



The Coalition Weekly Report

Wednesday, July 22, 2020

Volume 4

Number 25

Incidents

Systemwide Wildlife And Visitor Incidents

As is the case during most summers, reports on incidents pertaining to contacts between native species and visitors – intentional, accidental or otherwise – are on the increase. Here are a few that have come in lately:

- *Yellowstone NP* – A 37-year-old Missouri woman was hiking alone on Fairy Falls Trail near the Old Faithful geyser last week when she was knocked down by grizzly bear. The woman tried using bear spray and then notified others of the attack. She received minor injuries to her face and a scratch on her thigh, but declined medical attention. The bear was with her cub and was acting naturally to defend it. Source: [East Idaho News](#).
- *Assateague Island NS* – A man has been charged with trying to ride one of the park's protected wild horses. The charge stems from an incident depicted on social media that appears to show a man attempting to ride one of the horses. This instance comes a week after a horse kicked a woman after she approached the animal wielding a shovel. The woman didn't appear to be seriously injured as a result of the kick. Source: [Salisbury Daily Times](#).
- *Yellowstone NP* – A black bear was killed by wildlife managers after it brazenly walked into a backcountry campsite, bit one of the five campers, and then began eating their food. The incident took place around 5 p.m. on July 6th at a campsite located roughly three miles from the Hellroaring Trailhead in northern Yellowstone. The backpackers — three adults and two children — had been sitting outside of their tents when the bear walked up and bit a woman on her arm and head, inflicting bruises and minor cuts. The adult son then nipped at one of the children's hands and got into the group's food, which had not yet been hung from a storage pole. The group left the area and contacted the park; when rangers arrived at the scene on horseback, the bear was still in the campsite eating the backpackers' food. A decision was made to kill the bear because of concerns about human safety and the fact that the bear entered an occupied campsite, bit a person and received a considerable food reward after this behavior. Source: [Powell Tribune](#).
- *Glacier NP* - A Kalispell woman sustained minor injuries on the morning of July 11th when she collided with a young grizzly bear on Huckleberry Lookout Trail. The woman was the lead runner in a group of three when she ran into the bear. Both the woman and the bear tumbled off the trail together; once they separated, the bear ran off. The woman reported the incident to park officials at 9 a.m. She was self-transported Kalispell Regional Medical Center for further treatment and evaluation. Rangers have concluded that the surprise encounter was an isolated

incident. No other bear encounters have been reported and rangers have posted the trail with warnings about bears. Source: [KECI News](#).

- *Yellowstone NP* – A Montana woman played dead to avoid injury when she fell in front of a charging bison last week. A video taken by another visitor – which can be seen at the link below – shows the woman and another person running from two charging bison. As the closer bison nears, the woman trips and falls to the grass. She lays completely still while the bison, within a fraction of the second, catches up to her position. 'Play dead! Play dead!' people can be heard screaming at her as the bison prances around her body and eventually moves away from her. She suffered no injuries. Source: [Daily Mail](#).

Grand Teton NP

Trail Crew Members Save Visitor's Life

Park trail crew members were working in the Inspiration Point area around noon on Tuesday, July 7th, when they were approached by a visitor yelling for help. The visitor explained that a man was pinned in fast moving water about a half mile above Inspiration Point and needed help.

James Hemus, 23, was hiking Cascade Canyon with two other individuals when he slipped on some logs while playing in Cascade Creek. His leg was pinned between some rocks amid very cold and fast-moving water. His hiking companions and other hikers in the area tried to extract him from the situation with no success.

Trail crew members arrived and assessed the situation, including Hemus' injuries and deteriorating medical condition. Hemus was succumbing to the water's frigid temperature and pressure and was challenged to stay above the rushing water.

Trail crew members and other bystanders used rope from the crew's supplies to leverage a system to maintain Hemus' head and shoulders out of the water, as well as physically holding him above the water. They also created a rope system to remove Hemus from the rocks. After several attempts from a variety of angles, Hemus' leg was freed.

Park rangers arrived on scene to provide additional first aid and extract Hemus from the scene via helicopter short haul to Lupine Meadows. A park ambulance transported him to St. John's Health in Jackson.

Source: [KTAK News](#).

National Park System

Follow-ups On Previously Reported Incidents

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

- *Carlsbad Caverns NP* – The family of the man who was shot and killed by a ranger has filed a wrongful death claim against the federal government. The claim accuses the Park Service of negligence, assault and battery and false imprisonment and also of destroying evidence, as 26 seconds are missing from the ranger's body camera footage. Filing the claim is the first step in filing a lawsuit and the involved federal agencies have six months to investigate the case and respond to the plaintiffs. Mike Smith, [Carlsbad Current-Argus](#).
- *Gettysburg NMP* – Adam Rahuba, 38, a former concert promoter and part-time food-delivery driver and DJ, has been identified as the anonymous figure behind a number of social media hoaxes — the most recent played out in Gettysburg on Independence Day — that have riled far-right extremists in recent years and repeatedly duped partisan media outlets. They've often been amplified by right-wing commentators and covered as real news by media outlets such as Breitbart News and the Gateway Pundit. "The hoaxes, outlandish in their details, have spurred fringe groups of conspiracy-minded Americans to action by playing on partisan fears," reports the *Washington Post*. "They have led to highly combustible situations — attracting heavily

armed militia members and far-right activists eager to protect values they think are under siege — as well as large mobilizations of police.” The newspaper examined Rahuba’s activities in detail. The resulting article “provides a rare inside look at the work of a homegrown troll who uses social media to stoke partisan division. It shows that in an era of heightened sensitivity about disinformation campaigns carried out by foreign nations, bad-faith actors with far fewer resources can also manipulate public discourse and affect events in the real world.” Source: Shawn Boburg and Dalton Bennett, [Washington Post](#).

