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January 1 - August 31, 2017

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National Park Service  
P.O. Box 25287  
Denver, CO 80225

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## United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE  
INTERMOUNTAIN REGION  
12795 West Alameda Parkway  
P.O. Box 25287  
Denver, Colorado 80225-0287



March 16, 2018

Reference: National Park Service Intermountain Region, Reports

Subject: Freedom of Information Act Request NPS-2017-01264

This letter is in response to your Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request dated Aug. 31, 2017, in which you requested weekly reports sent by the Intermountain Region Office to the National Park Service (NPS), National Office, from Jan. 1 to Aug. 31, 2017.

We are writing today to respond to your request on behalf of the NPS. We have enclosed one file consisting of 89 pages, which is being released to you in part. Some of the information was withheld under FOIA Exemption 5, Exemption 6 and Exemption 7, subparts E and F.

Exemption 5 allows an agency to withhold “inter-agency or intra-agency memorandums or letters which would not be available by law to a party... in litigation with the agency.” [5 U.S.C. § 552\(b\)\(5\)](#). Exemption 5 therefore incorporates the privileges that protect materials from discovery in litigation, including the deliberative process, attorney work-product, attorney-client, and commercial information privileges. We are withholding portions of 18 pages in part under Exemption 5 because information included in those pages qualifies under the deliberative process privilege.

The deliberative process privilege protects the decision-making process of government agencies and encourages the frank exchange of ideas on legal or policy matters by ensuring agencies are not forced to operate in a fish bowl. A number of policy purposes have been attributed to the deliberative process privilege. Among the most important are to: (1) assure that subordinates will feel free to provide decision makers with their uninhibited opinions and recommendations; (2) protect against premature disclosure of proposed policies; and (3) protect against confusing the issues and misleading the public.

The deliberative process privilege protects materials that are both pre-decisional and deliberative. The privilege covers records that reflect the give-and-take of the consultative process and may include recommendations, draft documents, proposals, suggestions, and other subjective documents, which reflect the personal opinions of the writer rather than the policy of the agency.

The materials that have been withheld under the deliberative process privilege of Exemption 5 are both pre-decisional and deliberative. They do not contain or represent formal or informal agency policies or decisions. They are the result of frank and open discussions among employees of the Department of the Interior. Their contents have been held confidential by all parties and public dissemination of this information would expose the agency's decision-making process in such a way as to discourage candid discussion within the agency, and thereby undermine its ability to perform its mandated functions. The deliberative process privilege does not apply to records created 25 years or more before the date on which the records were requested.

Exemption 6 allows an agency to withhold "personnel and medical files and similar files the disclosure of which would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy." 5 U.S.C. § 552(b)(6). We are withholding portions of two pages in part under Exemption 6. The phrase "similar files" covers any agency records containing information about a particular individual that can be identified as applying to that individual. To determine whether releasing records containing information about a particular individual would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy, we are required to balance the privacy interest that would be affected by disclosure against any public interest in the information. Under the FOIA, the only relevant public interest to consider under the exemption is the extent to which the information sought would shed light on an agency's performance of its statutory duties or otherwise let citizens 'know what their government is up to. The burden is on the requester to establish that disclosure would serve the public interest. When the privacy interest at stake and the public interest in disclosure have been determined, the two competing interests must be weighed against one another to determine which is the greater result of disclosure: the harm to personal privacy or the benefit to the public. The purposes for which the request for information is made do not impact this balancing test, as a release of information requested under the FOIA constitutes a release to the general public.

The information that was withheld under Exemption 6 consists of personally identifiable information, and we have determined that the individual to whom this information pertains has a substantial privacy interest in withholding it. Additionally, you have not provided information that explains a relevant public interest under the FOIA in the disclosure of this personal information and we have determined that the disclosure of this information would shed little or no light on the performance of the agency's statutory duties. Because the harm to personal privacy is greater than whatever public interest may be served by disclosure, release of the information would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of the privacy of this individual and we are withholding it under Exemption 6.

Exemption 7 protects from disclosure "records or information compiled for law enforcement purposes" if the records fall within one or more of six specific bases for withholding set forth in subparts (a) through (f). 5 U.S.C. § 552(b)(7)(a)-(f). The information on page three we are withholding under Exemption 7, is protected under subparts E and F. Exemption 7(E) protects law enforcement records if their release would disclose techniques and procedures for law enforcement investigation or prosecutions, or would disclose guidelines for law enforcement investigations or prosecutions if the disclosure could reasonably be expected to risk circumvention of the law. Exemption 7(F) protects law enforcement records if their release could reasonably be expected to endanger the life or physical safety of any individual. The information that was withheld under 7(E) and 7(F) include scope and outlines for security information, procedures and work orders, and would compromise the protection of our resources and endanger the life or physical safety of individuals.

We reasonably foresee that disclosure would harm an interested party protected by one or more of the nine exemptions to the FOIA's general rule of disclosure.

Vanessa Lacayo, NPS, Public Affairs Specialist is responsible for this partial denial. Dana Jacobsen, Michael Williams and Karen Dunnigan, Attorneys, in the Office of the Solicitor were consulted.

We do not bill requesters for FOIA processing fees when their fees are less than \$50.00, because the cost of collection would be greater than the fee collected. See 43 C.F.R. § 2.37(g). Therefore, there is no billable fee for the processing of this request.

Because the NPS creates and maintains law enforcement records, we are required by the Department of Justice to provide the following information, even though it may or may not apply to your specific request. Congress excluded three discrete categories of law enforcement and national security records from the requirements of the FOIA. See 5 U.S.C. 552(c) (2006 & Supp. IV 2010). This response is limited to those records that are subject to the requirements of the FOIA. This is a standard notification that we are required to give all our requesters and should not be taken as an indication that excluded records do, or do not, exist.

You may appeal this response to the Department's FOIA/Privacy Act Appeals Officer. If you choose to appeal, the FOIA/Privacy Act Appeals Officer must receive your FOIA appeal no later than 90 workdays from the date of this message. Appeals arriving or delivered after 5 p.m. Eastern Time, Monday through Friday, will be deemed received on the next workday.

Your appeal must be made in writing. You may submit your appeal and accompanying materials to the FOIA/Privacy Act Appeals Officer by mail, courier service, fax, or email. All communications concerning your appeal should be clearly marked with the words: "FREEDOM OF INFORMATION APPEAL." You must include an explanation of why you believe the NPS' response is in error. You must also include with your appeal copies of all correspondence between you and the NPS concerning your FOIA request, including your original FOIA request and NPS's response. Failure to include with your appeal all correspondence between you and the NPS will result in the Department's rejection of your appeal, unless the FOIA/Privacy Act Appeals Officer determines (in the FOIA/Privacy Act Appeals Officer's sole discretion) that good cause exists to accept the defective appeal.

Please include your name and daytime telephone number (or the name and telephone number of an appropriate contact), email address and fax number (if available) in case the FOIA/Privacy Act Appeals Officer needs additional information or clarification of your appeal.

DOI FOIA/Privacy Act Appeals Office Contact Information  
Department of the Interior  
Office of the Solicitor  
1849 C Street, N.W.  
MS-6556 MIB  
Washington, DC 20240

Attn: FOIA/Privacy Act Appeals Office

Telephone: (202) 208-5339

Fax: (202) 208-6677

Email: [FOIA.Appeals@sol.doi.gov](mailto:FOIA.Appeals@sol.doi.gov)

The 2007 FOIA amendments created the Office of Government Information Services (OGIS) to offer mediation services to resolve disputes between FOIA requesters and Federal agencies as a non-exclusive alternative to litigation. Using OGIS services does not affect your right to pursue litigation. You may contact OGIS in any of the following ways:

Office of Government Information Services  
National Archives and Records Administration  
8601 Adelphi Road - OGIS  
College Park, MD 20740-6001  
E-mail: [ogis@nara.gov](mailto:ogis@nara.gov)  
Web: <https://ogis.archives.gov>  
Telephone: 202-741-5770  
Fax: 202-741-5769  
Toll-free: 1-877-684-6448

Please note that using OGIS services does not affect the timing of filing an appeal with the Department's FOIA & Privacy Act Appeals Officer. You also may seek dispute resolution services from our FOIA Public Liaison:

Ms. Charis Wilson, Ph.D., CRM  
NPS FOIA Officer  
12795 W. Alameda Parkway  
PO Box 25287  
Denver, CO 80225-0287  
303-969-2959  
Fax: 303-969-2557  
1-855-NPS-FOIA

Should you have any further questions regarding this request, please feel free to contact me. I can be reached at the address above or by phone at 303-969-2062. My e-mail address is [vanessa\\_lacayo@nps.gov](mailto:vanessa_lacayo@nps.gov).

Sincerely,

/s/

Vanessa Lacayo  
Public Affairs Specialist  
Intermountain Region, NPS

## **Intermountain Region Weekly Report January 3, 2017**

**Big Thicket National Preserve (TX) – Environmental Assessment for a 36 CFR 9B Plan of Operations to be Released** - Unit Petroleum Company (UPC) submitted a Plan of Operations as per the NPS' Nonfederal Oil and Gas Rights Regulations (36 CFR 9B), to construct and operate an eight-inch natural gas gathering line across the 1,300-foot wide Menard Creek Corridor Unit of Big Thicket National Preserve.

UPC will use horizontal directional drilling to install the gathering line across the unit; therefore, there will be no surface impacts from the construction of the line, and NPS expects impacts on park resources will be avoided or substantially minimized. The EA is ready to be released for 30 day public review.

**Big Bend National Park (TX) - Trespass Livestock Management Plan and Environmental Assessment** - A Big Bend National Park Trespass Livestock Management Plan and Environmental Assessment (EA) to guide management of illegal domestic livestock, will be released January 20 for a 30-day public review. The EA includes programmatic and site-specific analyses for implementation of a program to capture livestock found within the park then transport the livestock to the U.S. Department of Agriculture for quarantine and disposition.

The NPS preferred alternative is to live-capture the horses, cattle and burros, primarily of Mexican origin, temporarily hold them in NPS corrals, then transport and transfer the stock to the U.S. Department of Agriculture at their border livestock quarantine facility in Presidio, Texas. Capture methods include mounted wrangler roundup, helicopter-assisted roundup, corral trapping with bait, and minor strategic exclusionary fencing. No lethal means of livestock control are proposed. The EA examines impacts to Big Bend soils, water resources, vegetation, wilderness, visitor experience, archeological resources and historic structures. Agency, tribal, and public scoping included scoping newsletters, press releases, and public scoping meetings.

## **Intermountain Region Weekly Report January 9, 2017**

**Glen Canyon National Recreation Area (UT), Off Road Vehicle (ORV) Plan** – The Notice of Availability (NOA) and proposed rule for the Final Environmental Impact Statement was cleared by the Assistant Secretary's office. The park is proceeding with publication of the Notice of Availability under the EPA notice with a target date of Jan. 13, 2017. Due to the controversial nature of the plan and the number of stakeholders, the park expects to receive significant comments during the 30-day comment period as well as media attention in the state of Utah.

**Glen Canyon National Recreation Area (UT), New Utah State Proposed Legislation** – Utah House Bill (HB) 63, which deals with the creation of a Hole in the Rock State Park, gained attention potentially due to two recent and significant events; 1) The designation of the Bears Ears National Monument and 2) House Republicans changing the way Congress calculates the cost of transferring federal lands to the states and other entities, a move that will make it easier for members of the new Congress to cede federal control of public lands. That provision, was included as part as a [larger rules package](#) the House approved during its first day in session.

HB 63 (<http://le.utah.gov/~2017/bills/static/HB0063.html> ) authorizes the State's Division of Parks and Recreation to enter into agreements with the United States Bureau of Land Management and the United States National Park Service to acquire the Hole in the Rock area as a state park. The more than 100-mile-long Hole in the Rock road is significant to the Mormon culture and history and crosses through the middle of the park and the Colorado River. Approximately, 25 miles of the road exist within the park's boundary. The park is currently working on a proposal to have the feature designated as a Traditional Cultural Property. The park's General Management Plan from 1979 does identify the Hole in the Rock road as a potential development area.



**Intermountain Region  
Weekly Report  
January 17, 2017**

**Coronado National Memorial (AZ) – DHS Fixed Tower Installation – (b) (7)(E), (b) (7)(F)**



**Congressional Visit to Bandelier and White Sands National Monuments (NM) announced –** With very short notice, visits Jan. 26-27 by Rep. Raul Grijalva (D-AZ) to White Sands (WNSA) and Bandelier (BAND) were announced by House Natural Resource Committee staff. The WNSA visit will focus on the adjacent Missile Range's proposed land exchange/name change legislation, park dunes resource issues, drone jet crash cleanup/mitigations, and other issues. On Jan. 27, the BAND visit will focus on potential land acquisition and name change legislation, resource impacts from recent fires and floods and park cultural resources. The Congressman will be accompanied by House Committee staffers Emily Lande and Bertha Guerrero. Park and regional staff are assisting with the coordination of the Congressional visits.

**Route 66 Corridor Preservation Program – National Trails Intermountain Region –** On February 17-18, the first board meeting of the Route 66: The Road Ahead Partnership will take place in Albuquerque, NM. This organization formed in response to the legislated authority of the NPS Route 66 Corridor Preservation Program to assist states in establishing a non-federal entity to carry on the functions of the NPS Route 66 Program after its scheduled sunset in 2019. The mission of the Road Ahead Partnership is to revitalize Route 66 through collaborative nation-wide partnerships. The board meeting will include an update from its National Historic Trail Task Force, which is pursuing congressional designation of Route 66 as a National Historic Trail. Contact Aaron Mahr (505) 988-6736.



## **Intermountain Region Weekly Report January 23, 2017**

**Yellowstone National Park, (WY, MT, ID) – Bison Operations at Yellowstone National Park** – On behalf of the eight agencies of the [Interagency Bison Management Plan](#) (IBMP), the park began capturing bison in the Stephens Creek facility on January 7. Processing and shipping to slaughter should begin sometime during the week of January 23. This action stems from the [2017 winter operations plan](#) that was approved by the IBMP partners calling for a reduction of Yellowstone's current population of 5,500 bison (900 to 1,300 animals are targeted for removal). The park continues to hold 40 bison from last March for potential transfer under a proposed quarantine program. The park is negotiating the transfer of these animals with the state of Montana and the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS). State and tribal hunters are actively hunting bison outside the park in Gardiner and West Yellowstone. For more information: <https://www.nps.gov/yell/learn/nature/bisonmgnt.htm>.

**Bryce Canyon National Park, (UT) – Water Rights Agreement** – On Jan. 18, 2017, the NPS and the State of Utah entered into an agreement that recognizes a federal reserved water right for Bryce Canyon National Park. Pursuant to the agreement, the Park can exercise this federal reserved water right for two uses: (1) administrative use, with a priority date of June 8, 1923, under which up to 184 acre-feet per year may be diverted from and used within the boundaries of the Park; and (2) in situ and instream uses in a free flowing and natural condition, to satisfy and promote the purposes for which the Park was established. This is the ninth agreement the NPS entered into with the State of Utah to provide the necessary access and protection for water uses and water-dependent resources at NPS sites within the State of Utah.

**Manhattan Project National Historical Site (NM, WA, TN) – Response to DOE regarding proposed transmission line** – On Jan. 12, 2017, the NPS submitted its response to a notice of public scoping issued by the Department of Energy regarding the replacement of a transmission line immediately adjacent to the park's boundary on the Hanford Site in the State of Washington. The NPS reiterated its March 2016 request to be a cooperating agency in the NEPA process for this project and provided a list of subjects and issues related to potential impacts, including impacts to the historic resources and settings associated with park facilities. In addition, the NPS stated its interest in being a party to the tribal consultations conducted for this project and to be briefed on any prior consultations that have occurred to date.

**Grand Canyon (AZ) – Grand Canyon Listening Sessions** – The park will be holding public listening sessions in Flagstaff on February 13 and 14 as the park prepares to develop its communication infrastructure plan. The communication infrastructure plan will guide the park's process of developing and managing the infrastructure related to cellular telephone and internet communications for the foreseeable future. Half hour time slots will be available for present right-of-way holders and past applicants to present infrastructure needs to the plan's developers.


**Intermountain Region  
Weekly Report  
January 30, 2017**

***NPS-originated correspondence/memos needing clearance***

**Bandelier National Monument, NM** – Between February 1 and March 31, 2017, the park proposes to send 14 outgoing correspondence to the park's six affiliated tribes and to the New Mexico State Historic Preservation Office concerning a number of projects, planning documents and meetings that require Section 106 and tribal consultation pursuant to the National Historic Preservation Act. A complete list of each letter with accompanying background information is available upon request.

**Big Thicket National Preserve, TX** – The park proposes to send a letter to the Chairperson of the Alabama-Chouhatta Tribe of Texas, requesting a review of the proposed Unit Petroleum Company construction and operation of an eight- inch gathering line in the Menard Creek Corridor Unit of the preserve. The review is to ensure that the project does not adversely impact, sacred sites, Traditional Cultural properties or Trust Assets. The Environmental Assessment for this project is in the final stages of review. The Preserve would like to send this letter as soon as review is completed.

**Capitol Reef National Park, UT** – The State of Utah is a Cooperating Agency on Capitol Reef's Livestock Grazing and Trailing Plan EIS. As a follow-up to a Cooperating Agency meeting held in December of 2016, we would like to share the notes from that meeting with the Cooperators and a copy of Chapter One from the EIS per a request from the agencies. (b) (5)



**Casa Malpais Tribal Consultation, IMR** – The IMR Heritage Partnerships Program (HPP) is proposing to send a tribal consultation letter to the Governors of the Pueblos of Acoma and Zuni, the President of the Navajo Nation and the Chairmen of the White Mountain Apache, San Carlos Apache and the Hopi tribes. The consultation letter is in regard to a proposed project to stabilize the walls of the Casa Malpais National Historic Landmark in Springerville, AZ. The project is funded by HPP and tribal input is needed as soon as possible to keep construction for project on schedule and budget. Work is scheduled to begin in early May 2017. Consultation letters would need to be sent out no later than March 1 to allow for a 60-day review and to hold in-person meetings with tribes.

**Chickasaw National Recreation Area, OK** – The park is proposing to send letters to its six affiliated tribes regarding a proposal to install a new water line near the Black Sulphur comfort station in Chickasaw National Recreation Area. Park management, in accordance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, is seeking their review and comment on this

project. An Assessment of Effect Form (AEF) along with a complete project description, design plans, and location maps will be attached to the letter and include project's intended scope. NPS Archaeologist George Prothro conducted an archaeological survey of the area on January 24, 2017, and found no significant archaeological resources.

**Grand Teton National Park, WY** – On or about February 6, Grand Teton National Park proposes to release a scoping notice for the Jackson Hole Airport Wildlife Hazard Management and Habitat Restoration Environmental Assessment. The notice solicits public comment regarding issues to be addressed by the EA, which involves a suite of habitat-related actions near and within the boundaries of the Jackson Hole Airport to reduce the risk of collisions between aircraft and wildlife, especially greater sage-grouse. The NPS committed to preparation of the EA, which is not expected to be controversial, following completion of the airport's Wildlife Hazard Management Plan in 2014. The Jackson Hole Airport and the Federal Aviation Administration have been invited to participate as cooperating agencies.

**Japanese American Confinement Sites Program** – The JACS program is proposing to send out a grant apportionment memo, which recommends 14 grants for awards based on the amount of funding available through the Further Continuing and Security Assistance Appropriations Act, 2017. The IMR, MWR, and PWR regional directors have all provided their concurrence on the awards. The apportionment memo also includes a draft press release and communications plan, which were both reviewed and approved by WASO staff. The WASO Business Manager for WASO-Cultural Resources, Partnerships, and Science will guide the apportionment memo through the approval process. Final award selection will be made by the Principal Deputy Assistant for Fish and Wildlife and Parks.

**Yellowstone National Park, WY** – The park is proposing to send a letter to the Wyoming Department of Environmental Quality, Water Quality Division, to notify the state that the park failed in 2016 to test the yearly sampling parameters per the permit requirements. It is not possible to test a late sample at this time because the plant is shut down for the season and all wastewater is being stored. (b)5 Draft Deliberative, (b)6

(b)5 Draft  
Deliberative (b)6

**Yellowstone National Park, WY** – The park is proposing to send a letter to the State Historic Preservation Officer informing to notify the state that the park proposes to permit the construction of a wireless communications tower on Mt. Washburn and improve wireless facilities at other developed areas to increase data transport capacity to Canyon Village, Old Faithful, Lake Area, and Grant Village. The park is initiating consultation in accordance with 36 CFR §800, the regulations implementing Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. In addition to initiating consultation, the purpose of the letter is to 1) establish the Area of Potential Effects (APE) for the project, and 2) to identify historic properties and other properties eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places within the proposed APE. This is a time-sensitive request.

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***Week ahead report***

**Carlsbad Caverns National Park, NM** – On or about February 20, 2017, the National Park Service will take the elevators out of service at Carlsbad Caverns National Park. This is a scheduled elevator safety inspection, which will inspect the steel superstructure and guiderails within the hoist-way and will take about seven days to complete. While elevator service is temporarily suspended, visitors may still access the Cavern by hiking in and out of the Natural Entrance on a self-guided tour. Due to the steep grade, the Natural Entrance is not easily accessible; therefore, mobility impaired persons will not be able to enter the Cavern.

**Carlsbad Caverns National Park, NM** – On or about February 27, 2017, the National Park Service will announce a Prospectus for concession operations at Carlsbad Caverns National Park. The current concession operation is located in the Visitor Center and underground in the Cavern, which includes food services and a gift shop. The gift shop offers clothing, a variety of small gifts, and Native American jewelry and pottery. The concession contract will be awarded for a 10-year period starting January 1, 2018.

**Carlsbad Caverns National Park, NM** – On or about April 15, 2017, the National Park Service will issue a Solicitation of Request for Proposals for the modernization of the primary elevator system at Carlsbad Caverns National Park. The modernization will replace the motors and controllers, hoist way equipment, elevator cars, guiderails, and steel hoist cables. In addition, emergency rescue apparatus – auxiliary motor, auxiliary battery backup, and a single car rescue system – will be installed to improve elevator safety operations. The Design-Build Contract is expected to be awarded in May 2017 and be completed in May 2018.

**Glacier National Park, WY** – On or about February 15, Glacier National Park will update the public and stakeholders about boating restrictions for summer, 2017. All park waters are currently closed to boating due to the detection of invasive mussels in Montana. The announcement could include a continued prohibition on motorized and even hand propelled watercraft. GNP's ability to safely allow any boats on park waters this summer is tied to the availability of seasonal boat inspectors to inspect even hand propelled watercraft.

**Glacier National Park, WY** - Glacier National Park staff continue to collaborate with park partners, neighboring agencies, local communities, businesses and tribes to plan for the 2017 visitor season. In 2016, all of these groups struggled with congestion, seasonal staffing/housing shortages, budget limitations, and impacts to resources. Historically the opening of the Going-to-the-Sun road was seen as the major visitation/economic driver locally. With recent changes in the length of the temperate season and increased shoulder season visitation, serving those peak and shoulder season visitors has been challenging for all.

**Grand Canyon National Park, AZ** – The Arizona Pilots Association petitioned the Arizona State Land Department (ASLD) to open the Tuweep Airstrip to General Aviation. In October 2016, the park responded to a letter from the ASLD opposing the opening. On January 23, 2017, the Arizona Pilots Association sent a letter of support to the ASLD to open the Tuweep Airstrip. The ASLD closed this, and many other airstrips, to general aviation in 2005. The park is using the Tuweep Airstrip based on an Exclusive Use Special Use Permit issued by the ASLD. Bar 10 Airstrip is an alternate landing zone located five miles west of the Tuweep Airstrip and is open to



general aviation. The park is opposed to expanding recreational opportunities in the Tuweep area for multiple reasons including size of the airstrip, potential conflicts with emergency response services, and incursions into the Special Flight Rules Area in the Toroweap/Shinumo Flight Free Zone.

**Grand Canyon National Park, AZ** – On February 13 and 14, the park will hold public listening sessions in Flagstaff, AZ, for its Grand Canyon Communications Infrastructure Plan. GRCA sent a letter to interested parties on January 19, 2017, by email; additional notification will be sent via a news release on or about February 6, 2017. The communication infrastructure plan will guide the park’s process to develop and manage infrastructure related to cellular telephone and internet communications for the foreseeable future. Half hour time slots will be available for present right-of-way holders and past applicants to present infrastructure needs to the plan's developers.

