

United States Department of the Interior

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

November 7, 2022

A7221 (2550)

Caroline Haskins
MuckRock News
Dept. MR134972
263 Huntington Ave
Boston, MA 02115

Dear Ms. Haskins:

Reference: DOI-NPS-2023-00192

Subject: Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) Request

This letter is in reference to the FOIA request you filed on October 11, 2022, in which you requested:

- *All emails to, from, and copying NPS employees related to the Fat Bear Week ballot box stuffing for the week of Oct 9*
- *All other documents, memos, or digital materials pertaining to the Fat Bear Week ballot box stuffing for the week of Oct 9*

Your request has been received and has been assigned tracking number DOI-NPS-2023-000192. All future correspondence relating to this request should reference this tracking number.

Expedited Processing Denial

You have asked for expedited processing of your FOIA request. The Department's FOIA regulations state that a bureau will provide expedited processing when a requester demonstrates a compelling need for the records by explaining in detail how the request meets one or both of the criteria below and certifying the explanation is true and correct to the best of the requester's knowledge and belief. In accordance with [43 C.F.R. § 2.20](#) the criteria for granting expedited processing are as follows:

- (1) Failure to expedite the request could reasonably be expected to pose an imminent threat to the life or physical safety of an individual; or
- (2) There is an urgency to inform the public about an actual or alleged government activity and the request is made by a person primarily engaged in disseminating information. (The requested information must be the type of information that has particular value that will be lost if not disseminated quickly; this ordinarily refers to a breaking news story that concerns a matter of public exigency. Information of historical interest only or

information sought for litigation or commercial activities would not qualify, nor would a news media deadline unrelated to breaking news.)

Your request does not contain enough evidence to support either of these criteria. Your request failed to address how the records you requested relate to an alleged or actual government activity. You also failed to address how the value of the information would be lost if not provided quickly, particularly as the event to which the requested records relate had ended at the time of your request. Your request for expedited processing therefore has been denied.

Fee Waiver Request

You have also asked us to waive the fees for processing your request. The fees for processing your request will not exceed our \$50 minimum for charging fees. Accordingly, your fee waiver request is moot, and we will be closing it out in FOIAOnline as Not Billable.

Pursuant to regulation, 43 CFR 2.47 the following person is responsible for these decisions:

Charis Wilson
NPS FOIA Officer

Additionally, the following attorney was consulted during the preparation of this response:

Jason Waanders, Attorney-Advisor, Office of the Solicitor
U.S. Department of the Interior, Washington, D.C.

You have the right to appeal this denial of your request for expedited processing.

Determination

Upon further review, your request is granted in part and denied in part. We are providing one file, totaling 103 pages of responsive material. Portions of approximately 41 pages, however, are being withheld under Exemption 6 of the FOIA.

Exemption 6—[43 C.F.R. §§ 2.23, .24](#)

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\(b\)\(6\)](#). 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 has been withheld under Exemption 6 consists of personal information including the names and pictures of Explore.org employees and we have determined that the individual or individuals to whom this information pertains have 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 these individuals and we are withholding it under Exemption 6.

Appeal Rights

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 communication denying your request for a fee waiver. Appeals arriving or delivered after 5 p.m. Eastern Time, Monday through Friday, will be deemed received on the next workday. Additionally, appeals submitted via the FOIAOnline form will NOT be accepted for processing and will be deleted without further review or communication.

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 this response is in error. You must also include with your appeal copies of all correspondence between you and the National Park Service concerning your FOIA request, including your original FOIA request and this response. Failure to include with your appeal all correspondence between you and the National Park Service 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

Please do not hesitate to contact me with any further questions or concerns. I can be reached via e-mail at npsfoia@nps.gov.

