



Centennial Commission a Reality

In August, the Second Century Commission was announced. This fulfills an effort long argued for by the Coalition (see Professional Opinion Paper No. 2 and related article on page 2). The commission is being led by former United States Senators Howard H. Baker, Jr. (R-TN) and J. Bennett Johnston, Jr. (D-LA). The commission includes 26 additional nationally-renowned leaders with a broad range of backgrounds in natural and social science, business and government. Two of these—the only NPS or former NPS people—are Coalition members Jerry Rogers and Denis Galvin. Jerry is also a former CNPSR Executive Council member; Jerry first articulated the need for such a panel for the Coalition.

The staffing for the effort is lead by Loren Fraser, former Policy Office head. EC member Pat Tiller has also done some staff work for the Commission effort. The Commission is funded through and sponsored by the National Parks and Recreation Association, though it is being independently carried out.

The commission's first meeting was Aug. 25-27 at Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area in California. Bill Wade participated in a session in which several well-informed involved "Other Voices" directly engaged the commission in conversation. Jerry Rogers called that session the highlight of the two day event.

A total of 5 meetings in parks will be held though June of 2009, including in Yellowstone National Park in Wyo.; Gettysburg National Military Park in Pa.; Lowell National Historical Park in Mass.; and Great Smoky Mountains National Park in Tenn. The Commission will hear from a range of subject matter experts, park managers, and the general public over the course of their twelve-month effort, culminating in a report with recommendations in the fall of 2009.

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HOT NEWS!

The following were elected to the Executive Council (as of Jan. 1, 2009):

- Rob Arnberger
- Jake Hoogland
- JT Reynolds
- Pat Tiller

In the Press

Thanks to professional help and the cachet of national parks, the Coalition receives good coverage in the media. If you peruse the CNPSR website, you will see press releases, comments, and reports that the Coalition has issued. In addition to being posted to our website, these get distributed to the media. As a result, the first three-quarters of the year saw us mentioned over 100 times. This translates into effectiveness in the issues we take on. The more coverage we get, the more attention is paid to our opinion.

Varied media have carried quotes or stories related to our work. They include major newspapers, like the New York Times, Washington Post, Los Angeles Times and Philadelphia Inquirer; small papers like the Press Journal in Vero Beach, FL or the Pantograph in Bloomington, IL; electronic media such as Greenwire and Backpacker Magazine's blog; National Public Radio; and TV news shows on MSNBC and Fox.

Coalition Opinions

The Coalition's web page features a series of "professional papers" and those who track Art Allen's forum may have heard these discussed in the past. But in case you don't make it a habit of browsing the web and list serves, here's a short explanation of the concept and update on status.

The papers are envisioned by the Executive Council to meet two needs—to provide input for the centennial commission now a reality in the Second Century Commission and to provide analysis and recommendations to whatever new Administration takes shape in 2009. These papers also serve as the foundation for formal testimony, media interviews, and other forums where members might appear on behalf of CNPSR.

The EC believes that this is an effective way identify and focus on key issues and to articulate views and recommendations. The papers have been prepared through a combination of EC leads and solicitation of subject-matter experts, either to write or to help write and review the papers. Each paper is then reviewed by the EC to make certain we are comfortable with the issue presentation and recommendations. In at least one case, a member survey helped to inform opinions expressed; at all times, member involvement is welcomed for issues you where you have some expertise. We'd like to have papers on external programs, integrated management of natural and cultural resources, and alternate governance models, but these are not yet assigned or underway.