**Grand Teton National Park, WY** – In January 2016, Grand Teton National Park released a draft Historic Properties Management Plan and Environmental Assessment for public comment. The plan evaluated a no-action and two action alternatives for future management of 44 historic districts or sites encompassing 695 properties listed or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. The proposed action included retaining existing use of many sites, including the park’s two National Historic Landmarks; rehabilitation and adaptive use of currently unused properties, and removal of structures in three areas. As a result of public comment and consultation with the Wyoming State Historic Preservation Office (WYSHPO) and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP) in late summer, the park revised its proposed removal of three properties and now proposes to retain them on the landscape for future determination of use. The three properties are Aspen Ridge Ranch, McCollister Residence, and Sky Ranch. The park recently sent two letters to WYSHPO--the first reiterating park managers’ commitment to the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) consultation and training as recently reaffirmed by the regional director; the second notifying WYSHPO and other interested consulting parties of the park’s modified proposed action, and initiating a 30-day comment period on that undertaking as required by NHPA Section 106. The park anticipates this will lead to a final decision on this plan in mid 2017.

**Lyndon B. Johnson National Historical Park, TX** - On January 30, 2017, Lyndon B. Johnson National Historical Park will launch a three-year project to revitalize historic live oak trees at the Texas White House. The effort to save these signature park resources—such as the 300-year-old “cabinet oak” that shaded high-level meetings during Johnson's presidency—will require altering the cultural landscape to provide needed aeration by replacing the water-intensive lawn with compost and mulch. The Johnson family is in support of this effort.

**Intermountain Region**  
**Weekly Report**  
**February 6, 2017**

***NPS-originated correspondence/memos needing clearance***

**Big Thicket National Preserve, TX** – Big Thicket National Preserve proposes to send a letter to the District Director, Houston Office, of the Texas Railroad Commission requesting assistance in determining and possibly mitigating contaminant source(s) related to oil and gas exploration and recovery. Big Thicket National Preserve monitors water quality and has found increased chloride and sulfate at monitoring sites on Mernard Creek and Little Pine Island Bayou. The Texas Railroad Commission regulates oil and gas activities on all state and private lands in Texas. There are no National Park Service permitted oil and gas activities in the areas of concern.

**Zion National Park, UT** – On or before February 10, Zion National Park proposes to comment on a Bureau of Land Management environmental assessment for its Color Country District Office's June 15, 2017, oil and gas lease sale in Utah. Two of the parcels included in the EA are located north of the town of Virgin, Utah, along the Kolob-Terrace Road, which is an important route of access to the higher elevation wilderness portions of Zion National Park. Those parcels are not visible from the park, but drilling and production facilities would probably be visible from the Kolob-Terrace Road depending on the specific site locations. NPS comments include concerns related to air quality, protecting night skies, and wildlife habitat and resource protections.

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***Week ahead report***

**Carlsbad Caverns National Park, NM** – On February 6-10, and 13-17, the National Park Service will take the elevators out of service at Carlsbad Caverns National Park. This is scheduled elevator safety maintenance will replace steel hoist cables. While elevator service is temporarily suspended, visitors may still access the cavern by hiking in and out of the Natural Entrance on a self-guided tour. Due to the steep grade, the Natural Entrance is not accessible by people with mobility impairments.

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gifts, and Native American jewelry and pottery. The concession contract will be awarded for a 10-year period starting January 1, 2018.

**Carlsbad Caverns National Park, NM** – On or about April 15, the National Park Service will issue a Solicitation of Request for Proposals to modernize the primary elevator system at Carlsbad Caverns National Park. The modernization will replace the motors and controllers, hoist way equipment, elevator cars, guiderails and steel hoist cables. In addition, an emergency rescue apparatus, which includes an auxiliary motor, auxiliary battery backup and a single car rescue system, will be installed to improve elevator safety operations. The Design-Build Contract is expected to be awarded in May 2017 and be completed in May 2018.

**Glacier National Park, MT** – On or about February 15, Glacier National Park will inform the public regarding boating restrictions for summer 2017. All park waters are currently closed to all boating due to the detection of invasive mussels in Montana. The announcement could include a continued interim prohibition on private motorized watercraft. The park currently has a draft determination to re-open park waters only to non-motorized watercraft following rigorous inspection. Prior to a public announcement, the park will present its draft determination to the regional director for feedback, and coordinate internally with other area land managers including the State of Montana, the Blackfoot Tribe, and Waterton Lakes National Park (Canada) to ensure consistent messaging.

**Glen Canyon National Recreation Area, AZ, UT** – On or about February 9, Glen Canyon National Recreation Area will begin public scoping on a plan to protect native, special status fish species (Humpback Chub) in the Lees Ferry Reach of the Colorado River downstream to Grand Canyon National Park. These recurring management actions on non-native fish are outside the scope of the Comprehensive Fisheries Management Plan/Environmental Assessment. Internal scoping has already begun between Glen Canyon NRA, Grand Canyon National Park, Arizona Game and Fish, and other partners to develop preliminary alternatives.

**Glen Canyon National Recreation Area, AZ, UT** – On February 15, the 30-day wait period for the final Environmental Impact Statement/Off-Road Vehicle Plan for Glen Canyon National Recreation Area will end and the Record of Decision may be signed. The park is personally contacting any cooperating agency who submits comments to answer any other questions they may have.

**Petroglyph National Monument and Valles Caldera National Preserve, NM** – New Mexico State Senator Sander Rue (R-ABQ) introduced legislation to provide both national park units with concurrent law enforcement jurisdiction, which would authorize the National Park Service to enforce both federal and state laws within the park boundaries. This would allow park law enforcement to better assist their state, county and local counterparts. To this end, the proposal has been endorsed by the Albuquerque Police Department and Bernalillo County and Sandoval County sheriff's departments.

**White Sands National Monument, NM** – A congressional delegation from the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee, Subcommittee on the Interior, will be visiting sites in New Mexico including White Sands National Monument during the week of February 6,

2017. The U.S. Army, Legislative Liaison, Office of Chief Legislative Liaison, House Liaison Division is coordinating the visit to the monument. The purpose is to understand the relationship between White Sands National Monument and White Sands Missile Range, and any public land issues that the monument may have. Visiting members currently include, Liam McKenna, William McGrath (Subcommittee Majority Staff Director), Ryan Hambleton, Melissa Beaumont and Chris Esparza.

**Intermountain Region**  
**Weekly Report**  
**February 13, 2017**

***NPS-originated correspondence/memos requiring clearance***

**Yellowstone National Park, ID, MT, WY** – Yellowstone National Park proposes to send a letter to the Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks Division regarding inconsistencies in regulations and rules related to public and tribal bison hunting in the northern and western management areas of the Interagency Bison Management Plan. The letter includes written suggestions for elements and regulations that need to be adopted by all parties regarding the bison hunts occurring in the Gardiner and West Yellowstone areas.

**Yellowstone National Park, ID, MT, WY** – Yellowstone National Park proposes to send a letter to the Fort Belknap Indian Community in Montana regarding bison culled from the population at the Stephens Creek capture facility in Yellowstone National Park to Native American tribes and a tribal organization for the provision of meat to their members.

**Zion National Park, UT** – On or before March 9, 2017 Zion National Park proposes to comment on a Bureau of Land Management environmental assessment for its Color Country District Office's September, 2017 oil and gas lease sale in Utah. Two of the parcels included in the EA are located north of the town of Virgin, Utah, along the Kolob-Terrace Road, which is an important route of access to the higher elevation wilderness portions of Zion National Park. Those parcels are not visible from the park, but drilling and production facilities would probably be visible from the Kolob-Terrace Road depending on the specific site locations. NPS comments include concerns related to air quality, protecting night skies, and wildlife habitat and resource protections.

**Big Thicket National Preserve, TX** – Big Thicket National Preserve proposes to send a letter to the District Director, Houston Office, of the Texas Railroad Commission requesting assistance in determining and possibly mitigating contaminant source(s) related to oil and gas exploration and recovery. Big Thicket National Preserve monitors water quality and has found increased chloride and sulfates at monitoring sites in the park on Mernard Creek and Little Pine Island Bayou. The Texas Railroad Commission regulates oil and gas activities on all state and private lands in Texas. There are no National Park Service permitted oil and gas activities in the areas of concern.

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***Week ahead report***

**Capitol Reef National Park, UT** – (b) (5)

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(b) (5)

**Devil's Tower National Monument, WY** – On March 14, the park is meeting with local congressional staff at the park headquarters for their quarterly meeting. During the meeting, the park provides basic operational updates and discusses ongoing issues and upcoming park events.

**Glacier National Park, MT** - On February 9, the park submitted comments on behalf of the NPS on the BLM's Missoula Field Office Notice of Intent to prepare a Resource Management Plan. The park met with the BLM Missoula Field Office in July 2016, to discuss their upcoming planning effort and agreed the NPS would be a cooperating agency. The NPS requested an additional map showing the location of BLM-managed Federal minerals within the planning area and expressed concerns about air quality, terrestrial invasive species, fire, wildlife connectivity, threatened and endangered species, native salmonids, whitebark pine, climate change impacts and adaptation strategies.

**Glacier National Park, MT** - On February 7, for the second time since the Record of Decision was signed in 2008, the park issued a permit to BNSF Railway to allow them to conduct emergency avalanche mitigation in the park to reduce avalanche hazard on the railroad right-of-way. A record snowfall event and train delays of nearly 24 hours contributed to the park's decision that the thresholds described in the ROD had been met to begin emergency mitigation measures. A subsequent warming trend further increased avalanche danger, and resulted in an avalanche that covered railroad tracks and part of U.S. HWY 2. On February 9, the park approved a second emergency special use permit application, valid through February 13. Weather and rapidly changing snow pack conditions may cause BNSF to withdraw their request. The corridor remains closed to train traffic as of February 10.

**Glacier National Park, MT** - On or about April 22, the park, along with its sister peace park Waterton Lakes National Park (Canada) will announce its provisional designation as the world's first transboundary dark sky park. Because the dark sky designation overlays the entire International Peace Park (est.1932), and Parks Canada's 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration this year, there is interest from the Canadian government in Ottawa to participate in the announcement. The park is coordinating with Waterton Lakes National Park to determine the level of that interest and the type of announcement that would be appropriate.

**Glen Canyon National Recreation Area, AZ, UT** – During the week of February 13, Glen Canyon National Recreation Area will initiate the public scoping process for the Adaptive Risk Reduction Management Plan for Green Sunfish and Other Potentially Harmful Non-native or Invasive Fish Species in the Lee's Ferry Reach of Glen Canyon NRA. This environmental assessment likely will not include an analysis of brown trout, which will require further analysis and coordination. Glen Canyon is leading the environmental assessment and planning effort with assistance from Grand Canyon National Park, IMR–Colorado River staff and other partner agencies.

**National Trails Intermountain Region (NTIR)** – At the direction of Congress the NTIR prepared a special resource study for the Butterfield Overland Trail. The team found (b) (5)



(b) (5)



**Petroglyph National Monument, NM** – Beginning February 13, 2017, the visitor center at Petroglyph will be closed for approximately two-three months. The temporary closure will allow for rehabilitation of the 100+ year-old adobe structure. Replacement of HVAC systems and duct work, pest-proofing, and other work will also take place. The structure is not on the National Register of Historic Places, but this work will be conducted in consultation with the New Mexico SHPO. A temporary visitor contact station will operate in the existing Visitor Center parking area. No other visitor services will be disrupted.

**Yellowstone National Park, ID, MT, WY** – The NPS prepared an environmental assessment to be released in mid-February 2017 for a proposed project to reconstruct a portion of the East Entrance Road from Fishing Bridge to Indian Pond. This project would include widening this portion of road from an inconsistent 22- to 24-feet wide, to the park standard of 30-feet wide. The project would also reconstruct associated parking areas and turnouts; include the rehabilitation or reconstruction of the historic Fishing Bridge; and replacement of the Pelican Creek Bridge, with a much longer low profile viaduct (bridge) to improve wetland function by removing approximately 1,200 linear feet of road fill directly west and east of the existing Pelican Creek Bridge.

**Bandelier National Monument and Valles Caldera National Preserve, NM** - On Wednesday, February 22, 2017, staff from the House Appropriations Committee, Interior Subcommittee will be visiting Bandelier NM and Valles Caldera N Pres as part of their planned trip to New Mexico. The superintendents from both parks are coordinating the visits with staff of the Office of the Secretary, Department of the Interior.

-NPS-

## **Intermountain Region Weekly Report February 22, 2017**

### ***NPS-originated correspondence/memos requiring clearance***

**Yellowstone National Park, ID, MT, WY** – Yellowstone National Park proposes to send a letter to the Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks Division regarding inconsistencies in regulations and rules related to public and tribal bison hunting in the northern and western management areas of the Interagency Bison Management Plan. The letter includes written suggestions for elements and regulations that need to be adopted by all parties regarding the bison hunts occurring in the Gardiner and West Yellowstone areas.

**Yellowstone National Park, ID, MT, WY** – Yellowstone National Park proposes to send a letter to the Fort Belknap Indian Community in Montana regarding bison culled from the population at the Stephens Creek capture facility in Yellowstone National Park to Native American tribes and a tribal organization for the provision of meat to their members.

**Zion National Park, UT** – On or before March 9, 2017 Zion National Park proposes to comment on a Bureau of Land Management environmental assessment for its Color Country District Office's September, 2017 oil and gas lease sale in Utah. Two of the parcels included in the EA are located north of the town of Virgin, Utah, along the Kolob-Terrace Road, which is an important route of access to the higher elevation wilderness portions of Zion National Park. Those parcels are not visible from the park, but drilling and production facilities would probably be visible from the Kolob-Terrace Road depending on the specific site locations. NPS comments include concerns related to air quality, protecting night skies, and wildlife habitat and resource protections.

**Big Thicket National Preserve, TX** – Big Thicket National Preserve proposes to send a letter to the District Director, Houston Office, of the Texas Railroad Commission requesting assistance in determining and possibly mitigating contaminant source(s) related to oil and gas exploration and recovery. Big Thicket National Preserve monitors water quality and has found increased chloride and sulfates at monitoring sites in the park on Mernard Creek and Little Pine Island Bayou. The Texas Railroad Commission regulates oil and gas activities on all state and private lands in Texas. There are no National Park Service permitted oil and gas activities in the areas of concern.

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### ***Week ahead report***

**Bandelier National Monument and Valles Caldera National Preserve, NM** - On Wednesday, February 22, 2017, staff from the House Appropriations Committee, Interior Subcommittee will be visiting Bandelier NM and Valles Caldera N Pres as part of their planned trip to New Mexico. The superintendents from both parks are coordinating the visits with staff of the Office of the Secretary, Department of the Interior.



**Carlsbad Caverns National Park, NM** – On February 6-10, 2017, and 13-17, 2017, elevator service at the park was temporarily suspended for scheduled elevator safety maintenance to replace the steel hoist cables. Elevator service was safely restored at the park on February 17, 2017.

**Carlsbad Caverns National Park, NM** – On or about February 27, 2017, the park will conduct a scheduled elevator safety inspection of the steel superstructure and guiderails within the hoist-way which will take about 3-4 days to complete. During this time elevator service at the park will be suspended. Most visitors will still be able to access the Cavern by hiking in and out of the Natural Entrance on a self-guided tour. Due to the steep grade, the Natural Entrance is not handicap accessible; therefore, mobility impaired persons will not be able to enter the Cavern.

**Carlsbad Caverns National Park, NM** – On or about February 27, 2017, the National Park Service will announce a Prospectus for concession operations at Carlsbad Caverns National Park. The current concession operation is located in the Visitor Center and underground in the Cavern, which includes food services and a gift shop. The gift shop offers clothing, a variety of small gift, and Native American jewelry and pottery. The Concession Contract will be awarded for a 10-year period starting January 1, 2018.

**Carlsbad Caverns National Park, NM** – On or about April 15, 2017, the National Park Service will issue a Solicitation of Request for Proposals for the modernization of the primary elevator system at Carlsbad Caverns National Park. The modernization will replace the motors and controllers, hoist way equipment, elevator cars, guiderails, and steel hoist cables. In addition, emergency rescue apparatus – auxiliary motor, auxiliary battery backup, and a single car rescue system – will be installed to improve elevator safety operations. The Design-Build Contract is expected to be awarded in May 2017 and be completed in May 2018.

**Chiricahua National Monument, AZ** – On February 27, the criminal trial for Gil Gaxiola is slated to begin. Gaxiola is charged with attempted murder of a National Park Service employee on August 28, 2013, armed robbery, aggravated assault, kidnapping and theft as a means of transportation. The assaulted employee was found unconscious in a restroom near the Faraway Ranch complex, a visitor attraction at the monument. Following the incident, he was not immediately located, but arrested several months later by U.S. Border Patrol agents in Douglas, AZ. Gaxiola, a Mexican national, has rejected previous plea deals. Due to the complexities of the case it has been delayed several times. Cochise County is the lead prosecuting agency.

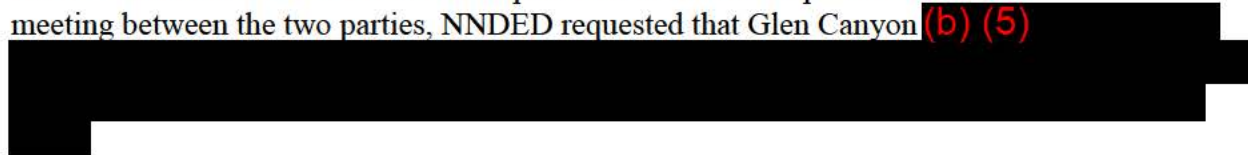
**Devil's Tower National Monument, WY** – On March 14, the park is meeting with local congressional staff at the park headquarters for their quarterly meeting. During the meeting, the park provides basic operational updates and discusses ongoing issues and upcoming park events.

**Glacier National Park, MT** – On or about March 1, Glacier National Park will update the public about boating restrictions for summer 2017. All park waters are currently closed to all boating due to the detection of invasive mussels in Montana. The announcement will include a continued interim prohibition on private motorized watercraft. The park currently has a draft determination to re-open park waters only to non-motorized watercraft following rigorous

inspection, pending seasonal boat inspector capacity. The park will work with the Intermountain Regional Office to provide information to WASO and DOI as appropriate in advance of the public announcement, and has coordinated internally with other area land managers including the State of Montana, U.S. Forest Service, the Blackfeet Tribe, and Waterton Lakes National Park (Canada) to ensure consistent messaging.

**Glacier National Park, MT** – On or about April 22, the park, along with its sister peace park Waterton Lakes National Park (Canada) will announce its provision designation as the world's first transboundary dark sky park. Because the dark sky designation overlays the entire International Peace Park (est.1932), and Parks Canada's 150th anniversary celebration this year, there is interest from the Canadian government in Ottawa to participate in the announcement. The park is coordinating with Waterton Lakes National Park to determine the level of that interest and the type of announcement that would be appropriate.

**Glen Canyon National Recreation Area, AZ, UT** – On March 3, Glen Canyon staff will meet with representatives of the Navajo Nation Division of Economic Development (NNDED) to discuss current and future concession operations at the Antelope Point Marina. At a Feb. 8 meeting between the two parties, NNDED requested that Glen Canyon (b) (5)



**Glen Canyon National Recreation Area, AZ, UT** – On or about February 27, Glen Canyon National Recreation Area will initiate the public scoping process for the Adaptive Risk Reduction Management Plan for Green Sunfish and Other Non-Native Piscivorous Fish Species in the Lees Ferry Reach of Glen Canyon NRA. Scoping had previously been expected to begin around February 13, but was delayed following a meeting between Glen Canyon, Grand Canyon and IMRO regarding the scope of the environmental assessment. Letters to tribal leaders have been prepared and will be sent following Adaptive Management Working Group meeting and prior to public notice.

**Glen Canyon National Recreation Area, AZ, UT** – On March 22 and March 23, Glen Canyon staff will meet with members of the Navajo Nation and Hopi Tribe, to discuss management of aquatic invasive species and tourist flights over Rainbow Bridge. A meeting with the Pueblo of Zuni Tribe was held February 1. The park negotiated a draft Voluntary Air Tour Management Agreement with air tour operators to reduce the number of flights over Rainbow Bridge, a sensitive cultural site for several tribes, and the time of day and time of year during which flights may occur. The tribal consultations will provide feedback on the draft agreement.

**Glen Canyon National Recreation Area, AZ, UT** – On April 4 or April 11, Glen Canyon National Recreation Area, in conjunction with the Bureau of Reclamation (BOR), plans to hold a Grand Re-opening ceremony for the Carl Hayden interagency visitor center at Glen Canyon Dam. Glen Canyon and the BOR plan to invite the NPS director, the director of the NPS Intermountain Region and the secretary of the interior to speak at the ceremony, and the secretary will be invited to visit the park with Glen Canyon staff to gather information on land-management issues firsthand.

**Grand Canyon National Park, AZ** – In late March 2017, Grand Canyon National Park expects to initiate a 30-day public review process for an environmental assessment (EA) that will analyze options for reducing the size of the bison herd on the park's North Rim. Resource impacts from the growing bison herd in the park include damage to sensitive resources, including cultural resources. The current herd size is approximately 500 animals; management actions under consideration in the EA would reduce the herd to size to less than 200 animals, through the use of a suite of tools including capture/removal, localized fencing of sensitive resources, and sharpshooting by skilled volunteers. The plan also proposed monitoring protocols to inform long-term decisions about bison management on the North Rim. The Arizona Game and Fish Department, Bureau of Land Management, U.S. Forest Service, and the InterTribal Bison Council are cooperating agencies on this effort.

**Palo Alto Battlefield National Historical Park, TX** – Within the next three weeks, the Land Resources Program Center will be acquiring a 5.48 acre tract of land valued at \$7,500. Thirty-six tracts ranging in size from 5.0 to 5.48 acre tracts have been acquired since 2009. They are located in the southwestern part of Valley Sound Addition, in Cameron County, Texas, part of a 1,200 plus acre subdivision platted of record in 1982. This subdivision and the lands adjoining were never developed with roads or other infrastructure. Because of this and due to encroaching industrial development in this area, it is important that we continue to offer acquisition opportunities. All of these tracts lie within the battlefield area.

**Rocky Mountain National Park, CO** – In the next three to four weeks, the Land Resources Program Center will acquire a tract of land containing 42.28 acres for \$1,650,000. The tract is known as “Cascade Cottages,” and is being sold by The Trust for Public Land, which acquired the land from the previous landowners in 2016. Prior to TPL's acquisition, this property was a family-run vacation cottage business for several decades. Rocky Mountain Conservancy and The Trust for Public Land worked together to raise the funds to purchase the property and hold it until NPS funding became available. This property is the largest remaining commercial inholding in the park, and is located on Highway 34 near the Fall River entrance. The acquisition of this property will ensure the protection of this highly visible tract for the future.

**Saguaro National Park, AZ** – The Trust for Public Land is acquiring 44.01 acres (Tract 01-179) of land within the boundary of the park with the intention of selling the land to the National Park Service. This tract is adjacent to Tract 01-174 donated by Roxanne Quimby and Tract 01-177 donated by The Trust for Public Land during NPS' Centennial Celebration. This tract and two others were the park's priority acquisitions and will provide improved protection and ability to manage the important riparian corridor and habitat along Rincon Creek.

**Valles Caldera National Preserve, NM** – The NPS is in its second year of operating a grazing program at Valles Caldera National Preserve. In its first year, the NPS issued a one-year grazing permit to the Pueblo of Jemez, utilizing the grazing management plan and rate of \$10/Animal Unit Month (AUM) established by the predecessor agency, the Valles Caldera Trust. The Pueblo had previously been issued a competitively-awarded three-year grazing permit by the Valles Caldera Trust. Pursuant to and consistent with NPS Policy (RM-53 Appendix 8), the NPS has conducted a market analysis to set rates for 2017 at \$20/AUM, and is preparing to issue the special use permit by a competitive process. (b) (5)



(b) (5)

**Yellowstone National Park, ID, MT, WY** – The NPS prepared an environmental assessment to be released in mid-February 2017 for a proposed project to reconstruct a portion of the East Entrance Road from Fishing Bridge to Indian Pond. This project would include widening this portion of road from an inconsistent 22- to 24-feet wide, to the park standard of 30-feet wide. The project would also reconstruct associated parking areas and turnouts; include the rehabilitation or reconstruction of the historic Fishing Bridge; and replacement of the Pelican Creek Bridge, with a much longer low profile viaduct (bridge) to improve wetland function by removing approximately 1,200 linear feet of road fill directly west and east of the existing Pelican Creek Bridge.