National Fire Situation

National Interagency Fire Center No Large Fires Reported In Any NPS Area

The national preparedness level remains at PL 3.

Large fire activity continues across the United States. The 45 large fires now active have together burned more than 428,000 acres in 15 states. New large fires were reported Monday in California, Idaho, Louisiana, Montana, Nevada, and Utah.

Park And Park-Related Fires

No large fires are reported in any NPS unit.

Resource Commitment Trend

Category	June 30	July 7	July 21
Area Command Teams	0	0	0
NIMO Teams	1	1	1
Type 1 Teams	1	1	3
Type 2 Teams	4	4	2
Crews	82	98	152
Engines	267	256	396
Helicopters	49	66	53
Total FF/Overhead	4,198	4,232	5,759

Fires/Acreage

Category	2010-2019 Ave	2020 Total	Difference
United States: YTD Fires	32,562	29,207	– 3,355
United States: YTD Acres	3,046,380	1,761,531	– 1,284,849

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

June 30 – The Committee on Energy and Natural Resources held a hearing to examine the impacts of the COVID–19 pandemic in the territories. Testimony was heard from Representatives Sablan, Radewagen, Plaskett, González-Colón, and San Nicolas. There were no witnesses from federal agencies at the hearing.

June 30 – The Committee on Foreign Relations held a hearing to examine COVID–19 and United States international pandemic preparedness, prevention, and response. Testimony was heard from Jimmy Kolker, former Department of Health and Human Services Assistant Secretary for Global Affairs, and public witnesses.

June 30 – The Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs held a hearing to examine the nomination of Derek Kan, of California, to be Deputy Director of the Office of Management and Budget, where the nominee testified and answered questions in his own behalf.

June 30 – The Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions held a hearing to examine COVID–19, focusing on an update on progress toward safely getting back to work and back to school. Testimony was heard from Robert R. Redfield, Director, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and Administrator, Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry, Anthony S. Fauci, Director, National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, National Institutes of Health, Brett P. Giroir, Admiral, Assistant Secretary for Health, U.S. Public Health Service, and Stephen M. Hahn, Commissioner of Food and Drugs, Food and Drug Administration, all of the Department of Health and Human Services.

July 1 – The Senate agreed to:

- [S. Res. 641](#), designating April 13, 2020, as “National Borinqueneers Day”. The Borinqueneers is the nickname of the 65th Infantry Regiment of the U.S. Army during the Korean War, which is from the original Taino Indian name for Puerto Rico (Borinquen). The regiment was awarded the Congressional Gold Medal on April 13, 2016.
- [S. Res. 629](#), designating June 2020 as “Great Outdoors Month”.
- [S. Res. 634](#), designating July 30, 2020, as “National Whistleblower Appreciation Day”.

July 1 – The Committee on Indian Affairs held an oversight hearing to examine the response and mitigation to the COVID–19 pandemic in Native communities, including [S. 3650](#), to amend the Indian Health Care Improvement Act to deem employees of urban Indian organizations as part of the Public Health Service for certain purposes. Testimony was heard from Rear Admiral Michael D. Weahkee, Director, Indian Health Service, Department of Health and Human Services; Robert Fenton, Region 9 Administrator, Federal Emergency Management Agency, Department of Homeland Security; Scott J. Davis, North Dakota Indian Affairs Commission Executive Director, Bismarck; and Lisa Elgin, National Indian Health Board, Washington, D.C.

July 2 – The Senate agreed to [S. Res. 648](#), designating August 2020 as “National Women's Suffrage Month”.

July 2 – The Committee on Appropriations Subcommittee on Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education, and Related Agencies held a hearing to examine Operation Warp Speed, focusing on researching, manufacturing, and distributing a safe and effective coronavirus vaccine. Testimony was heard from Francis Collins, Director, National Institutes of Health, Robert R. Redfield, Director, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and Gary Disbrow, Acting Director, Biomedical Advanced Research and Development Authority, all of the Department of Health and Human Services.

House Actions

June 29 – The Committee on Natural Resources held a hearing entitled “The U.S. Park Police Attack on Peaceful Protesters at Lafayette Square”. Testimony was heard from public witnesses. There were no witnesses from the department or other federal agencies at the hearing.

June 30 – The House agreed to [H. Res. 1001](#), recognizing June 19, 2020, as this year's observance of the historical significance of Juneteenth Independence Day.

