



The Coalition Weekly Report Wednesday, January 13, 2021

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Incidents

Washington Area Parks Preparations Underway For Potential Inaugural Disruptions

The National Park Service has joined other federal agencies in taking steps to assure that the inaugural set for next Thursday is free from the kind of insurrectionist disruptions and violence seen last week at the Capitol.

The Washington Monument will be closed through January 24th and other NPS facilities around D.C. will be temporarily closed due to "credible threats" from groups involved in the January 6th Capitol invasion. The park released a statement on Monday that said, in part:

"[The] the National Mall and Memorial Parks is implementing temporary closures of National Park Service public facilities, parking areas and roadways in response to credible threats to visitors and park resources. Groups involved in the January 6, 2021 riots at the US Capitol continue to threaten to disrupt the 59th presidential inauguration on January 20, 2021. This includes the set up and execution of inaugural events, which occur in several park areas. In response, the National Park Service will suspend tours of the Washington Monument beginning January 11, 2021 through January 24, 2021 and may institute temporary closures of public access to roadways, parking areas and restrooms within the National Mall and Memorial Parks if conditions warrant, to protect public safety and park resources."

D.C. Mayor Muriel Bowser wrote a letter Sunday requesting that the United States Department of Homeland Security boost its security preparations for the January 20th presidential inauguration to ensure the safety of those involved in the event. She also asked that the Secretary of the Department of the Interior cancel any and all public gathering permits in D.C. and to deny any applications for public gathering permits between January 11th and January 24th.

Last week, the NPS announced that protest applications for inauguration week are coming in and, by law, they can't be denied unless they pose a clear specific threat.

[Full story, including text of NPS statement.](#) Source: KOMO News.

Independence NHP Seven Charged With Felonies In Building Vandalism

Seven people are facing felony charges after at least two federal buildings in Philadelphia were vandalized on New Year's Eve and the discovery of what police said were Molotov cocktails and other suspicious devices.

Officers reported spotting about 50 people, all in black, around 8:30 p.m. Thursday at the historic U.S. Customs House, and a man was seen throwing a brick through the windows of a federal building and courthouse shortly thereafter. Damage to the federal building was estimated at \$3,000. Anti-police and anti-prison graffiti were scrawled on walls, a sheriff's van was defaced, and several windows were broken.

Adam McVicker, 25, of Coatesville, is accused of throwing the brick and is charged with criminal mischief and related counts, as are Dustin Callahan, 24, of Farmingdale, New Jersey; Allison Donohue, 23, of Wallingford; and Josey Augustine, 31, of Royersford.

Additionally, Jacob Robotin, 25, of Willow Grove; Sydney Miller, 22, of Philadelphia; and Meredith Tooker, 26, are charged with attempted arson and risking a catastrophe, along with other counts, including conspiracy.

Robotin was carrying a glass jar with a fuse that had "a strong flammable odor," as well as a plastic container with white powder labeled "Fire Starter." Miller had bottles with liquids that had "a chemical smell."

Numerous Molotov cocktails and other devices were recovered.

[Full story](#). Source: Associated Press.

Petroglyph NM Video Reveals Visitor Resistance That Led To Taser

A day after the media expressed shock over a video of a man being tasered by a ranger while in the park, expanded video footage subsequently revealed showed the victim lying and refusing police orders for seven minutes.

In the expanded footage, Darrell House, who gave a different name to the officer, repeatedly refused to identify himself and walked away despite requests to stay with his female companion and a dog.

The incident took place on Sunday, December 27th. What began as a friendly interaction and request by the ranger to avoid the area sacred to Native Americans ended when House began filming the officer, refused to put his dog down as asked, and started yelling, "Help!" At that point, the unidentified ranger tasered House. Even after he was tasered, House refused the ranger's orders.

"While the incident remains under investigation," said the park in releasing the additional video, "we are sharing more details and the facts as we know them in an effort to provide as much transparency as possible. Prior to the officer using his electronic control device, or taser, the officer attempted to resolve the interaction with an educational contact and simple warning. During this initial interaction, both individuals provided fake names and dates of birth to the officer."

[Full story](#). Source: Paul, Bedard, *Washington Examiner*.

Mount Rushmore NP Woman Arrested For Ascending Monument

A 20-year-old Indiana woman who ascended Mount Rushmore at night has been released after pleading guilty to one federal charge of illegally climbing the national memorial.

Molly Venderley appeared before a federal magistrate judge in Rapid City, on January 4th, the day after a park ranger coaxed her down from the talus pile below George Washington's lapel, some 200 feet up the monument. She told the ranger she'd climbed the mountain at night to elude detection.

Venderley was "sober, cooperative and uninjured" according to law enforcement reports, but a ranger found a bottle of champagne and a fake ID after searching Venderley's vehicle in the memorial's

parking lot. Two female companions with what reports described as a "large amount of camping gear" were also questioned at the scene, but Venderley maintained she hiked the memorial alone.

[Full story](#). Source: Christopher Vondracek, *West Central Tribune*.

Mount Rainier NP Visitor Killed In Accidental Fall

The body of a 65-year-old woman was recovered from a steep slope near Ricksecker Point in the southwest corner of the park this past Sunday. She'd died in an accidental fall.