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## **Intermountain Region Weekly Report February 27, 2017**

### ***NPS-originated correspondence/memos requiring clearance***

**Yellowstone National Park, ID, MT, WY** – Yellowstone National Park proposes to send a letter to the Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks Division regarding inconsistencies in regulations and rules related to public and tribal bison hunting in the northern and western management areas of the Interagency Bison Management Plan. The letter includes written suggestions for elements and regulations that need to be adopted by all parties regarding the bison hunts occurring in the Gardiner and West Yellowstone areas.

**Yellowstone National Park, ID, MT, WY** – Yellowstone National Park proposes to send a letter to the Fort Belknap Indian Community in Montana regarding bison culled from the population at the Stephens Creek capture facility in Yellowstone National Park to Native American tribes and a tribal organization for the provision of meat to their members.

**Zion National Park, UT** – On or before March 9, 2017, Zion National Park proposes to comment on a Bureau of Land Management environmental assessment for its Color Country District Office's September 2017 oil and gas lease sale in Utah. Two of the parcels included in the EA are located north of the town of Virgin, Utah, along the Kolob-Terrace Road, which is an important access route to the higher elevation wilderness portions of Zion National Park. Those parcels are not visible from the park, but drilling and production facilities would probably be visible from the Kolob-Terrace Road depending on the specific site locations. NPS comments include concerns related to air quality, protecting night skies, and wildlife habitat and resource protections.

**Big Thicket National Preserve, TX** – Big Thicket National Preserve proposes to send a letter to the District Director, Houston Office, of the Texas Railroad Commission requesting assistance in determining and possibly mitigating contaminant source(s) related to oil and gas exploration and recovery. Big Thicket National Preserve monitors water quality and has found increased chloride and sulfates at monitoring sites in the park on Mernard Creek and Little Pine Island Bayou. The Texas Railroad Commission regulates oil and gas activities on all state and private lands in Texas. There are no NPS-permitted oil and gas activities in the areas of concern.

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### ***Week ahead report***

**Carlsbad Caverns National Park, NM** – On or about April 15, 2017, the NPS will issue a Solicitation of Request for Proposals for the modernization of the primary elevator system at Carlsbad Caverns National Park. The modernization will replace the motors and controllers, hoist way equipment, elevator cars, guiderails and steel hoist cables. In addition, emergency rescue apparatus – auxiliary motor, auxiliary battery backup, and a single car rescue system –


will be installed to improve elevator safety operations. The Design-Build Contract is expected to be awarded in May 2017 and be completed in May 2018.

**Chaco Culture National Historical Park, NM** – On March 1 and 6, 2017, Chaco Culture National Historical Park is hosting open meetings to inform the public on the current status of the Visitor Center's new exhibit being fabricated and scheduled for installation in late April. The exhibit will focus on cultural and natural resources within Chaco Canyon and the surrounding area, while also highlighting Chaco's direct connections to current southwestern tribes- an important component to the park's World Heritage status. The park is currently working with contractors to correct issues with the HVAC system to open the exhibit.

**Devil's Tower National Monument, WY** – On March 14, the park is meeting with local congressional staff at the park headquarters for their quarterly meeting. During the meeting, the park provides basic operational updates and discusses ongoing issues and upcoming park events.

**Dinosaur National Monument, CO, UT** – On February 24, 2017, Dinosaur National Monument submitted scoping comments to the Bureau of Land Management on the proposed reinstatement of 10 oil and gas lease parcels located within the White River Field Office. The comments were related to air quality and air quality related values, night skies, viewsheds and soundscapes. The parcels are located 8-15 miles from the southeastern boundary of the monument and Deerlodge Road.

**Glacier National Park, MT** – On February 28, Federal Highways Administration (FHWA) will meet with the Blackfeet Tribal Business Council (BTBC) to discuss a Federal Lands Access Program (FLAP) grant to rehabilitate a 7-mile section of the Many Glacier road outside the park on the Blackfeet reservation. In the winter of 2016, the BTBC passed a resolution supporting the park's application for the FLAP grant and subsequently the tribe requested the meeting to demonstrate their capacity to complete the design and construction work required. (b) (5)



**Glacier National Park, MT** – On or about March 8, Glacier National Park will update the public about boating restrictions for summer 2017. All park waters are currently closed to all boating due to the detection of invasive mussels in Montana. The announcement will include a continued interim prohibition on private motorized watercraft. The park currently has a draft determination to re-open park waters only to non-motorized watercraft following rigorous inspection, pending seasonal boat inspector capacity. The park will work with the Intermountain Regional Office to provide information to WASO and DOI as appropriate in advance of the public announcement, and has coordinated internally with other area land managers including the State of Montana, U.S. Forest Service, the Blackfeet Tribe, and Waterton Lakes National Park (Canada) to ensure consistent messaging.

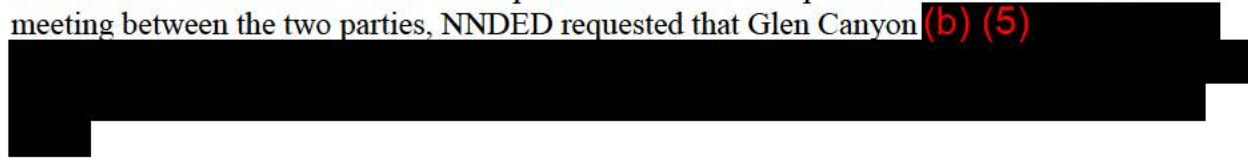
**Glacier National Park, MT** – On or about April 22, the park, along with its sister peace park Waterton Lakes National Park (Canada) will announce its provision designation as the world's



first transboundary dark sky park. Because the dark sky designation overlays the entire International Peace Park (est.1932), and Parks Canada's 150th anniversary celebration this year, there is interest from the Canadian government in Ottawa to participate in the announcement. The park is coordinating with Waterton Lakes National Park to determine the level of that interest and the type of announcement that would be appropriate.

**Glen Canyon National Recreation Area, AZ, UT** – On or about March 1, the public scoping process will begin related to the Adaptive Risk Reduction Management Plan for Green Sunfish and other non-native Piscivorous fish species in the Lees Ferry Reach of Glen Canyon National Recreation Area. Glen Canyon will send letters to tribal leaders seeking input on the process the same day or earlier.

**Glen Canyon National Recreation Area, AZ, UT** – On March 3, Glen Canyon staff will meet with representatives of the Navajo Nation Division of Economic Development (NNDED) to discuss current and future concession operations at the Antelope Point Marina. At a Feb. 8 meeting between the two parties, NNDED requested that Glen Canyon (b) (5)



**Glen Canyon National Recreation Area, AZ, UT** – On March 22 and March 23, Glen Canyon staff will meet with members of the Navajo Nation and Hopi Tribe, to discuss management of aquatic invasive species and tourist flights over Rainbow Bridge. A meeting with the Pueblo of Zuni Tribe was held February 1. The park negotiated a draft Voluntary Air Tour Management Agreement with air tour operators to reduce the number of flights over Rainbow Bridge, a sensitive cultural site for several tribes, and the time of day and time of year during which flights may occur. The tribal consultations will provide feedback on the draft agreement.

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**Grand Canyon National Park, AZ** – In late March 2017, Grand Canyon National Park expects to initiate a 30-day public review process for an environmental assessment that will analyze options for reducing the size of the bison herd on the park's North Rim. Resource impacts from the growing bison herd in the park include damage to sensitive resources, including cultural resources. The current herd size is approximately 500 animals; management actions under consideration in the EA would reduce the herd to size to less than 200 animals, through the use of a suite of tools including capture/removal, localized fencing of sensitive resources, and sharpshooting by skilled volunteers. The plan also proposed monitoring protocols to inform long-term decisions about bison management on the North Rim. The Arizona Game and Fish



Department, Bureau of Land Management, U.S. Forest Service, and the InterTribal Bison Council are cooperating agencies on this effort.

**Grand Canyon National Park, AZ** – On April 29, 2017, the Arizona Cardinals will live broadcast two NFL draft picks from the South Rim of Grand Canyon National Park. This may draw some media attention, especially in sporting news. The Cardinals will bring notable figures, possibly including AZ Governor Ducey and/or current and former Cardinals players, to announce the picks. A commercial filming permit will be issued and all associated activities will be monitored by the Office of Communications.

**Palo Alto Battlefield National Historical Park, TX** – Within the next two weeks, the Land Resources Program Center will be acquiring a 5.48 acre tract of land valued at \$7,500. Thirty-six tracts ranging in size from 5.0 to 5.48 acre tracts have been acquired since 2009. They are located in the southwestern part of Valley Sound Addition, in Cameron County, Texas, part of a 1,200 plus acre subdivision platted of record in 1982. This subdivision and the lands adjoining were never developed with roads or other infrastructure. Because of this and due to encroaching industrial development in this area, it is important that we continue to offer acquisition opportunities. All of these tracts lie within the battlefield area.

**Palo Alto Battlefield National Historical Park, TX** – On or before March 3, Palo Alto Battlefield National Historical Park is sending a letter to the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) to address several structures newly added to the proposed Texas SpaceX Launch Site. In 2014, the FAA concluded an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the Texas SpaceX Launch Site and subsequent Section 106. As part of that process, NPS participated in the consultation as required by 36 CFR Part 800.10 (c). The 106 process analyzed potential effects and established mitigation measures related to the nearby Palmito Ranch National Historic Landmark and other historic sites. A Memorandum of Agreement was also established with NPS as a signatory party. In February 2017, the FAA and SpaceX issued a revised Site Facility Design and Lighting Management Plan, which contains several additional structures and elements that were not analyzed in the original EIS and 106 process.

**Rocky Mountain National Park, CO** – In the next two to three weeks, the Land Resources Program Center will acquire a tract of land containing 42.28 acres for \$1,650,000. The tract is known as “Cascade Cottages,” and is being sold by The Trust for Public Land, which acquired the land from the previous landowners in 2016. Prior to TPL's acquisition, this property was a family-run vacation cottage business for several decades. Rocky Mountain Conservancy and The Trust for Public Land worked together to raise the funds to purchase the property and hold it until NPS funding became available. This property is the largest remaining commercial inholding in the park, and is located on Highway 34 near the Fall River entrance. The acquisition of this property will ensure the protection of this highly visible tract for the future.

**Valles Caldera National Preserve, NM** – (b) (5)




(b) (5)



White Sands National Monument, NM – (b) (5)



Sen. Heinrich is proposing to rename the monument to White Sands National Park (b) (5)



-NPS-

## **Intermountain Region**

### **Weekly Report**

**March 6, 2017**

## **DRAFT –NEED TO ADD TIMES AND DATES TO GRCA BISON MEETINGS**

### ***NPS-originated correspondence/memos requiring clearance***

**Capitol Reef National Park, UT** – Capitol Reef National Park proposes to send a letter and supporting documentation to 22 consulting parties regarding National Historic Preservation Act Section 106 compliance actions the park has taken. The Section 106 compliance is part of a National Environmental Policy Act process to develop a livestock (cattle) grazing and trailing management plan and Environmental Impact Statement for Capitol Reef. The letter provides consulting parties with information regarding cultural properties within the Area of Potential Effects. The supporting documentation updates the consulting parties on archeological surveys completed to address consulting party comments. Consulting parties include local residents, county and state government, advocacy organizations, and Indian Tribes.

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### ***Week ahead report***

**Carlsbad Caverns National Park, NM** – On or about April 15, 2017, the NPS will issue a Solicitation of Request for Proposals for the modernization of the primary elevator system at Carlsbad Caverns National Park. The modernization will replace the motors and controllers, hoist way equipment, elevator cars, guiderails and steel hoist cables. In addition, emergency rescue apparatus – auxiliary motor, auxiliary battery backup, and a single car rescue system – will be installed to improve elevator safety operations. The Design-Build Contract is expected to be awarded in May 2017 and the project could be completed in May 2018.

**Devil's Tower National Monument, WY** – On March 14, the park is meeting with local congressional staff at the park headquarters for their quarterly meeting. During the meeting, the park provides basic operational updates and discusses ongoing issues and upcoming park events.

**Dinosaur National Monument, CO, UT** – On May 6, the National Highway Transportation Safety Administration (NHTSA) offered to host a start-of-season "kick-off" media event for their ongoing "Click it or Ticket it" campaign on the Utah side of Dinosaur National Monument. Various federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies, as well as from the media and public are expected to attend. Uintah County Sheriff's and Utah State patrol are partnering with monument staff in the planning and execution of this event. Both seatbelt usage and driving posted speed limits will be emphasized during this event in an effort to reduce the threats to people and wildlife on monument and nearby roads.

**Glacier National Park, MT** – On or about March 8, Glacier National Park will update the public about boating restrictions for summer 2017. All park waters are currently closed to all

boating due to the detection of invasive mussels in Montana. The announcement will include a continued interim prohibition on private motorized watercraft. The park currently has a draft determination to re-open park waters only to non-motorized watercraft following rigorous inspection, pending seasonal boat inspector capacity. The park will work with the Intermountain Regional Office to provide information to WASO and DOI as appropriate in advance of the public announcement, and has coordinated internally with other area land managers including the State of Montana, U.S. Forest Service, the Blackfoot Tribe, and Waterton Lakes National Park (Canada) to ensure consistent messaging.

**Glacier National Park, MT** – On or about April 22, the park, along with its sister peace park Waterton Lakes National Park (Canada) will announce its provision designation as the world's first transboundary dark sky park. Because the dark sky designation overlays the entire International Peace Park (est.1932), and Parks Canada's 150th anniversary celebration this year, there is interest from the Canadian government in Ottawa to participate in the announcement. The park is coordinating with Waterton Lakes National Park to determine the level of that interest and the type of announcement that would be appropriate.

**Glen Canyon National Recreation Area, AZ, UT** – On March 22 and March 23, Glen Canyon staff will meet with members of the Navajo Nation and Hopi Tribe, to discuss management of aquatic invasive species and tourist flights over Rainbow Bridge. A meeting with the Pueblo of Zuni Tribe was held February 1. The park negotiated a draft Voluntary Air Tour Management Agreement with air tour operators to reduce the number of flights over Rainbow Bridge, a sensitive cultural site for several tribes, and the time of day and time of year during which flights may occur. The tribal consultations will provide feedback on the draft agreement.

**Glen Canyon National Recreation Area, AZ, UT** – On April 4 or April 11, Glen Canyon National Recreation Area, in conjunction with the Bureau of Reclamation (BOR), plans to hold a Grand Re-opening ceremony for the Carl Hayden interagency visitor center at Glen Canyon Dam. Glen Canyon and the BOR plan to invite the NPS director, the director of the NPS Intermountain Region and the secretary of the interior to speak at the ceremony, and the secretary will be invited to visit the park with Glen Canyon staff to gather information on land-management issues firsthand.

**Grand Canyon National Park, AZ** – In late March 2017, Grand Canyon National Park expects to initiate a 30-day public review process for an environmental assessment (EA) that will analyze options for reducing the size of the bison herd on the park's North Rim. During the public review, the NPS plans to hold three public meetings, in Phoenix and Flagstaff, AZ and Kanab, UT, and to consult with Grand Canyon's 11 associated tribes. We are working with partners to finalize the dates. Resource impacts from the growing bison herd in the park include damage to sensitive resources, including cultural resources. The current herd size is approximately 500 animals; management actions under consideration in the EA would reduce the herd to size to less than 200 animals through the use of a suite of tools including capture/removal, localized fencing of sensitive resources, and sharpshooting by skilled volunteers. The plan also proposed monitoring protocols to inform long-term decisions about bison management on the North Rim. The Arizona Game and Fish Department, Bureau of Land Management, U.S. Forest Service, and the InterTribal Bison Council are cooperating agencies on this effort.

**Grand Canyon National Park, AZ** – On April 29, 2017, the Arizona Cardinals will live broadcast two NFL draft picks from the South Rim of Grand Canyon National Park. This may draw some media attention, especially in sporting news. The Cardinals will bring notable figures, possibly including AZ Governor Ducey and/or current and former Cardinals players, to announce the picks. A commercial filming permit will be issued and all associated activities will be monitored by the Office of Communications.

**Lyndon B. Johnson National Historical Park** – On April 1, 2017, Lyndon B. Johnson National Historical Park will host the 10<sup>th</sup> annual “LBJ 100” bicycle ride. More than 1,000 recreational bicyclists will pedal from the LBJ Ranch’s airstrip onto rural public roads through the scenic Texas Hill Country on routes ranging from 10 to 62 miles. This popular event is an important fundraiser for the park’s Friends group, with proceeds ultimately benefiting the park.

**Palo Alto Battlefield National Historical Park, TX** – Within the next week, the Land Resources Program Center will be acquiring a 5.48 acre tract of land valued at \$7,500. Thirty-six tracts ranging in size from 5.0 to 5.48 acre tracts have been acquired since 2009. They are located in the southwestern part of Valley Sound Addition, in Cameron County, Texas, part of a 1,200 plus acre subdivision platted of record in 1982. This subdivision and the lands adjoining were never developed with roads or other infrastructure. Because of this and due to encroaching industrial development in this area, it is important that we continue to offer acquisition opportunities. All of these tracts lie within the battlefield area.

**Rocky Mountain National Park, CO** – In the next two to three weeks, the Land Resources Program Center will acquire a tract of land containing 42.28 acres for \$1,650,000. The tract is known as “Cascade Cottages,” and is being sold by The Trust for Public Land, which acquired the land from the previous landowners in 2016. Prior to TPL's acquisition, this property was a family-run vacation cottage business for several decades. Rocky Mountain Conservancy and The Trust for Public Land worked together to raise the funds to purchase the property and hold it until NPS funding became available. This property is the largest remaining commercial inholding in the park, and is located on Highway 34 near the Fall River entrance. The acquisition of this property will ensure the protection of this highly visible tract for the future.

**Zion National Park, UT** – On March 9, 2017, Zion National Park is commenting on a Bureau of Land Management environmental assessment for its Color Country District Office's September 2017 oil and gas lease sale in Utah. Two of the parcels included in the EA are located north of the town of Virgin, Utah, along the Kolob-Terrace Road, which is an important access route to the higher elevation wilderness portions of Zion National Park. Those parcels are not visible from the park, but drilling and production facilities would probably be visible from the Kolob-Terrace Road depending on the specific site locations. NPS comments include concerns related to air quality, protecting night skies, and wildlife habitat and resource protections.

**-NPS-**



## **Intermountain Region Weekly Report March 13, 2017**

### ***NPS-originated correspondence/memos requiring clearance***

**Capitol Reef National Park, UT** – Capitol Reef National Park proposes to send a letter and supporting documentation to 22 consulting parties regarding National Historic Preservation Act Section 106 compliance actions the park has taken. The Section 106 compliance is part of a National Environmental Policy Act process to develop a livestock (cattle) grazing and trailing management plan and Environmental Impact Statement for Capitol Reef. The letter provides consulting parties with information regarding cultural properties within the Area of Potential Effects. The supporting documentation updates the consulting parties on archeological surveys completed to address consulting party comments. Consulting parties include local residents, county and state government, advocacy organizations, and Indian Tribes.

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### ***Week ahead report***

**Arches National Park, UT** - On March 7, significant road work began in Arches National Park. Construction is expected to continue through November 2017. The Federal Highways "3R" project will resurface, restore and rehabilitate the 26 miles of roads and pullouts in the park. To ease effects on visitors, much of the work will be done at night, necessitating night time closure of the park road beginning in mid-March. To facilitate weekend visitation, road closures are not currently planned on Friday or Saturday nights.

**Bryce Canyon National Park** – In February, a portion of State Highway 12 through the north end of the park, began to slide. Utah Department of Transportation (UDOT) immediately reduced traffic to a single lane managed by traffic lights. They also instituted round-the-clock observation to monitor the situation. On March 8, an existing crack gained 1/2" in width and additional movement along the slide area was detected. UDOT crews installed a second lane north of the slide area to help ensure traffic passage along Highway 12. One-lane traffic will continue for the unforeseen future as crews work to stabilize the area. Park staff, UDOT and Garfield County are working closely as events occur.

**Carlsbad Caverns National Park, NM** – On or about April 15, 2017, the NPS will issue a Solicitation of Request for Proposals for the modernization of the primary elevator system at Carlsbad Caverns National Park. The modernization will replace the motors and controllers, hoist way equipment, elevator cars, guiderails and steel hoist cables. In addition, emergency rescue apparatus – auxiliary motor, auxiliary battery backup, and a single car rescue system – will be installed to improve elevator safety operations. The Design-Build Contract is expected to be awarded in May 2017 and the project could be completed in May 2018.

**Devil's Tower National Monument, WY** – On March 14, the park is meeting with local congressional staff at the park headquarters for their quarterly meeting. During the meeting, the park provides basic operational updates and discusses ongoing issues and upcoming park events.

**Dinosaur National Monument, CO, UT** – On May 6, the National Highway Transportation Safety Administration (NHTSA) offered to host a start-of-season "kick-off" media event for their ongoing "Click it or Ticket it" campaign on the Utah side of Dinosaur National Monument. Various federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies, as well as from the media and public are expected to attend. Uintah County Sheriff's and Utah State patrol are partnering with monument staff in the planning and execution of this event. Both seatbelt usage and driving posted speed limits will be emphasized during this event in an effort to reduce the threats to people and wildlife on monument and nearby roads.

**Glacier National Park, MT** – On or about March 14, Glacier National Park will update the public about boating restrictions for summer, 2017. All park waters are currently closed to all boating due to the detection of invasive mussels in Montana. The announcement will include a continued interim prohibition on private motorized watercraft. The park currently has a draft determination to re-open park waters only to non-motorized watercraft following rigorous inspection, pending seasonal boat inspector capacity. The park has worked with the Intermountain Regional Office to provide information to WASO and DOI in advance of the public announcement, and has coordinated internally with other area land managers including the State of Montana, US Forest Service, the Blackfeet Tribe, and Waterton Lakes National Park (Canada) to ensure consistent messaging.

**Glacier National Park, MT** – On or about April 22, the park, along with its sister peace park Waterton Lakes National Park (Canada) will announce its provision designation as the world's first transboundary dark sky park. Because the dark sky designation overlays the entire International Peace Park (est.1932), and Parks Canada's 150th anniversary celebration this year, there is interest from the Canadian government in Ottawa to participate in the announcement. The park is coordinating with Waterton Lakes National Park to determine the level of that interest and the type of announcement that would be appropriate.

**Glen Canyon National Recreation Area, AZ, UT** – On March 14, GLCA will meet with representatives from the Western Area Power Administration, the National Renewable Energy Laboratory and the Arizona NPS Major Acquisition Buying Office to discuss the bidding process for three entities interested in developing a power-purchase agreement for several remote up-lake sites. This will be a follow-up to a similar meeting held Feb. 28.

**Glen Canyon National Recreation Area, AZ, UT** – On March 22 and March 23, Glen Canyon staff will meet with members of the Navajo Nation and Hopi Tribe, to discuss management of aquatic invasive species and tourist flights over Rainbow Bridge. A meeting with the Pueblo of Zuni Tribe was held February 1. The park negotiated a draft Voluntary Air Tour Management Agreement with air tour operators to reduce the number of flights over Rainbow Bridge, a sensitive cultural site for several tribes, and the time of day and time of year during which flights may occur. The tribal consultations will provide feedback on the draft agreement.

**Glen Canyon National Recreation Area, AZ, UT** – On April 4 or April 11, Glen Canyon National Recreation Area, in conjunction with the Bureau of Reclamation (BOR), plans to hold a Grand Re-opening ceremony for the Carl Hayden interagency visitor center at Glen Canyon Dam. Glen Canyon and the BOR plan to invite the NPS director, the director of the NPS Intermountain Region and the secretary of the interior to speak at the ceremony, and the secretary will be invited to visit the park with Glen Canyon staff to gather information on land-management issues firsthand.