July 1 – The House passed [H.R. 2](#), to authorize funds for Federal-aid highways, highway safety programs, and transit programs through FY 2025, by a vote of 233 yeas to 188 nays. The bill includes an authorization of funding for various programs affecting national park roads, bridges, and infrastructure. As passed by the House, the bill includes the following:

- Sec. 1101, to authorize \$400 million for NPS from the Federal Lands Highways Program for each of FY 2022 through 2025; and 400 million for each of FY 2022 through 2025 for the Federal Lands and Tribal Major Projects Program (projects that because of their high cost would likely use of large portions of the annual Federal lands highways funding available to NPS).
- Various sections include provisions for programs to address climate change, clean energy, federal oil and gas orphan well remediation, wildlife-vehicle collision reduction, repairing and replacing wastewater and drinking water infrastructure, and EPA programs to protect large aquatic ecosystems including the Chesapeake Bay, Puget Sound, the Great Lakes, and Long Island Sound, as well as to reauthorize the National Estuary Program.
- Sec. 82101, to establish a special account in the treasury for each federal land management agency for the deposit of rental fees received by the federal land management agency for communications use authorizations (CUA) on federal lands. The fees are to be used to support activities associated with the CUAs.
- Sec. 82201-82206, to establish the Outdoor Recreation Legacy Partnership within NPS, which is a matching grant program for communities to acquire land and water for parks or recreation purposes or to develop new or existing outdoor recreation facilities in urban areas for underserved communities. Funding for this program would come from the Gulf of Mexico Energy Security Act (GOMESA) and is authorized for FY 2020 through 2058.
- Sec. 82301, to remove the ceiling on the amount for which the Presidio Trust can issue loans from the Secretary of the Treasury to private lenders financing capital improvements at the Presidio of San Francisco within Golden Gate National Recreation Area.
- Sec. 82501, to authorize 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. 83201-83402, to authorize the establishment of the National Wildlife Corridor System with the ability to designate national wildlife corridors among various federal agencies including the secretary of the interior.
- Sec. 83601, to reauthorize the Chesapeake Gateways and Watertrails Network through FY 2025.

July 7 – The House Appropriations Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies approved [H.R. 7612](#), the FY 2021 Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Appropriations bill by a vote of 30 yeas to 19 nays. As approved, the bill provides \$3.22 billion for National Park Service, a decrease of \$153 million from the FY 2020 enacted level and \$431 million above the president's budget request. The decrease in funding is a result of several things, including legislation that makes the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) mandatory spending instead of discretionary spending that the committee appropriates each year in the bill, a large reduction in the Construction account as noted below, and a transfer of some funds to the department for a consolidated ethics office for all bureaus. These reductions were somewhat offset with increases for other programs. When you include the amounts for LWCF noted below, total funding for NPS and its programs will be \$3.82 billion in FY 2021. The bill includes the following appropriations:

- \$2.776 billion for Operation of the National Park System (ONPS), an increase of \$200 million above the FY 2020 enacted level and \$261 million above the president's budget request. This

increase includes funding for 1,200 new staff at park units. The committee provided NPS with \$34.7 million to pay for fixed costs. The committee 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. Within the ONPS account, there is \$135.9 million for repair/rehab projects in parks, \$188.1 for cyclic maintenance projects, and \$5 million for matching Centennial grant funding for the National Park Foundation. There is also an \$800,000 increase to the National Trails System program. Of note, is a \$5 million decrease in funding for the U.S. Park Police's (USPP) Washington, D.C. operations. The committee said that DOI and NPS have failed to provide the committee with the information requested in the June 3, 2020 letter to Secretary Bernhardt and Acting Chief Monahan regarding the use of aggressive action against peaceful protesters in Lafayette Park on June 1, 2020. The NPS is directed to provide this information within 10 days of enactment of this Act. The bill reported by the committee includes language that reduces USPP funding by \$50,000 for each day that this directive is not fulfilled.

- \$74.29 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 committee provides \$3 million for the Chesapeake Gateways and Watertrails Network, \$3.1 million for Japanese Confinement Site Grants, and \$24 million for National Heritage Area grants. There is bill language included that waives the matching requirement for the heritage area grants for FY 2021.
- \$136 million for the Historic Preservation Fund, an increase of \$18 million above the FY 2020 enacted level and \$96 million above the president's budget request. Within this amount, the bill includes \$71 million for State and Tribal Historic Preservation Offices, \$25 million for Save America's Treasures grants, \$22 million for competitive grants to preserve the sites and stories of underrepresented community civil rights, and \$10 million for grants to Historically Black Colleges and Universities.
- \$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. The committee does not include funds to rehabilitate the Fort Vancouver National Historic Site to serve as a new regional office location and no funds are provided to relocate the Park Service's Pacific West Regional Office (Regions 8, 9, 10, and 12) from its current location in the San Francisco Bay Area, California.
- \$15 million for the Centennial Challenge program.
- With the impending enactment of the Great American Outdoors Act, [H.R. 1957](#), all \$900 million of the Land and Water Conservation Fund would be mandatory spending each fiscal year. However, H.R. 1957 gives the appropriations committees the ability to allocate LWCF spending among the various land management agencies and for other specific programs. As such, in FY 2021, the committee allocates the National Park Service \$124 million for federal land acquisition; \$295 million for the state grant program; and \$18 million for the American Battlefield grant program.
- 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 ability of NPS to classify monies received into the Medical Service Fund as offsetting receipts for the ten national parks that provide medical services in their parks.
- Section 121 allows 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 431 extends the authority for the Chesapeake Gateways and Watertrails Network for one year through the end of FY 2021.
- Section 432 continues a provision restricting oil and gas leasing activities within a designated area surrounding Chaco Culture National Historical Park.
- Section 441 prohibits funds to be used by the National Park Service to purchase or display the Confederate flag for non-educational purposes.

- Section 442 requires the National Park Service to remove from display all physical Confederate commemorative works.
- Section 443 requires the Secretary of the Interior to submit to the Committee on Appropriations an inventory of all assets under the Department's jurisdiction with Confederate names.
- Section 445 requires the Secretary of Interior to conduct a special resource study of sites associated with the 1908 Springfield Race Riot.
- Section 446 transfers and allocates amounts becoming available for expenditure from the Land and Water Conservation Fund upon enactment of the Great American Outdoors Act, H.R. 1957, of the 116th Congress.