Papers completed and posted on the web to date include:

- America's Crown Jewels, The National Park System (No. 1)
- The National Park Centennial Commission (No. 2)
- The Centennial Institute for National Park Studies (No. 3)
- Competitive Sourcing, Privatization, and Philanthropy in our National Parks (No. 4)
- The Future of Entrance Fees and its Connection to Visitation (No. 5)
- Reasserting International Leadership Political Challenge (No. 6)
- It's Not a Matter of Money; It's a Matter of Priorities (No. 8)
- Global Climate Change and How Our National Parks Meet the Challenge (No. 11)

In process:

- A Renaissance of Park Interpretation and Education Reaffirms the Mission of the National Park Service (No. 7)
- The Renewal of the Park Ranger Profession (No. 10)
- Reassessing the Development Footprint in our Parks (No. 12)

Contact Bill Wade if you'd like to be involved in any of the unassigned papers.

And Other Official Positions In the last quarter, CNSPR has issued the following:

- Report on Impact of Concealed Firearm Rule; Administrative Procedure Act Petition submitted to Kempthorne, Bomar and Hall
- Comments on a proposal to change Endangered Species Act regulations on section 7 consultation to, among other things, allow "action agencies" to determine unilaterally whether their actions will jeopardize T&E species (comments posted on CNPSR web page)
- Letter to Bomar concerning IG report on history collection in jeopardy at Harper's Ferry Center

In the Press...continued

By far the greatest coverage in this period has been on the gun rule issue. Coverage included letters to the editor from individual members, references to the Coalition's comment letter, quotes from Doug Morris and Bill Wade included in press releases, and Bill Wade interview excerpts on NPR's *All Things Considered*. Several newspapers' editorials cited the Coalition in presenting their own opinions. For example, the *Columbian* (Vancouver, WA) editorial of May 2, 2008, stated: "A group that knows about safety in national parks is the Coalition of National Park Service Retirees" and followed with a quote from our press release. *Greenwire* highlighted the Coalition among all the groups opposing the proposed new gun rule in its April 7, 2008 release: "Several conservation and law enforcement groups, including the Coalition of National Park Service Retirees, say amending the law would be a dangerous change that could discourage visitors and increase poaching."

CNPSR Goodies



Logo wear, calendars, and other goods advertising and supporting the Coalition are available at:

www.cafepress.com/cnpsr

The Coalition has a mission to educate the public about parks, not just stand up for park protection policies. Its quiet parks news release generated almost as much coverage as the guns issue. In addition to quoting from CNPSR's release, the release stimulated some outlets to prepare their own stories and contact NPS on the noise issue.

Park Study Institute Named for Hartzog

In 2007, CNPSR partnered with Clemson University to assist with the establishment of the George B. and Helen C. Hartzog, Jr. Institute for Parks. The vision for that Institute seemed to coalesce nicely with the Coalition's proposal for a Centennial Institute. The latter was viewed as a collaborative think tank that would bring together the best minds to discuss and make recommendations on critical issues that will be facing park professionals at all levels over the next 20-50 years.

The Hartzog Institute was formally established in June, 2008, just prior to Mr. Hartzog's death, and is located at Clemson University. It has applied for, and is awaiting 501(C) (3) status as a non-profit organization. The Institute's objectives are to model the leadership and management philosophy of George Hartzog: relevancy of parks, collaboration and partnership, leadership and grounded/relevant research.

The Institute currently has a Founder's Board of 13 members which is likely to grow to around 20, as it becomes operational and seeks out more partners. The Chair of the Board is former Director Ron Walker. The Founder's Board had its initial meeting in October, coinciding with the Hartzog lecture series and award presentations. At the present time, the Coalition has one seat on the Founder's Board, and is represented by Maureen Finnerty. The goal of the Board over the next year is to market and promote the Institute, raise private funds, seek out partners, and begin to outline an operational program.

I'd like to make a donation the old-fashioned way (alternative is at www.npsretirees.org)

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CNPSR is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. Contributions are tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law.

Please use this space to let us know if and how you'd like to be involved in the collaborative initiative with NPS, provide feedback on this newsletter, or pass on any other thoughts you'd like to share with the Executive Council. (You can also contact us at www.npsretirees.org)

Coalition of NPS Retirees
5625 North Wilmot
Tucson, AZ 85750