**Grand Canyon National Park, AZ** – In late March 2017, Grand Canyon National Park expects to initiate a 30-day public review process for an environmental assessment (EA) that will analyze options for reducing the size of the bison herd on the park's North Rim. During the public review, the NPS plans to hold three public meetings, in Phoenix and Flagstaff, AZ and Kanab, UT, and to consult with Grand Canyon's 11 associated tribes. We are working with partners to finalize the dates. Resource impacts from the growing bison herd in the park include damage to sensitive resources, including cultural resources. The current herd size is approximately 500 animals; management actions under consideration in the EA would reduce the herd to size to less than 200 animals through the use of a suite of tools including capture/removal, localized fencing of sensitive resources, and sharpshooting by skilled volunteers. The plan also proposed monitoring protocols to inform long-term decisions about bison management on the North Rim. The Arizona Game and Fish Department, Bureau of Land Management, U.S. Forest Service, and the InterTribal Bison Council are cooperating agencies on this effort.

**Grand Canyon National Park, AZ** – On April 29, 2017, the Arizona Cardinals will live broadcast two NFL draft picks from the South Rim of Grand Canyon National Park. This may draw some media attention, especially in sporting news. The Cardinals will bring notable figures, possibly including AZ Governor Ducey and/or current and former Cardinals players, to announce the picks. A commercial filming permit will be issued and all associated activities will be monitored by the Office of Communications.

**Grand Teton National Park, WY**- On or about March 30, Grand Teton National Park will release a scoping notice for the Telecommunications Infrastructure Plan and Environmental Assessment. The plan and EA will address outdated and relevant telecommunications services within developed areas of the park to effectively meet National Park Service mission critical business operations, safety and emergency services, resource protection, and visitor services. A substantial portion of the park's existing telecommunications infrastructure is outdated or nonexistent. The focus will be on developed areas of the park that have a significant park staff presence and/or see a high volume of park visitors. This process is intended to provide a proactive approach to determine acceptable locations for wireless telecommunications facilities and fiber optic lines within the park that are consistent with agency mission and existing laws and regulations. The park received six applications for fiber optic cable network and wireless telecommunications facilities. Public support and opposition are anticipated.

**Lyndon B. Johnson National Historical Park** – On April 1, 2017, Lyndon B. Johnson National Historical Park will host the 10<sup>th</sup> annual “LBJ 100” bicycle ride. More than 1,000 recreational bicyclists will pedal from the LBJ Ranch's airstrip onto rural public roads through the scenic

Texas Hill Country on routes ranging from 10 to 62 miles. This popular event is an important fundraiser for the park's Friends group, with proceeds ultimately benefiting the park.

**Pecos National Historical Park, NM** – On March 7, Pecos National Historical Park received final approval to proceed with the rehabilitation of the Santa Fe Trail era "Kozlowski's" Trading Post. This project will provide park visitors with a unique opportunity to learn about and enjoy the elements of American history as seen from this building. Funding is provided by National Park Service visitor collected fees and the rehabilitation will address a major deferred maintenance expense.

**Rocky Mountain National Park, CO** – In the next week week, the Land Resources Program Center will acquire a tract of land containing 42.28 acres for \$1,650,000. The tract is known as "Cascade Cottages," and is being sold by The Trust for Public Land, which acquired the land from the previous landowners in 2016. Prior to TPL's acquisition, this property was a family-run vacation cottage business for several decades. Rocky Mountain Conservancy and The Trust for Public Land worked together to raise the funds to purchase the property and hold it until NPS funding became available. This property is the largest remaining commercial inholding in the park, and is located on Highway 34 near the Fall River entrance. The acquisition of this property will ensure the protection of this highly visible tract for the future.

**Valles Caldera National Preserve, NM** – On March 20, Valles Caldera intends to issue a press release seeking applications for grazing permits. The NPS is in its second year of operating a grazing program at Valles Caldera National Preserve. In its first year, the NPS issued a one-year grazing permit to the Pueblo of Jemez, using the grazing management plan and rate of \$10/Animal Unit Month (AUM) established by the predecessor agency, the Valles Caldera Trust. Valles Caldera Trust previously issued the Pueblo a competitively-awarded, three-year grazing permit. Pursuant to and consistent with NPS Policy (RM-53 Appendix 8), the NPS conducted a market analysis to set rates for 2017 at \$20/AUM, and is preparing to issue the special use permit by a competitive process. The Pueblo of Jemez may raise objections about competitively awarding the permit and the rate increase. The United States and Pueblo of Jemez are currently in litigation over title to the NPS unit. DOI SOL has been consulted and has informed DOJ.

**Zion National Park, UT** – On March 7, 2017, Zion National Park commented, via mail and email, on a Bureau of Land Management environmental assessment for its Color Country District Office's September 2017 oil and gas lease sale in Utah. Two of the parcels included in the EA are located north of the town of Virgin, Utah, along the Kolob-Terrace Road, which is an important access route to the higher elevation wilderness portions of Zion National Park. Those parcels are not visible from the park, but drilling and production facilities would probably be visible from the Kolob-Terrace Road depending on the specific site locations. NPS comments include concerns related to air quality, protecting night skies, and wildlife habitat and resource protections.

**-NPS-**



## **Intermountain Region Weekly Report March 20, 2017**

### ***Week ahead report***

**Carlsbad Caverns National Park, NM** – On or about April 15, 2017, the NPS will issue a Solicitation of Request for Proposals for the modernization of the primary elevator system at Carlsbad Caverns National Park. The modernization will replace the motors and controllers, hoist way equipment, elevator cars, guiderails and steel hoist cables. In addition, emergency rescue apparatus – auxiliary motor, auxiliary battery backup, and a single car rescue system – will be installed to improve elevator safety operations. The Design-Build Contract is expected to be awarded in May 2017 and the project could be completed in May 2018.

**Chiricahua National Monument, AZ** – On March 17, 2017, a Cochise County Superior Court jury found Gil Gaxiola, 33, guilty. Gaxiola was charged with first degree assault in an attack on a National Park Service employee at Chiricahua National Monument in August 2013. Gaxiola was also convicted of other charges in the case. Sentencing will be held on April 17, 2017.

**Dinosaur National Monument, CO, UT** – On May 6, the National Highway Transportation Safety Administration (NHTSA) offered to host a start-of-season "kick-off" media event for their ongoing "Click it or Ticket it" campaign on the Utah side of Dinosaur National Monument. Various federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies, as well as from the media and public are expected to attend. Uintah County Sheriff's and Utah State patrol are partnering with monument staff in the planning and execution of this event. Both seatbelt usage and driving posted speed limits will be emphasized during this event in an effort to reduce the threats to people and wildlife on monument and nearby roads.

**Glacier National Park, MT** – On or about April 22, the park, along with its sister peace park Waterton Lakes National Park (Canada) will announce its provisional designation as the world's first transboundary dark sky park. Because the dark sky designation overlays the entire International Peace Park (est.1932), and Parks Canada's 150th anniversary celebration this year, there is interest from the Canadian government in Ottawa to participate in the announcement. The park is coordinating with Waterton Lakes National Park to determine the level of that interest and the type of announcement that would be appropriate.

**Glen Canyon National Recreation Area, AZ, UT** – On March 22 and March 23, Glen Canyon staff will meet with members of the Navajo Nation and Hopi Tribe, to discuss management of aquatic invasive species and tourist flights over Rainbow Bridge. A meeting with the Pueblo of Zuni Tribe was held February 1. The park negotiated a draft Voluntary Air Tour Management Agreement with air tour operators to reduce the number of flights over Rainbow Bridge, a sensitive cultural site for several tribes, and the time of day and time of year during which flights may occur. The tribal consultations will provide feedback on the draft agreement.

**Glen Canyon National Recreation Area, AZ, UT** – On April 4 or April 11, Glen Canyon National Recreation Area, in conjunction with the Bureau of Reclamation (BOR), plans to hold a Grand Re-opening ceremony for the Carl Hayden interagency visitor center at Glen Canyon Dam. Glen Canyon and the BOR plan to invite the NPS director, the director of the NPS Intermountain Region and the secretary of the interior to speak at the ceremony, and the secretary will be invited to visit the park with Glen Canyon staff to gather information on land-management issues firsthand.

**Glen Canyon National Recreation Area, AZ, UT** – On March 14, GLCA met with representatives from the Western Area Power Administration, the National Renewable Energy Laboratory and the Arizona NPS Major Acquisition Buying Office to discuss the bidding process to develop a power-purchase agreement for several remote uplake sites. GLCA has since contacted the General Services Administration (GSA) to determine if NPS has the authority to enter into such an agreement, or if GSA approval and participation is required.

**Grand Canyon National Park, AZ** – In April 2017, Grand Canyon National Park expects to initiate a 30-day public review process for an environmental assessment (EA) that will analyze options for reducing the size of the bison herd on the park's North Rim. During the review process, the NPS plans to hold three public meetings, in Phoenix and Flagstaff, AZ and Kanab, UT, and will consult with Grand Canyon's 11 associated tribes. Resource impacts from the growing bison herd in the park include damage to sensitive resources, including cultural resources. The current herd size is approximately 500 animals; management actions under consideration in the EA would reduce the herd to size to less than 200 animals, through the use of a suite of tools including capture/removal, localized fencing of sensitive resources, and sharpshooting by skilled volunteers. The plan also proposed monitoring protocols to inform long-term decisions about bison management on the North Rim. The Arizona Game and Fish Department, Bureau of Land Management, U.S. Forest Service, and the InterTribal Bison Council are cooperating agencies on this effort. In a March 13, 2017, letter to the NPS, Arizona Senators John McCain (R-AZ) and Jeff Flake (R-AZ) requested information about the status of the EA.

**Grand Canyon National Park, AZ** – The NPS entered into an administrative action to terminate the current river operations contract supporting administrative work on the Colorado River in Grand Canyon National Park. The NPS intends to have a new contract in place by summer 2017. In the interim, several planned NPS trips will be canceled. Commercial river trips conducted for park visitors by concessioners and NPS search and rescue operations will be unaffected by this action.

**Grand Canyon National Park, AZ** – In May, the NPS plans to initiate public scoping under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) to replace the park's trans-canyon pipeline. The trans-canyon pipeline serves the park's south rim supplying all water to facilities serving more than 5 million visitors and 2,500 residents annually. The pipeline reached the end of its serviceable life and experiences frequent breaks. The cost to replace the pipeline is currently estimated at \$131.8 million dollars and construction is expected to begin in 2019. During the 30-day initial public scoping, the NPS plans to hold public meetings at the park's south rim and in Flagstaff, AZ, and will consult with the park's 11 associated tribes.

**Grand Canyon National Park, AZ** – On March 14, the Grand Canyon water utility crew identified significant damage from a storm-caused rockslide to the North Rim water supply line, including an estimated 300 foot section of missing pipeline. Initial reports indicate there will be a need to scale the rockslide above the pipeline before repairs begin. While scaling occurs, the North Kaibab Trail will close for hiker and worker safety. Repairs to the pipeline may take eight weeks or longer, possibly disrupting the usual May 15 seasonal opening of the North Rim.

**Grand Canyon National Park, AZ** – On April 29, 2017, the Arizona Cardinals will live broadcast two NFL draft picks from the South Rim of Grand Canyon National Park. This may draw some media attention, especially in sporting news. The Cardinals will bring notable figures, possibly including AZ Governor Ducey and/or current and former Cardinals players, to announce the picks. A commercial filming permit will be issued and all associated activities will be monitored by the Office of Communications.

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**Lyndon B. Johnson National Historical Park** – On April 1, 2017, Lyndon B. Johnson National Historical Park will host the 10<sup>th</sup> annual “LBJ 100” bicycle ride. More than 1,000 recreational bicyclists will pedal from the LBJ Ranch's airstrip onto rural public roads through the scenic Texas Hill Country on routes ranging from 10 to 62 miles. This popular event is an important fundraiser for the park's Friends group, with proceeds ultimately benefiting the park.

**Rocky Mountain National Park, CO** – On Monday, March 13, Rocky Mountain National Park acquired the 40-acre Cascade Cottages, the largest remaining commercial inholding in the park. The property is currently developed with 14 seasonal cabins. Acquisition required a collaborative effort between the NPS, the Trust for Public Land and the Rocky Mountain Conservancy, which spearheaded a Centennial Legacy Campaign on behalf of the park to acquire the property. Larimer County, the Town of Estes Park and the Estes Valley Land Trust also contributed funds for the acquisition.

**Valles Caldera National Preserve, NM** – On March 20, Valles Caldera issued a press release seeking applications for grazing permits. The NPS is in its second year of operating a grazing program at Valles Caldera National Preserve. In its first year, the NPS issued a one-year grazing permit to the Pueblo of Jemez, using the grazing management plan and rate of \$10/Animal Unit

Month (AUM) established by the predecessor agency, the Valles Caldera Trust. Valles Caldera Trust previously issued the Pueblo a competitively-awarded, three-year grazing permit. Pursuant to and consistent with NPS Policy (RM-53 Appendix 8), the NPS conducted a market analysis to set rates for 2017 at \$20/AUM, and is preparing to issue the special use permit by a competitive process. The Pueblo of Jemez may raise objections about competitively awarding the permit and the rate increase. The United States and Pueblo of Jemez are currently in litigation over title to the NPS unit. DOI SOL has been consulted and has informed DOJ.

**-NPS-**



## **Intermountain Region Weekly Report April 7, 2017**

### ***Week ahead report***

**Carlsbad Caverns National Park, NM** – On or about April 15, 2017, the NPS will issue a Solicitation of Request for Proposals to modernize the primary elevator system at Carlsbad Caverns National Park. The plan is to replace the motors and controllers, hoist way equipment, elevator cars, guiderails and steel hoist cables. In addition, the emergency rescue apparatus, which included the auxiliary motor, auxiliary battery backup, and a single car rescue system, will be installed to improve elevator safety operations. The Design-Build Contract is expected to be awarded in May 2017 and the project could be completed in May 2018 barring any complications.

**Carlsbad Caverns National Park, NM** – On April 25 and 26, the park will intermittently take the elevators out of service. This is an annual steel super structure inspection of the secondary elevator hoistway to be conducted by JVA, Consulting Engineers, CO. The facilities manager is working diligently with JVA to develop a schedule where we can bring the elevators back into service during peak visitor use on both days. This could result in Congressional interest.

**Carlsbad Caverns National Park, NM** – In May, the park will be required to shorten the hoist ropes before the busy summer season begins. In addition, the annual Qualified Elevator Inspector Certification (safety inspection) of the secondary elevator machinery will be completed in May. To reduce elevator downtime, both jobs will be scheduled to occur at the same time, which should take a total of three days to complete.

**Chickasaw National Recreation Area, OK** – On April 17, the Governor of the Chickasaw Nation and other invitees of the Chickasaw Nation will join the park to dedicate the Inkana Bridge. The bridge was a collaborative effort between the Chickasaw Nation and Chickasaw National Recreation Area and will span Rock Creek connecting the Chickasaw National Recreation Area with the Chickasaw Cultural Center.

**Dinosaur National Monument, CO, UT** – On May 6, the National Highway Transportation Safety Administration (NHTSA) offered to host a start-of-season media event for their ongoing "Click it or Ticket it" campaign on the Utah side of Dinosaur National Monument. Various federal, state and local law enforcement agencies, as well as from the media and public are expected to attend. Uintah County Sheriff's and Utah State patrol are partnering with monument staff to plan and execute the event. Both seatbelt usage and driving posted speed limits will be emphasized during this event in an effort to reduce the threats to people and wildlife on monument and nearby roads.

**Glacier National Park, MT** – On April 28, the park, along with its sister peace park Waterton Lakes National Park (Canada) will announce its provisional designation as the world's first International Dark Sky Association certified transboundary dark sky park. The announcement

will occur in West Glacier, MT, and will involve a presentation and luncheon reception for media, community leaders, donors, Waterton Lakes National Park leadership, and park staff. The park expects that media interest will be high following the announcement.

**Glen Canyon National Recreation Area, UT, AZ** – On April 28, KTVK-TV Phoenix Channel 3 will broadcast its four-hour Good Morning Arizona show from the park's Wahweap Marina. The show will feature video gathered by the park from the March 31 Bridging the Gap trip to Rainbow Bridge as well as video shot from the GLCA plane, and interviews about Horseshoe Bend, visitor safety, graffiti removal and resource protection.

**Glen Canyon National Recreation Area, UT, AZ** – On April 17-18, the park will tour archaeological sites with members of the Zuni tribe to assess the impacts of high-flow experiments at Glen Canyon Dam and gather tribal recommendations on mitigating impacts. A similar trip March 15-16 included members of the Kaibab Paiute and San Juan Southern Paiute tribes as well as University of Arizona researchers.

**Grand Canyon National Park, AZ** – On April 6, the park requested the help of the Intermountain Incident Management Team (IIMT) to help repair trail damages and breaks to the North Rim water pipeline. This Type-2 team will help the park coordinate operations, logistics, finances, plans, safety and communication issues related to the incident. The team is evaluating seasonal operations on the North Rim and assessing a date to open the North Rim.

**Grand Canyon National Park, AZ** – On April 13, Speaker of the House Paul Ryan will visit Grand Canyon on a private family day trip. The park is assisting with logistics of the visit; however, there will be no formal briefings or meetings with park staff. The Speaker will be accompanied by his family and will spend the day sightseeing.

**Grand Canyon National Park, AZ** - This month, the park plan to initiate a 30-day public review process for an environmental assessment (EA) that will analyze options for reducing the size of the bison herd on the park's North Rim. During the public review, the NPS plans to hold three public meetings, in Phoenix and Flagstaff, AZ and Kanab, UT, and to consult with Grand Canyon's 11 associated tribes. Resource impacts from the growing bison herd in the park include damage to sensitive resources, including cultural resources. The current herd size is approximately 500 animals; management actions under consideration in the EA would reduce the herd to size to less than 200 animals, through the use of capture/removal, localized fencing of sensitive resources, and sharpshooting by skilled volunteers. The plan also proposed monitoring protocols to inform long-term decisions about bison management on the North Rim. The Arizona Game and Fish Department, Bureau of Land Management, US Forest Service, and the InterTribal Bison Council are cooperating agencies on this effort.

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**Grand Canyon National Park, Canyon de Chelly National Monument, AZ** – Staff members from both parks are working with Senator John McCain's office to plan logistics and formal briefings to host a visit for the Ambassador from Jordan to both parks. The Senator invited Her Excellency to visit Arizona. The trip is tentatively scheduled for the end of June and includes an overnight visit to Grand Canyon and a day trip to Canyon de Chelly.

**Grant-Kohrs Ranch National Historic Site, MT** - In May, the park anticipates the Montana Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) will fly an Unmanned Aircraft System (UAS) flight for administrative purposes. The park is seeking approval from the Associate Director, Visitor and Resource Protection to approve the UAS flights. Last winter, the park received approval and issued a Special Use Permit to authorize DEQ to fly a UAS to document conditions. The park represents three linear miles of the 120-linear-mile Clark Fork River Superfund Remediation Area. The UAS is being used to document the entire Superfund corridor. Data collected will be used to identify progress, success, or failure of remediation, as well as tell the park's story of changes to the cultural landscape.

**Pecos National Historical Park, NM** – On April 23, the park is planning a kick-off event showcase its unique partnership with the Pecos Valley Medical Center to promote the Pecos Park Prescription Program (PPPP). The PPPP encourages health care patients and other local community members to use the visitor trail system at Pecos National Historical Park as a place for exercise, learning and general wellness.

**Petrified Forest National Park, AZ** – On April 19, the park will host two ceremonies. At 10 a.m., a naturalization ceremony for about a dozen new citizens will be held at an outdoor venue at Painted Desert Inn. The Department of Homeland Security, Office of U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services will preside. At 1 p.m., the park will celebrate the designation of the Painted Desert Community Complex as a National Historic Landmark. The park's partnership with the National Trust for Historic Preservation and State Historic Preservation Office will also be celebrated.

**Sand Creek Massacre National Historic Site, CO** – On April 27, the park will recognize the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of its establishment following two days of tribal consultation meetings. NPS staff, Northern and Southern Cheyenne tribal representatives and Colorado State representatives will be joined by Colorado Lt. Governor Donna Lynne for a tour of the park and an evening panel discussion entitled "Sand Creek Massacre National Historic Site: A Ten Year Retrospective". The event will be open to the public.

**Timpanogos Cave National Monument, UT** – On or about April 21, the park plans to issue a Special Use Permit to the Tour of Utah bicycle race for the use of Utah State Route 92 through the park on August 5, 2017. Racers would pass through the park in approximately 15 minutes, and no facilities or infrastructure will be allowed. The park determined that the short disruption of visitor vehicle traffic will not be significant (as defined in NPS Policy Memorandum 16-02). No resource impacts are anticipated.

**Yellowstone National Park, ID, MT, WY** – This month, the park plans to release an environmental assessment to construct an ecological research and monitoring site on the Blacktail Plateau as part of the National Ecological Observatory Network, d/b/a Battelle Ecology, Inc. (NEON). The site would involve installing a tower, soil sampling (array) plots, instrument hut, and aquatic monitoring equipment. Plots would also be established within a defined study area to collect data on biogeochemical cycles, infectious diseases, and a suite of local taxa to characterize patterns, dynamics, and linkages in terrestrial ecosystems. An annual flyover with small aircraft would collect airborne observations. This proposed site would be operational for a 30-year period.

**Zion National Park, UT** – On or about April 10, the park plans to release an environmental assessment for a 30-day public comment period to relocate the South Entrance Monument, install a monument plaza and reconfigure the adjacent parking area. Implementation of the proposed project would simultaneously enhance visitor safety, mitigate factors contributing to localized vehicle congestion and expand cultural resource protection measures.

**-NPS-**



**Intermountain Region  
Weekly Report  
April 17, 2017**

**Capitol Reef National Park, UT - (b) (5)**



**Carlsbad Caverns National Park, NM** – On April 25 and 26, the park will intermittently take the elevators out of service. This is an annual steel super structure inspection of the secondary elevator hoistway to be conducted by JVA, Consulting Engineers, CO. The facilities manager is working diligently with JVA to develop a schedule where we can bring the elevators back into service during peak visitor use on both days. This could result in Congressional interest.

**Carlsbad Caverns National Park, NM** – In May, the park will be required to shorten the hoist ropes before the busy summer season begins. In addition, the annual Qualified Elevator Inspector Certification (safety inspection) of the secondary elevator machinery will be completed in May. To reduce elevator downtime, both jobs will be scheduled to occur at the same time, which should take a total of three days to complete.

**Chickasaw National Recreation Area, OK** – On April 17, the Governor of the Chickasaw Nation and other invitees of the Chickasaw Nation will join the park to dedicate the Inkana Bridge. The bridge was a collaborative effort between the Chickasaw Nation and Chickasaw National Recreation Area and will span Rock Creek connecting the Chickasaw National Recreation Area with the Chickasaw Cultural Center.

**Dinosaur National Monument, CO, UT** – On May 6, the National Highway Transportation Safety Administration (NHTSA) offered to host a start-of-season media event for their ongoing "Click it or Ticket it" campaign on the Utah side of Dinosaur National Monument. Various federal, state and local law enforcement agencies, as well as from the media and public are expected to attend. Uintah County Sheriff's and Utah State patrol are partnering with monument staff to plan and execute the event. Both seatbelt usage and driving posted speed limits will be emphasized during this event in an effort to reduce the threats to people and wildlife on monument and nearby roads.

**Glacier National Park, MT** – On April 28, the park, along with its sister peace park, Waterton Lakes National Park (Canada), will announce its provisional designation as the world's first

International-Dark-Sky-Association-certified transboundary dark sky park. The announcement will occur in West Glacier, MT, and will involve a presentation and luncheon reception for media, community leaders, donors, Waterton Lakes National Park leadership, and park staff. The park expects that media interest will be high following the announcement.

**Glen Canyon National Recreation Area, UT, AZ** – On April 28, KTVK-TV Phoenix Channel 3 will broadcast its four-hour Good Morning Arizona show from the park's Wahweap Marina. The show will feature video gathered by the park from the March 31 Bridging-the-Gap trip to Rainbow Bridge as well as video shot from the GLCA plane, and interviews about Horseshoe Bend, visitor safety, graffiti removal and resource protection.