Searchers were able to locate her body on Saturday and confirmed that she was dead. A ground team returned to the area on Sunday and recovered her body using a helicopter.

Twenty-two National Park Service employees, with assistance from 13 Mountain Rescue Association personnel and one person from Pierce County Fire District 23, worked to recover the body from the steep, hazardous terrain.

[Full story](#). Source: KOMO News.

Golden Gate NRA Woman Rescued After Car Plunges From Cliff Near Fort Funston

Firefighters rescued a woman who "miraculously" survived after her vehicle plunged off a cliff on Christmas Day.

Shortly before 8:40 a.m., firefighters responded to reports of the vehicle leaving the roadway near Ft. Funston off Skyline Boulevard. When they arrived, they found the wrecked vehicle about 200 feet below on Funston Beach, and rescued a woman who they found to be in "miraculously stable condition." They took her to an ambulance at a Noriega Street access point. She was taken to a trauma center, where at last notice she remained in serious condition.

The fort's cliffs, which have been a popular hangout spot for hikers and hang-gliders, has also been a regular site of visitor rescues, with firefighters responding to the site to rescue a father and son in September and as recently as Wednesday to rescue a person with a dog.

[Full story](#). Source: *Los Angeles Times*.

National Park System Follow-ups On Previously Reported Incidents

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

- *Hawaii Volcanoes NP* – The eruption of Kilauea volcano has entered its second week. Scientists continue to monitor the activity within the rising lava lake at the summit. The U.S. Geological Survey's Hawaiian Volcano Observatory says the activity is confined to the summit caldera, with lava erupting from vents on the northwest side of the crater. HVO says there is no indication that additional magma is currently moving into the rift zones beyond the summit area. Meanwhile, rangers have cited dozens of people who have gathered to watch the volcano's eruption. Rangers said that those cited had ventured into dangerous areas to take photos and videos of the volcano eruption. [Full story \(and images\) on eruption](#); [full story on citations](#). Sources: Big Island Video News, Associated Press.
- *Yellowstone NP* – A Utah man has pleaded guilty after authorities said he was caught digging in a park cemetery in search of hidden treasure. Rodrick Dow Craythorn, 52, of Syracuse, Utah, entered a plea on January 4th in U.S. District Court in Casper to illegally excavating or trafficking in archaeological resources and to damaging federal property. He could face up to 12 years in prison and \$270,000 in fines when sentenced March 17th. Craythorn was

searching for a treasure chest containing coins, gold and other valuables left in the backcountry a decade ago by Santa Fe, New Mexico, art and antiques dealer Forrest Fenn, who published a book with a poem containing clues to where the treasure could be found. Craythorn caused more than \$1,000 in damage by digging in the Fort Yellowstone Cemetery between Oct. 1, 2019, and May 24, 2020, prosecutors alleged. [Full story](#). Source: Associated Press.

National Fire Situation

National Interagency Fire Center Little Fire Activity Reported

The national preparedness level remains at PL 1.

One new large fire was reported in Florida. Seven large fires were contained, including the Dolan and Rattlesnake fires in California.

Resource Commitment Trend

Category	December 11	December 18	January 8
Area Command Teams	0	0	0
NIMO Teams	0	0	0
Type 1 Teams	0	0	0
Type 2 Teams	0	0	0
Crews	11	8	0
Engines	32	21	2
Helicopters	2	5	0
Total FF/Overhead	539	280	11

Fires/Acreage

Category	2010-2019 Ave	2021 Total	Difference
United States: YTD Fires	167	176	+ 9
United States: YTD Acres	5,838	841	- 4,997

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

December 18 – The president signed into law the following:

- [S. 1982](#), to improve efforts to combat marine debris (Public Law 116–224).
- [H.J. Res. 107](#), making further continuing appropriations for fiscal year 2021. The bill extends funding for all federal agencies through December 20, 2020 (Public Law 116–225).

December 20 – The president signed into law [H.J. Res. 110](#), making further continuing appropriations for fiscal year 2021. The bill extends funding for all federal agencies through December 21, 2020 (Public Law 116–226).

December 22 – The president signed into law the following:

- [H.R. 1520](#), making further continuing appropriations for fiscal year 2021. The bill extends funding for all federal agencies through December 28, 2020 (Public Law 116–246).
- [H.R. 3349](#), to authorize the Daughters of the Republic of Texas to establish the Republic of Texas Legation Memorial as a commemorative work in the District of Columbia (Public Law 116–248).

December 23 – The president signed into law the following:

- [H.R. 3465](#), to authorize the Fallen Journalists Memorial Foundation to establish a commemorative work in the District of Columbia and its environs (Public Law 116–253).
- [S. 1014](#), to establish the Route 66 Centennial Commission (Public Law 116–256).

December 27 – The president signed into law [H.R. 133](#), making consolidated appropriations for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2021, providing coronavirus emergency response and relief (Public Law 116–260). This law funds all federal agencies through the remainder of FY 2021. For provisions affecting the National Park Service, see the entry for H.R. 133 under House Actions, below.

December 31 – The president signed into law [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 (Public Law 116–282).