In addition to above, the committee included several directives to NPS in the committee report to accompany the bill. Among them were:

- a requirement that the Department of the Interior provide the committee with a plan for outfitting all law enforcement officers with body cameras within 120 days of the bill's enactment;
- a recommendation to DOI to divert additional resources to support the state and local partners conducting coral reef monitoring, research, and restoration efforts in highly impacted and high priority coral reef habitats in U.S. waters, including in Biscayne National Park and Dry Tortugas National Park;
- an expression of the committee's support for academic internships, partnerships, and educational and outreach programs of the land management agencies and encouraging agencies to ensure that their efforts reach the widest possible audience including, but not limited to, Hispanic-Serving Institutions, Historically Black Colleges and Universities, and Tribal Colleges and Universities, as appropriate;
- an encouragement of DOI to partner with appropriate entities to support year-round environmental educational programs for kids and adults of all ages living in urban settings;
- a direction that DOI's federal law enforcement officers and Federal Law Enforcement Training Centers adopt and follow the training program required to be established by the Attorney General under the direction of a different appropriations bill that covers the use of force and de-escalation, racial profiling, implicit bias, and procedural justice, to include training on the duty of Federal law enforcement officers to intervene in cases where another law enforcement officer is using excessive force, and to make such training a requirement for federal law enforcement officers;
- a recommendation that the secretaries of the DOI and the Department of Agriculture recognize the traditional use of state-recognized community land grants, acequias, and community ditches in the American Southwest during the land use planning process and in accordance with applicable law, shall consider and, as appropriate, provide for traditional-historic uses by these entities within land management plans;
- a recommendation that DOI, including the National Park Service, participate and coordinate as an essential federal stakeholder with the EPA as it leads efforts to develop a federal government-wide Mississippi River restoration and resiliency strategy focused on improving water quality, restoring habitat and natural systems, improved navigation, eliminating aquatic invasive species, and building local resilience to natural disasters;
- a direction that DOI work with the Department of Agriculture, the Department of Homeland Security, and the Department of Defense to complete the report required in House Report 116-180 regarding mitigation for border barrier activities;
- a direction that the land management agencies of DOI and the Forest Service provide technical assistance to the Defense Health Agency as it develops a scalable and community-based wellness program focused on outdoor recreational activities for military families utilizing local, state, national parks and public lands;
- a direction that the secretary of the interior work with the Smithsonian Institution on its new initiative "Race, Community and Our Shared Future" to help the nation explore how we, as a country, understand and experience race, and how we confront its impact on communities, and specifically, in discussions on questions surrounding monuments, memorials, and other symbols, including who they are named after;

- an expectation that agencies funded in the bill publish decision rationale in the context of and in reasonable detail to the tribal input received during consultation in order to address the frustrations heard from tribes about agency failures to conduct “true” and “meaningful” government-to-government consultation and to help tribes understand how their feedback was considered;
- a direction to DOI and the Forest Service to notify the House and Senate Committees on Appropriations in advance of any proposed project specifically intending to close an area to recreational shooting, hunting, or fishing on a nonemergency basis of more than 30 days.

July 8- The Committee on Homeland Security held a hearing entitled “Examining the National Response to the Worsening Coronavirus Pandemic”. Testimony was heard from Jay Robert Pritzker, Governor, Illinois; Jason Shelton, Mayor, Tupelo, Mississippi; and public witnesses.

July 10 – The Committee on Appropriations approved [H.R. 7612](#), the FY 2021 Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Appropriations Bill, among other bills. The provisions of the bill affecting the NPS are discussed in the July 9 entry, above.

July 13 – The Committee on Natural Resources Subcommittee on National Parks, Forests, and Public Lands held a hearing on:

- [H.R. 4345](#), to direct the National Park Service, if the State of Virginia offers to convey 44 acres of identified land in Virginia, to add and administer the land as part of the Fort Monroe National Monument.
- [H.R. 4840](#), to modify the boundary of the Casa Grande Ruins National Monument to transfer a few acres from the Bureau of Land Management to NPS, to authorize a small exchange of Bureau of Indian Affairs land for NPS lands, and to provide for cooperative management of 200 acres of state trust lands.
- [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.
- [H.R. 5459](#), to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to correct a land ownership error within the boundary of Rocky Mountain National Park by authorizing an exchange of 0.18 acres of land between a private landowner and NPS.
- [H.R. 5472](#), to redesignate the Jimmy Carter National Historic Site in the state of Georgia as the “Jimmy Carter National Historical Park”.
- [H.R. 5852](#), to redesignate the Weir Farm National Historic Site in the State of Connecticut as the “Weir Farm National Historical Park”.
- [H.R. 7098](#), to expand the boundary of Saguaro National Park by approximately 1,150 acres, and to study additional land for future adjustments to the boundary of the park.
- [H.R. 7489](#), to authorize 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).

Testimony was heard from Chairman Grijalva, and Representatives Luria, Neguse, Bishop of Georgia, Himes, and Wittman; Mamie E. Locke, Member, Senate, General Assembly, Virginia; Shannon Valentine, Secretary, Virginia Department of Transportation; and public witnesses. There were no witnesses from federal agencies at the hearing.