**Glen Canyon National Recreation Area, UT, AZ** – On April 17-18, the park will tour archaeological sites with members of the Zuni tribe to assess the impacts of high-flow experiments at Glen Canyon Dam and gather tribal recommendations on mitigating impacts. A similar trip March 15-16 included members of the Kaibab Paiute and San Juan Southern Paiute tribes as well as University of Arizona researchers.

**Grand Canyon National Park, AZ** – This month, the park plans to initiate a 30-day public review process for an environmental assessment (EA) that will analyze options for reducing the size of the bison herd on the park's North Rim. During the public review, the NPS plans to hold three public meetings, in Phoenix and Flagstaff, AZ and Kanab, UT, and to consult with Grand Canyon's 11 associated tribes. Resource impacts from the growing bison herd in the park include damage to sensitive resources, including cultural resources. The current herd size is approximately 500 animals; management actions under consideration in the EA would reduce the herd size to less than 200 animals through the use of capture/removal, localized fencing of sensitive resources, and sharpshooting by skilled volunteers. The plan also proposed monitoring protocols to inform long-term decisions about bison management on the North Rim. The Arizona Game and Fish Department, Bureau of Land Management, US Forest Service, and the InterTribal Bison Council are cooperating agencies on this effort.

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**Grand Canyon National Park, AZ** – On May 15, the park's North Rim will open as scheduled with limited visitor services and water conservation measures due to a storm-caused break in the North Rim water pipeline. This does not affect South Rim or Phantom Ranch water operations. Overnight accommodations at the Grand Canyon Lodge North Rim, operated by Forever Resorts, will have an 11-day delayed opening to May 26. Repairs are underway to the pipeline; the work is complex and logistically challenging and worker and visitor safety is paramount. North Kaibab Trail access is affected. Immediate actions to haul water to the North Rim are being implemented using crews and equipment from Grand Canyon, other national park units, and local contractors. The park is coordinating with the Arizona Department of Transportation. The park made notifications to affected parties and public. An emergency storm damage funding request will be submitted. The Intermountain Incident Management Team is transitioning management to park team.

**Grand Canyon National Park, AZ** – The footbridge leading to Ribbon Falls is closed until the Grand Canyon trail crew can repair damages. Ribbon Falls is a popular destination and side hike from the North Kaibab Trail, about six miles north of Phantom Ranch. The bridge is impassable and will not bear the weight of a hiker. There is no estimated time of repair.

**Grand Canyon National Park, Canyon de Chelly National Monument, AZ** – Staff members from both parks are working with Senator John McCain's office to plan logistics and formal briefings to host a visit for the Ambassador from Jordan to both parks. The Senator invited Her Excellency to visit Arizona. The trip is tentatively scheduled for the end of June and includes an overnight visit to Grand Canyon and a day trip to Canyon de Chelly.

**Grant-Kohrs Ranch National Historic Site, MT** - In May, the park anticipates the Montana Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) will fly an Unmanned Aircraft System (UAS) flight for administrative purposes. The park is seeking approval from the Associate Director, Visitor and Resource Protection to approve the UAS flights. Last winter, the park received approval and issued a Special Use Permit to authorize DEQ to fly a UAS to document conditions. The park represents three linear miles of the 120-linear-mile Clark Fork River Superfund Remediation Area. The UAS is being used to document the entire Superfund corridor. Data collected will be used to identify progress, success, or failure of remediation, as well as tell the park's story of changes to the cultural landscape.

**Great Sand Dunes National Park and Preserve, CO** – The National Park Service is in the process of developing an Ungulate Management Plan Draft Environment Impact Statement for Great Sand Dunes National Park and Preserve. The purpose is to determine the appropriate future management of elk and bison that supports long-term protection of resources and is compatible with conditions and management activities across the broader eastern San Luis Valley landscape. The park plans to release of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement for public review in mid-August 2017. We anticipate we will begin routing the Notice of Availability for National Park Service review in early May 2017 and that it will be available for departmental review by early June 2017.

**Great Sand Dunes National Park and Preserve, CO** – On April 25, park staff will meet with Congressional staff representatives from Sen. Michael Bennet, Rep. Scott Tipton and Sen. Cory

Gardner's office, and agency representatives from the USFS, USFWS and BLM to provide general updates on park operations and current visitor use activities.

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**Waco Mammoth National Memorial, TX** – On April 20, the Director of Government Relations at Baylor University is requesting a tour for Rep. Bill Flores. Raegan King, City of Waco Site Manager at Waco Mammoth National Memorial, will lead the tour and be accompanied by an NPS uniformed employee to demonstrate the cooperative partnership at the site. Rep. Flores, his Washington staff and local district staff are on a retreat and are planning to visit several locations in the Waco area, including Baylor University, Waco Mammoth, Space X and Texas A&M University.

**Yellowstone National Park, ID, MT, WY** – This month, the park plans to release an environmental assessment to construct an ecological research and monitoring site on the Blacktail Plateau as part of the National Ecological Observatory Network, d/b/a Battelle Ecology, Inc. (NEON). The site would involve installing a tower, soil sampling (array) plots, instrument hut, and aquatic monitoring equipment. Plots would also be established within a defined study area to collect data on biogeochemical cycles, infectious diseases, and a suite of local taxa to characterize patterns, dynamics, and linkages in terrestrial ecosystems. An annual



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**-NPS-**

## **Intermountain Region Weekly Report April 24, 2017**

**Carlsbad Caverns National Park, NM** – On April 25 and 26, the park will intermittently take the elevators out of service. This is an annual steel super structure inspection of the secondary elevator hoistway to be conducted by JVA, Consulting Engineers, CO. The facilities manager is working with JVA to develop a schedule where we can bring the elevators back into service during peak visitor use on both days. This could result in Congressional interest. In May, the park will be required to shorten the hoist ropes before the busy summer season begins. In addition, the annual Qualified Elevator Inspector Certification (safety inspection) of the secondary elevator machinery will be completed in May. To reduce elevator downtime, both jobs will be scheduled to occur at the same time, which should take a total of three days to complete.

**Dinosaur National Monument, CO, UT** – On or about April 26, the park intends to send a memo to the Bureau of Land Management's Vernal Field Office in Utah regarding their December 2017 oil and gas lease sale. One of the parcels being considered for leasing is located within one mile of the most visited location in the monument, the Quarry Visitor Center. Several other parcels are located on the immediate western boundary, and many others within 5 miles of the monument. In the memo, NPS is requesting that the BLM review air, water, viewshed and night sky impacts. The memo also requests the BLM to defer leasing the parcels that would most significantly impact resources and visitors in the monument. The comment period for the lease sale closed April 14; however, NPS was not aware of the parcels until April 18. The BLM indicated they will accept NPS' comments if they are received as soon as possible.

**Glacier National Park, MT** – On April 28, the park, along with its sister peace park, Waterton Lakes National Park (Canada), will announce its provisional designation as the world's first International-Dark-Sky-Association-certified transboundary dark sky park. The announcement will occur in West Glacier, MT, and will involve a presentation and luncheon reception for media, community leaders, donors, Waterton Lakes National Park leadership, and park staff. The park expects that media interest will be high following the announcement.

**Grand Canyon National Park, AZ** – The park's Type-3 Incident Management Team assumed control of the Winter Storm Damage Recovery Incident to coordinate repairs of the North Rim waterline and the opening of the North Rim. Slope scaling at the site is complete, which stabilized the work site, and crews began sling-loading in pipe and other equipment and have started repairs to the pipeline. The park continues to consult with the Arizona Department of Transportation and the Arizona Governor's office on weight limits for water hauling to the North Rim on SR 67. Daily stakeholder calls began on April 18th and will continue as needed.

**Grand Canyon National Park, AZ** – On April 15, the park received an alert from a personal locating beacon in a remote area of the park. An Arizona Department of Public Safety helicopter responded to the location where a hiking party reported Lou Ann Merrell, 62, and Jackson

Standefer, 14, went missing while crossing Tapeats Creek. On Thursday, April 20, after five days of extensive searching, which included ground teams, an NPS helicopter, an inflatable motor raft, and an unmanned aerial system, the NPS reduced the scale of the search. A missing persons investigation is ongoing.

**Grand Canyon National Park, AZ** – On April 20, the park posted video footage from an NPS-operated unmanned aerial system (UAS) on its Flickr site. This is the first time the park made UAS footage available to the public. On Friday, April 21, the Associated Press ran an article about UAS use in GRCA for operational and search and rescue missions.

**Grand Canyon National Park, AZ** – In May 2017, the park will initiate a 30-day public review for an environmental assessment (EA) to analyze options for reducing bison herd sizes on the park's North Rim. The NPS plans to hold public meetings in Phoenix and Flagstaff, AZ, and Kanab, UT, and will consult with the park's 11 associated tribes. Resource impacts from the growing bison herd in the park include damage to sensitive resources, including cultural resources. The EA includes options to reduce the heard size from approximately 500 animals to less than 200 animals through the use of capture/removal techniques, fencing off sensitive resources, and sharpshooting by skilled volunteers. The plan also proposes monitoring protocols to inform long-term decisions about bison management on the North Rim. The Arizona Game and Fish Department, Bureau of Land Management, US Forest Service, and the InterTribal Bison Council are cooperating agencies.

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**Grand Canyon National Park, Canyon de Chelly National Monument, AZ** – Staff members from both parks are working with Senator John McCain's office to plan logistics and formal briefings to host a visit for the Ambassador from Jordan to both parks. The Senator invited Her Excellency to visit Arizona. The trip is tentatively scheduled for the end of June and includes an overnight visit to Grand Canyon and a day trip to Canyon de Chelly.

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Clark Fork River Superfund Remediation Area. The UAS is being used to document the entire Superfund corridor. Data collected will be used to identify progress, success, or failure of remediation, as well as tell the park's story of changes to the cultural landscape.

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**Great Sand Dunes National Park and Preserve, CO** – On April 25, park staff will meet with Congressional staff representatives from Sen. Michael Bennet, Rep. Scott Tipton and Sen. Cory Gardner's office, and agency representatives from the USFS, USFWS and BLM to provide general updates on park operations and current visitor use activities.

**National Trails Intermountain Region** – On or about May 1, IMR Regional Director Sue Masica will review for signature the Categorical Exclusion for the Butterfield Overland Stagecoach Route Special Resource Study/National Historic Trail Feasibility Study, and submit to the director's office for transmittal to congress. The study finds the Butterfield Route is eligible for designation as a National Historic Trail. The findings of the study have not generated controversy.

**Pecos National Historical Park, NM** – On April 17, the National Park Service and the State of New Mexico's Department of Public Safety entered into a formal agreement that establishes a mutual framework in managing search and rescue operations in and near units of the National Park Service within New Mexico. The goal is to better coordinate rescue missions and improve outdoor public safety.

**Sand Creek Massacre National Historic Site, CO** – On April 27, the park will recognize the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of its establishment following two days of tribal consultation meetings. NPS staff, Northern and Southern Cheyenne tribal representatives and Colorado State representatives will be joined by Colorado Lt. Governor Donna Lynne for a tour of the park and an evening panel discussion entitled "Sand Creek Massacre National Historic Site: A Ten Year Retrospective". The event will be open to the public.

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flyover with small aircraft would collect airborne observations. This proposed site would be operational for a 30-year period.

**Yellowstone National Park, ID, MT, WY** – In May, the park plans to release an Environmental Assessment for a proposed project to reconstruct a portion of the East Entrance Road from Fishing Bridge to Indian Pond. The project would include widening the road up to eight feet to match the park standard of 30-feet wide. The project also includes plans to reconstruct associated parking areas and turnouts, rehabilitate or reconstruct the historic Fishing Bridge, and replace the Pelican Creek Bridge with a much longer low-profile viaduct (bridge).

**-NPS-**

**Intermountain Region  
Weekly Report  
May 22, 2017**

**ADDENDUM**

**Rocky Mountain National Park, CO** – May 30 - June 1, Rep. Mike Quigley (D-IL) and members of his staff will be touring the park to discuss climate change. The tour will include: fuels and hazard tree mitigation, exotic plant management, elk and vegetation management planning efforts, Fern Lake Fire of 2012, bark beetle and spruce fir beetle infestations, pika habitat and research, and alpine tundra exhibits. Quigley will also be visiting with National Resource Stewardship and Science staff to discuss science, adaptation, mitigation and communication related to climate change being conducted throughout NPS.

**-NPS-**

**Intermountain Region  
Weekly Report  
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**\*Please note, we have one more GRCA item pending solicitor review. We will send that along asap.**

**Colorado National Monument, CO** – Sometime in June, Colorado National Monument plans to repair a broken, 60-year-old water main under two-lane Rim Rock Drive, the park's main road, near the east entry station (Grand Junction). The January 2017 break cut off running water to the entrance station and maintenance shops and offices at that end of the park. Repair is vital for busy summer visitation and operations. The new section of pipe will extend beyond both sides of the road to limit risk of future breaks under the pavement. To minimize traffic delays, one lane will remain open during the week-long project. This road is the main access for law enforcement, emergency services and residential and commercial vehicles to Glade Park, a neighboring community. Residents, police and emergency agencies were notified May 19 of the pending work. An exact start date is being determined with the contractor.

**Glacier National Park, MT** – On June 2 and 3, Senators Steve Daines (MT) and Pat Roberts (KS) will visit the park. The visit is informal, and will come at the conclusion of an agriculture summit they are attending in Great Falls, MT. The Senators will go on a guided Lake McDonald Lodge Tour and possibly a guided walk the following morning.

**Glen Canyon National Recreation Area, AZ** – On May 22, Glen Canyon National Recreation Area will re-issue a press release alerting boaters that three side canyons on Lake Powell will be enforced as wakeless areas beginning May 25 to increase safety for visitors in all types of watercraft. The press release, which was originally issued May 2, will include a map of the canyons.

**Glen Canyon National Recreation Area, AZ** – On May 26, staffers from the offices of Utah Sens. Orrin Hatch and Mike Lee and Utah Rep. Chris Stewart will visit GLCA to gather information and discuss federal issues facing the park.

**Grand Canyon National Park, AZ** – The park issued a notice to seek information from potential contractors who may be interested in providing logistical support services for administrative work along the Colorado River corridor. The NPS intends to have a contract in place by mid-summer 2017. Contractor support would include providing boats, equipment and boat operators for biological, archaeological, maintenance and restoration, and other administrative work along the river. Commercial river trips and search and rescue operations will not be affected by this action.

**Grand Canyon National Park (AZ)** – During the 30-day public review period for the Initial Bison Herd Reduction environmental assessment (EA) released on May 9, 2017, Grand Canyon

National Park has held two of three public meetings. The NPS held meetings in Phoenix, AZ (May 18), Flagstaff, AZ (May 16), and will hold a meeting in Kanab, UT (May 23) and a web-based meeting (May 30). The EA analyzes options for reducing the size of the bison herd on the park's North Rim. Resource impacts from the growing bison herd in the park include damage to sensitive natural and cultural resources. The current herd size estimated at 400 to 600 animals. Management actions under consideration in the EA would reduce the herd to size to less than 200 animals through the use of capture/removal techniques, fencing local sensitive resources and lethal culling by skilled volunteers. The NPS is continuing to consult with the park's 11 associated tribes. The Arizona Game and Fish Department, Bureau of Land Management, US Forest Service, and the Intertribal Buffalo Council are cooperating agencies on this effort.

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GRCA Snelling

GRCA Hualapi signs, helicopters.

**Grand Canyon National Park, AZ** – From May 29 to September 4, a demonstrator who dresses as Sesame Street characters such as Cookie Monster to solicit money for photos, submitted a special use permit application to exercise his First Amendment rights. GRCA commercial services division processed the permit and is working with the solicitor's office. Front-line staff will be briefed about First Amendment rights; talking points and FAQs about First Amendment rights in national parks will be available. The park may also use a disclaimer board in designated First Amendment areas.

**Little Bighorn Battlefield National Monument, MT** – On May 29, Little Bighorn Battlefield National Monument will host an annual Memorial Day event in the Custer National Cemetery with local veterans and the general public to honor all veterans. US Senator Steve Daines will speak at this event. Local media usually are present.

**Little Bighorn Battlefield National Monument, MT** – On June 25, Little Bighorn Battlefield National Monument will host an annual Anniversary event honoring all who fought in the Battle of Little Bighorn. Secretary Zinke and the Acting Director of the National Park Service have been invited to speak along with Tribal leaders from 17 associated nations. The Montana Congressional delegation will be invited to attend. Local media will be present.

**Old Spanish and Juan Bautista de Anza National Historic Trails, CA** – The Old Spanish National Historic Trail, administered by the National Trails Intermountain Region (NTIR) and Juan Bautista de Anza National Historic Trail have partnered with the Office of Federal Lands

Highway, Central Federal Lands Division (CFL) to pursue a feasibility study for a non-motorized trail along a shared corridor through Los Angeles County. CFL is the lead agency on the project. CFL and NTIR staff will introduce the project to the Southern California Association of Governments Energy & Environment Committee, during their upcoming June 1 meeting. This has not generated controversy and will likely result in positive media attention.

**Saguaro National Park, AZ** – The Arizona Department of Transportation and the Federal Highway Administration released a draft Environmental Impact Statement, which lists a range of corridor alternatives for the proposed Interstate 11 between Nogales and Wickenburg. The NPS is serving as a cooperating agency on the planning document and plans to submit comments regarding two proposed routes that run adjacent to the border of the park's Tucson Mountain District. The comment period closes on June 2.

**Tuzigoot National Monument, AZ** – On May 30, Tuzigoot National Monument will send a letter to Freeport Minerals Corporation (FMC) in response to the draft United Verde Soil Program, Remedial Action Work Plan (RAWP) submitted to the Arizona Division of Environmental Quality. The RAWP proposes to establish a staging area and permanent repository for smelting related contaminated soils within the legislative boundaries of Tuzigoot, on lands owned by FMC. As 36 CFR Part 6, Solid Waste Disposal Sites in Units of the National Park Service, is applicable to these lands, NPS is unable to approve the placement of the staging and repository areas within those boundaries. The NPS is concerned about contamination within Tuzigoot resulting from the same legacy activities that have impacted the town of Clarkdale and believes that lands within the park, notably the Tavasci Marsh, require investigation and, if necessary, remediation.

**Yellowstone National Park, ID, MT, WY** – In May, the park released an Environmental Assessment for a proposed project to reconstruct a portion of the East Entrance Road from Fishing Bridge to Indian Pond. Public comments are being accepted on the project until May 26, 2017.

The project would include widening the road up to eight feet to match the park standard of 30-foot wide. The project also includes plans to reconstruct associated parking areas and turnouts, rehabilitate or reconstruct the historic Fishing Bridge, and replace the Pelican Creek Bridge with a much longer low-profile viaduct (bridge).

**-NPS-**



## **Intermountain Region Weekly Report May 26, 2017**

**Big Thicket National Preserve, TX** – The park prepared a Finding of No Significant Impact statement on BP America's proposal to directionally drill nine wells from six locations outside the Neches Bottom / Jack Gore Baygall Unit. All surface activities will be located outside of the park. Directional drilling inside the park will occur approximately 9,300 feet from the surface. Based on the preferred alternative in the environmental assessment, NPS determined there were no significant threats to federally-owned or administered lands, waters or resources. NPS is proposing to grant BP an exemption under the NPS' Nonfederal Oil and Gas Rights Regulations. The NPS will also consider granting BP exemptions to directionally drill and produce an additional eight wells in the Ticonderoga Gas Unit pending 1) an approved state of Texas drilling permit, 2) a Groundwater Advisory Unit, and 3) a description of any revisions to the currently-proposed development methodology for the eight wells.

**Colorado National Monument, CO** – Sometime in June, Colorado National Monument plans to repair a broken, 60-year-old water main under two-lane Rim Rock Drive, the park's main road, near the east entry station (Grand Junction). To minimize traffic delays, one lane will remain open during the week-long project. This road is the main access for law enforcement, emergency services and residential and commercial vehicles to Glade Park, a neighboring community. The January 2017 break cut off running water to the entrance station and maintenance shops and offices at that end of the park. Repair is vital for busy summer visitation and operations. The new section of pipe will extend beyond both sides of the road to limit risk of future breaks under the pavement. Residents, police and emergency agencies were notified May 19 of the pending work. An exact start date is being determined with the contractor.

**Glacier National Park, MT** – On June 2 and 3, Senators Steve Daines (R-MT) and Pat Roberts (R-KS) will visit the park. The visit is informal, and will come at the conclusion of an agriculture summit they are attending in Great Falls, MT. The senators will go on a guided Lake McDonald Lodge Tour and possibly a guided walk the following morning.

**Glen Canyon National Recreation Area, UT** – On June 12-16, WASO and the National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL) will visit the park to conduct a detailed assessment of the electrical systems at Bullfrog, Halls Crossing, Dangling Rope and Hite. The assessment will provide information necessary to issue a prospectus for competitive bids for a proposed Power Purchase Agreement for multiple uptake sites.

**Grand Canyon National Park (AZ)** – On June 14, the comment period for Initial Bison Herd Reduction environmental assessment (EA) will close. The comment period was extended from June 7, to account for an unrelated outage of the NPS Planning, Environmental, and Public Comment website. Grand Canyon National Park held three public meetings in Phoenix, AZ (May 18), Flagstaff, AZ (May 16) and Kanab, UT (May 23). A final web-based meeting is scheduled May 30. The EA analyzes options for reducing the size of the bison herd on the park's North Rim. Resource impacts from the growing bison herd in the park include damage to sensitive natural and cultural resources. The current herd size estimated at 400 to 600 animals. Management actions under consideration in the EA would reduce the herd to size to less than

200 animals through the use of capture/removal techniques, fencing local sensitive resources and lethal culling by skilled volunteers. The NPS is continuing to consult with the park's 11 associated tribes. The Arizona Game and Fish Department, Bureau of Land Management, US Forest Service, and the Intertribal Buffalo Council are cooperating agencies on this effort.

**Grand Canyon National Park, AZ** – In June, the NPS plans to initiate a 30-day public scoping on a plan to replace the park's trans-canyon pipeline. The trans-canyon pipeline serves the park's South Rim, which supplies water to facilities serving more than 5 million visitors and 2,500 residents annually. The pipeline reached the end of its serviceable life and experiences frequent breaks. The cost to replace the pipeline is estimated at \$131.8 million and construction is expected to begin in 2019. The NPS plans to hold public meetings at the park's South Rim and in Flagstaff, AZ, and will consult with the park's 11 associated tribes.

**Grand Canyon National Park, AZ** – From May 29 to September 4, a demonstrator who dresses as Sesame Street characters such as Cookie Monster to solicit money for photos, submitted a special use permit application to exercise his First Amendment rights. GRCA commercial services division processed the permit and is working with the solicitor's office. Front-line staff will be briefed about First Amendment rights; talking points and FAQs about First Amendment rights in national parks will be available. The park may also post written disclaimers for the public in designated First Amendment areas.

**Little Bighorn Battlefield National Monument, MT** – On May 29, Little Bighorn Battlefield National Monument will host an annual Memorial Day event in the Custer National Cemetery with local veterans and the general public to honor all veterans. Senator Steve Daines (R-MT) will speak at this event. Local media usually are present.

**Little Bighorn Battlefield National Monument, MT** – On June 25, Little Bighorn Battlefield National Monument will host an annual anniversary event honoring all who fought in the Battle of Little Bighorn. Secretary Zinke and the Acting Director of the National Park Service have been invited to speak along with Tribal leaders from 17 associated nations. The Montana Congressional delegation will be invited to attend. Local media will be present.

**Manhattan Project National Historic Park, NM** – New Mexico Senator Martin Heinrich (D-NM) was in Los Alamos, NM, on Saturday, May 27, for a press event celebrating the creation of a Friends Group that will be established to support the Manhattan Project National Historical Park in Los Alamos.

