area. They found him and guided rescuers on the ground to his location, which was a few miles from where his belongings were found. He is receiving medical treatment.

Source: Jake Allen, [Naples Daily News](#).

#### **Yellowstone NP Skier Bitten By Coyote**

On the morning of Tuesday, January 28th, park dispatch received a call reporting that a coyote had bitten a woman in the Canyon Village area. She was cross-country skiing on the Grand Loop Road near the South Rim Drive when the incident occurred.

Witnesses took the 43-year-old woman to the Canyon Visitor Education Center, where rangers provided initial treatment for puncture wounds and lacerations to her head and arm. They then transported her to Mammoth Hot Springs by over-snow vehicle. She subsequently was transferred to another medical facility.

Park staff temporarily closed the road, then positively identified and killed the coyote. The coyote tested negative for rabies.

Source: Morgan Warthin, [National Park Service](#); [Cody Enterprise](#).

#### **National Park System Park Operating Status Summary**

A summary of recent openings, closures and other changes in the status of parks and their facilities,

- *Crater Lake NP* – Highway 62, the main access road to the park, is among a number of Oregon roads that have been closed due to rockslides triggered by recent heavy rains. Giant boulders – each about 15 feet by 15 feet – fell from a hillside that has endured pounding rain and repeated freezing and thawing of the rock due to harsh winter conditions. About two miles of the highway remain closed as geologists and hydrologists inspect the slide. Source: [KOMO News](#).
- *Point Reyes NS* – Rainy storms in February 2019 wiped out chunks of the McClures Beach Trailhead Access Road, as well as Mt. Vision Road in Inverness, rendering them impassable to hikers and beach-goers. On January 29th, the park announced that the Mt. Vision Road between Sir Francis Drake Boulevard and the Pine Ridge-Gunn Road junction and the McClures Beach Road have been fixed and reopened to car traffic. Source: Katie Dowd, [San Francisco Chronicle](#).
- *National Capital Parks* – The NPS has completed upgrades to segments of the George Washington Memorial Parkway, the Baltimore-Washington Parkway, the Clara Barton Parkway, and Beach, Fort Davis and Fort Dupont Drives – all of them significant commuter access roads. Details on the work that's been completed can be found on the following webpage. Source: Kristi King, [WTOP News](#).

## **National Park System**

### **Follow-ups On Previously Reported Incidents**

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

- *Rocky Mountain NP* – The body of a man found in the park last August has been identified as that of Aragorn Spaulding, 37, who disappeared while hiking alone. A search was begun for him on August 4th after he failed to return from his hike. Searchers found his car on the road near the Corral Creek Trailhead in the northwest portion of the park the following morning. On Tuesday, they were joined by search and rescue dog teams and a Colorado National Guard helicopter. The crew of the helicopter spotted his body below a large cliff band in a steep, rocky area above Mirror Lake. The coroner found that he'd died of multiple blunt force injuries, but the cause of death was undetermined. Source: Sady Swanson, *Fort Collins Coloradoan*.

## **National/International Fire Situation**

### **National Interagency Fire Center**

#### **Assistance To Australia Continues And Expands**

NIFC is at PL 1.

NIFC is sending additional DOI and Forest Service wildfire personnel to assist with ongoing wildfire suppression efforts in Australia.

Throughout December and January, US firefighters were dispatched to help out that country's hard-pressed firefighters. The Australian Fire and Emergency Service Authorities Council has since asked for additional help, and DOI and USFS are currently working to get firefighters and overhead there as soon as possible. US firefighters are filling critical wildfire and aviation management roles in New South Wales and Victoria.

As of last Friday, a total of 165 firefighters and overhead personnel were committed to the wildfires burning in three Australian states – 22 to New South Wales, 5 to South Australia, 138 to Victoria.

Because emergency management in Australia is a state responsibility, detailed information on operations in the above three states can be found at the following websites:

- New South Wales RFS – <https://www.rfs.nsw.gov.au/>
- Victoria – <https://www.emv.vic.gov.au/>
- South Australian Country Fire Service – <https://www.cfs.sa.gov.au/site/home.jsp>

You can learn more about the US deployment at [https://www.nifc.gov/fireInfo/fireInfo\\_australia.htm](https://www.nifc.gov/fireInfo/fireInfo_australia.htm).