Sincerely,

CHARIS
WILSON

Digitally signed by
CHARIS WILSON
Date: 2022.11.07
15:06:37 -07'00'

Charis Wilson
NPS FOIA Officer

Reporter/Outlet: TBD

Subject: Fat Bear Week voting issue

Deadline: ASAP

Spokesperson & Position Held: Amber Kraft, Katmai National Park & Preserve Interpretation and Education Program Manager, and other Katmai park rangers

Additional information/Driver for request: On Sunday, October 9, 747 was winning was leading in votes for the whole day and by quite a substantial amount. When there were just a few hours of voting left, park staff noticed that 435 Holly received over 9,000 votes in a very short period. There have not been any previous matches where a bear has gained on its competitor so fast in such a short period of time.

When our partners at explore.org looked into it they found many fake email addresses coming from several IP address. They were then able to filter out the fraudulent votes from those IP addresses bringing the vote totals to 37,940 for 747 and 30,430 for 435 Holly.

Our partners at explore.org also took the time to go back and look at the other matchups and found they were all sound. Going forward, the explore.org team has added captcha in order to create another barrier to stop fraudulent voting.

On Monday, the park received inquiries from Bloomberg News and Rolling Stone Magazine, and used the below statement in response:

747 was winning was leading in votes for the whole day and by quite a substantial amount. When there were just a few hours of voting left we noticed that 435 Holly received over 9,000 votes in a very short period of time. There have not been any previous matches where a bear has gained on its competitor so fast in such a short period of time.

When our partners at explore.org looked into it they found many fake email addresses coming from several IP address. They were then able to filter out the fraudulent votes from those IP addresses bringing the vote totals to 37,940 for 747 and 30,430 for 435 Holly.

Our partners at explore.org also took the time to go back and look at the other matchups and found they were all sound. For the voting today we have added captcha in order to create another barrier to stop fraudulent voting.

The important thing to remember, however, is that despite which bear wins the most votes in the Fat Bear Week competition, they are all winners. Bears get fat to survive and the health of Katmai's ecosystem, as demonstrated by the sustained run of salmon, clean water and thriving flora and fauna, enables their survival. Bears don't actually get anything from competing in or winning Fat Bear Week. Instead, it a way to raise awareness about brown bears: survival, competition, hunger, reproduction, conflict, skill, adaptation, learning, consequences, and the importance of protecting a healthy ecosystem for wildlife and for humans.

We hope that the awareness that Fat Bear Week brings will grow into caring, and action in whatever way makes the most sense for each individual. It could look like talking about important issues with friends and family, cleaning up a watershed or volunteering with a conservation organization, or any number of other actions. Our friends group, the [Katmai](#)

[Conservancy](#), is the official nonprofit fundraising partner of Katmai. They are the third partner with us in Fat Bear Week and have a [fundraising campaign](#) they do in conjunction to the event.

Note that the final paragraph in the statement was included in the approved comms materials for Fat Bear Week 2022.

There are some news groups picking up on this: [CNN](#), [Jezebel](#), [Forbes](#), [USA Today](#), [Bloomberg News](#), and [Rolling Stone Magazine](#).

An updated statement for review is below. Park staff would like to use the statement below to respond to additional inquiries that come in, as well as for interviews today (10/11) with the Washington Post and other outlets (the park will announce the winner today and expects to receive more interview requests).

Proposed response:

When there were just a few hours of voting left on Sunday, October 9, we noticed that Bear 435 (Holly) received over 9,000 votes in a very short period of time to overtake Bear 747. There have not been any previous matches where a bear has gained on its competitor so fast in such a short period of time.

When our partners at explore.org looked into it they found many fake email addresses coming from several IP address. They were then able to filter out the fraudulent votes from those IP addresses bringing the vote totals to 37,940 for 747 and 30,430 for 435 Holly. The explore.org team also took the time to go back and look at the other matchups and found they were all sound. Going forward, the explore.org team has added captcha in order to create another barrier to stop fraudulent voting. The team at explore.org can answer further details about the voting system that they manage for Fat Bear Week.