**Old Spanish and Juan Bautista de Anza National Historic Trails, CA** – The Old Spanish National Historic Trail, administered by the National Trails Intermountain Region (NTIR) and Juan Bautista de Anza National Historic Trail have partnered with the Office of Federal Lands Highway, Central Federal Lands Division (CFL) to pursue a feasibility study for a non-motorized trail along a shared corridor through Los Angeles County. CFL is the lead agency on the project. CFL and NTIR staff will introduce the project to the Southern California Association of Governments Energy & Environment Committee, during their upcoming June 1 meeting. This has not generated controversy and will likely result in positive media attention.

**Rocky Mountain National Park, CO** – May 30 to June 1, Rep. Mike Quigley (D-IL) and members of his staff will tour the park to discuss climate change. The tour will include: fuels and

hazard tree mitigation, exotic plant management, elk and vegetation management planning efforts, Fern Lake Fire of 2012, bark beetle and spruce fir beetle infestations, pika habitat and research, and alpine tundra exhibits. Quigley will also visit with National Resource Stewardship and Science staff to discuss science, adaptation, mitigation and communication related to climate change being conducted throughout NPS.

**Saguaro National Park, AZ** – The Arizona Department of Transportation and the Federal Highway Administration released a draft Environmental Impact Statement, which lists a range of corridor alternatives for the proposed Interstate 11 between Nogales and Wickenburg. The NPS is serving as a cooperating agency on the planning document and plans to submit comments regarding two proposed routes that run adjacent to the border of the park's Tucson Mountain District. The comment period closes on June 2.

**Sand Creek Massacre National Historic Site, CO** – On May 31, Senator Michael Bennet (D-CO) will visit the Sand Creek Massacre National Historic Site during a visit to several sites and communities in southeastern Colorado. In 2013 and 2014, Senator Bennet supported a bipartisan effort among Colorado's congressional delegation to enable National Historic Sites such as Sand Creek Massacre to expend federal funds on non-federally owned support facilities under certain circumstances. The successful effort resulted in a provision in the 2015 National Defense Authorization Act, which enabled NPS to support the renovation and development of a visitor facility for the Sand Creek Massacre NHS in the gateway community of Eads, Colorado. That project is ongoing.

**Tuzigoot National Monument, AZ** – On May 30, Tuzigoot National Monument will send a letter to Freeport Minerals Corporation (FMC) in response to the draft United Verde Soil Program, Remedial Action Work Plan (RAWP) submitted to the Arizona Division of Environmental Quality. The RAWP proposes to establish a staging area and permanent repository for smelting related contaminated soils within the legislative boundaries of Tuzigoot, on lands owned by FMC. As 36 CFR Part 6, Solid Waste Disposal Sites in Units of the National Park Service, is applicable to these lands, NPS is unable to approve the placement of the staging and repository areas within those boundaries. The NPS is concerned about contamination within Tuzigoot resulting from the same legacy activities that have impacted the town of Clarkdale and believes that lands within the park, notably the Tavasci Marsh, require investigation and, if necessary, remediation.

**Zion National Park, UT** – On or about June 19, the park plans to release a Finding of No Significant Impact statement for a project to relocate the South Entrance Monument, install a monument plaza, and reconfigure the adjacent parking area to reduce visitor hazards. Implementation of the proposed project would simultaneously enhance visitor safety, mitigate factors contributing to localized vehicle congestion, and expand cultural resource protection measures.

**-NPS-**

## **Intermountain Region Weekly Report May 08, 2017**

**Grand Canyon National Park, AZ** – On May 8, the Grand Canyon National Park initiated a 30-day public review process for an environmental assessment (EA) to analyze options for reducing the size of the bison herd on the park's North Rim. As part of the review, the NPS plans to hold three public meetings in Phoenix, AZ (May 18), Flagstaff, AZ (May 16), and Kanab, UT (May 23), and a web-based meeting (May 30) for those who cannot attend an in-person meeting. The NPS continues to consult with Grand Canyon's 11 associated tribes on this issue. Resource impacts from the growing bison herd in the park include damage to sensitive natural and cultural resources. The current herd size is approximately 500 animals; management actions under consideration in the EA would reduce the herd size to less than 200 animals through the use of a suite of tools including capture/removal, localized fencing of sensitive resources, and lethal culling by skilled volunteers. The plan also proposes monitoring protocols to inform long-term decisions about bison management on the North Rim. The Arizona Game and Fish Department, Bureau of Land Management, US Forest Service, and the InterTribal Buffalo Council are cooperating agencies on this effort.

**Grand Canyon National Park, AZ** – As part of the its 2017 Winter Storm Recovery Incident, Grand Canyon's Type-3 Incident Management Team (IMT) is working with a contractor to truck at least 40,000 gallons of water a day until water is can be pumped from Roaring Springs to the North Rim storage tanks. A 300-foot break and smaller breaks in the North Rim water pipeline were repaired. The NPS anticipates water will start flowing to the North Rim storage tanks as early as this week. The last day of daily stakeholder calls was Friday, May 5 and the IMT will no longer manage the incident; however, GRCA continues to work with partners and concessioners.

**Grand Canyon National Park, AZ** – In June, the NPS plans to initiate a 30-day public scoping on a plan to replace the park's trans-canyon pipeline. The trans-canyon pipeline serves the park's South Rim, which supplies water to facilities serving more than 5 million visitors and 2,500 residents annually. The pipeline reached the end of its serviceable life and experiences frequent breaks. The cost to replace the pipeline is estimated at \$131.8 million and construction is expected to begin in 2019. The NPS plans to hold public meetings at the park's South Rim and in Flagstaff, AZ, and will consult with the park's 11 associated tribes.

**Grand Canyon National Park, AZ** – On May 23, the Director of Yuntaishan (China) Geologic Park and regional government officials plan to visit the park to sign the sister park renewal agreement. This sister park relationship, first formalized in 2007, promotes international cooperation and support for the mutual benefit of both parks and the people of both countries.

**Grand Canyon National Park, AZ** – From May 29 to September 4, a demonstrator who dresses as Sesame Street characters such as Cookie Monster to solicit money for photos, submitted a special use permit application to exercise his First Amendment rights. GRCA commercial services division processed the permit and is working with the solicitor's office. Front-line staff will be briefed about First Amendment rights; talking points and FAQs about First Amendment

rights in national parks will be available. The park may also use a disclaimer board in designated First Amendment areas.

**Grand Canyon National Park, AZ** – The footbridge leading to Ribbon Falls is closed until the Grand Canyon trail crew can repair damages. Ribbon Falls is a popular destination and side hike from the North Kaibab Trail, about six miles north of Phantom Ranch. The bridge is impassable and will not bear the weight of a hiker. There is no estimated time of repair.

**Grand Canyon National Park, Canyon de Chelly National Monument, AZ** – Staff members from both parks are working with Senator John McCain's office to plan logistics and formal briefings to host a visit for the Ambassador from Jordan to both parks. The Senator invited Her Excellency to visit Arizona. The trip is tentatively scheduled for the end of June and includes an overnight visit to Grand Canyon and a day trip to Canyon de Chelly.

**Grant-Kohrs Ranch National Historic Site, MT** - This week, the Montana Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) will fly an Unmanned Aircraft System (UAS) flight for administrative purposes. The park represents three linear miles of the 120-linear-mile Clark Fork River Superfund Remediation Area. The UAS is being used to document the entire Superfund corridor. Data collected will be used to identify progress, success, or failure of remediation, as well as tell the park's story of changes to the cultural landscape.

**Great Sand Dunes National Park and Preserve, CO** – The National Park Service is in the process of developing an Ungulate Management Plan Draft Environment Impact Statement for Great Sand Dunes National Park and Preserve. The purpose is to determine the appropriate future management of elk and bison that supports long-term protection of resources and is compatible with conditions and management activities across the broader eastern San Luis Valley landscape. The park plans to release the Draft Environmental Impact Statement for public review in mid-August 2017. We anticipate we will begin routing the Notice of Availability for National Park Service review in early May 2017 and that it will be available for departmental review by early June 2017.

**Yellowstone National Park, ID, MT, WY** – In May, the park plans to release an Environmental Assessment for a proposed project to reconstruct a portion of the East Entrance Road from Fishing Bridge to Indian Pond. The project would include widening the road up to eight feet to match the park standard of 30-feet wide. The project also includes plans to reconstruct associated parking areas and turnouts, rehabilitate or reconstruct the historic Fishing Bridge, and replace the Pelican Creek Bridge with a much longer low-profile viaduct (bridge).

**-NPS-**



## **Intermountain Region Weekly Report May 15, 2017 DRAFT**

**Grand Canyon National Park, AZ** – The park issued a notice to seek information from potential contractors who may be interested in providing logistical support services for administrative work along the Colorado River corridor. The NPS intends to have a contract in place by mid-summer 2017. Contractor support would include providing boats, equipment and boat operators for biological, archaeological, maintenance and restoration, and other administrative work along the river. Commercial river trips and search and rescue operations will not be affected by this action.

**Grand Canyon National Park, AZ** – The park will hold three public meetings during the 30-day public review period for the Initial Bison Herd Reduction environmental assessment (EA), released on May 9, 2017. The meetings include: Phoenix, AZ (May 18), Flagstaff, AZ (May 16), and Kanab, UT (May 23) as well as a web-based meeting (May 30). The EA analyzes options for reducing the size of the bison herd on the park's North Rim. Resource impacts from the growing bison herd in the park include damage to sensitive natural and cultural resources. The current herd size estimated at 400 to 600 animals. Management actions under consideration in the EA would reduce the herd to size to less than 200 animals through the use of capture/removal techniques, fencing local sensitive resources and lethal culling by skilled volunteers. The NPS is continuing to consult with the park's 11 associated tribes. The Arizona Game and Fish Department, Bureau of Land Management, US Forest Service, and the InterTribal Buffalo Council are cooperating agencies on this effort.

**Grand Canyon National Park, AZ** – Repairs to the damaged North Rim water pipeline were completed ahead of schedule and North Rim operations began May 15. The campground, public laundry and showers, mule rides, visitor center, and other visitor services will open as scheduled. Forever Resorts will open lodging for individuals with prior reservations and will offer meals in the lodge restaurant, saloon, and general store.

**Grand Canyon National Park, AZ** – In June, the NPS plans to initiate a 30-day public scoping on a plan to replace the park's trans-canyon pipeline. The trans-canyon pipeline serves the park's South Rim, which supplies water to facilities serving more than 5 million visitors and 2,500 residents annually. The pipeline reached the end of its serviceable life and experiences frequent breaks. The cost to replace the pipeline is estimated at \$131.8 million and construction is expected to begin in 2019. The NPS plans to hold public meetings at the park's South Rim and in Flagstaff, AZ, and will consult with the park's 11 associated tribes.

**Grand Canyon National Park, AZ** – On May 23, the Director of Yuntaishan (China) Geologic Park and regional government officials plan to visit the park to sign the sister park renewal agreement. This sister park relationship, first formalized in 2007, promotes international cooperation and support for the mutual benefit of both parks and the people of both countries.

**Grand Canyon National Park, AZ** – From May 29 to September 4, a demonstrator who dresses as Sesame Street characters such as Cookie Monster to solicit money for photos, submitted a special use permit application to exercise his First Amendment rights. GRCA commercial services division processed the permit and is working with the solicitor's office. Front-line staff will be briefed about First Amendment rights; talking points and FAQs about First Amendment rights in national parks will be available. The park may also use a disclaimer board in designated First Amendment areas.

**Great Sand Dunes National Park and Preserve, CO** – The National Park Service is in the process of developing an Ungulate Management Plan Draft Environment Impact Statement for Great Sand Dunes National Park and Preserve. The purpose is to determine the appropriate future management of elk and bison that supports long-term protection of resources and is compatible with conditions and management activities across the broader eastern San Luis Valley landscape. The park plans to release the Draft Environmental Impact Statement for public review in mid-August 2017. We anticipate we will begin routing the Notice of Availability for National Park Service review in early May 2017 and that it will be available for departmental review by early June 2017.

**Lyndon B. Johnson National Historical Park, TX** – A recent structural inspection of the main house revealed two significant structural issues. The first, the living room ceiling has become detached from the floor joists above it. The second, the masonry end wall of 1967 office addition has excessive lateral movement. The first issue was described as an emergency situation by the engineer. As a result, the park immediately ceased tours of the living room and dining room, and created an alternate tour through other parts of the house. The next step is to safely remove the artifacts from the room.

**Manhattan Project National Historical Park, WA, NM, TN** – From May 9 - 12, the B Reactor tours at the Hanford Site were suspended to address a partial tunnel collapse near the Plutonium Uranium Extraction Facility, known as the PUREX plant, which was operated during the Cold War and was last operated in the 1980s. The tunnel is used to store nuclear waste. The Department of Energy reported that no radiological contamination was detected as a result of the collapse. On May 10, crews completed back-filling the subsided area.

**Saguaro National Park, AZ** – The Arizona Department of Transportation and the Federal Highway Administration released a draft Environmental Impact Statement, which lists a range of corridor alternatives for the proposed Interstate 11 between Nogales and Wickenburg. The NPS is serving as a cooperating agency on the planning document and plans to submit comments regarding two proposed routes that run adjacent to the border of the park's Tucson Mountain District. The comment period closes on June 2.

**Salinas Pueblo Missions National Monument, NM** – While conducting a tour of the pictograph cultural area near Abo, a newly-painted pictograph was located on NPS lands. The pictograph is of a horned serpent and appears to be a traditional image made within the last year. The park drafted a consultation letter to determine if the new images are related to landscape being used by our associated pueblos as a traditional cultural property. Should the pueblos agree that the images are graffiti; the park intends to remove them.

**White Sands National Monument, NM** – On or about May 19, the park will submit comments on the Draft Environmental Assessment (DEA) for the Interim Relocation of Two F-16 Squadrons. The DEA evaluates potential impacts associated with temporarily (five years) relocating two squadrons of F-16 fighter aircraft to Holloman Air Force Base. The park responded to a notice of intent for the DEA earlier this year. Comments will center on safety of park visitors and staff and protection of park resources due to increased overflights, training operations and supersonic booms that would occur under the USAF preferred alternative.

**Yellowstone National Park, ID, MT, WY** – In May, the park plans to release an Environmental Assessment for a proposed project to reconstruct a portion of the East Entrance Road from Fishing Bridge to Indian Pond. The project would include widening the road up to eight feet to match the park standard of 30-feet wide. The project also includes plans to reconstruct associated parking areas and turnouts, rehabilitate or reconstruct the historic Fishing Bridge, and replace the Pelican Creek Bridge with a much longer low-profile viaduct (bridge).

**-NPS-**

## **Intermountain Region Weekly Report June 5, 2017**

**Colorado National Monument, CO** – As soon as possible in June 2017, Colorado National Monument plans to repair a broken, 60-year-old water main under two-lane Rim Rock Drive, the park's main road, near the east entry station (Grand Junction). To minimize traffic delays, one lane will remain open during the week-long project. This road is the main access for law enforcement, emergency services and residential and commercial vehicles to Glade Park, a neighboring community. A January 2017 break cut off running water to the entrance station and maintenance shops and offices at that end of the park. Repair is vital for busy summer visitation and operations. The new section of pipe will extend beyond both sides of the road to limit risk of future breaks under the pavement. Residents, police and emergency agencies were notified May 19 of the pending work. An exact start date is being determined with the contractor.

**Glen Canyon National Recreation Area, UT** – On June 12-16, WASO and the National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL) will visit the park to conduct a detailed assessment of the electrical systems at Bullfrog, Halls Crossing, Dangling Rope and Hite. The assessment will provide information necessary to issue a prospectus for competitive bids for a proposed Power Purchase Agreement for multiple uplake sites.

**Glen Canyon National Recreation Area, UT** – Early Monday, June 5 a fuel spill was detected at the park's Hall's Crossing Dock. About 884 gallons of unleaded fuel spilled from a broken above-ground hose line at the Hall's Crossing Fuel Dock starting at approx. 1 a.m. The spill was discovered at approx. 8 a.m when an Aramark employee arrived for work. With NPS maintenance assistance, the fuel and electricity were shut off and locked out immediately thereafter. Aramark and NPS Safety Officers arrived to the scene and have commenced planning and cleanup preparations. An engineer will be on site at 1200 tomorrow to inspect the area and provide additional planning advice. The spill occurred approx. 36 feet from the shoreline on a 30% grade. Most of the fuel was contained by soil. No visible sheen is present on the water surface, but it appears that a minor amount might have seeped to the waterline. Redundant booms have been placed in the water around the spill location and measures have been taken to move and secure fuel and other lines.

An Environmental Services company will begin performing cleanup/decon beginning operations Tuesday, June 6. GLCA Safety Officer became Incident Commander June 5; operations will be coordinated through the IC by (b) (6) (Aramark Safety Officer). Applicable federal, state, and county environmental agencies have been notified. The Hall's Crossing Fuel Dock will be closed until further notice. The cause of the spill is under investigation

**Glen Canyon National Recreation Area, AZ/UT** – An investigation is underway of a possible homicide-suicide near Wahweap. On June 2, 2017 at approximately 6 a.m. the National Park Service Dispatch received a report of two deceased subjects near the Wahweap Swim Beach parking area of the Glen Canyon National Recreation Area. One female deceased was in a car in the parking lot (AZ, Coconino County), and one male deceased was near the Lake Powell shoreline (UT, Kane County). Deputies from the two Sheriff's Offices and National Park

Service Rangers responded to the scene and located a 37-year-old male and a 25-year-old female victims deceased from apparent gunshot wounds. Both are from the Page, AZ area. There were no outstanding suspects or concerns for public safety at the time. Due to the close proximity of the Utah/Arizona state line, this incident is being investigated through coordinated efforts of the Coconino County Sheriff's Office, Kane County Sheriff's Office, Coconino County Medical Examiner's Office, Utah State Medical Examiner's Office, and the National Park Service.

**Grand Canyon National Park, AZ** – On June 14, the comment period for Initial Bison Herd Reduction environmental assessment (EA) will close. The comment period was extended from June 7, to account for an unrelated outage of the NPS Planning, Environmental, and Public Comment website. Grand Canyon National Park held three public meetings in Phoenix, AZ (May 18), Flagstaff, AZ (May 16) and Kanab, UT (May 23). A final web-based meeting occurred May 30. The EA analyzes options for reducing the size of the bison herd on the park's North Rim. Resource impacts from the growing bison herd in the park include damage to sensitive natural and cultural resources. The current herd size estimated at 400 to 600 animals. Management actions under consideration in the EA would reduce the herd to size to less than 200 animals through the use of capture/removal techniques, fencing local sensitive resources and lethal culling by skilled volunteers. The NPS is continuing to consult with the park's 11 associated tribes. The Arizona Game and Fish Department, Bureau of Land Management, US Forest Service, and the Intertribal Buffalo Council are cooperating agencies on this effort.

**Grand Canyon National Park, AZ** – In June, the NPS plans to initiate a 30-day public scoping on a plan to replace the park's trans-canyon pipeline. The trans-canyon pipeline serves the park's South Rim, which supplies water to facilities serving more than 5 million visitors and 2,500 residents annually. The pipeline reached the end of its serviceable life and experiences frequent breaks. The cost to replace the pipeline is estimated at \$131.8 million and construction is expected to begin in 2019. The NPS plans to hold public meetings at the park's South Rim and in Flagstaff, AZ, and will consult with the park's 11 associated tribes.

**Grand Canyon National Park, AZ** – The NPS has issued a sources sought notice for market research seeking initial information from potential contractors who may be interested in providing logistical support services for NPS administrative work along the Colorado River corridor within Grand Canyon National Park. The NPS intends to have a contract in place by mid-summer 2017. Contractor support under the contract would include providing boats, equipment and boat operators to support biological, archaeological, maintenance and restoration, and other administrative NPS work along the river. Commercial river trips conducted for park visitors by concessioners and NPS search and rescue operations are ongoing and will be unaffected by this action.

**Grand Canyon National Park, AZ** – The NPS plans to close the Grand Canyon Pioneer Cemetery to new burials during summer 2017. The cemetery is located in the park's South Rim Village area and was first officially used in 1919. The current cemetery area, alignment, plots and sections were laid out in the 1930s with the specification that when the plots were full the cemetery would close. Burial in the cemetery has been determined by policy for qualifying residents of the canyon area and by superintendent discretion. Less than 10 open spaces remain and there are no feasible options for expansion. The NPS plans to notify community residents and the general public of the closure through various communication methods including a news release, a posting on the park's website and notifications in local Arizona newspapers.



**Grand Canyon National Park, AZ** – The NPS has issued a commercial filming permit to the Today Show (NBC) for filming that will take place at Grand Canyon National Park's South Rim on June 25 and 26. A film crew will follow Al Roker and three inner-city youth on a one day trip to the canyon that will include riding the Grand Canyon Railway and a taking a mule ride to Shoshone Point both of which will be provided by the park's concessioner, Xanterra South Rim LLC. The segment will air at a later date.

**Little Bighorn Battlefield National Monument, MT** – On June 25, Little Bighorn Battlefield National Monument will host an annual anniversary event honoring all who fought in the Battle of Little Bighorn. Secretary Zinke and the Acting Director of the National Park Service have been invited to speak along with Tribal leaders from 17 associated nations. The Montana Congressional delegation will be invited to attend. Local media will be present.

**Petroglyph National Monument, NM** – On June 14, Petroglyph National Monument will hold a government-to-government tribal consultation meeting in Albuquerque, NM. Twenty-nine affiliated tribes and pueblos are invited for consultation on the park's Visitor Use Management Plan. The draft plan will be released to the public later this summer.

**San Antonio Missions National Historical Park, TX** – Within the next three weeks the Land Resources Program Center will be receiving from the City of San Antonio a donation of two tracts of land containing 9.37 acres across from Mission San Jose. This acquisition is a culmination of years of cooperation between the City of San Antonio and the National Park Service. These tracts provide open space for visitor use outside the Mission walls and help maintain the historic views across undeveloped lands. Along with these transfers the City of San Antonio will complete the vacation of several roads around the Mission that have been realigned for the benefit and safety of the visitors to the Mission and Park, including vacation of parts of the former Napier Road, Woodhull Drive and Mission Road that lie beneath the Park's visitor center. The United States will accept a quitclaim of any interests the City has relating to those vacations and the realignment.

**Zion National Park, UT** – On or about June 19, the park plans to release a Finding of No Significant Impact statement for a project to relocate the South Entrance Monument, install a monument plaza, and reconfigure the adjacent parking area to reduce visitor hazards. Implementation of the proposed project would simultaneously enhance visitor safety, mitigate factors contributing to localized vehicle congestion, and expand cultural resource protection measures.

**-NPS-**

## **Intermountain Region Weekly Report June 12, 2017**

**Grand Canyon National Park, AZ** – On June 14, the comment period for Initial Bison Herd Reduction environmental assessment (EA) will close. The comment period was extended from June 7, to account for an unrelated outage of the NPS Planning, Environmental, and Public Comment website. Grand Canyon National Park held three public meetings in Phoenix, AZ (May 18), Flagstaff, AZ (May 16) and Kanab, UT (May 23). A final web-based meeting occurred May 30. The EA analyzes options for reducing the size of the bison herd on the park's North Rim. Resource impacts from the growing bison herd in the park include damage to sensitive natural and cultural resources. The current herd size estimated at 400 to 600 animals. Management actions under consideration in the EA would reduce the herd to size to less than 200 animals through the use of capture/removal techniques, fencing local sensitive resources and lethal culling by skilled volunteers. The NPS is continuing to consult with the park's 11 associated tribes. The Arizona Game and Fish Department, Bureau of Land Management, US Forest Service, and the Intertribal Buffalo Council are cooperating agencies on this effort.

**Grand Canyon National Park, AZ** – During the week of June 26, the NPS plans to initiate a 30-day public scoping on a plan to replace the park's trans-canyon pipeline. The trans-canyon pipeline serves the park's South Rim, which supplies water to facilities serving more than 5 million visitors and 2,500 residents annually. The pipeline reached the end of its serviceable life and experiences frequent breaks. The cost to replace the pipeline is estimated at \$131.8 million and construction is expected to begin in 2019. The NPS plans to hold public meetings at the park's South Rim and in Flagstaff, AZ, and will consult with the park's 11 associated tribes.