July 14 –The Committee on Homeland Security Subcommittee on Oversight, Management, and Accountability; and Subcommittee on Emergency Preparedness, Response, and Recovery held a joint hearing entitled “Reviewing Federal and State Pandemic Supply Preparedness and Response”. Testimony was heard from Mark Ghilarducci, Director, Governor’s Office of Emergency Services, California; Chris Currie, Director, Homeland Security and Justice, Government Accountability Office; and a public witness.

July 14 – The Committee on Natural Resources Subcommittee on Energy and Mineral Resources held a hearing entitled “Energy Infrastructure and Environmental Justice: Lessons for a Sustainable

Future". Testimony was heard from public witnesses. There were no witnesses from federal agencies at the hearing.

July 14 – The Committee on Science, Space, and Technology held a hearing entitled "Sweltering in Place: COVID-19, Extreme Heat, and Environmental Justice". Testimony was heard from public witnesses. There were no witnesses from federal agencies at the hearing.

July 15 – The Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure approved [H.R. 7575](#), the "Water Resources Development Act of 2020", to provide for improvements to the rivers and harbors of the United States, and to provide for the conservation and development of water and related resources. This is the biennial legislation passed by Congress to provide authority to the Army Corps of Engineers to carry out water resources development projects and studies. Of interest to NPS are:

- Sec. 306, to increase the authorization of appropriations for the Chesapeake Bay Environmental Restoration and Protection Program.
- Sec. 307, to increase the authorization of appropriations for the Upper Mississippi River System Environmental Management Program.
- Sec. 319, to clarify that the Corps is directed to carry out the Everglades Agricultural Area modification (authorized in WRDA 2018) as part of the ongoing Central Everglades Planning Project.
- Sec. 401(5), to authorize additional work on the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan (FL), and the Anacostia Watershed Restoration (MD), among other projects.

Joint Senate and House Meetings

June 30 – The Joint Congressional Committee on Inaugural Ceremonies ordered favorably reported the designation of Senator Blunt as Chairman, designation of the 2021 Inaugural site, approval of the 2021 Inaugural budget, and designation of official staff representatives.

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.

- *Cedar Breaks NM* – The park is in the process of designing a new visitor contact station within the Point Supreme developed area. The facility will include new exhibits, an expanded book sales area, increased restroom facilities, and an outdoor covered space for interpretive programs and shelter from unpredictable weather. Comments on the plan are being taken until July 25th. Source: Kathleen Gondor, [National Park Service](#).
- *Cuyahoga Valley NP* – The park is evaluating options for restoring habitat and hydrology along the Cuyahoga River in Summit and Cuyahoga Counties. The ecology and water quality of the Cuyahoga River have improved substantially over recent decades but remain impaired. These impairments have resulted in designation of the reach of the river that runs through CVNP as an Area of Concern under the Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement. Funding for this work will be provided through the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative. Comments may be submitted until July 27th. Source: Chris Davis, [National Park Service](#).
- *Olympic NP* – The National Park Service has released an environmental assessment for the final disposition of the Enchanted Valley Chalet for a 30-day public review and comment period. This EA, which incorporates responses to comments received during the public scoping process in 2016, evaluates impacts of the proposed project on cultural and natural resources, wilderness character, and visitor use and experience. You can review and comment on it until August 2nd. Source: Penny Wagner, [National Park Service](#).

- *Paterson Great Falls NHP* – Plans are being made for a new visitor experience and education center in Overlook Park across from Great Falls. The proposed facility would be the first point of contact for the anticipated 300,000 plus visitors coming to the national park each year. It is planned as an approximately 13,000 square foot facility at the scenic falls overlook, connected to the existing footprint of the former 1915 steam generating plant. Comments are being taken on the plan until July 28th. Source: Floyd Meyers, [National Park Service](#).
- *Salt River Bay NHP & EP* – The newest NPS quarter in the United States Mint's America the Beautiful Quarters® Program has just been released. A single immature red mangrove tree appears as the focal point on the Salt River Bay quarter. The design is meant to bring awareness to the park's endangered mangrove forests and the unique and delicate nature of how the species reproduces in salt water. This coin marks the fifty-third of fifty-six strikes in the series commemorating national parks. The article tells you how you can obtain them. Source: Darrin Lee Unser, [CoinNews.net](#).

Opinions

Opinions, op-eds, and articles expressing specific opinions about issues pertaining to the national parks or national park system.