The important thing to remember is that despite which bear wins the most votes in the Fat Bear Week competition, they are all winners. Bears get fat to survive and the health of Katmai's ecosystem, as demonstrated by the sustained run of salmon, clean water and thriving flora and fauna, enables their survival. Bears don't actually get anything from competing in or winning Fat Bear Week. Instead, it a way to raise awareness about brown bears: survival, competition, hunger, reproduction, conflict, skill, adaptation, learning, consequences, and the importance of protecting a healthy ecosystem for wildlife and for humans.

We hope that the awareness that Fat Bear Week brings will grow into caring, and action in whatever way makes the most sense for each individual. It could look like talking about important issues with friends and family, cleaning up a watershed or volunteering with a conservation organization, or any number of other actions.

Re: Re:Fw: [EXTERNAL] From NPS.gov: Bloomberg News story on Fat Bear Week scandal

Claire Ballentine (BLOOMBERG/ NEWSROOM:) <cballentine@bloomberg.net>

Mon 10/10/2022 12:52 PM

To: Kraft, Amber D amber_kraft@nps.gov

Thank you!!

Claire Ballentine
Personal Finance Reporter
Bloomberg New
865 441 1026
@cfb 18

From: amber_kraft@nps.gov At: 10/10/22 15:29:09 UTC-4:00

To: [Claire Ballentine \(BLOOMBERG/ NEWSROOM:\)](#)

Subject Re Re Fw [EXTERNAL] From NPS gov Bloomberg News story on Fat Bear Week scandal

Hi Claire,

747 was winning was leading in votes for the whole day and by quite a substantial amount When there were just a few hours of voting left we noticed that 435 Holly received over 9,000 votes in a very short period of time. There have not been any previous matches where a a bear has gained on its competitor so fast in such a short period of time.

When our partners at explore.org looked into it they found many fake email addresses coming from several IP address. They were then able to filter out the fraudulent votes from those IP addresses bringing the vote totals to 37,940 for 747 and 30,430 for 435 Holly.

Our partners at explore.org also took the time to go back and look at the other matchups and found they were all sound. For the voting today we have added captcha in order to create another barrier to stop fraudulent voting.

The important thing to remember, however, is that despite which bear wins the most votes in the Fat Bear Week competition, they are all winners. Bears get fat to survive and the health of Katmai's ecosystem, as demonstrated by the sustained run of salmon, clean water and thriving flora and fauna, enables their survival Bears don't actually get anything from competing in or winning Fat Bear Week. Instead, it a way to raise awareness about brown bears: survival, competition, hunger, reproduction, conflict, skill, adaptation, learning, consequences, and the importance of protecting a healthy ecosystem for wildlife and for humans

We hope that the awareness that Fat Bear Week brings will grow into caring, and action in whatever way makes the most sense for each individual. It could look like talking about important issues with friends and family, cleaning up a watershed or volunteering with a conservation organization, or any number of other actions. Our friends group, the [Katmai Conservancy](#), is the official nonprofit fundraising partner of Katmai. They are the third partner with us in Fat Bear Week and have a [fundraising campaign](#) they do in conjunction to the event

Thanks,

Amber Kraft
Interpretation and Education Program Manager
907-246-2137
amber_kraft@nps.gov

Katmai National Park & Preserve | Alagnak Wild River | Aniakchak National Monument & Preserve
PO Box 7
King Salmon, AK 99613



From: Claire Ballentine (BLOOMBERG/ NEWSROOM:) <cballentine@bloomberg.net>
Sent: Monday, October 10, 2022 10:35 AM
To: Kraft, Amber D <amber_kraft@nps.gov>
Subject: Re:Fw: [EXTERNAL] From NPS.gov: Bloomberg News story on Fat Bear Week scandal

Written answer is fine! Can you clarify what actually happened with the fake ballots? Was it a bot? And how did you know they were fake?

Sent from Bloomberg Professional for iPhone

----- Original Message -----
From: Amber D Kraft amber_kraft@nps.gov
To: CLAIRE BALLENTINE
At: 10/10/22 14:32:40 UTC-04:00

Hi Claire,

Thanks for reaching out and for your interest in Fat Bear Week! Your contact information was passed along to me and I'm letting you know that we've received your request and I will be working on coordinating this inquiry for you

We'd appreciate a list of questions if possible. Are you hoping for a phone or video interview, or would written answers suffice for your purposes?