Senate Actions

116th Congress

December 20 – The Senate passed the following bills:

- [S. 2827](#), to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to conduct a study of African American burial grounds.
- [H.J. Res. 110](#), making further continuing appropriations for fiscal year 2021. The bill extends funding for all federal agencies through December 21, 2020. The bill now goes to the president to be signed into law.
- [H.R. 5458](#), to authorize the Department of the Interior to acquire, by donation, approximately 40 acres of specified nonfederal land for inclusion in Rocky Mountain National Park in Colorado. The bill now goes to the president to be signed into law.
- [H.R. 7460](#), to extend the authority for the establishment by the Peace Corps Commemorative Foundation of a commemorative work to commemorate the mission of the Peace Corps and the ideals on which the Peace Corps was founded. The bill now goes to the president to be signed into law.
- [H.R. 5852](#), to redesignate the Weir Farm National Historic Site in the State of Connecticut as the "Weir Farm National Historical Park". The bill now goes to the president to be signed into law.

December 21 – The Senate passed the following bills:

- [S. 2429](#), to reauthorize the Coral Reef Conservation Act of 2000 and to establish the United States Coral Reef Task Force.
- [H.R. 3250](#), to require the Secretary of the Interior to conduct a special resource study of the sites associated with the life and legacy of the noted American philanthropist and business executive Julius Rosenwald, with a special focus on the Rosenwald Schools. The bill now goes to the president to be signed into law.

- [H.R. 5472](#), to redesignate the Jimmy Carter National Historic Site as the "Jimmy Carter National Historical Park". The bill now goes to the president to be signed into law.
- [H.R. 5126](#), to require individuals fishing for Gulf reef fish to use certain descending devices. The bill now goes to the president to be signed into law.
- [H.R. 1492](#), to authorize the inclusion of 160 acres of land by donation as part of the Yucca House National Monument in Colorado. The bill now goes to the president to be signed into law.
- [H.R. 1520](#), making further continuing appropriations for fiscal year 2021. The bill extends funding for all federal agencies through December 28, 2020. The bill now goes to the president to be signed into law.
- [H.R. 133](#), making consolidated appropriations for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2021, and providing coronavirus emergency response and relief. The bill now goes to the president to be signed into law. For information about the provisions affecting the NPS, see the House action on H.R. 133, below.

December 31 – The Senate passed the following bills:

- [H.R. 4044](#), to amend the Federal Water Pollution Control Act to reauthorize the National Estuary Program. This bill reauthorizes for FY 22- FY 26 and revises the National Estuary Program, which provides grants to protect or restore estuaries of national significance by expanding the types of projects that qualify for grants under the program, such as projects that address issues related to coastal resiliency, stormwater runoff, or accelerated land loss. The bill now goes to the president to be signed into law.
- [H.R. 1472](#), to rename the Homestead National Monument of America near Beatrice, Nebraska, as the Homestead National Historical Park. The bill now goes to the president to be signed into law.

January 1 – The Senate voted to override the president's veto of [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 81 yeas to 13 nays (two-thirds of those present voting to override). H.R. 6395 now becomes law without the president's signature. [See House action of December 8th in the coalition's weekly report of December 16th, for a list of the provisions that affect the NPS.](#)

January 3 – The Senate ended its business for the 116th Congress and adjourned at 11:45 a.m.

117th Congress

January 3 – The Senate convened for the First Session of the 117th Congress at 12 noon pursuant to the 20th Amendment of the Constitution.

January 3 – The Senate agreed to the following:

- [S. Res. 1](#), establishing a Committee to Inform the President of the United States that a quorum of each House is assembled.
- [S. Res. 2](#), informing the House of Representatives that a quorum of the Senate is assembled.
- [S. Con. Res. 1](#), to provide for the counting on January 6, 2021, of the electoral votes for President and Vice President of the United States.
- [S. Con. Res. 2](#), extending the life of the Joint Congressional Committee on Inaugural Ceremonies and authorizing the use of the rotunda and Emancipation Hall of the Capitol by the Joint Congressional Committee on Inaugural Ceremonies in connection with the proceedings and ceremonies conducted for the inauguration of the President-elect and the Vice President-elect of the United States.

House Actions

116th Congress

December 20 – The House passed law [H.J. Res. 110](#), making further continuing appropriations for fiscal year 2021, by a vote of 329 yeas to 65 nays. The bill extends funding for all federal agencies through December 21, 2020.

December 21 – The House passed [H.R. 133](#), making consolidated appropriations for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2021, and providing coronavirus emergency response and relief. This bill is a result of the Senate and House interior appropriations subcommittee conferees resolving the differences in their two versions of the bill. There were several provisions of this bill that affect the National Park Service as follows:

Division G: Interior Appropriations – Division G provides a total of \$3.123 billion in discretionary appropriations for the National Park Service in FY 2021, a decrease of \$254.6 million from the FY 2020 appropriation, but \$330 million more than the president’s budget request. The decrease from the FY 2020 appropriation is almost all a result of the Land and Water Conservation Fund annual appropriation now being a mandatory appropriation due to passage of the Great American Outdoors Act. NPS land acquisition amounts are not counted among the discretionary appropriations amount mentioned above. The reduction from the FY 2020 level also is a result of a \$23 million rescission of unobligated land acquisition funds and a few smaller reductions in other accounts. However, when the mandatory appropriations from the Great Americans Outdoors Act (\$1.3 billion for deferred maintenance projects, and \$473.8 million for NPS land acquisition and related grant programs from the Land and Water Conservation Fund) are added to the discretionary appropriations, the total funding for NPS and related grant programs in FY 2021 is \$4.89 billion. This total appropriation is divided among the following accounts:

- \$2.688 billion for Operation of the National Park System (ONPS), an increase of \$111.3 million above the FY 2020 enacted level and \$171.6 million above the president’s budget request. The amount appropriated for ONPS includes:
 - \$8.3 million for new responsibilities for new and existing parks;
 - \$22 million for rebuilding the workforce of NPS;
 - \$36.3 million for fixed costs;
 - \$10.28 million for Everglades restoration;
 - \$135.9 million for repair/rehab projects;
 - \$188 million for cyclic maintenance;
 - \$5 million to the National Park Foundation for Centennial matching projects;
 - \$3.9 million for Partnership Wild and Scenic Rivers;
 - \$15.2 million for the National Trails System;
 - \$8 million for the United States Semiquincentennial Commission, and
 - \$3.3 million for the 400 Years of African American History Commission Act.
- The conference report approved the transfer of \$3.3 million in NPS funds as well as the associated employees to a consolidated departmental ethics office under the Office of the Solicitor.
- \$74.1 million for National Recreation and Preservation, an increase of \$3 million above the FY 2020 enacted level and \$40 million above the president’s budget request. Within the account, the bill provides:
 - \$10.7 million for the Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance Program;
 - \$3 million for the Chesapeake Gateways and Watertrails Network;
 - \$1.9 million for the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Grants program; and
 - \$22.8 million for National Heritage Area grants.
- \$144.3 million for the Historic Preservation Fund, an increase of \$25.6 million above the FY 2020 enacted level and \$103.6 million above the president’s budget request. Within this amount, the bill includes:
 - \$70.6 million for State and Tribal Historic Preservation Offices;
 - \$25 million for Save America’s Treasures grants;
 - \$7.5 million for competitive grants for National Register eligible or listed properties;
 - \$10 million for competitive grants for Semiquincentennial National Register state-owned listed properties;

- \$21 million for competitive grants to preserve the sites of the Civil Rights movement; and
- \$10 million for grants to Historically Black Colleges and Universities.
- The conference report noted the appropriations committees continued concern about the Department's draft regulation of March 1, 2019, to modify the longstanding procedure used to nominate properties for inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places and reiterated its directive to complete meaningful government-to-government consultation with Tribes, other federal land management agencies, State and tribal historic preservation officers, or other key stakeholders prior to finalizing or implementing the rule.
- \$223.9 million for Construction, which is a decrease of \$165.4 million from the FY 2020 enacted level and \$31.2 million above the president's budget request.
- \$15 million for the Centennial Challenge program, which is equal to the FY 2020 enacted level and \$15 million above the president's budget request.

Division G: Additional NPS-Related Provisions – The following provisions affect the National Park Service:

- Sec. 113 increases the ceiling for appropriations from \$15 million to \$17 million for the America's Agricultural Heritage Partnership (Silos and Smokestacks) and from \$10 million to \$12 million for the Lackawanna Valley National Heritage Area.
- Sec. 118 makes permanent the authority for NPS to classify monies received into the Medical Service Fund as offsetting receipts for the ten national parks that provide medical services to employees and visitors in their parks.
- Section 120 authorizes the National Park Service to convey lands to Virginia and the District of Columbia for purposes of transportation and recreation for the so-called Long Bridge project (a railroad, bicycle and pedestrian access project across the Potomac River).
- Sec. 423 extends the authority to collect fees under the Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act through October 1, 2022.
- Section 430 continues a provision restricting oil and gas leasing activities within a designated area surrounding Chaco Culture National Historical Park.
- Section 432 requires the Secretary of Interior to conduct a special resource study of sites associated with the 1908 Springfield, Illinois Race Riot.
- Section 434 requires the secretary of the interior to allocate funds from the Great American Outdoors Act for land acquisition and deferred maintenance projects to each bureau within the department within 45 days of enactment of the appropriations act.

Further, the conference report lists the individual deferred maintenance projects that will be eligible for \$1.3 billion in funding from the Great American Outdoors Act. The report also lists the allocation of \$473.8 million for NPS and various grant programs from the Land and Water Conservation Fund as follows:

- \$43.3 million for federal land acquisition within park boundaries
- \$6 million for NPS land acquisition contingencies
- \$14.5 million for NPS recreational access acquisitions
- \$4 million for NPS emergencies, hardships, relocations, and deficiencies
- \$11.5 million for NPS inholdings, donations, and exchanges
- \$14.5 million for NPS acquisition management
- \$220 million for state conservation grants
- \$15 million for state conservation grants administration
- \$125 million for LWCF Outdoor Recreation Legacy Grants (projects in economically disadvantaged urbanized areas)
- \$20 million for the American Battlefield Protection Program (state and local battlefield acquisitions)

Division N: Additional Coronavirus Response and Relief – Subtitle B, Sec. 274 allows individuals whose Social Security payroll taxes were deferred in 2020 to have until December 31, 2021 to repay those taxes, and requires that interest and penalties not begin to be accrued until January 1, 2022.

