

Message from the Chair



Maureen Finnerty

We have been busy during 2013, and there have been many accomplishments as you will see on the following pages. As our Coalition matures, there are needs that we must address if we are to be successful. There is much yet to do and we need your help to ensure that our voice will be heard so that we can influence outcomes important to the Service and to all of us retirees. We have been successful in obtaining grants and are very fortunate that a number of you have made donations to support our cause. Your support *has made a difference* as it has enabled us to provide testimony before the Congress, to improve our website, create an effective public relations campaign, and to grow to become an organization that people respect. We have been engaged in important legislation that affects our parks, and we plan on being at the table as often as necessary to ensure that our interests are represented. As members of the Coalition, I know that you care about the issues that we are working on, so **I ask that you please consider making a gift to the Coalition so that we can continue to be good stewards of our country's special places. Thank you!**



February 2014

2013 Accomplishments

A lot of good work has been done during the year, thanks to the hard work of many, as you will see in the following synopsis!

Park Stewardship Institute

During 2013, the Coalition continued to work on the Park Stewardship Institute. The Advisory Committee provided input and a draft blueprint was prepared. Nearly 20 institutions/organizations were interviewed to find out how they might interact with the Park Stewardship Institute, and to provide information on what could be done to improve the blueprint. A contract employee was hired to help with drafting and revising the blueprint. Next steps will include strengthening the blueprint and preparing it for the fundraising phase. The Coalition hopes to inaugurate the Park Stewardship Institute in 2015. For further information contact Maureen_Finnerty@npsretirees.org.

Legislative Outreach

In 2013 we began a locally based Congressional outreach strategy, with CNPSR members reaching out to their Congressional delegations. To initiate the effort last spring, we deployed a survey to

all CNPSR members asking them about their experiences with Congress, and the level of commitment they could make in engaging their delegations. We received about 100 responses, about half of which we could identify. We then selected a dozen CNPSR members and asked them to contact delegations in their home states with mixed results. We will continue to strategically reach out to make sure that we are heard.

If you are interested in participating in this effort, please contact cherry_payne@npsretirees.org.

Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act (FLREA) Policy Change Proposal

Maureen Finnerty and Phil Francis served as members of NPCA's 2nd Century Action Coalition. A lot of time and effort was spent to address reauthorization of the Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act (FLREA), which was set to expire in 2014. Representatives from numerous organizations, including the CNPSR, collaborated to ensure that there was a new authorization and that NPS interests were served. Thanks to support by key members of Congress, FLREA was extended by one year. The extension gives the Service and interested parties time to fashion new legislation. A number of recommendations are being considered that may affect price per user category, use of fee funds, new technologies, and marketing of passes. Stay tuned as final recommendations are developed.

2013 Issues - Our Coalition weighed in on a number of issues around the Service, such as:

- **Yellowstone National Park Winter Use Proposed Rule** – The CNPSR stayed engaged and publicly vocal throughout the final phases of the Yellowstone Winter Use EIS Record of Decision and rulemaking.
- **Point Reyes** – Efforts by the owner of the Drakes Bay Oyster Company to overturn a federal judge's decision have now been rejected by the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals. The CNPSR has worked with the park, NPCA, and other partners on behalf of removing this inappropriate commercial enterprise from the Seashore. A legal appeal to the US Supreme Court could be forthcoming. The CNPSR responded to numerous news media requests and co-authored letters to Congress with other groups opposing the oyster farm operation.
- **Sequestration and NPS Budget for FY2014** – On January 17th, the President signed a \$1.1 trillion appropriations bill providing funding for the NPS and other agencies through September 2014! Due to our efforts, hundreds of distinct news stories focused on effects of sequestration and the government shutdown on all units of the National Park System and National Park Service employees. The CNPSR branded itself as the “voices of experience” and as a go-to source for

the news media and various outside organizations.

- **Coburn’s “Parked” report** – In October, the CNPSR publicly opposed the report issued by Senator Coburn entitled “Parked!” Senator Coburn’s report was filled with errors and mistruths, and he was advocating for closing certain lesser-visited units or units he deemed as not as worthy as the icon parks. The CNPSR was successful in providing a strong counter to his recommendations as well as correcting the many inaccuracies of his report.
- **Cape Hatteras National Seashore** – A letter was issued supporting protection of park resources.

While the above four issues received much attention, other important work was accomplished:

- In late November, the CNPSR launched a new website to replace its original 10-year old website. Please make sure to visit the new website which is easier to navigate for all users: www.npsretirees.org
- We provided comments to the Director on the Revisiting Leopold report.
- A planned giving pamphlet was developed.
- We served as members of the NPS Advisory Board Centennial Committee and the NPCA 2nd Century Action Coalition.