Happy Fat Bear Week!

Amber Kraft
Interpretation and Education Program Manager
907-246-2137
amber_kraft@nps.gov

Katmai National Park & Preserve | Alagnak Wild River | Aniakchak National Monument & Preserve
PO Box 7
King Salmon, AK 99613



From: KATM Visitor Information, NPS KATM_Visitor_Information@nps.gov
Sent: Monday, October 10, 2022 10:12 AM
To: Kraft, Amber D amber_kraft@nps.gov
Subject: Fw: [EXTERNAL] From NPS.gov: Bloomberg News story on Fat Bear Week scandal

Visitor Information
Katmai National Park & Preserve
Aniakchak National Monument & Preserve
Alagnak Wild River
907-246-2113 or 907-246-2103

From: no-reply@nps.gov <no-reply@nps.gov>
Sent: Monday, October 10, 2022 8:41 AM
To: KATM Visitor Information, NPS <KATM_Visitor_Information@nps.gov>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] From NPS.gov: Bloomberg News story on Fat Bear Week scandal

<p>This email has been received from outside of DOI. Use caution before clicking on links, opening attachments, or responding.</p>

Email submitted from: cballentine@bloomberg.net at /katm/contacts.htm

Use cballentine@bloomberg.net to reply to this message

Category: Digital Experience

Hi - my name is Claire Ballentine, and I'm a journalist for Bloomberg News. I'm writing about the fake vote on Fat Bear Week. I'd like to find someone who could talk with me about this?

3WO report e r Week

Kraft, Amber D <amber_kraft@np.gov>

Mon 10/10/2022 2:45 PM

To: Stiteler, Sharon K <sharon_stiteler@np.gov>

Cc: Chritian, Peter A <Peter_Chritian@np.gov>; Sturm, Mark G <Mark_Sturm@np.gov>

Voting on www.fatbearweek.org continues through Fat Bear Tuesday (10/11) when the winner is crowned. Social media each day will share the day's matchups, remind people to vote, and reveal the winner for the day. On Tuesday (10/11) the Fat Bear Tuesday live chat will take place at 3:00pm. On Wed (10/12) we will revel in the glory of the 2022 Fat Bear Week champion. The complete schedule to finish out FBW 2022 is below.

Fat Bear Week Schedule:

Social Media - To go out on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram

October 10 –

AM: Match up

Noon: Remember to Vote

PM: Winner

October 11 –

AM: Final Match Up

Noon: Remember to Vote

PM: Winner, winner salmon dinner!

October 12 – Congrats to all bears

October 13 –Thanks to the sponsors (AKA salmon)

October 14 – Fat Bear Week over but something that still promotes involvement

Live Event Schedule (hosted on explore.org):

- October 11 – Fat Bear Tuesday Chat (concludes FBW)

Of Note:

- FBW got more than 9,000 FBW spam votes on Sunday, Oct 9 for Holly that would have changed the results of the match up.
- Fat Bear Week Partners, the Katmai Conservancy and explore.org will host a Fat Bear Week Celebration and Fundraiser on the [explore's live chat channel](#) on Saturday, October 15 – 4 p.m. Eastern / 1 p.m. Pacific.