Division O: Extensions and Technical Corrections – Title X, Sec. 1002, repeals several criminal penalties for violations that do not involve serious wrongdoing, at least not serious enough to warrant criminal prosecution and the consequences of a criminal record. This includes the unauthorized use of the “Smokey Bear” character or name, the “Woodsy Owl” character, name, or slogan, or “The Golden Eagle Insignia.”

Division T: New Museums – Establishes, within the Smithsonian Institution, the Women’s History Museum and the National Museum of the American Latino. To the maximum extent practicable, the museums will be located on or near the National Mall in the District of Columbia. The secretary of the Smithsonian is required to consult with a variety of individuals, including the director of the National Park Service, on the establishment of both museums.

Division Z: Energy Act of 2020 – Title III, Subtitle B, requires the Secretary of the Interior to establish a program to improve interagency cooperation for solar, wind, and geothermal permits on federal land with the goal of permitting at least 25 gigawatts (GW) of electricity from wind, solar, and geothermal projects by 2025.

Division AA: Water Resources Development Act of 2020 – Title III, Sec. 324 of the bill provides additional funds for the Central Everglades ecosystem restoration project. There are additional provisions in the bill that affect related water projects that could impact the Everglades. Further, the bill has provisions related to dams, waterways, lakes, or rivers that could potentially impact national park sites adjacent or near these water resources.

Division FF: Other Matters – Title II – Public Lands. Sec. 201, authorizes a boundary adjustment of Saguaro National Park in the State of Arizona, increasing the park by approximately 1,152 acres. Sec. 202, designates New River Gorge National River in the State of West Virginia as the New River Gorge National Park and Preserve.

December 21 – Besides [H.R. 133](#) mentioned above, the House also passed [H.R. 1520](#), making further continuing appropriations for fiscal year 2021. The bill extends funding for all federal agencies through December 28, 2020. This bill was passed to prevent a lapse in appropriations while work was completed by the Senate on H.R. 133, and to allow the president time to sign that bill into law.

December 28 – The House passed H.R. 9051, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to increase economic recovery rebate amounts to \$2,000 for individuals, by a vote of 275 yeas to 134 nays.

December 28 – The House voted to override the president's veto of 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 322 yeas to 87 nays (two-thirds of those present voting to override). The bill now goes to the Senate for a vote on the veto override. [See House action of December 8th in the coalition’s weekly report of December 16th for a list of the provisions that affect the NPS.](#)

December 31 – The House agreed to the Senate amendment to H.R. 1923, to require the Secretary of the Treasury to mint and issue quarter dollars in commemoration of the Nineteenth Amendment, which gave women the right to vote. The bill now goes to the president to be signed into law.

January 3 – The House ended its business for the 116th Congress and adjourned at 11:58 a.m.

117th Congress

January 3 – The House convened for the First Session of the 117th Congress at 12 noon pursuant to the 20th Amendment of the Constitution.

January 3 – The Honorable Nancy Pelosi of California was elected Speaker of the House of Representatives and received 216 votes. The Honorable Kevin McCarthy received 209 votes, The Honorable Tammy Duckworth received 1 vote, and The Honorable Hakeem Jeffries received 1 vote.

January 3 – The Chairman of the Democratic Caucus, Representative Jeffries, announced the election of Representative Hoyer as the Majority Leader, Representative Clyburn as the Majority Whip and Representative Clark (MA) as Assistant Speaker. The Chairman of the Republican Conference, Representative Cheney, announced the election of Representative McCarthy as the Minority Leader, and Representative Scalise as the Minority Whip.

January 3 – The House agreed to the following:

- [H. Res. 3](#), to inform the Senate that a quorum of the House has assembled and of the election of the Speaker and the Clerk.
- [H. Res. 4](#), authorizing the Speaker to appoint a committee to notify the President of the assembly of the Congress.
- [H. Res. 5](#), authorizing the Clerk to inform the President of the election of the Speaker and the Clerk.
- [S. Con. Res. 1](#), to provide for the counting on January 6, 2021, of the electoral votes for President and Vice President of the United States.
- [S. Con. Res. 2](#), extending the life of the Joint Congressional Committee on Inaugural Ceremonies and authorizing the use of the rotunda and Emancipation Hall of the Capitol by the Joint Congressional Committee on Inaugural Ceremonies in connection with the proceedings and ceremonies conducted for the inauguration of the President-elect and the Vice President-elect of the United States.
- [H. Con. Res. 1](#), regarding consent to assemble outside the seat of government.

January 3 – The House agreed to [H. Res. 9](#), electing Majority Members to certain standing committees of the House of Representatives as follows:

- Committee On Appropriations: Ms. DeLauro, Chair.
- Committee On Natural Resources: Mr. Grijalva, Chair.
- Committee On Oversight And Reform: Mrs. Carolyn B. Maloney of New York, Chair.

January 3 – The House agreed to [H. Res. 10](#), electing Minority Members to certain standing committees of the House of Representatives as follows:

- Committee On Appropriations: Ms. Granger, ranking member.
- Committee On Natural Resources: Mr. Westerman, ranking member.
- Committee On Oversight And Reform: Mr. Comer, ranking member.