**Grand Canyon National Park, AZ** – The NPS plans to close the Grand Canyon Pioneer Cemetery to new burials during summer 2017. The cemetery is located in the park's South Rim Village area and was first officially used in 1919. The current cemetery area, alignment, plots and sections were laid out in the 1930s with the specification that when the plots were full the cemetery would close. Burial in the cemetery has been determined by policy for qualifying residents of the canyon area and by superintendent discretion. Less than 10 open spaces remain and there are no feasible options for expansion. The NPS plans to notify community residents and the general public of the closure through various communication methods including a news release, a posting on the park's website and notifications in local Arizona newspapers.

**Grand Canyon National Park, AZ** – The NPS has issued a commercial filming permit to the Today Show (NBC) for filming that will take place at Grand Canyon National Park's South Rim on June 25 and 26. A film crew will follow Al Roker and three inner-city youth on a one day trip to the canyon that will include riding the Grand Canyon Railway and a taking a mule ride to Shoshone Point both of which will be provided by the park's concessioner, Xanterra South Rim LLC. The segment will air at a later date.

**Grand Teton National Park, WY** – On June 6, the Gros Ventre Road in Grand Teton National Park was closed due to significant and accelerated erosion along the Gros Ventre River near the

southern boundary of the park. The river bank eroded more than 15 feet within 48 hours and has eroded a total of 40 horizontal feet as of June 9, 2017. The integrity of the road is compromised and is closed to public and administrative access. The road is the primary transportation corridor for the community of Kelly, Wyoming, a major park campground managed by park concessionaire that has a capacity of almost 2,400 people, numerous homeowners, US Forest Service campgrounds and recreation areas, active agricultural lands and more. A detour to these locations has been implemented. Additional damage is anticipated due to record amounts of snow at higher elevations producing significant water runoff. The park has worked with the Intermountain Regional Office and Federal Highway Administration, since at least 2011 to fund and implement a variety of short-term and long-term stabilization strategies along the river corridor. The effect of this closure, and anticipated impacts related to short-term and long-term solutions, has significant implications to the affected parties.

**-NPS-**

**Intermountain Region**  
**Weekly Report**  
**June 19, 2017**

**Grand Canyon National Park (AZ)** – Superintendent Chris Lehnertz and select staff will hold an informal community conversation in the park's south rim community and in Flagstaff July 10 and 11. The community conversation is a new engagement tool designed bring up topics before they become controversial issues. The park plans several community conversations each year. They will be open house style based on themes of community interest. The first conversation will center around the Colorado River, its fisheries, the park's river operations and an upcoming contract for river operations to be provided by outside companies, and a river concessions contract that will be up for renewal in the next year. People who attend the community conversation can offer thoughts and opinions to the park but this is not an instance where the park is required to solicit and respond to public input on pending park decisions under the National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA) or other federal law.

**Manhattan Project NHP (TN)** – The visitor center in Oak Ridge, TN, currently located in the American Museum of Science & Energy, will be relocating in October 2017 to the Children's Museum of Oak Ridge due to the upcoming closure of the American Museum of Science & Energy. Local government, citizen, and media interest is very high.

**Rocky Mountain National Park (CO)** – An Environmental Assessment (EA) has been prepared to evaluate alternatives for the future of the Crater Trail and is available for public review and comment. In addition to the no action alternative, the EA evaluates stabilizing the trail in place, closing the trail and restoring the impacted area (NPS proposed action), and rerouting the trail to a more sustainable grade. The Crater Trail is an informal route that was not designed and constructed. Steepness of the route has resulted in significant erosion, which is impacting soil, vegetation, wilderness values, and archaeological resources and is located in prime bighorn sheep range.

**Salinas Pueblo Missions NM (NM)** – Has been experiencing vandalism of the fountain/garden area in front of the park headquarters at night. The first incident on Saturday, June 10th, resulted in the statue of St. Francis of Assisi having the head knocked off, damage to the fountain itself and damage to lights. Subsequent incidents on June 12th and again on June 14th resulted in pieces of the artwork decorating the bench area being ripped off and thrown into the fountain. Total damage is estimated at between \$1500 and \$2000. The investigation is continuing by the park, the local PD and Protective Services. Park employees have offered a \$100 reward for information leading to the arrest and conviction of the vandals. Photos are attached.

-NPS-

## **Intermountain Region Weekly Report June 26, 2017**

**Dinosaur National Monument, UT** – The BLM Vernal Field Office (UT) issued a press release on June 22, 2017 asking for public comment on the environmental analysis of proposed oil and gas lease sales near Dinosaur National Monument. On May 1, 2017, after WASO and DOI review, Dinosaur sent a comment memo to the Vernal Field Office regarding their December 2017 oil and gas lease sale. There is a proposed parcel within one mile of the most visited location in the monument (the Quarry Visitor Center), several parcels on the immediate western boundary, and many others within 5 miles of the monument. Remaining consistent with recent comments to both the Utah and Colorado BLM field offices surrounding the monument, this memo from the monument requests that the BLM review air, water, view shed, and night skies impacts. It also requests the BLM to defer the lease sale of the parcels that would most significantly impact resources and visitors in the monument (i.e. on the boundary and within view of the Quarry Visitor Center). Local county commissioners have expressed their concern with lease sales that may impact the main entrance road and the Quarry Visitor Center and have indicated they will submit comments to the BLM reflecting their concerns. Recent media attention regarding lease sales near Zion and Rocky Mountain National Parks suggest heightened attention to this issue near Dinosaur.

**Grand Canyon National Park, AZ** – Superintendent Chris Lehnertz and select staff will hold an informal community conversation in the park's south rim community and in Flagstaff July 10 and 11. The community conversation is a new engagement tool designed to bring up topics before they become controversial issues. The park plans several community conversations each year. They will be open house style based on themes of community interest. The first conversation will center on the Colorado River, its fisheries, the park's river operations and an upcoming contract for river operations to be provided by outside companies, and a river concessions contract that will be up for renewal in the next year. People who attend the community conversation can offer thoughts and opinions to the park but this is not an instance where the park is required to solicit and respond to public input on pending park decisions under the National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA) or other federal law.

**Grand Canyon National Park, AZ** – The public review period for Grand Canyon National Park's Initial Bison Herd Reduction environmental assessment (EA) closed on June 14, 2017. During the review period, the NPS received approximately 700 individual responses from members of the public. The NPS also held three public meetings, in Phoenix, AZ (May 18), Flagstaff, AZ (May 16), and Kanab, UT (May 23), as well as a web-based meeting (May 30) for those who could not attend an in-person meeting. The EA analyzes options for reducing the size of the bison herd on the park's North Rim. Resource impacts from the growing bison herd in the park include damage to sensitive natural and cultural resources. The current herd size estimated at 400 to 600 animals; management actions under consideration in the EA would reduce the herd to size to less than 200 animals through the use of a suite of tools including capture/removal, localized fencing of sensitive resources, and lethal culling by skilled volunteers. The NPS is



currently finalizing comment review. Following review, the NPS expects a finding of no significant impact (FONSI) to be signed by the NPS Intermountain Regional Director in July 2017. The NPS is continuing to consult with Grand Canyon's 11 associated tribes on this issue. The Arizona Game and Fish Department, Bureau of Land Management, US Forest Service, and the Intertribal Buffalo Council are cooperating agencies on this effort.

**San Antonio Missions NHP, TX** – By July 7, the Land Resources Program Center will be acquiring a tract of land containing 16.49 acres for \$148,300 near Mission San Juan Capistrano. Acquisition of this parcel provides the park with legal access to and a protective buffer around a portion of the historic San Juan Acequia. This acquisition will allow this valuable resource to be protected while the adjacent tracts are experiencing development.

**Valles Caldera National Preserve, NM** – (b) (5)



**Carlsbad Caverns National Park, NM** – After a recent safety inspection by the Intermountain Region Risk Assessment Officer, consideration is being given to discontinuing the most difficult cave tour at the park, - the Hall of the White Giant tour. Should an emergency arise on that tour, medical evacuations would be extremely difficult. Five other cave tour opportunities are available to the public while additional assessments of the situation continue.

Discussions are underway about alternatives, as well as consideration of a communications plan if cancellation of the tours occurs.

-NPS-

## **Intermountain Region Weekly Report June 30, 2017**

**Big Thicket National Preserve, TX** – A FONSI was signed by the IMR RD which allows a Unit Petroleum Company (UPC) proposal to construct and operate an 8-inch gathering line across the Menard Creek Corridor unit. NPS selected Alternative B (the NPS preferred alternative), to grant UPC an Operations Permit to construct and operate the pipeline across the MCCU, to connect existing wells and to perform routine maintenance during operation. Alternative B was selected because UPC holds valid oil and gas rights within the Preserve, which, as developed under the terms and conditions of the Operations Permit, will meet all applicable operating standards and not result in an impairment of park resources and values. This alternative fulfills the NPS's approval standards under the 9B Regulations and its park protection mandates, while allowing UPC to exercise their property right interests.

The EA was made available for public review and comment during a 30-day period, ending March 28, 2017. Two public comment letters were received, and were addressed in the Errata section of the FONSI.

**Glacier National Park, MT** – On July 15, Facebook CEO Mark Zuckerberg will visit Glacier National Park. He will tour the park in a historic red bus with Superintendent Mow and USGS scientist Dan Fagre (Director of the Climate Change in Mountain Ecosystems Project). He will also visit with Gracie the Bark Ranger and official park partners. Zuckerberg will do a Facebook post immediately following his visit to his 92 million followers.

**Glen Canyon National Recreation Area, AZ** – (b) (5)



**Glen Canyon National Recreation Area, AZ** – On June 29 GLCA provided an overflight and interviews for Denver 7 WMGH TV, related to several stories they plan to do about the Colorado River. A 30-minute special will be aired around Labor Day, part one of a four-part series, entitled, "The Colorado River, the Lifeblood of the West." GLCA was the only park they visited, where they focused on "what makes Lake Powell a destination area, recreation, water levels and habitat changes, etc." They also visited a farm in Yuma that needs more water, and the Hoover Dam. They plan to use footage they already have for other segments of the Colorado River.

**Grand Canyon National Park, AZ** – Early in July 2017, the NPS plans to initiate a 30-day public scoping period under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) for replacement of Grand Canyon National Park's trans-canyon pipeline. The trans-canyon pipeline serves the park's

south rim supplying all water to facilities serving over 5 million visitors and 2,500 residents annually. The pipeline has exceeded its serviceable life and breaks frequently. The cost to replace the pipeline is currently estimated at \$131.8 million and construction is expected to begin in 2019. During the 30-day initial public scoping the NPS plans to hold public meetings at the park's south rim and in Flagstaff, AZ and will consult with the park's 11 associated tribes.

**Grand Canyon National Park, AZ** – The NPS plans to issue a solicitation for a contract to provide logistical support services for NPS administrative work along the Colorado River corridor within Grand Canyon National Park. Contractor support under the contract would include providing boats, equipment and boat operators to support biological, archaeological, maintenance and restoration, and other administrative NPS work along the river. The NPS previously issued a “sources sought” notice for market research seeking initial information from potential contractors. The NPS intends to have a contract in place by September 1, 2017. Commercial river trips conducted for park visitors by concessioners and NPS search and rescue operations are ongoing and will be unaffected by this action.

**-NPS-**



## **Intermountain Region Weekly Report July 10, 2017**

**Glacier National Park, MT** – On the weekend of July 4th, Glacier National Park experienced levels of extreme visitation. Traffic backed up for two miles onto US HWY 2, despite "flushing" 250 vehicles twice during peak hours through the entrance station. Based on a call from the park concession, the park temporarily closed the Many Glacier Valley for the first time due to gridlock conditions and hundreds of illegally parked cars. The Bowman Lake area has consistently filled and traffic restrictions occur on a daily basis. Based on unofficial metrics, the park estimates June visitation to be in excess of 25% over last year, setting the pace for another year of record visitation.

**Grand Canyon National Park (AZ)** – (b) (5)



**Grand Canyon National Park, AZ** – Congressional staff members are expected to visit the park during the rest of July and during the August Recess. On Tuesday, July 11, 2017, staff from the office of Sen. John McCain and from the office of Sen. Jeff Flake will be in the park to visit with Superintendent Chris Lehnertz on a variety of topics including visitation, Colorado River fisheries and rafting, North Rim bison management, and the Transcanyon water pipeline.

**Grand Teton National Park, WY** – On June 29 the Gros Ventre Road was open to alternating one-lane traffic in the erosion-affected area by a lighted traffic control system. The road was closed June 6 to all traffic due to significant erosion along the Gros Ventre River and damage to the Gros Ventre Road near the southern boundary of the park. The alternating one-lane of traffic and some riverbank stabilization is the first of three phases in the park's response to the situation. The second phase of the plan is to provide additional stabilization and create a two-lane bypass. The third phase includes re-establishing the river bank and permanent realignment of the road. As of June 19, the river bank had eroded a total of 40 horizontal feet and a 30-foot section of the eastbound lane had eroded. The road is the primary transportation corridor for the community of Kelly, Wyoming, a major park campground, numerous homeowners, US Forest Service campgrounds and recreation areas, active agricultural lands, and more.

**Grand Teton National Park, WY** – On July 11 the park will host another public open house to share information about the construction of a roundabout at the Gros Ventre Junction along US Highway 26/89/191 in the southern area of the park. The project addresses existing safety risks for pathways users, highway users and wildlife. US Highway 26/89/191 is a high-speed, two-lane rural road with an unsignalled intersection. This type of road has the greatest safety risk of any type of road in the country. A roundabout will meet all safety improvement objectives, and

provide the best balance of improved safety, protection of wildlife and visual quality and cost. Construction will begin Spring 2018 and will have temporary impacts to vehicle and bicycle traffic, including delays and bypass lanes. The park is working in partnership with Western Federal Lands Highway on the project. In FY17 approximately \$4.2 million is programmed from the Federal Lands Transportation Program. Public concerns about traffic impacts are anticipated.

**-NPS-**

## **Intermountain Region Weekly Report July 17, 2017**

**Arizona National Scenic Trail, AZ** – In August, the National Park Service will participate in several public scoping meetings throughout Arizona related to a Comprehensive Plan by the United States Forest Service (USFS) regarding the Arizona National Scenic Trail. The Omnibus Public Land Management Act of 2009 was amended to designate the Arizona Trail – one of only 11 National Scenic Trails in the United States. The Act also designated the USFS as the lead agency to prepare a Comprehensive Plan and manage the trail. The trail stretches 800 miles from the international boundary with Mexico to the border with Utah and crosses through four National Park Service units. The National Park Service will be a cooperating agency on the Comprehensive Plan. There is large, local public support for the Arizona National Scenic Trail, and we do not anticipate any controversy or media coverage for the meetings.

**El Malpais National Monument, NM** – Effective July 28, the El Malpais National Monument will be closing the El Malpais Information Center. The Information Center is normally open seasonally from March through September to assist the public with caving permits, hiking and general information. One employee transfer and another resignation left the park with inadequate staffing to operate the facility for the rest of the season. We are working as quickly as possible to fill these positions. The Information Center visitation is approximately 36 visitors per day. Visitors – through social media, the park's web page, news releases and local postings – will be directed to the nearby multi-agency (NPS/BLM) operated El Malpais Visitor Center for assistance.

**Dinosaur National Monument, CO** – On May 1, after NPS WASO and DOI review, Dinosaur National Monument (DINO) sent a comment memo to the BLM Vernal Field Office (UT) regarding BLM's proposed December 2017 oil and gas lease sale, which included a proposed parcel within one mile of the most visited location in the monument (the Quarry Visitor Center), a parcel on the immediate western boundary, and many others within 5 miles of the monument. In the May 1 comment memo, DINO requested the BLM review air, water, viewshed, and night skies impacts. DINO also requested that the BLM defer leasing the parcels that would most significantly impact resources and visitors in the monument (i.e. on the boundary and within view of the Quarry Visitor Center). On June 22, the BLM issued a press release asking for public comment on the lease sale environmental assessment (EA) by July 24. Local county commissioners, Utah State Representatives, local land and business owners, and many environmental groups have expressed their concern with leasing the parcels that may impact the main entrance road and the Quarry Visitor Center, and have indicated they will submit written comments to the BLM reflecting those concerns. There is significant media attention regarding the lease sale and many media outlets have quoted the NPS May 1 memo requesting deferral. The BLM repeatedly requested DINO submit additional comments regarding the EA during the public comment period. DINO worked with the NPS Air Resources Division and plans to issue an EA comment memo by July 24, following appropriate upbrief. The sale notice will be posted August 31, and will include parcels the BLM is offering in the December 12 sale.



**Glacier National Park, MT – (b) (5)**



**Glen Canyon National Recreation Area, AZ** – On July 25, 18 news outlets will visit Hite as part of an environmental writing workshop being conducted by the Institute for Journalism & Natural Resources. Representatives from the following news outlets are participating: AP, E&E News, ClimateWire, Newsweek, Bloomberg BNA, NPR, Grist, Arizona Public Media, High Country News, KGNU, Arizona Daily Sun, The Colorado Independent, Arizona Republic, Salt Lake Tribune, Voice of San Diego, and KQED. The “Upper Colorado River Institute” is cosponsored by the Glen Canyon Institute, which is opposed to the Glen Canyon Dam and Lake Powell. Public affairs and subject matter experts from the park and the Bureau of Reclamation will provide information.

**Grand Canyon National Park, AZ** – On July 5, the NPS initiated a 30-day public scoping period on a plan to replace the park’s Trans-canyon pipeline. During the public scoping period, the NPS will hold public meetings at the park’s south rim (July 17) and in Flagstaff, AZ (July 18), and will host a web based meeting (July 25) for those who cannot not attend an in person meeting. The Trans-canyon pipeline serves the park’s south rim supplying all water to facilities serving over 5 million visitors and 2,500 residents annually. The pipeline has exceeded its serviceable life and breaks frequently. The cost to replace the pipeline is currently estimated at \$131.8 million and construction is expected to begin in 2019.

**Grand Canyon National Park, AZ** – By September 1, the NPS plans to award up to three contracts to provide logistical support services for NPS administrative work along the Colorado River corridor within the park. Contractor support under the contracts will include providing boats, equipment and boat operators to support biological, archaeological, maintenance and restoration, and other administrative NPS work along the river. The NPS solicitation for award, which was issued on July 5, is tentatively scheduled to close August 7. Commercial river trips conducted for park visitors by concessioners and NPS search and rescue operations are ongoing and will be unaffected by this action.

**Grand Canyon National Park, AZ** – On June 14, the public review period for park’s Initial Bison Herd Reduction environmental assessment (EA) closed. During the review period, the NPS received approximately 700 individual responses from members of the public. The NPS also held three public meetings, in Phoenix, AZ (May 18), Flagstaff, AZ (May 16) and Kanab, UT (May 23), as well as a web-based meeting (May 30) for those who could not attend an in-person meeting. The EA analyzes options for reducing the size of the bison herd on the park’s

North Rim. Resource impacts from the growing bison herd in the park include damage to sensitive natural and cultural resources. The current herd size estimated at 400 to 600 animals; management actions under consideration in the EA would reduce the herd to size to less than 200 animals through the use of a suite of tools including capture/removal, localized fencing of sensitive resources, and lethal culling by skilled volunteers. The NPS is currently finalizing comment review. Following review, the NPS expects a finding of no significant impact to be signed by the NPS Intermountain Regional Director in July 2017. The NPS is continuing to consult with Grand Canyon's 11 associated tribes on this issue. The Arizona Game and Fish Department, Bureau of Land Management, US Forest Service, and the InterTribal Buffalo Council are cooperating agencies on this effort.

**Zion National Park (UT)** – On July 17, the park announced a Visitor Use Management Plan, Preliminary Alternative Concepts public comment period, which will run through August 17. Developed from public scoping comments, research and information based on existing land use plans, Zion is soliciting public comments on alternative management concepts intended to provide quality visitor experiences and to protect park resources. The comments will help NPS refine the alternative concepts. Once the alternatives are more developed, the park will analyze the impacts of implementing the various alternatives. The alternatives and the analysis will be presented to the public in the draft plan and environmental assessment, scheduled to be released in the fall of 2018. Visitation has increased 60% in the past six years with dramatic affects to facilities, resources and visitor experiences. A Visitor Use Management Plan was specifically called for in the ZION General Management Plan (2001).

**-NPS-**



## **Intermountain Region Weekly Report July 24, 2017**

**\*\*Glen Canyon National Recreation Area, AZ** – On July 25, reporters from eighteen news outlets will visit Green River, Utah as part of an environmental writing workshop being conducted by the Institute for Journalism & Natural Resources (IJMR) in conjunction with BUREC. Due to late changes in logistics, GLCA will not be able to participate. The event is being co-sponsored by the Glen Canyon Institute, which is opposed to the Glen Canyon Dam and Lake Powell. IJMR is planning another event for the February/March 2018 timeframe and plans to come to Page to visit the dam. The Bureau of Reclamation has suggested joint activities with GLCA to get IJMR participants into the park in addition to the BOR dam tour.

**\*Glen Canyon National Recreation Area, AZ** – The MOU that existed between the Garfield County Sheriff's Office and GLCA has expired. The current Sheriff has concerns regarding jurisdiction. The Garfield County Attorney is in the process of re-writing the MOU. Under the guidance of our Solicitor, GLCA Rangers are not responding to emergency incidents outside the park boundary in Garfield County.

**\*Grand Canyon National Park (AZ) and Glen Canyon National Recreation Area (UT)** – Public Scoping for the Potentially Harmful Nonnative Fish Species Management Plan for the Colorado River and Tributaries below the Glen Canyon Dam Environmental Assessment – The National Park Service will begin public scoping for an Environmental Assessment (EA) of a nonnative fish management plan in late July or early August. The need for this action is due to the increase of green sunfish, brown trout and potential expansion or invasion of other harmful nonnative fish that threaten downstream native or endangered fish or the Lees Ferry recreational rainbow trout fishery. These species have become an increasing threat due to changing infestation conditions since the completion of the 2013 Comprehensive Fish Management Plan and the 2016 Long Term Experimental and Management Plan (LTEMP) and existing measures may be inadequate to address the new species and other potentially harmful nonnative fish. The management plan will include a monitoring plan and a response implementation plan with additional measures to address harmful nonnative species in the action area. The action area for this plan will be from the Glen Canyon Dam to Lake Mead including the Colorado River and its tributaries in Grand Canyon National Park (GCNP), and the Glen Canyon Reach of the Colorado and Paria Rivers in Glen Canyon National Recreation Area (GCNRA). The Park Service is coordinating closely with the Bureau of Reclamation, the US Fish and Wildlife Service, Arizona Game and Fish Department and many other partners on this process.

**\*\*Grand Canyon National Park, AZ** – On July 5, The NPS initiated a 30-day public scoping period under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) for replacement of Grand Canyon National Park's trans-canyon pipeline. The NPS held public meetings at the park's South Rim (July 17) and in Flagstaff, AZ (July 18) and plans to hold a web based meeting (July 25) for those who were not able to attend an in person meeting. The trans-canyon pipeline serves the

park's South Rim supplying all water to facilities serving more than 5 million visitors and 2,500 residents annually. The pipeline has exceeded its serviceable life and breaks frequently. The cost to replace the pipeline is currently estimated at \$131.8 million and construction is expected to begin in 2019.

**\*\*Grand Canyon National Park, AZ** – By September 1, the NPS plans to award up to three contracts to provide logistical support services for NPS administrative work along the Colorado River corridor within the park. Contractor support under the contracts will include providing boats, equipment and boat operators to support biological, archaeological, maintenance and restoration, and other administrative NPS work along the river. The NPS solicitation for award, which was issued on July 5, is tentatively scheduled to close August 7. Commercial river trips conducted for park visitors by concessioners and NPS search and rescue operations are ongoing and will be unaffected by this action.

**\*Petrified Forest NP, AZ** – By July 11, the Land Resources Program Center will be acquiring a tract of land containing 160 acres valued at \$28,000 using monies from the Land and Water Conservation Fund. This tract is surrounded on three sides by Park lands and State Trust lands. In addition to protecting valuable resources, this acquisition will enhance open space connectivity and management efficiencies.

-NPS-

\*new

\*\*updated



## **Intermountain Region Weekly Report July 31, 2017**

**Glen Canyon National Recreation Area, AZ** – The MOU that existed between the Garfield County Sheriff's Office and GLCA has expired. The current Sheriff has concerns regarding jurisdiction. The Garfield County Attorney is in the process of re-writing the MOU. Under the guidance of our Solicitor, GLCA Rangers are not responding to emergency incidents outside the park boundary in Garfield County.