Amber Kraft

Interpretati on Program Manager

907-246-2137

amber_kraft@ps.gov

Katmai National Park & Preserve | Alagnak Wild River | Aniakchak National Monument & Preserve

PO Box 7

King Salmon, AK 99613



Re: [EXTERNAL] Re: Fat Bear Week

Miles Klee <mkleee@rollingstone.com>

Mon 10/10/2022 5:20 PM

To: Kraft, Amber D <amber_kraft@nps.gov>

Amber, really appreciate this response! We'll have our story up tomorrow Hope you like it, all best, and thanks for chatting about bears—

Miles

From: Kraft, Amber D <amber_kraft@nps.gov>

Sent: Monday, October 10, 2022 2:27 PM

To: Miles Klee <mkleee@rollingstone.com>

Subject: Re: [EXTERNAL] Re: Fat Bear Week

Hi Miles,

747 was winning was leading in votes for the whole day and by quite a substantial amount. When there were just a few hours of voting left we noticed that 435 Holly received over 9,000 votes in a very short period of time. There have not been any previous matches where a bear has gained on its competitor so fast in such a short period of time

When our partners at explore.org looked into it they found many fake email addresses coming from several IP address. They were then able to filter out the fraudulent votes from those IP addresses bringing the vote totals to 37,940 for 747 and 30,430 for 435 Holly

Our partners at explore.org also took the time to go back and look at the other matchups and found they were all sound. For the voting today we have added captcha in order to create another barrier to stop fraudulent voting

The important thing to remember, however, is that despite which bear wins the most votes in the Fat Bear Week competition, they are all winners. Bears get fat to survive and the health of Katmai's ecosystem, as demonstrated by the sustained run of salmon, clean water and thriving flora and fauna, enables their survival. Bears don't actually get anything from competing in or winning Fat Bear Week. Instead, it's a way to raise awareness about brown bears: survival, competition, hunger, reproduction, conflict, skill, adaptation, learning, consequences, and the importance of protecting a healthy ecosystem for wildlife and for humans

We hope that the awareness that Fat Bear Week brings will grow into caring and action in whatever way makes the most sense for each individual. It could look like talking about important issues with friends and family, cleaning up a watershed or volunteering with a conservation organization, or any number of other actions. Our friends group, the [Katmai Conservancy](#), is the official nonprofit fundraising partner of Katmai. They are the third partner with us in Fat Bear Week and have a [fundraising campaign](#) they do in conjunction to the event.

Thanks,

Amber Kraft

nterpretation and Education Program Manager
907-246-2137
amber_kraft@nps.gov

Katmai National Park & Preserve | Alagnak Wild River | Aniakchak National Monument & Preserve
PO Box 7
King Salmon, AK 99613



From: Miles Klee <mkleee@rollingstone.com>
Sent: Monday, October 10, 2022 1:13 PM
To: Kraft, Amber D <amber_kraft@nps.gov>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Re: Fat Bear Week

<p>This email has been received from outside of DOI - Use caution before clicking on links, opening attachments, or responding.</p>
--

Hi, Amber! Thanks for reaching out. Written answers would be great!

This is in regards to the apparent effort to game the voting for Fat Bear Week:

<https://twitter.com/KatmaiNPS/status/1579289664795840515>

My questions are:

1. How were the spam votes identified, and what can you tell us about the person(s) or account(s) that attempted to pull this off?
2. It seems, based on tweets in this thread, that someone was attempting to help bear 435 (Holly) win over bear 747. Is that correct?
3. If so, why might someone try this hard to give Holly a fraudulent win?
4. Has Fat Bear Week dealt with any voter fraud in the past? What protections are in place to ensure fair and democratic elections?

Thanks very much for your time, and all best—

Miles Klee

From: Kraft, Amber D <amber_kraft@nps.gov>

Sent: Monday, October 10, 2022 2:03 PM

To: Miles Klee <mkleee@rollingstone.com>

Subject: Fat Bear Week

Hello!

Thanks for reaching out and for your interest in Fat Bear Week! Your contact information was passed along to me and I'm letting you know that we've received your request and I will be working on coordinating this inquiry for you.

We'd appreciate a list of questions if possible. Would written answers suffice for your purposes?

Thanks!