January 5 – The House passed [H.R. 22](#), to require the budget justifications and appropriation requests of agencies be made publicly available, by a vote of 412 yeas to 2 nays.

January 6 – Pursuant to the provisions of S. Con. Res. 1, and the requirements of the Constitution and laws relating to the election of President and Vice President of the United States, the two Houses of Congress met in joint session with Vice President Pence as the presiding officer to count the electoral votes. The following votes were cast for President: Joseph R. Biden, Jr. of Delaware, 306; and Donald J. Trump of Florida, 232. The following votes were cast for Vice President: Kamala D. Harris of California, 306; and Michael R. Pence of Indiana, 232. After announcing the results of the certification process, the Vice President announced that the Joint Session was dissolved and that the results of the proceedings had during the Joint Session would be entered into the Journals of both Houses.

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.

- *Badlands NP* – The Badlands Search & Rescue Service has received a donation of equipment to help its mission. The West Fargo Police Department reached out to the team in recent months and inquired if they had a need for any radio communications gear. North Dakota Public Safety agencies are currently undergoing phases to a new radio system and had a large number of radios that were still serviceable and useable. The department's first thought was of BSAR, as many of their members make the journey to the western region of the state to hunt each year. As the radios were decommissioned from use by WFPD, they were programmed for BSAR use with nationwide interoperability channels that are mandated by both federal and state rules, as well as state frequencies to communicate with other public safety agencies, national SAR channels for team communications, and the maritime distress frequency for boaters to call for aid and/or speak directly to search and rescue during incidents. BSAR received 20 Motorola 1500 and 2500 handheld radios, complete with rechargeable batteries and charging stations as well as shoulder microphones. [Full story](#). Source: *Williston Daily Herald*.
- *Colonial NHP* – The park has begun a shoreline protection and enhancement project along the western shore of the York River near Indian Field Creek and Felgates Creek. This phase of the project is part of an overall plan to protect about three miles of York River shoreline northwest of the Navy pier in order to maintain the stability of the Colonial Parkway. The work will protect and enhance wetland habitats as well as offer protection to archaeological sites. In addition, the project will enhance oyster habitats to improve water quality in the York River and the Chesapeake Bay. [Full story](#). Source: Kaylynn Stephens, WAVY News.
- *Gates of the Arctic NP&P* – In the latest step in a longstanding dispute between mining advocates and environmentalists, federal and state entities signed a 50-year right of way permit for the controversial Ambler Road project on January 6th. The permit was signed by BLM, the NPS and Alaska's state-owned development corporation — the Alaska Industrial Development and Export Authority. It allows the privately-owned road to pass through lands controlled by the federal government. A company called Ambler Metals LLC, a subsidiary of British Columbia-based Trilogy Metals, hopes to use the road to access copper, gold, zinc and other mineral deposits in the area, in cooperation with the NANA regional Native corporation. The road would stretch 211 miles from the Dalton Highway to the Ambler Mining District east of Kotzebue along the Kobuk River. Environmentalists are most opposed to the part of the project that would cross Gates of the Arctic National Park and Preserve. [Full story](#). Source: Wesley Early, KTOO News.
- *George Washington MP* – The park recently named Marine Evolutions, Inc., the new operator of Belle Haven Marina. The company will provide services for the next decade. The marina provides access to the Potomac River and is one of three along the parkway. MEI previously took charge of a clean-up at the marina, which included the removal of abandoned property. They are committed to sustainability of the environment. Improvements will be achieved with the installation of self-siphoning baskets to collect debris from the river. MEI also plans to host trash pick-up events for members of the Alexandria community who want to help keep the shoreline clean. [Full story](#). Source: Kevin Dauray, TheZebra.com.
- *Olympic NP* – In a recent report, NASA estimated that one spot on the Olympic Peninsula received 255.41 inches of rain in 2020 -- tops in the Lower 48, according to the NOAA's Weather Prediction Center, which ranked each state's rainiest spot via the model estimate. The Olympic rain forest is statistically the wettest spot in the Lower 48, with over 200 inches of rain on average a year in its higher elevations. The jet stream relentlessly carries storms with heavy rain into western Washington over much of the autumn and winter; the Olympics block much of the precipitation from going any further east, so it falls on the peninsula. [Full story](#). Source: Scott Sistik, KOMO News.
- *Virgin Islands NP* – DOI and EHI Acquisitions, an affiliate of CBI Acquisitions, LLC, the current operator of Caneel Bay Resort, have reached an understanding to move forward with negotiations toward a long-term lease for Caneel Bay Resort and for the NPS to begin the next phase of environmental site assessments at the property. Caneel Bay Resort closed following

Irma and Maria, the back-to-back Category 5 hurricanes that devastated the U.S. Virgin Islands in 2017. Spokespersons for the two organizations issued this statement: “This good faith understanding is an important next step for both parties toward a long-term lease for the future operation of the property and subsequently the future of tourism and prosperity in the local economy. In addition to the recovery and reopening of the resort, addressing environmental stewardship remains a top priority. The parties will work cooperatively and in good faith to define and develop any necessary actions concerning environmental matters at Caneel Bay. Following Interior and EHI reaching this agreement, the NPS will now resume environmental site assessments at the property to evaluate appropriate next steps, including whether and to what extent cleanup and remediation may be necessary.” [Full story](#). Source: Cission PR Newswire.