**Grand Canyon National Park, AZ and Glen Canyon National Recreation Area, UT** – Public Scoping for the Potentially Harmful Nonnative Fish Species Management Plan for the Colorado River and Tributaries below the Glen Canyon Dam Environmental Assessment – In late July or early August, the National Park Service will begin public scoping for an Environmental Assessment (EA) of a nonnative fish management plan. The need for this action is due to the increase of green sunfish, brown trout and potential expansion or invasion of other harmful nonnative fish that threaten downstream native or endangered fish or the Lees Ferry recreational rainbow trout fishery. These species have become an increasing threat due to changing infestation conditions since the completion of the 2013 Comprehensive Fish Management Plan and the 2016 Long Term Experimental and Management Plan (LTEMP) and existing measures may be inadequate to address the new species and other potentially harmful nonnative fish. The management plan will include a monitoring plan and a response implementation plan with additional measures to address harmful nonnative species in the action area. The action area for this plan will be from the Glen Canyon Dam to Lake Mead including the Colorado River and its tributaries in Grand Canyon National Park (GCNP), and the Glen Canyon Reach of the Colorado and Paria Rivers in Glen Canyon National Recreation Area (GCNRA). The Park Service is coordinating closely with the Bureau of Reclamation, the US Fish and Wildlife Service, Arizona Game and Fish Department and many other partners on this process.

**\*\*Grand Canyon National Park, AZ** – By September 1, the NPS plans to award up to three contracts to provide logistical support services for NPS administrative work along the Colorado River corridor within Grand Canyon National Park. Contractor support under the contracts will include providing boats, equipment and boat operators to support biological, archaeological, maintenance and restoration, and other administrative NPS work along the river. The NPS solicitation for award, which was issued on July 5, is tentatively schedule to close August 7. Commercial river trips conducted for park visitors by concessioners and NPS search and rescue operations are ongoing and will be unaffected by this action.

**\*Tumacácori National Historical Park, AZ** – Raw Sewage Flowing into Santa Cruz River – On July 25 the City of Nogales, AZ reported a partial breach of the International Outfall Interceptor (IOI), approximately .5 miles north of the International border. The IOI is an 8.5 mile long concrete reinforced pipeline that conveys waste water northward from Sonora, Mexico and Arizona to the Nogales International Wastewater Treatment Plant (NIWTP), located in Rio

Rico, AZ. Currently untreated wastewater is discharging from the breach directly into the Nogales Wash, which eventually flows into the Santa Cruz River. A 1.5 mile stretch of the Santa Cruz River runs through Tumacácori National Historical Park (TUMA) and adjacent to the Juan Bautista de Anza National Historic Trail (JUBA), approximately 17 miles north of the International Border. On July 27 Santa Cruz County issued a Declaration of Emergency, and the State of Arizona subsequently declared a State of Emergency for Santa Cruz County in response to the IOI breach. Sampling conducted by the Arizona Department of Environmental Quality (ADEQ) found levels of E. coli to be far exceeding recommended levels, both below and above the partial breach.

**Zion National Park, UT** – On or about Aug 14, Zion National Park will release for public comment a Draft Environmental Assessment on Bighorn Sheep management. The preferred alternative is to reduce the risk of catastrophic disease die off in the herd by transplanting up to 60 sheep to other herds in the state. Utah Division of Wildlife Resources is our partner in this project. This project will entail use of helicopters in wilderness to capture sheep.

**-NPS-**

\*new

\*\*updated



## **Intermountain Region Weekly Report August 7, 2017**

**\*Glacier National Park, MT** – On or about August 13, multiple media stories will appear about "the Night of the Grizzlies" at Glacier National Park. The 13th marks the 50th anniversary of the night when two people were killed in the park in separate bear maulings. The event marked a dramatic shift in how public land management agencies managed bears, food storage, and visitor education.

**\*\*Grand Canyon National Park, AZ and Glen Canyon National Recreation Area, UT** – Public Scoping for the Potentially Harmful Nonnative Fish Species Management Plan for the Colorado River and Tributaries below the Glen Canyon Dam Environmental Assessment – At the end of August, the National Park Service will begin public scoping for an Environmental Assessment (EA) of a nonnative fish management plan. The need for this action is due to the increase of green sunfish, brown trout and potential expansion or invasion of other harmful nonnative fish that threaten downstream native or endangered fish or the Lees Ferry recreational rainbow trout fishery. These species have become an increasing threat due to changing infestation conditions since the completion of the 2013 Comprehensive Fish Management Plan and the 2016 Long Term Experimental and Management Plan (LTEMP) and existing measures may be inadequate to address the new species and other potentially harmful nonnative fish. The management plan will include a monitoring plan and a response implementation plan with additional measures to address harmful nonnative species in the action area. The action area for this plan will be from the Glen Canyon Dam to Lake Mead including the Colorado River and its tributaries in Grand Canyon National Park (GCNP), and the Glen Canyon Reach of the Colorado and Paria Rivers in Glen Canyon National Recreation Area (GCNRA). The Park Service is coordinating closely with the Bureau of Reclamation, the US Fish and Wildlife Service, Arizona Game and Fish Department and many other partners on this process.

**Grand Canyon National Park, AZ** – By September 1, the NPS plans to award up to three contracts to provide logistical support services for NPS administrative work along the Colorado River corridor within Grand Canyon National Park. Contractor support under the contracts will include providing boats, equipment and boat operators to support biological, archaeological, maintenance and restoration, and other administrative NPS work along the river. The NPS solicitation for award, which was issued on July 5, is tentatively schedule to close August 7. Commercial river trips conducted for park visitors by concessioners and NPS search and rescue operations are ongoing and will be unaffected by this action.

**Zion National Park, UT** – On or about Aug 14, Zion National Park will release for public comment a Draft Environmental Assessment on Bighorn Sheep management. The preferred alternative is to reduce the risk of catastrophic disease die off in the herd by transplanting up to 60 sheep to other herds in the state. Utah Division of Wildlife Resources is our partner in this project. This project will entail use of helicopters in wilderness to capture sheep.

**-NPS-**

\*new

\*\*updated

## **Intermountain Region Weekly Report August 14, 2017**

**\*Dinosaur National Monument, CO** – On Saturday, September 2nd, the Utah Symphony will perform an outdoor concert as part of their Great American Road Trip series near the Split Mountain Boat ramp in Dinosaur National Monument. Attendance is expected to be approximately 3000 people. A special use permit has been issued and the event is being managed under the incident command system. This is the first time the symphony has ever performed within a unit of the National Park System. There is a possibility that members of the Utah congressional delegation will be attending. The concert is being widely heralded as a successful partnership between the Symphony, county, local communities, and the National Park Service.

**Glacier National Park, MT** – On or about August 13, multiple media stories will appear about "the Night of the Grizzlies" at Glacier National Park. The 13th marks the 50th anniversary of the night when two people were killed in the park in separate bear maulings. The event marked a dramatic shift in how public land management agencies managed bears, food storage, and visitor education.

**\*\*Glen Canyon National Recreation Area, UT** – The Denver7 TV news special, "Colorado River: Lifeline of the West" is available at this link (approximately 21:30 air time): <http://www.thedenverchannel.com/about/spotlight/colorado-river-lifeline-of-the-west-takes-viewers-on-a-1450-mile-journey-through-the-southwest> Interviews shot during their June 29 visit to GLCA appear briefly in the top and end of the show. Here is a link to the GLCA segment: <http://www.thedenverchannel.com/weather/weather-blogs/arizona-recreation-destination-lake-powell-was-nearly-created-in-colorados-own-echo-canyon> and [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rU\\_IcjdLEFI](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rU_IcjdLEFI)

**\*\*Grand Canyon National Park, AZ and Glen Canyon National Recreation Area, UT** – Public Scoping for the Potentially Harmful Nonnative Fish Species Management Plan for the Colorado River and Tributaries below the Glen Canyon Dam Environmental Assessment – At the end of August, the National Park Service will begin public scoping for an Environmental Assessment (EA) of a nonnative fish management plan. The need for this action is due to the increase of green sunfish, brown trout and potential expansion or invasion of other harmful nonnative fish that threaten downstream native or endangered fish or the Lees Ferry recreational rainbow trout fishery. These species have become an increasing threat due to changing infestation conditions since the completion of the 2013 Comprehensive Fish Management Plan and the 2016 Long Term Experimental and Management Plan (LTEMP) and existing measures may be inadequate to address the new species and other potentially harmful nonnative fish. The management plan will include a monitoring plan and a response implementation plan with additional measures to address harmful nonnative species in the action area. The action area for this plan will be from the Glen Canyon Dam to Lake Mead including the Colorado River and its tributaries in Grand Canyon National Park (GCNP), and the Glen Canyon Reach of the Colorado and Paria Rivers in Glen Canyon

National Recreation Area (GCNRA). The Park Service is coordinating closely with the Bureau of Reclamation, the US Fish and Wildlife Service, Arizona Game and Fish Department and many other partners on this process.

**\*\*Grand Canyon National Park, AZ** – By September 1, the NPS plans to award up to three contracts to provide logistical support services for NPS administrative work along the Colorado River corridor within Grand Canyon National Park. Contractor support under the contracts will include providing boats, equipment and boat operators to support biological, archaeological, maintenance and restoration, and other administrative NPS work along the river. The NPS solicitation for award, which was issued on July 5, closed August 8. Commercial river trips conducted for park visitors by concessioners and NPS search and rescue operations are ongoing and will be unaffected by this action.

**\*Salinas Pueblo Missions National Monument, NM** – On July 11, 2017 monument staff discovered a deceased rock squirrel in the square kiva at the Quarai mission of Salinas Pueblo Missions National Monument. Retrieved and sent to the Colorado State Veterinary Diagnostic lab, the squirrel tested positive for plague. Employees are taking proper precautions. Monument staff has posted signage about plague at the site to inform the visiting public. We are prohibiting pets on the trail because it is a flea-vectored disease. Only one deceased squirrel has been found.

**\*\*Tumacácori National Historical Park, AZ** – A previous entry reported a breach of the International Outfall Interceptor (IOI). The IOI is an 8.5 mile long concrete reinforced pipeline that conveys sewage and wastewater northward from Sonora, Mexico to the Nogales International Wastewater Treatment Plant in Rio Rico, Arizona. The breach had been flowing raw sewage into the Santa Cruz River. Tumacácori's stretch of the river is approximately 10 miles downstream of the breach. The breach was reported on July 25<sup>th</sup> and testing downstream indicated extremely high levels of E. coli. A bypass around the breached section of pipeline was installed on August 2<sup>nd</sup>. The Arizona Army National Guard, Corp of Engineers, and contractors for the City of Nogales, Santa Cruz County and the International Boundary and Water Commission continue to work on repair of the sewer line, as well as shoring up areas thought to be weakened by recent rains.

**Zion National Park, UT** – On or about Aug 14, Zion National Park will release for public comment a Draft Environmental Assessment on Bighorn Sheep management. The preferred alternative is to reduce the risk of catastrophic disease die off in the herd by transplanting up to 60 sheep to other herds in the state. Utah Division of Wildlife Resources is our partner in this project. This project will entail use of helicopters in wilderness to capture sheep.

**-NPS-**

\*new

\*\*updated

## **Intermountain Region Weekly Report August 21, 2017**

**\*\*Dinosaur National Monument, CO** – On August 31, the BLM Vernal Field Office (UT) will post the sale notice for its December 2017 oil and gas lease sale. On June 22, the BLM released the lease sale environmental assessment (EA) for public comments. The EA included a proposed parcel within one mile of the most visited location in the monument (the Quarry Visitor Center), a parcel on the immediate western boundary, and many others within 5 miles of the monument. Dinosaur National Monument (DINO) prepared a comment memo on the EA, which is currently routing through WASO for DOI review. In the memo, NPS asks that the BLM review air, water, soundscape, viewshed, and night skies impacts. NPS also requested that the BLM defer leasing parcels that would most significantly impact resources and visitors in the monument (i.e. on the boundary and within view of the Quarry Visitor Center). These comments mirror those NPS submitted in May during the scoping period for the EA. Local county commissioners, the Utah Governor, a Utah State Representative, local land and business owners, and many environmental groups have also expressed their concern with leasing the parcels that may impact the main entrance road and the Quarry Visitor Center. The lease sale continues to generate significant media attention, and many media outlets have quoted the comments NPS submitted in May requesting deferral. The BLM has repeatedly requested DINO submit comments on the EA before the sale notice is posted.

**\*Dinosaur National Monument, CO** – On August 21, the NPS reopened public access to the Jones Hole Creek to recreational use including fishing and swimming based on recommendations from Tri-county Health in Vernal, UT, and the U.S. Public Health Service. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) instituted a temporary closure to the Jones Hole Fish Hatchery due to a sewer leak. The USFWS ordered portable toilets and will restore public access to the hatchery and trailhead once the portable toilets are set up. Under advisement by the U.S. Public Health Service, the monument had closed the waters of Jones Hole Creek. While the NPS closure is now lifted, the warning signs along the trail within the monument will remain posted until the hatchery can fix their septic issues.

**\*Glen Canyon National Recreation Area, AZ** - On August 16, the Flagstaff Bureau of KPNX, Arizona Channel 12News, interviewed GLCA about their August 21 Solar Eclipse Party. The interview was part of their evening newscast. A 12News reporter will return on August 21 to live-stream the eclipse party, being held at the Carl Hayden Visitor Center, as part of their story documenting special places in Arizona where people watched the eclipse.

**\*Grand Teton National Park, WY** - In early August 2017, sixteen students were treated with rabies post-exposure prophylaxis due to exposure to bats in their sleeping facility at the historic University of Wyoming-NPS Research Center in Grand Teton National Park. Students were not apparently bitten, and the treatment was a routine preventive measure. NPS Public Health personnel contacted previous occupants for a risk assessment. As of August 18, 123 individuals were contacted and 28 people have either initiated or were recommended for post exposure prophylaxis of the 184 individuals that stayed at the research center. The park continues to work



with NPS Public Health, Wyoming Department of Public Health, the Center for Disease Control and the University of Wyoming. An “Epi-Aid” process will be used to develop a risk assessment and recommendations for reducing or eliminating the risk. The structures at the research center are NPS assets and managed by the University of Wyoming via an agreement. Bat mitigation work and monitoring was conducted by the University of Wyoming, and remediation has been completed where the incident occurred. In addition, a roofing project that includes bat proofing, was previously planned on a different structure at the research center, will begin late August 2017. It is rare for humans to contract rabies from a bat.

**\*Grand Teton National Park, WY** - On August 16, the Intermountain Regional Director awarded a concession contract to EcoTour Adventures, Inc. (EcoTour). The contract requires the concessioner to provide guided cross-country ski touring services and guided snowshoe tour services within the park. The contract is effective November 1, 2017, through October 31, 2024. In 2013, EcoTour legally challenged a NPS decision to award two cross-country skiing concession contracts to incumbent-preferred offerors, which generated media attention. The Court of Federal Claims (CFC) ruled against the NPS and awarded EcoTour its bid preparation costs, but found that it did not have the authority to issue the equitable relief sought by EcoTour (i.e., ordering the NPS to award the contracts to EcoTour). NPS subsequently paid EcoTour its bid preparation costs and awarded the contracts to the incumbent-preferred offerors. In December 2014, EcoTour filed suit in Federal District Court under the Administrative Procedures Act, seeking the equitable relief the CFC denied. The Court ruled that EcoTour was entitled to equitable relief, but ordered the parties to brief the following two issues: 1) whether the incumbent concessioners should be joined as parties; and 2) the appropriate form of injunctive relief. (b) (5)

The two incumbent concessioners, Jackson Hole Mountain Resort and Hole Hiking Experience, will be notified of the award of this contact within the next two weeks.

**Grand Canyon National Park, AZ and Glen Canyon National Recreation Area, UT** – Late August, the NPS will begin public scoping on an Environmental Assessment (EA) for a non-native fish management plan. The EA looks at the increase of green sunfish, brown trout and potential expansion or invasion of other harmful non-native fish that threaten downstream native or endangered fish. These species have become an increasing threat due to changing infestation conditions since the 2013 Comprehensive Fish Management Plan and the 2016 Long Term Experimental and Management Plan were completed. The non-native fish management plan will include a monitoring plan and a response implementation plan with additional measures to address harmful non-native species. The plan covers the Glen Canyon Dam to Lake Mead, including the Colorado River and its tributaries in Grand Canyon National Park, and the Glen Canyon Reach of the Colorado and Paria rivers in Glen Canyon National Recreation Area. The NPS is coordinating with the Bureau of Reclamation, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Arizona Game and Fish Department and many other partners on this process.

**Grand Canyon National Park, AZ** – On September 1, the NPS plans to award up to three contracts to provide logistical support services for NPS administrative work along the Colorado River corridor within the park. Contractor support will include providing boats, equipment and boat operators for biological, archaeological, maintenance and restoration, and other



administrative work along the river. Commercial river trips conducted for park visitors by concessioners and NPS search and rescue operations will not be affected by this action.

**Grand Canyon National Park, AZ** – On June 14, the public period for Grand Canyon National Park's Initial Bison Herd Reduction environmental assessment (EA) closed. The NPS received approximately 700 individual responses from members of the public. The NPS also held three public meetings, in Phoenix, AZ (May 18), Flagstaff, AZ (May 16), and Kanab, UT (May 23), as well as a web-based meeting (May 30) for those who could not attend an in-person meeting. The EA analyzes options for reducing the size of the bison herd on the park's North Rim. Resource impacts from the growing bison herd in the park include damage to sensitive natural and cultural resources. The current herd size is estimated at 400 to 600 animals; management actions under consideration in the EA would reduce the herd to size to less than 200 animals through the use of a suite of tools including capture/removal, localized fencing of sensitive resources, and lethal culling by skilled volunteers. The NPS is reviewing the comments and expects a finding of no significant impact to be signed by the NPS Intermountain Regional Director in August 2017. The NPS continues to consult with Grand Canyon's 11 associated tribes on this issue. The Arizona Game and Fish Department, Bureau of Land Management, U.S. Forest Service, and the InterTribal Buffalo Council are cooperating agencies on this effort.

**\*Saguaro National Park, AZ** – On August 17, 2017, Saguaro National Park resumed aerial treatment of invasive buffelgrass in areas of the park inaccessible to ground crews utilizing a helicopter. This is the fourth year the park used helicopters to treat dense patches of buffelgrass during the monsoon.

**-NPS-**

\*new

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## **Intermountain Region Weekly Report August 25, 2017**

**Dinosaur National Monument, CO** – On August 31, the BLM Vernal Field Office (UT) will post the sale notice for its December 2017 oil and gas lease sale. On June 22, the BLM released the lease sale environmental assessment (EA) for public comments. The EA included a proposed parcel within one mile of the most visited location in the monument (the Quarry Visitor Center), a parcel on the immediate western boundary, and many others within 5 miles of the monument. Dinosaur National Monument (DINO) prepared a comment memo on the EA, which was sent August 22. In the memo, NPS asks that the BLM review air, water, soundscape, viewshed, and night skies impacts. NPS also requested that the BLM defer leasing parcels that would most significantly impact resources and visitors in the monument (i.e. on the boundary and within view of the Quarry Visitor Center). Local county commissioners, the Utah Governor, a Utah State Representative, local land and business owners, and many environmental groups have also expressed their concern with leasing the parcels that may impact the main entrance road and the Quarry Visitor Center. The lease sale continues to generate significant media attention.

**Grand Teton National Park, WY** - In early August 2017, sixteen students were treated with rabies post-exposure prophylaxis due to exposure to bats in their sleeping facility at the historic University of Wyoming-NPS Research Center in Grand Teton National Park. Students were not apparently bitten, and the treatment was a routine preventive measure. NPS Public Health personnel contacted previous occupants for a risk assessment. As of August 18, 123 individuals were contacted and 28 people have either initiated or were recommended for post exposure prophylaxis of the 184 individuals that stayed at the research center. The park continues to work with NPS Public Health, Wyoming Department of Public Health, the Center for Disease Control and the University of Wyoming. An “Epi-Aid” process will be used to develop a risk assessment and recommendations for reducing or eliminating the risk. The structures at the research center are NPS assets and managed by the University of Wyoming via an agreement. Bat mitigation work and monitoring was conducted by the University of Wyoming, and remediation has been completed where the incident occurred. In addition, a roofing project that includes bat proofing, was previously planned on a different structure at the research center, will begin late August 2017. It is rare for humans to contract rabies from a bat.

**Grand Canyon National Park, AZ and Glen Canyon National Recreation Area, UT** – Late August, the NPS will begin public scoping on an Environmental Assessment (EA) for a non-native fish management plan. The EA looks at the increase of green sunfish, brown trout and potential expansion or invasion of other harmful non-native fish that threaten downstream native or endangered fish. These species have become an increasing threat due to changing infestation conditions since the 2013 Comprehensive Fish Management Plan and the 2016 Long Term Experimental and Management Plan were completed. The non-native fish management plan will include a monitoring plan and a response implementation plan with additional measures to address harmful non-native species. The plan covers the Glen Canyon Dam to Lake Mead, including the Colorado River and its tributaries in Grand Canyon National Park, and the Glen Canyon Reach of the Colorado and Paria rivers in Glen Canyon National Recreation Area. The

NPS is coordinating with the Bureau of Reclamation, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Arizona Game and Fish Department and many other partners on this process.

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**\*Great Sand Dunes National Park and Preserve, CO** – Ungulate Management Plan Environmental Impact Statement – On or about September 19, 2017, the NPS anticipates submitting a *Federal Register* Notice of Availability for the Great Sand Dunes National Park and Preserve Ungulate Management Plan Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for Washington Office and Department of the Interior approval. The NPS hopes to release this plan and Draft EIS in early November 2017 for public review. The plan and Draft EIS, being developed with input from Colorado Division of Parks and Wildlife and the US Fish and Wildlife Service as formal cooperating agencies, addresses two key issues: the need for active elk management and the future of bison management at the park. Interested parties include affiliated tribes; Colorado Department of Natural Resources; local Habitat Partnership Program committees; Senator Bennet's, Gardner's, and Congressman Tipton's office; The Nature Conservancy; and the Congressional Sportsman's Foundation. These stakeholders generally express support for the plan.

**\*Hurricane Procedures:**

**Big Thicket National Preserve, TX** – Weather reports indicate Hurricane Harvey will be west of Big Thicket and the impact will be 15-20 inches of rain. The park issued a closure for the visitor center, which took effect at noon on Friday and will continue through Aug. 29. The park may extend the closure depending on weather conditions. For now, the park itself will remain

open. All facilities and equipment are secured according to the park's Hurricane Plan. Tyler County Texas requested that BITH's airboat and an operator be on stand by for rescue efforts.

**Lyndon B. Johnson National Historical Park, TX** - Given the current weather forecast, the park decided to cancel all special weekend events. The park will be posting weather alerts and any changes to normal operating hours on their website.

**Padre Island National Sea Shore, TX** – On Aug. 24, NPS issued a park-wide closure, which included evacuating park employees and contractors. All hurricane preparations were put into place. There is a mandatory evacuation order for North Padre Island and some areas on the east side of Corpus Christi. Employees with residences there are relocating out of the area. Storm surge/flooding is predicted up to 10 feet on parts of Padre Island. Weather permitting, NPS will perform damage assessments Monday morning and determine if the park is safe to reopen. We anticipate some water damage and possible structural damages. Park operations may reconstitute at SAAN for the short term as needed. PAAL, located south of PAIS will get by with tropical force winds and up to potentially six inches of rain. All necessary precautions for property and employees there are in place.

**San Antonio Missions National Historical Park, TX** – On Aug. 26 and 27, NPS plans to issue park-wide closure. Weather permitting, NPS will perform damage assessments Monday morning and determine if the park is safe to reopen.

**\*Yellowstone National Park, WY**– On September 9th, Chinese Ambassador Cui, former MT Senator and former U.S. Ambassador to China Max Baucus will be visiting Yellowstone National Park, along with a group of 15 - 20 Chinese citizens. It is possible that Senator Daines (MT) will also be in attendance. The park will provide an interpretive ranger to the group for a day tour in the park.

**-NPS-**

\*new

\*\*updated