Amber Kraft

Interpretation and Education Program Manager

907-246-2137

amber_kraft@nps.gov

Katmai National Park & Preserve | Alagnak Wild River | Aniakchak National Monument & Preserve

PO Box 7

King Salmon, AK 99613



RE: FBW Update 10/10/2022

Stiteler, Sharon K <sharon_stiteler@nps.gov>

Tue 10/11/2022 9:47 AM

o: Christian, Peter A <Peter_Christian@nps.gov>; Kraft, Amber D <amber_kraft@nps.gov>; Hernandez, Cynthia E <cynthia_hernandez@nps.gov>; NPS News Media <NewsMedia@nps.gov>; Anzelmo-Sarles, Jenny <Jenny_Anzelmo-Sarles@nps.gov>

We just had the call, you're off the hook.

Sharon Stiteler (she/her)
Public Affairs Officer
Denali National Park and Preserve
PO Box 9
Denali Park, AK 99755
Office: 907-683-9583
Cell: 907-202-0156

The one thing that you have that nobody else has is you. Your voice, your mind, your story, your vision. So write and draw and build and play and dance and live as only you can."
Neil Gaiman

From: Christian, Peter A <Peter_Christian@nps.gov>

Sent: Tuesday, October 11, 2022 9:46 AM

To: Stiteler, Sharon K <sharon_stiteler@nps.gov>; Kraft, Amber D <amber_kraft@nps.gov>; Hernandez, Cynthia E <cynthia_hernandez@nps.gov>; NPS News Media <NewsMedia@nps.gov>; Anzelmo-Sarles, Jenny <Jenny_Anzelmo-Sarles@nps.gov>

Subject: Re: FBW Update 10/10/2022

I'm at a conference all day. Thanks

Get [Outlook for iOS](#)

From: Stiteler, Sharon K <sharon_stiteler@nps.gov>

Sent: Tuesday, October 11, 2022 9:18 AM

To: Kraft, Amber D <amber_kraft@nps.gov>; Hernandez, Cynthia E <cynthia_hernandez@nps.gov>; NPS News Media <NewsMedia@nps.gov>; Anzelmo-Sarles, Jenny <Jenny_Anzelmo-Sarles@nps.gov>

Cc: Christian, Peter A <Peter_Christian@nps.gov>

Subject: RE: FBW Update 10/10/2022

I'm ready to meet anytime. I think Pete is in Sitka so not sure if he's available this morning.

Sharon Stiteler (she/her)
Public Affairs Officer
Denali National Park and Preserve
PO Box 9
Denali Park, AK 99755
Office: 907-683-9583
Cell: 907-202-0156

"The one thing that you have that nobody else has is you Your voice, your mind, your story, your vision So write and draw and build and play and dance and live as only you can."

Neil Gaiman

From: Kraft, Amber D <amber_kraft@nps.gov>

Sent: Tuesday, October 11, 2022 9:09 AM

To: Hernandez, Cynthia E <cynthia_hernandez@nps.gov>; NPS News Media <NewsMedia@nps.gov>; Anzelmo-Sarles, Jenny <Jenny_Anzelmo-Sarles@nps.gov>; Stiteler, Sharon K <sharon_stiteler@nps.gov>

Cc: Christian, Peter A <Peter_Christian@nps.gov>

Subject: Re: FBW Update 10/10/2022

Good Morning,

Can we meet a little earlier? Today is the last day of voting and it would be great to have an approved response.

747 was winning was leading in votes for the whole day and by quite a substantial amount. When there were just a few hours of voting left we noticed that 435 Holly received over 9,000 votes in a very short period of time There have not been any previous matches where a bear has gained on its competitor so fast in such a short period of time.

When our partners at explore.org looked into it they found many fake email addresses coming from several IP address They were then able to filter out the fraudulent votes from those IP addresses bringing the vote totals to 37,940 for 747 and 30,430 for 435 Holly.

Our partners at explore.org also took the time to go back and look at the other matchups and found they were all sound For the voting today we have added captcha in order to create another barrier to stop fraudulent voting.