- *Yellowstone NP* – “In its recently unveiled, first-ever autonomous vehicle pilot set to unfold at Yellowstone National Park in May,” reports *Nextgov*, “the National Park Service has an eye on the future—and its next generation of visitors, who will likely be tech-savvy and extremely online.” A spokesman for the park offered this rationale for the vehicles: “The demographics and the visitor profiles that we’ll see in the future—right, we’re going to have people who have grown up with the internet, people who have grown up with smartphones—and I think visitors are going to expect to have an enhanced technological experience in national parks.” Proponents are optimistic about the outcome of this trial run: “[By] this time next year, we should have strong findings for future opportunities.” [Full story](#). Source: Brandi Vincent, *Nextgov*.

The Federal Government

News from around the federal government – including DOI, kindred agencies and the courts – of consequence to the NPS.

- *Court Rules On Wildlife Taking On NPS Inholdings* – The 10th Circuit has upheld the National Park Service’s determination that a regulation which generally prohibits the taking of wildlife in national parks does not apply to park “inholdings.” The court ruled that the National Parks Conservation Association and the Greater Yellowstone Coalition lack standing to challenge the Service’s approval of the 2015 Elk Reduction Program in Grand Teton National Park. [Full article, including a link to the court’s 63-page-long ruling](#). Source: Courthouse News Service.
- *Reinstating Superintendents’ Coronavirus Closure Authority* – Rep. Raúl Grijalva, D-Ariz., chairman of the House Natural Resources Committee, has urged President-elect Biden to reinstate National Park Service superintendents’ ability to close sites or sections of them due to coronavirus outbreaks. “Current [Interior Department] policies are wholly insufficient and fail to provide basic protections for employees and the public,” he wrote in a [letter](#) in mid-December. “According to recent news reports, roughly 150 [NPS] employees tested positive for COVID-19 between March and September.” [Full article, including a link to Grijalva’s letter](#). Source: Courtney Buble, *Government Executive*.

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 embedded in each entry.

- *Statement Issued On DC Insurrection* – The Coalition issued a [short statement](#) on the chaos and violence in Washington, D.C. this week, saying, “a peaceful transition of power lies at the heart of our democracy. It is the foundation of our country. If we don’t protect that American ideal, all of our other efforts to preserve and protect America’s Best Idea, our national parks, will be in vain. We are horrified by this insurrection and wholeheartedly condemn the acts of violence occurring today in our nation’s capital.”

- *Passing of Gary Everhardt* – CPANP issued a statement on the loss of former NPS Director Gary Everhardt. Phil Francis, a friend of the family, spoke highly of Everhardt's long service in the NPS and his dedication to the mission. You can read our [press statement](#) here, and click here for other [newspaper interviews](#) related to his death.
- *MBTA EIS* – The Coalition joined 31 other organizations in [signing a letter](#) to USFWS in response to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Final Environmental Impact Statement regarding regulations governing migratory birds.
- *Interim Final Rules on Rulemaking SOPs* – CPANP also [signed on to a letter](#) commenting on the interim final rule to revise rulemaking procedures to implement Executive Order 13891 entitled "Promoting the Rule of Law Through Improved Agency Guidance Documents."

Source: Emily Thompson, Communications and Advocacy Coordinator.

Park People

Passages

A listing of the deaths of retired and active NPS employees over the past few months:

- *Gary and Nancy Everhardt* – Former Director Gary Everhardt, 86, passed away on Sunday, December 27th, following a battle with COVID-19. His wife, Nancy, died from the same cause on December 23rd. Everhardt was born on July 8, 1934 in Lenoir, North Carolina. He graduated from North Carolina State University in 1957 with a degree in civil engineering. Following his graduation, Everhardt began his NPS career as an engineer, rising through the ranks to become superintendent of Grand Teton National Park in 1972. He was appointed as the ninth director of the National Park Service by President Gerald Ford in January 1975 and served through the end of the Ford Administration. As director, Everhardt led America's Bicentennial planning and celebration, doubled the acreage of land protected as part of the National Park System (adding over 30 million acres, primarily in Alaska), and oversaw significant advancements in interpretive programming and visitor services. Under Everhardt's leadership, the NPS also welcomed many firsts: first national symposium on urban recreation; the first national conference on scientific research; the first Native crafts sales program in the parks; and the first international park publication, *PARKS*. After serving as director, Everhardt returned to the field as the superintendent of the Blue Ridge Parkway in 1977, serving for 23 years until his retirement in 2000. At Blue Ridge Parkway, Everhardt championed significant projects to make the Parkway safe and accessible for visitors, expanded ranger-led programming, constructed new trails, supported the addition of arts destinations like the Asheville Folk Art Center and Blue Ridge Music Center, and invested in growing partnerships between the park and local communities. His long list of awards includes DOI's highest honor, the Distinguished Service Award, which he received in 1985. The headquarters of the Blue Ridge Parkway is also named for him. Nancy, Everhardt's wife for 60 years, was often found side-by-side to her husband. She was a fixture in their communities and family, and actively engaged with her adopted NPS family. Everhardt and his wife are survived by their two children Karen and Phil. Condolences can be sent to Phil Everhardt, 5446 Ashbury Lane, Davidson, NC 28036. Gary's daughter Karen resides in Blacksburg, Virginia. Phil has asked that in lieu of flowers, donations be made to the Coalition to Protect America's National Parks or to the Blue Ridge Parkway Foundation. [Full story](#). Source: National Park Service.