**Wildland Fire News** – Stories pertaining to wildland fire and fire-related activities that involved the NPS and its fellow agencies around the globe.

- *Video Shows Intensity Of Australian Fire* – “Australian firefighters [have] released a terrifying video showing just how dangerous the bushfires raging across the country can become in mere minutes, spurred by high winds and extremely dry conditions,” reports the *Huffington Post*. The video was taken by the Dunmore Rural Fire Brigade, part of the New South Wales Rural Fire Service; it shows firefighters working to protect a property from advancing flames, then rapidly departing when the wind shifts. The video was shot on a dash-cam from inside a firetruck whose operators – out of the immediate path of the flames – stayed to battle the flames after the other vehicles drove to safety. [You can see it at this link](#); the first video is for some reason unrelated to the story about the wildfire, so you need to scroll down to the second video. Source: Nick Visser, [Huffington Post](#).
- *International Cooperation In Firefighting* – The current issue of *The New Yorker* has an article on international cooperation in firefighting, which is becoming “a worldwide problem” and how the term “fire season” has been supplanted by “fire year.” It includes stories about Aussies working on fires in the US and vice-versa, about fire management being facilitated by both nations using ICS, about how Australian firefighting is built around volunteers (more than 70,000 in New South Wales alone, the largest volunteer firefighting service in the world), and about the strong appreciation that Australians have displayed regarding the help from America (“When [US firefighters] arrived at Sydney Airport with dozens of their North American colleagues, they were surprised by a spontaneous standing ovation from Australians milling about in the arrivals hall. They have been welcomed every day since...”). The full article contains additional details about the effectiveness of such international cooperation. Source: Ceridwen Dovey, [The New Yorker](#).

### Resource Commitment Trend

Category	January 24	January 31	February 7
Area Command Teams	0	0	--
NIMO Teams	0	0	--
Type 1 Teams	0	0	--
Type 2 Teams	0	0	--
Crews	0	0	--
Engines	3	0	--
Helicopters	0	0	--
Total FF/Overhead	11	0	--

### Fires/Acreage

Category	2020 Total	2010-2019 Ave	2020 Variance
United States: YTD Fires	1,136	1,449	- 22%
United States: YTD Acres	16,791	26,684	- 30%

### 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**

**January 27** – The president signed into law, [H.R. 434](#), to amend the National Trails System Act to provide for the study of the Emancipation National Historic Trail, extending approximately 51 miles from Galveston, Texas, to Freedmen’s Town and Emancipation Park in Houston, Texas, following the migration route taken by newly freed slaves and other persons of African descent from the major 19th century seaport town of Galveston to the burgeoning community of Freedmen’s Town, located in the 4th Ward of Houston, Texas. (Public Law 116–111).

## **Senate Actions**

**January 27-31** – The Senate, sitting as a Court of Impeachment, continued considered of the articles of impeachment against Donald John Trump, President of the United States. By a vote of 49 yeas to 51 nays, the Senate rejected a motion to subpoena witnesses or documents.

## **House Actions**

**January 28** - The Committee on Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Energy; and the Subcommittee on Environment and Climate Change held a joint hearing entitled “Out of Control: The Impact of Wildfires on our Power Sector and the Environment”. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

**January 28** - The Committee on Natural Resources Subcommittee on Energy and Mineral Resources held a hearing entitled “The Importance of Public Disclosure Requirements for Protecting Human Health, the Climate, and the Environment”. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

**January 28** – The Committee on Oversight and Reform Subcommittee on Government Operations held a hearing entitled “Protecting Those Who Blow the Whistle on Government Wrongdoing”. Testimony was heard from Glenn A. Fine, Principal Deputy Inspector General Performing the Duties of the Inspector General, Department of Defense; Michael E. Horowitz, Inspector General, Department of Justice; and public witnesses.