The important thing to remember, however, is that despite which bear wins the most votes in the Fat Bear Week competition, they are all winners Bears get fat to survive and the health of Katmai's ecosystem, as demonstrated by the sustained run of salmon, clean water and thriving flora and fauna, enables their survival. Bears don't actually get anything from competing in or winning Fat Bear Week. Instead, it a way to raise awareness about brown bears survival, competition, hunger, reproduction, conflict, skill, adaptation, learning, consequences, and the importance of protecting a healthy ecosystem for wildlife and for humans.

We hope that the awareness that Fat Bear Week brings will grow into caring, and action in whatever way makes the most sense for each individual. It could look like talking about important issues with friends and family, cleaning up a watershed or volunteering with a conservation organization, or any number of other actions. Our friends group, the [Katmai Conservancy](#), is the official nonprofit fundraising partner of Katmai. They are the third partner with us in Fat Bear Week and have a [fundraising campaign](#) they do in conjunction to the event.

Amber Kraft

nterpretation and Education Program Manager

907 246 2137

amber_kraft@nps.gov

Katmai National Park & Preserve | Alagnak Wild River | Aniakchak National Monument & Preserve

PO Box 7

King Salmon AK 99613



From: Hernandez, Cynthia E <cynthia_hernandez@nps.gov>

Sent: Tuesday, October 11, 2022 7:23 AM

To: Kraft, Amber D <amber_kraft@nps.gov>; NPS News Media <NewsMedia@nps.gov>; Anzelmo-Sarles, Jenny <Jenny_Anzelmo-Sarles@nps.gov>; Stiteler, Sharon K <sharon_stiteler@nps.gov>

Cc: Christian, Peter A <Peter_Christian@nps.gov>

Subject: Re: FBW Update 10/10/2022

Hi Amber, Pete, and Sharon,

I'm going to find a time for us to chat today about this and work on an updated statement together. Since I'll need to send the draft statement to DOI for review as well, Amber, please hold on using the interim statement or responding to inquiries about this until we get clearance from DOI

Thanks,

Cynthia Hernandez

Public Affairs Specialist

National Park Service

(202)740-8273

cynthia_hernandez@nps.gov

Pronouns: she/her/hers

[NPS Mental Health Resources](#)

From: Kraft, Amber D amber_kraft@nps.gov


Sent: Monday, October 10, 2022 9:19 PM

To: NPS News Media NewsMedia@nps.gov ; Hernandez, Cynthia E cynthia_hernandez@nps.gov ; Anzelmo Sarles, Jenny <Jenny_Anzelmo-Sarles@nps.gov>; Stiteler, Sharon K <sharon_stiteler@nps.gov>

Cc: Christian, Peter A Peter_Christian@nps.gov

Subject: FBW Update 10/10/2022

Hello All!

Here is your Fat Bear Week update for today. If you would like to see a complete list that I am compiling of FBW stories you can find that at  [2022 media contacts.xlsx](#) on the 3rd tab I'm a few days behind on this...

Of note: On Sunday 10/9 - 747 was winning was leading in votes for the whole day and by quite a substantial amount. When there were just a few hours of voting left we noticed that 435 Holly received over 9,000 votes in a very short period of time. There have not been any previous matches where a bear has gained on its competitor so fast in such a short period of time.

When our partners at explore.org looked into it they found many fake email addresses coming from several IP address. They were then able to filter out the fraudulent votes from those IP addresses bringing the vote totals to 37,940 for 747 and 30,430 for 435 Holly.

Our partners at explore.org also took the time to go back and look at the other matchups and found they were all sound. For the voting today we have added captcha in order to create another barrier to stop fraudulent voting.

There are some news groups picking up on this: [CNN](#), [Jezebel](#), and have also received questions from Rolling Stone Magazine and Bloomberg News. Trying to keep it focused on the interpretive message by saying the following after answering about what happened as I did above:

The important thing to remember, however, is that despite which bear wins the most votes in the Fat Bear Week competition, they are all winners. Bears get fat to survive and the health of Katmai's ecosystem, as demonstrated by the sustained run of salmon, clean water and thriving flora and fauna, enables their survival. Bears don't actually get anything from competing in or winning Fat Bear Week. Instead, it a way to raise awareness about brown bears: survival, competition, hunger, reproduction, conflict, skill, adaptation, learning, consequences, and the importance of protecting a healthy ecosystem for wildlife and for humans.