- 10th Anniversary and Annual newsletters were prepared.
- The CNPSR now maintains a Facebook page at: www.facebook.com/NPSretirees and a Twitter feed @NPSRetirees and via web at: www.twitter.com/NPSRetirees
- We hired a great new Administrative Assistant in Rachel Dixon.
- Letters were sent regarding a variety of issues to key Congressional members, to Vice President Biden, the NPS Director, newspapers, and other agencies. Issues included the budget, sequestration, Grant Tetons, Yellowstone, deferred maintenance, Blackstone River Valley, Cape Hatteras, BLM leasing near National Parks, the Revisiting Leopold report initiative, and funding of parks affected by Hurricane Sandy.
- Oral testimony was provided by Deny Galvin and Maureen Finnerty provided written testimony concerning the Blackstone River Valley National Historical Park.
- Thanks to the great work of Joan Anzelmo and others, the Coalition was in the news frequently regarding many of the issues listed above. Hundreds of distinct news stories focused on the effects of the government shutdown alone!

FY2014 Budget – National Park Service

Sequestration curtailed many operations in our national parks and offices for the second time in two years as across-the-board reductions were put in place, greatly affecting the Service's ability to accomplish its core mission. In addition, the failure to pass an appropriations bill or a continuing resolution resulted in a government shutdown. Criticism of the Service's position to close park operations was significant, but the CNPSR was frequently in the press presenting a different side of the debate. The Anti-Deficiency Act does not allow for agencies to spend more money than they have, so closure was not the issue.

Congress and the Administration finally reached a budget deal, setting the top line numbers for the FY2014 budget but leaving it up to the appropriators to agree on the details that would become our FY2014 appropriation. The house and senate completed this task, after which the appropriations bill was sent to the President who then signed the bill on 17 January 2014. This is a good first step but many additional steps are still needed so that the Service can meet its fundamental mission. The FY2014 bill funds the NPS at FY2012 levels, which means that the Service will not have the large cuts that many feared but it also means that the funding level is significantly lower than the funding levels enjoyed back in FY2010, and it does not address the maintenance backlog nor does it address reductions in lost capacity that parks have experienced over the past dozen years. The

NPS budget currently is only around 1/15th of 1 percent of the federal budget; however, back in 1980 it was closer to 1/8th of 1 percent. We must continue our focus on this issue to ensure that we are able to meet our mandate of protecting resources and providing an outstanding visitor experience as we approach the Centennial.

New Executive Council Officers and Members

At the annual meeting of the CNPSR, the following officers were elected:

Chair	Maureen Finnerty
Vice Chair	Molly Ross
Treasurer	Phil Francis

Continuing Members of the EC:

Joan Anzelmo	Jim Hammett
Don Field	Kate Stevenson
Cherry Payne	

New members of the Executive Council are:

Linda Canzanelli	Michael Murray
Ernie Quintana	Richard Ring
Phil Francis	

*A big **thank you** to the outgoing members of our Executive Council members: Dan Sealy, Doug Morris, J.T. Reynolds, and Bill Wade!*

Advisory Committee

Rob Arnberger	Doug Morris
Brenda Barrett	Jerry Rogers
Jamie Rappaport Clark	Rick Smith
Mike Finley	Bill Wade
Deny Galvin	

CNPSR Awards



1872 Award – This award is given to the person who has made significant contributions to the Coalition. This year’s recipient is **Bill Wade**. Bill has been the heart and soul of the CNPSR since its inception and continues to provide critical leadership to our organization.



George Hartzog Award – This award is given to an individual(s) who demonstrates outstanding support for the mission of the National Park Service and/or National Park System. Nominees are accepted from the general membership of the Coalition. **Butch Farabee** is this year’s winner. Since Butch retired, he has continued to stay involved in the ranger profession. He has written three books that have contributed to increasing the public knowledge of the profession, and he has devoted a significant amount of time and other personal resources to researching and documenting the administrative histories of several ranger-related occupational techniques and practices now common in the NPS.

Honorary Members – Four individuals were selected:

Scott Stapf and Patrick Mitchell of The Hastings Group, our public relations firm – For significant contributions to the CNPSR over the years.

Kurt Repanshek of *National Parks Traveler* web magazine – For his outstanding work in educating the public about NPS issues.

Teresa Ford of the Association of National Park Rangers – For her continued support of our organization.

Global Parks

The CNPSR signed a Statement of Cooperation with Global Parks (GP) in December, 2013. GP is an NGO established in 2005 that connects retired land managers from various federal agencies (NPS, USFS, BLM, USFWS) with developing parks, park systems, and protected areas around the world. Serving as volunteers, with travel and in-country expenses paid by the hosts, GP has provided such expertise to areas such as China, Mongolia, Thailand, several countries in the eastern Caribbean, and several countries in eastern Africa. Former Executive Council member Doug Morris is Chairman of the Board of Directors that includes several members of the Coalition. The Statement of Cooperation will provide for improved coordination in selecting the best individuals to serve on teams to work on projects in distant countries in the future.

PLEASE DONATE

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Coalition of NPS Retirees

5625 N Wilmot Road

Tucson, AZ 85750

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