**January 28** – The Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure Subcommittee on Economic Development, Public Buildings, and Emergency Management held a hearing entitled “GSA Outleases and the Trump Old Post Office Hotel”. Testimony was heard from Emily W. Murphy, Administrator, General Services Administration.

**January 29** – The Committee on the Budget held a hearing entitled “The Congressional Budget Office’s Budget and Economic Outlook”. Testimony was heard from Phillip Swagel, Director, Congressional Budget Office.

**January 29** – The Committee on Natural Resources approved the following, among other bills:

- [H.R. 1049](#), to authorize a National Heritage Area Program.
- [H.R. 2748](#), to establish an integrated national approach to respond to ongoing and expected effects of extreme weather and climate change by protecting, managing, and conserving the fish, wildlife, and plants of the United States, and to maximize Government efficiency and reduce costs, in cooperation with State, local, and Tribal Governments and other entities.
- [H.R. 2795](#), to establish National Wildlife Corridors to provide for the protection and restoration of certain native fish, wildlife, and plant species.
- [H.R. 3399](#), to amend the Nutria Eradication and Control Act of 2003 to include California in the program.

- [H.R. 4348](#), to terminate certain rules issued by the Secretary of the Interior and the Secretary of Commerce relating to endangered and threatened species.
- [H.R. 4679](#), to require the Comptroller General of the United States to submit to Congress a report examining efforts by the Regional Fishery Management Councils, the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission, and the National Marine Fisheries Service to prepare and adapt United States fishery management for the impacts of climate change.
- [H.R. 5179](#), to require the Secretary of the Interior to establish Tribal Wildlife Corridors.

## **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.

- *Guidance Issued On Visitor Management* – The NPS and the Interagency Visitor Use Management Council (IVUMC) last year published two manuals that provide guidance on managing visitation. The first volume is called the *Monitoring Guidebook Evaluating Effectiveness of Visitor Use Management*. It “provides specific guidance for developing and implementing a monitoring strategy related to visitor use that can be incorporated into existing agency planning and decision-making processes.” The second is entitled the *Visitor Use Management Framework A Guide to Providing Sustainable Outdoor Recreation*. It “provides managers with processes and tools to collaboratively develop long-term strategies to manage the amounts and types of visitor use to achieve desired conditions and improve access, connect visitors to key experiences, and protect resources.” Both of these are available on [the IVUMC web page](#) in several different formats. Source: Michael Rees, IVUMC.

### **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.

- *Channel Islands NP* – On January 24th, the Marine Conservation Institute presented its Blue Park Award to three agencies – the California Department of Fish and Wildlife, NOAA’s Office of National Marine Sanctuaries and the National Park Service for their collaborative efforts in meeting the highest science-based standards for protection and management of the northern Channel Islands Marine Protected Areas (MPAs). In order to receive it, the three agencies had to go through a rigorous evaluation using science-based criteria, including an assessment of the biological significance of the area, the strength of their regulations, and their management effectiveness. Source: Jorge Mercado, [Santa Barbara News-Press](#).
- *Mammoth Cave NP* – The remnants of a huge fossilized shark head have been found in one of Mammoth Cave’s walls. The shark fossil, which dates to around 330 million years ago, was first spotted alongside several others by two Mammoth Cave experts who were conducting investigations of the area. The remains likely belong to a species known as *Saivodus striatus*, which lived during the Late Mississippian geological period. For much of the Mississippian period, which lasted between 359 and 323 million years ago, the area that is now Kentucky was submerged beneath shallow tropical seas. As a result, many marine fossils are found in the area. Shark skeletons are made of cartilage, which does not fossilize as well as bone so is rarely preserved. Shark teeth fossils, on the other hand, are commonly found all over the world. Source: Aristos Georgiou, [Newsweek](#).
- *Minidoka NHS* – The park’s new visitor center will open on February 22nd. It includes a bookstore, a theater showing a new park film, a new exhibit on the history of the Japanese American incarceration, and an exhibit on first generation pioneers. The historic site contains an original guard tower, barracks and mess hall buildings from the days when thousands of Japanese Americans were interred during the war. Source: Idaho Falls [Post Register](#).