- [“Our National Parks Need Urgent Help,”](#) *Charleston Post and Courier*. Commentary by Will Shafroth, president and CEO of the National Park Foundation, on the need for the House to pass the Great American Outdoors Act. “National parks are the common ground that defines our shared history and heritage; the scenic landscapes and historical sites commemorating people, places and events that give shape to our uniquely American story... For more than a century, national parks have occupied a central place in American life. They belong to all of us, an inheritance we share, and we owe them our best.”
- [“Trump Abuses Our National Parks, And He's Doing It Again At Mount Rushmore,”](#) *The Guardian*. Op-ed by Jonathan B Jarvis and Gary Machlis on the Administration's misuse of parks for political rallies. “Trump neither comprehends [the purpose of parks] nor takes seriously his responsibilities to his fellow citizens, and he can only envision our public spaces and historical parks as taxpayer-funded stage pageant backdrops for his political rallies and photo ops, which divide rather than unite.”
- [“The Lie—And Shame—Of Alaska's Wildlife Management,”](#) *Anchorage Press*. Editorial by Anchorage nature writer Bill Sherwonit concerning the mismanagement of wildlife in Alaska. “For far too long, the state of Alaska has pushed a false narrative about its management of wildlife, one that the public has seemed willing to accept. Or perhaps most residents simply don't care. It's beyond time to end the charade and hold state officials accountable for their mismanagement, particularly of wolves and bears... It's time to hold wildlife officials—and our political leaders—accountable and change a cruel, unethical, and corrupt predator-kill system that's been shamefully out of control for far too long.”
- [“Trump Administration Wildlife Rule Will Hurt Alaska Tourism,”](#) *Cordova Times*. Guest commentary by Marybeth Holleman, author of *Among Wolves*, *The Heart of the Sound*, and other books, who chastises the Administration for setting back tourism to Alaska with its new hunting regulations. “Rather than help us recover [from the loss of tourism during the pandemic], they're setting us back by allowing shameful trophy hunting practices that are reviled by most Alaskans — including many traditional hunters. Rather than support our recovery, the Trump administration is bending to the whims of the few wealthy trophy hunters who want to kill our treasured, iconic wildlife for nothing more than bragging rights and pictures for social media... Watchable wildlife is one of our pathways to economic recovery. We need the state and federal administrations to recognize that, and to help us achieve that — not to impede our ability to find our way forward.”

- [“Park Service And 'Patriots' Failed The \[Gettysburg\] Community Last Week,”](#) *York Daily Record*. Letter to the newspaper from Britt Isenberg, a licensed battlefield guide at Gettysburg, regarding the gathering of heavily-armed right-wingers at the park last week to oppose a supposed Antifa rally (a hoax). “There were failures across the board on Saturday, from the behavior of attendees to the National Parks Service itself. The park failed in enforcing its own regulations. The National Cemetery, the most hallowed and reverential ground in this country, became the stage for playing army, blatant racism, mockery, and maybe worst of all, disrespect to the U.S. Service men and women from all wars who are interred there. All of this too occurred only yards from where President Abraham Lincoln delivered his Gettysburg Address.”

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 Change Indisputably Caused Siberian Heat Wave* – “This year’s startling heat across much of Siberia would have been all but impossible without human influence on climate change, researchers have concluded,” reports John Schwartz in the July 15th *New York Times*. “The scientists looked at two recent examples of exceptional heating in Siberia, one long-term and the other more brief. The first was the overall rise in temperature across the region from January to June, which was more than nine degrees Fahrenheit above average temperatures recorded between 1951 and 1980. The second was the astonishing spike on June 20 that put temperatures at the Russian town of Verkhoyansk at a reported 100.4 degrees, which the Russian Meteorological Service said is a record for temperatures anywhere north of the Arctic Circle. In their analysis, the scientists said climate change made the prolonged heat event 600 times as likely to occur as it would be without climate change. In a statement, Andrew Ciavarella, the lead author of the research and senior detection and attribution scientist at the Met Office, the national meteorological service for Britain, called the result ‘truly staggering.’ For all practical purposes, said Friederike Otto, acting director of the Environmental Change Institute at the University of Oxford and an author of the paper, ‘you would not have gotten an event like this without climate change.’” The article includes [a link to the report](#) that appeared in *World Weather Attribution*. Source: John Schwartz, [New York Times](#).
- *Sunny Day Flooding Increasing In U.S.* – The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration has issued [its annual report on high tide \(a.k.a. sunny day\) flooding](#). They found that high tide flooding happens twice as often as it did in 2000 and that the reason is climate induced sea-level rise. Nineteen cities and towns along the East and Gulf Coasts broke or tied their all-time high tide flooding days records in 2019, including Miami, Savannah, Charleston, and numerous locations along the Texas coastline. High tide flooding days nationwide are likely to double or even triple within ten years if we do not adapt and find a way to manage coastal areas for flooding. “Sea level rise flooding of U.S. coastlines is happening now, and it is becoming more frequent each year,” say the reports authors. “[The] National Weather Service is issuing record numbers of watches/warnings for coastal flooding, often with no storm in sight. This will become the new normal unless coastal flood mitigation strategies are implemented or enhanced.” Source: [Our Daily Planet](#).

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.

Climate Change

- *Death Valley NP* – On July 12th, the official weather observing station at Furnace Creek recorded a scorching high of 128 degrees Fahrenheit – the hottest temperature recorded anywhere on the planet since 2017 and only one degree behind what experts say is likely the hottest temperature ever recorded on Earth. Death Valley wasn't alone in recording a high temperature that weekend, though; it hit 121 degrees in Palm Springs, 116 in Phoenix, 113 in Tucson, 110 in Roswell, and 109 in Del Rio, Texas. Towns in Wyoming and Utah also hit record highs above 100 degrees. Source: Jeff Berardelli, [CBS News](#).
- *Moore's Creek NB* – Over recent years, the park has found itself at the mercy of increasingly intrusive flood waters coming off the Cape Fear River and the Black River. Major '500-year events' like hurricanes Florence and Matthew pushed six or more feet of water onto the site one right after the other, a historic amount of flooding that also affected much of the surrounding low-lying residential area. But even heavy rain events now open up floodgates, causing more frequent closures of the park due to safety concerns and inaccessibility. "Where we are now, it doesn't take a hurricane or even a particularly strong storm," said park superintendent Matthew Woods. "We can have a sunny day here, but if the Fayetteville area west of us gets even close to 3-5 inches of rain, we are going to flood and likely have to shut down portions of the park." Concerns regarding flooding have become so imperative at the battlefield that Woods said it has brought up some tough questions about how staff can adapt to the conditions, and whether they will need to abandon certain facilities and relinquish the battlefield to water in the next few decades. "Twenty to 30 years from now, based on the pattern we are seeing with this consistent flooding, I do envision that the visitor may not recognize what the park looks like," Woods said. The article also details specific impacts to park resources. Source: Hunter Ingram, [Havelock News](#).