From The Archives

This section contains incidents taken from *Morning Report* issues published during the corresponding week (approximately) 25 years ago in 1996. All entries appear in the original verb tense; "submitters" are those people who originally submitted the incident report.

- *Petrified Forest NP* – A man driving a van from California to Arizona picked up a hitchhiker near the state line on December 7th. The hitchhiker, later identified as Robert Martinez, a career criminal, subsequently threatened the driver and made him pull off Interstate 40 at the Petrified Forest exit. The driver complied, but fled on foot with the van's keys after stopping. He walked seven miles before calling the county sheriff's office for assistance. Meanwhile, Martinez forced open a gate to the park maintenance yard and stole a GSA Ford Ranger pickup truck and a small generator. The truck was found to be missing at 7 a.m. on the 8th, and a description was entered into NCIC. Later that afternoon, a Forest Service investigator called the park to advise that an informant had told him of a government-owned generator that had been offered to him for sale. The investigator followed-up on the lead, found the GSA truck at a motel in Albuquerque, ran a check on it, learned that it was stolen, and notified the park. Surveillance of the area was begun. Martinez returned that evening and got in the truck and left before Forest Service officers could stop him. They pursued him, but backed off when speeds became excessive. Martinez drove through several traffic control signs and devices until he struck another vehicle. The truck rolled over, and Martinez was partially ejected. Martinez was admitted to the hospital with serious injuries. The driver of the other vehicle suffered only minor injuries. Investigation revealed that Martinez has a 25-year criminal history, that he'd been arrested 25 times, and that he operated under at least eight other names. Charges are pending. Submitted by Chief Ranger Pat Quinn.
- *Organ Pipe Cactus NM* – Rangers Pennington, Tillman and Moosman were the first emergency units to arrive at Lukeville on the Mexican border as part of the multi-agency response to the bus accident that killed 26 people in Mexico on January 1st. First reports were that from 10 to 100 seriously injured patients were en route to Lukeville via Mexican Red Cross ambulances from the scene of the accident between two commercial passenger buses, which occurred about 14 miles south of the border town of Sonoyta. Eight air ambulances from hospitals in Tucson and Phoenix and EMS units from Pima, Ajo, the Tohono O'odham Nation and Arizona DPS also responded. The rangers were involved in incident command, patient triage and direct patient treatment. A total of 52 people were involved in the accident. Most of those who weren't killed were seriously injured. Seven patients with major injuries were air-lifted from Lukeville; remaining victims were taken to Mexican hospitals until those facilities were filled. Submitted by Chief Ranger Aniceto Olais.
- *Shenandoah NP* – The blizzard which struck the eastern United States over the past weekend deposited significant amounts of snow in the park; Big Meadows, for example, had 47 inches of snow, with drifts of over ten feet. Even though backcountry camping permits had not been issued since the beginning of the partial government shutdown, the park learned of at least three stranded backcountry groups within the park and of a fourth on private land just outside the park's boundary. The crews of supporting National Guard and Park Police helicopters made contact with each of the parties on Tuesday, January 10th, and dropped them food, shelters, equipment and survival information. Park plows reached a party of three located at Lewis Mountain campground that evening. They had contacted the park's communications center from a pay phone in the closed campground, and credited the survival information with saving their lives. The park also received over a dozen reports (with varying levels of confirmation) of other hikers who could be in Shenandoah. Intensive investigation has resolved most of these reports, but there is a significant probability that there are other hikers stranded in the park. Efforts were underway yesterday to reach the previously identified parties, most of whom are ten or more miles from the nearest plowed road, and to find any other hikers. The incident management team is concentrating on utilizing plows and the park's snowblower to reach stranded visitors and park residents. Other winter travel methods have proven to be ineffective in the deep, light, fluffy snow. Incident objectives include deadlines for completing most work prior to the next significant snowfall, forecast for tomorrow. Clayton Jordan is incident commander. Submitted by Greg Stiles.

A Closing Observation

"Ability to see the cultural value of wilderness boils down, in the last analysis, to a question of intellectual humility. The shallow minded modern who has lost his rootage in the land assumes that he has already discovered what is important; it is such who prate of empires, political or economic, that will last a thousand years. It is only the scholar who appreciates that all history consists of successive excursions from a single starting point, to which man returns again and again to organize yet another search for a durable scale of values. It is only the scholar who understands why raw wilderness give definition and meaning to the human enterprise."

Aldo Leopold, *A Sand County Almanac*

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- Production: Steve Pittleman
- Regular Correspondents: Don Hellmann, Emily Thompson, Dennis Burnett, Rick Smith, Duncan Morrow and Mark Forbes
- Issue Contributors: Cathy Halainen, Bob Martin, Bill Walters, John Townsend

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.

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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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