- *National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial* – When the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial was first dedicated in October 1991, it displayed the names of 12,561 officers who had died in the line of duty through the end of 1990. Now, though, the memorial holds the names of 21,183 fallen officers – and, according to an NPS study, is running out of room for new names. The number exceeds expectations in part because of the inclusion of nearly 200 historical names each year and in part because of 9/11 names. The National Capital Planning Commission will meet this week to discuss an NPS proposal dedicated to expand the memorial. The proposal is to add 15 inches to the height of the existing curved 'Walls of Remembrance' to increase space available for names. Source: Madisson Haynes, [WUSA](#).
- *Pullman NM* – The Service has awarded a \$5.8 million contract to a veteran-owned small business, Griggs Mitchell & Alma of Illinois, to stabilize the historic Administration Clock Tower Building and develop a visitor center for the national monument in Chicago. Funded by the National Park Foundation and its donors and combined with an NPS Centennial Challenge Grant, construction is scheduled to begin in February and is expected to take about a year to complete. The visitor center will provide a first stop for visitors to the monument. Exhibits and programs will share the broad stories of Pullman, including George Pullman, his company and vision. Visitors can get a glimmer of the opulence of a wood Pullman Palace Sleeping car in the entrance exhibit, get multiple perspectives on the 1894 Pullman Strike and boycott, and learn about the struggles of the African-American Pullman porters to unionize and gain rights with the company in the 1930s. Source: [National Parks Traveler](#).
- *Selma to Montgomery NHT* – The Selma Interpretative Center is set to undergo a \$2.1 million expansion. The new section will be just on the other side of the main museum. The center has become increasingly popular, with visitation doubling between its opening in 2011 and last year. The expansion will include new exhibits, photos and a theatre for 100 people. Source: Bryan Henry, [WSFA](#).

### **Briefly Noted**

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

- *Science Guide To National Parks* – A new book entitled *Scenic Science of the National Parks, An Explorer's Guide to Wildlife, Geology and Botany* is scheduled to come out on March 31st. "This really is a wonderful new book in the national park genre," says Kurt Repanshek in his review of the book in *National Parks Traveler*. "You won't find lodging details, or a long list of hiking trail recommendations. But you will find information that draws you closer to a park's natural resources, the uniqueness of the different plants and animals, and some of the amazing geological details. It's content perfect to entice the aspiring scientist or nature writer into the parks and possibly into a lifelong vocation or avocation." The balance of the article consists of an interview with authors Emily Hoff and Maygen Keller. Source: Kurt Repanshek, [National Parks Traveler](#).
- *Time Lapse Videos Of Grand Canyon* – The current edition of *Outside* has a video/videos (2:34 running time) with pretty spectacular [time-lapse images](#) taken from various vantage points and at all times of day. Check it out! Source: [Outside](#).

### **Commenting On NPS Projects**

An alphabetical listing of National Park Service projects – physical, paper and otherwise – which have solicited public comments, plus due dates and URL's to related sites. Park names for new entries are in **boldface**.

- *Alaskan Parks* – All of the parks in Alaska have opened up their proposed park compendium changes for 2020 for public review and comment. Links to each of the dozen parks can be

found at [Alaska Region's proposed compendium changes webpage](#). Comments are due by February 15th.

- *Arches NP* – EA analyzing the effects of allowing bicycle use on the newly constructed Arches Visitor Center Connector Trail. [PEPC webpage](#). Closes February 11th.
- *Everglades NP* – The Corps of Engineers' Jacksonville District is seeking comments the final EIS for the Everglades Agricultural Area Southern Reservoir and Stormwater Treatment Area. The relevant documents can be found at [this link](#); look for item #35 titled “Central and Southern Florida, Everglades Agricultural Area” located under the multiple counties section of environmental documents by county. Closes February 24th. Send comments by email to [EAAReservoir@usace.army.mil](mailto:EAAReservoir@usace.army.mil) or to U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Jacksonville District, ATTN: Andrew LoSchiavo, 701 San Marco Boulevard, Jacksonville, Florida 32207-8175.
- *Ozark NSR* – Proposed temporary closure on the taking, pursuing or releasing of all feral swine within the park in order to support interagency efforts to eliminate feral swine in Missouri. [PEPC webpage](#). Closes February 11th.
- *Voyageurs NP* – Possible expansion of tour boat operations. [PEPC webpage](#). Closes February 8th.