Native/Reintroduced Species

- *North Cascades NP* – The federal government is scrapping plans to reintroduce grizzly bears to the North Cascades ecosystem. On July 7th, Secretary Bernhardt told a meeting of community members in Omak, Washington, that his agency will not conduct the environmental impact statement needed to move forward. "The Trump Administration is committed to being a good neighbor," said Bernhardt, "and the people who live and work in north-central Washington have made their voices clear that they do not want grizzly bears reintroduced into the North Cascades." A regional conservation group disagreed, noting that 80% of the people who provided public comments on the bears supported growing the population by bringing grizzlies to the backcountry in and around North Cascades National Park. Source: [King 5 News](#).
- *Yellowstone NP* – The federal government is proposing to reevaluate how it manages park bison. The NPS has decided to prepare a new NEPA analysis of bison management in the park; the Forest Service plans to participate in the process. The decision comes after lawsuits were filed in recent years challenging the agencies' management of wild bison. "This NEPA analysis will incorporate new information and changed circumstances, describe adaptive management adjustments to the IBMP since 2000, and evaluate the efforts of alternative approaches for managing bison," said the park in a court affidavit. "The appropriate NEPA process will be followed, including preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement, if necessary." The Service will engage other agencies with jurisdiction by law or special expertise in bison management during the process. "Alternative elements [in the plan] will include, but are not limited to, different bison population ranges, options for managing bison inside the park, and actions for dealing with brucellosis in bison." The analysis will also study the impacts of bison management outside of the park while pointing out that the National Park Service has no jurisdiction over the tolerance for bison outside of Yellowstone or for state or tribal bison hunts. Source: Justin Post, [Livingston Enterprise](#).
- *Sequoia/Kings Canyon NPs* – Recently reintroduced endangered California condors continue to reoccupy parts of their historic range, including the Sierra Nevada Mountains of California and adjacent foothills. According to the park, condors were seen atop Moro Rock in late May.

Historic and GPS data reveal that the birds are back to the trees and cliffs after being absent for nearly 50 years. Source: [MyNews4.com](https://www.mynews4.com).

- *Yellowstone NP* – A federal appeals court in San Francisco ruled earlier this month that the 700 or so grizzly bears living in the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem — which includes 34,000 square miles in parts of Montana, Idaho and Wyoming — will remain federally protected under the Endangered Species Act. The decision affirmed a 2018 Federal District Court ruling that required the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to put grizzly bears back on the endangered species list after the agency removed them in 2017. The ruling means it is still illegal to hunt grizzly bears for sport in the designated area. The issue has been a source of contention and lawsuits for more than a decade. In her decision, the judge echoed the Federal District Court’s ruling that the delisting had failed to consider the long-term genetic effects on other grizzly bear populations across the country. The court also ordered the Fish and Wildlife Service to “conduct a ‘comprehensive review’ of the remnant grizzly population.” The decision to delist the grizzly bear violated the Endangered Species Act because it was “the result of political pressure by the states rather than having been based on the best scientific and commercial data.” The judge’s ruling can be read [at this link](#). Source: Marie Fazio, [New York Times](#).

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.

- *Pipeline Across The AT Canceled* – Dominion Energy and Duke Energy have announced that they have canceled the proposed Atlantic Coast Pipeline project, which would have carried natural gas across the Appalachian Trail and the Blue Ridge Parkway. Both companies said that lawsuits, mainly from environmentalists aimed at blocking the project, had increased costs to as much as \$8 billion from about \$4.5 billion to \$5 billion when it was first announced in 2014. The Coalition filed a joint amicus brief in this case back in January. [Text of the Coalition’s release on this decision](#).
- *Defense Of Clean Air Act* – The Coalition and NPCA filed an amicus brief with the DC Circuit Court of Appeals in a legal challenge to the Trump Administration’s attempt to eliminate California’s authority to apply its own automobile emission standards under the Clean Air Act. In the brief, we are asking the court to deny EPA’s attempt to prevent California from setting its own vehicle emissions standards — standards that are needed to reduce air pollution, combat climate change and prevent further harm to our national parks and communities. [Text of Coalition statement, including link to the amicus brief](#).
- *Great American Outdoors Act* – Over 400 Coalition members signed a letter in support of the Great American Outdoors Act, a landmark piece of legislation that is critical to preserving and protecting our parks. [Text of letter](#).

Source: Emily Thompson, Communications and Advocacy Coordinator.

Park People

NPS Alumni Passing Of Justin Kingston

Justin Kingston, 33, a former protection ranger who worked at Cape Cod, Everglades and Lake Mead before moving on to the Secret Service, recently passed away.

Before joining the NPS, Justin served with the Marine Corps.

The following tribute accompanied the notice of his death: “Justin was the epitome of a true American patriot and public servant - always protecting our freedoms, our nation and our communities without

asking for anything in return. For those who knew Justin, it is safe to say that he always had a smile on his face, a joke to crack, but most importantly always wanted was best for everyone. For those of you who didn't know Justin, it is also safe to say that he was there for you or your family member in need.”