## **Climate and Conservation**

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

### **National and Worldwide Issues**

Reports on the national and international climate and conservation crisis.

- *Climate Models Show Global Heating Accelerating* – More good news on the climate front, this time from *Bloomberg Green*: “There are dozens of climate models, and for decades they’ve agreed on what it would take to heat the planet by about 3° Celsius,” writes the author. “It’s an outcome that would be disastrous—flooded cities, agricultural failures, deadly heat—but there’s been a grim steadiness in the consensus among these complicated climate simulations. Then last year, unnoticed in plain view, some of the models started running very hot. The scientists who hone these systems used the same assumptions about greenhouse-gas emissions as before and came back with far worse outcomes. Some produced projections in excess of 5°C, a nightmare scenario.” So why the sudden increase? “Researchers are starting to put together answers, a task that will take months at best, and there’s not yet agreement on how to interpret the hotter results. The reason for worry is that these same models have successfully projected global warming for a half century.” Source: Eric Roston, [Bloomberg Green](#).

### **National Park System Issues**

**Climate Change** – News concerning the impacts of climate change on park lands, waters, species and other assets.

- *Devils Tower NM* – The park recently published a report on advances in the use of scenario planning as a tool to evaluate the vulnerability of park features and develop potential management actions in light of climate change. In the report, entitled [Climate Change Scenario Planning for Resource Stewardship: Applying a Novel Approach in Devils Tower National Monument](#), the authors describe how a team of subject matter experts pioneered an approach for including “robust climate-resource scenarios” in a comprehensive NPS planning process. The park elaborated on this methodology in a press release: “In recent years, scenario planning has been used to consider the breadth of uncertainty around climate change vulnerability in

places like Badlands National Park and Apostle Islands National Lakeshore. These earlier efforts suggest the tool can benefit planning efforts across the National Park System, and lessons drawn from this groundbreaking work at Devils Tower are being applied in the development of guidance for climate change specialists and managers across the NPS.” Source: [National Park Service](#).

**Native Flora and Fauna** – Recent news pertaining to the protection, propagation and advancement of species now or formerly native to the national parks:

- *Isle Royale NP* – With the moose population at Isle Royale approaching historical highs (there are an estimated 2,060 at present), the Michigan House of Representatives is asking the National Park Service to allow a moose tag lottery hunt on the island. As part of the 2018 environmental impact study leading to the introduction of new wolves, the NPS explored several alternatives. Those included a moose hunt, which residents had suggested during public hearings. Statutory law does not, however, allow a hunt on Isle Royale. The NPS also identified other obstacles, including logistics, increased staffing requirements, removal of carcasses from the landscape, and the impacts to wilderness character. The park’s superintendent says that the Service does not intend to revisit the issue. Source: Garrett Neese, [Daily Mining Gazette](#).
- *Fire Island NS* – A federal court has ruled that the Service’s plan to control the park’s deer population complied with the National Environmental Policy Act. The 2015 management plan for white-tailed deer within the seashore relies primarily on culling and hunting to reduce the deer population. The NPS sufficiently considered alternative options before it decided on a combination of direct reduction and fertility control, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit said on February 3rd. The government considered and rejected a non-lethal alternative because it found that fertility control alone would take too long. Source: [Bloomberg Law](#).

**Ecosystems and Habitat** – News about actions that affect park and adjoining ecosystems and habitat:

- *Big Cypress NP* – Environmentalists have called on Gov. Ron DeSantis to step in to stop another oil drilling plan in the Everglades, one potentially much bigger than the one he halted late last month with the announcement of a land buyout in western Broward County. A letter has been sent to the governor urging him to stop a Texas company’s oil exploration activities in the park. Burnett Oil Company holds state and federal permits to look for oil across 110 square miles of the preserve by using heavy trucks that vibrate metal plates against the ground to detect the presence of oil. Signing the letter were the Center for Biological Diversity, Natural Resources Defense Council, 1,000 Friends of Florida, Southern Alliance for Clean Energy, and Sierra Club. A map included in the article shows the location of the area of concern. Source: David Fleshler, [South Florida Sun Sentinel](#).
- *Everglades NP* – On January 27th, the *New York Times* published a powerful piece by Nina Burleigh about the prospect of losing the Everglades due to the many threats to the ecosystem. “Where it’s not diverted or blocked by human engineering, the water [that’s essential to the Everglades] still trickles south at the rate of a quarter mile a day, as it has for millennia. But it is profoundly imperiled by pollution, human schemes to drain and control it, animal and plant invasives and sea level rise. As salt water breaches the limestone bedrock around the Florida peninsula and enters the aquifer, this natural freshwater wonder is threatened like never before.” She then provides an overview of the extraordinary Everglades ecosystem, itemizes the threats to its existence, and provides examples of some of the successes conservationists have had in arresting its decline. Source: Nina Burleigh, [New York Times](#).

**Park Carrying Capacity** – Management challenges pertaining to the balance between park protection and use.

- *Southern Utah Parks* – There’s an article in the current issue of *Outside* about the overcrowding of Utah’s big national parks entitled “Utah Wanted All the Tourists. Then It Got Them.” In 2012, the state hired a company to promote its biggest national parks – Arches, Canyonlands,



Zion, Bryce and Capitol Reef. The company developed a campaign called “The Mighty Five,” which proved to be hugely successful. “The campaign introduced to the mainstream a type of adventure that for decades had only a cult following,” writes the author. “Unlike traditional park fare—peaks, woods, wild animals—canyons are an acquired taste, less achievement and more mystery, an immersion into the stone innards of creation that can be at once sensual, hallucinatory, and religious.” The result? “The number of visitors to the five parks jumped 12 percent in 2014, 14 percent in 2015, and 20 percent in 2016, leaping from 6.3 million to over 10 million in just three years. The state coffers filled with sales taxes paid on hotels and rental cars and restaurants.” The long, thoughtful and provocative article that follows examines the impacts of this huge spike in tourism (particularly in Moab) and the state’s attempts to mitigate the problem by diverting visitors to other locales. Source: Mark Sundeen, [Outside](#).

**External Issues** – Management issues related to usage or development in culturally or naturally sensitive areas abutting or passing through parks.

- *Everglades NP* – As if the park doesn’t have enough issues already: A toll road – the Southwest Central Corridor – is being proposed that would threaten the Everglades and communities that rely on its water. This road would likely slice through nine counties between Collier and Polk, creating 140 miles of “hardscape” through some of the region’s best remaining natural and agricultural areas. “Public policy at all levels of government often operates in mysterious and conflicting ways,” writes the author in an opinion piece. “But simultaneously spending billions of dollars to accelerate Everglades restoration while also developing this toll road should leave every resident of south Florida scratching their heads.” Source: Ray Christman, Fort Myers [News-Press](#).
- *Grand Canyon NP* – The debate continues over the huge new development planned for Tusayan, right outside the park’s entrance. On January 23rd, the Tusayan Town Council voted unanimously to approve a revised proposal for roads and utility easements connecting to parcels of land they own that are surrounded by the Kaibab National Forest. An Italian company called Stilo, the developer and co-applicant, owns the vast majority of those parcels, the 200-acre Ten-X Ranch and 160-acre Kotzin Ranch. A revised proposal now goes to USFS for review (an earlier one was rejected by Kaibab NF). Source: Elizabeth Whitman, [Phoenix New Times](#).

## The Coalition

Summary of recent developments within the Coalition, including some of the actions that CNPCA took on your behalf.