Source: Email notice via Dennis Burnett.

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:

- *Cape Cod NS* – Leslie Reynolds, who has been the park's chief ranger for the past eight years, has been selected as the park's deputy superintendent. Before coming to Cape Cod, she was the chief ranger at Shenandoah NP. Her background also includes service as a ranger, law enforcement officer, park medic, investigator, incident commander, and leader/mentor to park rangers. Source: CapeCodWickedLocal.com.
- *Sagamore Hill NHS* – Jonathan Parker will be the park's next superintendent, effective August 30th. Parker currently serves as the chief of interpretation at Valley Forge NHP. Before that, he was the chief of interpretation, education and partnerships at Salem Maritime and Saugus Iron Works national historic sites. Source: LI Herald.
- *Isle Royale NP* – Denice Swanke will become the park's new superintendent on August 16th. Swanke is currently acting superintendent and deputy superintendent at Denali, a post she has held since November 2016. In 2019, she served as the acting superintendent at Mount Rushmore. Source: Liz Valencia, National Park Service.
- *Valley Forge NHP* – Rosalyn “Rose” Fennell has been named the park's new superintendent; she will also oversee Hopewell Furnace National Historic Site and the Washington-Rochambeau Revolutionary Route National Historic Trail. Fennell will begin her new assignment on September 27th. She currently serves as the deputy regional director for Interior Region 1, North Atlantic – Appalachian. Source: National Park Service.
- *Nicodemus NHS* – Frank Torres will take over as the park's new superintendent in September. Torres has worked for NPS since 1989, most recently as chief of interpretation and visitor services at Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument in Arizona. He previously served as chief of interpretation at San Juan National Historic Site, supervisory park ranger at Oklahoma City and Coronado national memorials, chief of interpretation at Washita Battlefield National Historic Site, and park ranger at Petroglyph and Fort Union national monuments. Source: Hays Post.
- *Palo Alto Battlefield NHP* – Oralía Fernandez has taken over as the park's superintendent. Fernandez has more than 24 years of National Park Service experience and was most recently the AO for Palo Alto Battlefield and Padre Island. 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 1995. All entries appear in the original verb tense; “submitters” are those people who originally submitted the incident report.

- *Fire Island NS* – Around 1:30 a.m. on July 1st, four people in an 18-foot Donzi speedboat left Ocean Bay Park in the fog at a high rate of speed. The operator, who later admitted to have been drinking heavily, thought he was headed north (the boat had no compass) when he was in fact headed east, parallel with the park shoreline. The operator subsequently made a sharp

turn to the right while travelling at about 45 mph and struck the shoreline at a 45 degree angle, rolling the boat 37 feet into Sunken Forest, a quarter mile west of Sailors Haven marina. All four occupants were thrown clear of the boat along with more than a dozen empty beer cans. When two of them eventually sobered up, they realized that they were injured. The two were treated by rangers, county officers and Coast Guard EMTs, then taken to local hospitals. The operator has two previous convictions for boating while intoxicated (BWI) and was issued citations for reckless operation of a motor vessel and for littering. Submitted by Jay Lippert.

- *C&O Canal NHP* – On July 2nd, rangers arrested Larry Parkinson of Martinsburg, West Virginia, after a ranger conducting surveillance of a parking area at Lock 34 saw him enter a locked vehicle and remove a woman's purse. Parkinson had been the focus of an extensive investigation involving rangers and authorities from West Virginia and Maryland. The park alone has logged over 50 car clouts so far this year. Rangers conducted weekend surveillance of target parking areas over a two-month period, during which time information was gained that narrowed the focus on Parkinson. A search of Parkinson's vehicle led to the recovery of additional stolen property. Victims from two car clouts stopped to report the crimes while the vehicle search was in progress and discovered their property among the recovered items. Parkinson was charged with theft under 18 USC 661 and with tampering and misappropriation of property under 36 CFR; he also faces drug possession and additional car clouting charges in Maryland. Parkinson pled guilty to the theft charge under a plea agreement and was sentenced to six months in jail pending a pre-sentencing investigation. Further investigation on property recovered could lead to additional state or federal charges. Submitted by Chief Ranger's Office.
- *Mesa Verde NP* – A school group from Vidor, Texas, was having lunch in the picnic area on Chapin Mesa on July 10th when two instructors decided to play a joke on the group by pretending to push Harry Morgan, 48, into Spruce Canyon. Morgan jumped onto a ledge, lost his balance, then fell 35 feet into the canyon. Morgan suffered a fractured left hip, humerus and shoulder, a dislocated right shoulder, and closed head injuries. He was carried from the canyon, driven by park ambulance to Far View, then transported by helicopter to a hospital in Farmington, New Mexico. He is in intensive care but in stable condition. Submitted by Denise Fuller.

A Closing Observation

"I do not want to see our National Parks robbed of any of their beauty on the ground that it must be done in order to secure money sufficient to pay the expenses of maintaining them. I do not want to see any of the natural resources taken from them that would in any way mar their beauty. I think it would be the best money that Congress could spend to place the parks in a condition that they can be enjoyed by the people of the United States."

[Senator Reed Smoot](#) (R-Utah), addressing the 1916 Conference on National Parks

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, Emily Thompson, and Duncan Morrow
- Issue Contributors: Denny Huffman, Mike Murray, Mark Forbes, Bob Martin

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.

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](#).

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