- *Ebikes On Alaskan Park Trails* – The Coalition has submitted comments to ARO expressing our concerns over the NPS proposal to allow the use of ebikes on designated bike trails at units of the National Park System in Alaska. [Link to comments](#).
- *Oil And Gas Leasing* – Executive council member Sarah Bransom has submitted a letter to the editor of the *Daily Camera* (Boulder, Colorado) expressing support for HR 3225 (the Restoring Community Input and Public Protections in Oil and Gas Leasing Act) and urging Rep. Neguse to cosponsor and support the legislation. [Link to letter](#).

Source: Emily Thompson, Communications and Advocacy Coordinator.

## Park People

### **National Park Service Recent NPS Management Changes**

Here’s a listing of recent personnel changes in the NPS. Click on the links following the brief summaries for additional details:

- *Chattahoochee River NRA* – Bill Cox, the park’s superintendent since 2013, retired on January 3rd, bringing to a close 40 years of federal service in the NPS, DOD, EPA and USAF. Source: [National Park Service](#).
- *Gettysburg NMP/Eisenhower NHS* – Steven D. Sims began his new duties as superintendent of the two parks on January 21st. Joining him for a 120-day detail as acting deputy superintendent is Kristina Heister, currently superintendent at Upper Delaware S&RR. Source: [Gettysburg Connection](#).
- *Virgin Islands NP/Virgin Islands Coral Reef NM* – Nigel A. Fields will take over management of these two areas on February 16th. He’s served as the acting superintendent of both park units since December 2018. Source: [The Saint Thomas Source](#).

## **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.

- *Voyageurs NP* – At the request of the Ontario Provincial Police, park rangers from Voyageurs directed the rescue of an International Falls woman who was seriously injured in a snowmobile accident on Rainy Lake on Saturday, January 28th. The accident occurred near Breezy Island in Stokes Bay on the Canadian side of the border and 30 miles from the nearest road. Doreen Piekarski was riding with a group of six when her snowmobile struck a rock and went airborne for about 40 feet, dumping her onto the ground. Piekarski subsequently told her friends that she could not move her legs. Rangers Larry Johnson, David Little and Mike Larsen, all emergency medical technicians, responded, stabilized her and requested a life flight helicopter because of the possibility of a spinal injury. Due to bad weather, which prevailed throughout the incident, a life flight helicopter from Duluth (150 miles south) was unable to get to the park, so arrangements were made for a life flight helicopter from Kenora, Ontario (100 miles northwest of the park). Park pilot Scott Evans flew the park airplane to meet the helicopter and guided it to the scene. The patient was loaded on the helicopter and transported to International Falls Hospital. She was later taken to St Mary’s Hospital in Duluth, where she is being treated for a fractured vertebrae. Submitted by Chief Ranger Bruce McKeeman.
- *Mount Rainier NP* – The road to Paradise was closed on February 2nd and will remain closed until crews locate and repair water lines which were damaged during the 5.0 earthquake which struck the Puget Sound area on the evening of January 28th. Water service is now out to all facilities at Paradise, a popular winter area. The exact cause of the problem is still under investigation. Efforts to fix the problem have been hampered by a snow accumulation of between 15 and 20 feet throughout the area. No damage estimates are currently available, nor is it certain when Paradise will reopen. Submitted by J. Milton.
- *Joshua Tree NP* – On January 24th, rangers Jeff Ohlfs and Colin Smith were on a field trip to a Cahuilla Indian village site as part of an ARPA training course when they and the other 41 state and federal officers on the trip came upon two men illegally collecting pot sherds from the ancient village, which is on private land. Since the two rangers possessed state peace officer authority, they held the suspects - Steve Irvin, 37, and Buddy Morris, 44, both of La Quinta - and coordinated the investigation until the on-duty BLM ranger could arrive. The two men were charged in California court for ARPA violations and possession of a concealed handgun. Submitted by CRO.

## **Acknowledgements**

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

- Production: Steve Pittleman
- Regular Correspondents: Don Hellmann, Dennis Burnett, Rick Smith, and Duncan Morrow
- Issue Contributors: Michael Rees, 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.

\* \* \* \* \*

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 employee (GS, wage grade, seasonal, temporary, or SES) 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](#).

--- ### ---