We hope that the awareness that Fat Bear Week brings will grow into caring, and action in whatever way makes the most sense for each individual. It could look like talking about important issues with friends and family, cleaning up a watershed or volunteering with a conservation organization, or any number of other actions. Our friends group, the [Katmai Conservancy](#), is the official nonprofit fundraising partner of Katmai. They are the third partner with us in Fat Bear Week and have a [fundraising campaign](#) they do in conjunction to the event.

Interviews getting scheduled:

- The Weather Channel
- ABC- Australia's national TV news channel
- Wyoming Public Radio
-

Upcoming interviews:

- 10/12 NBC LX | NBC Owned Stations- follow up interview
-

Already done interviews:

- [9/12 Smithsonianmag.com](#)
- [9/13 The Washington Post's KidsPost section](#)

- 9/14 Bentley McGuinness Media Pty Ltd (Australia)- written responses- sent MP3 file of interview he did with 3AW radio station in Australia
- [9/14 Environmental Defense Fund](#) - written responses
- [9/15 nationalparkstraveler.org](#) and [a podcast](#) [from 2:36 - 13:38 and 15:50 - 27:39 marks in audio]
- 9/15 Ample Nature - wants to do a 3 part TV series next year leading up to FBW and was looking for info for that.
- [9/19 USA Today Universal NOW](#) and [Article 2](#)
- [9/21 Cronkite News/ Arizona PBS](#)
- [9/23 Geo Week News](#)
- [9/27 Washington Post](#) and [a second article](#)
- [9/28 InsideEdition.com](#)
- [9/29 Tag 24](#)
- 9/29 Chapman News (broadcast date 10/4)
- 9/29 German Press Agency dpa [Article 1](#), [Article 2](#), [Article 3](#), [Article 4](#), [Article 5](#), [Article 6](#), [Article 7](#), [Article 8](#), [Article 9](#)
- [9/30 Jaxon.gg - UK](#)
- [9/30 The Economist magazine](#)
- [9/30 USA Today Travel](#)
- [Grays Peak Strategies](#) podcast
- [10/3 Vogue.com](#)
- 10/4 Z99 FM Cayman Islands
- [10/4 NY Times](#)
- 10/4 Der Spiegel in Germany - written responses
- [10/4 GRID News -written responses](#)
- [10/4 Denver7 news, the ABC affiliate in Denver, CO](#)
- 10/5 NBC LX | NBC Owned Stations - 10/5 5pm newscast around the 5:45 pm CST mark <https://www.lx.com/where-to-watch/>
- 10/5 KREX 5 News in Grand Junction, CO
- 10/5 CBC Yukon
- [10/5 The Agenda on Dubai Eye radio](#) [from 4:15 to 14:00 marks in audio]
- [10/6 Hit VIC radio show - Victoria, Australia](#)
- 10/6 CCBC North - Northbeat
- 10/7 ABC News (Live) @ [7 am](#) & [11 am](#)
- [10/7 CNN Newsroom \(Live\)](#)
- 10/7 Stay With Me Here podcast (broadcast date 10/11)
- [10/7 Scripps National Media](#)
- 10/8 DePaulia, DePaul University's student newspaper
- 10/10 Rolling Stone Magazine - written responses (questions about spam votes yesterday)
- 10/10 Bloomberg News - written responses (questions about spam votes yesterday)
- 10/10 ABC News Breakfast - Australian Broadcasting Corporation

Media using [ranger recorded FAQs](#):

- [Mediahuis \(Independent.ie\) - Ireland](#)
- POLITICO Snapchat Show

Amber Kraft

Interpretation and Education Program Manager

907-246-2137

amber_kraft@nps.gov

Katmai National Park & Preserve | Alagnak Wild River | Aniakchak National Monument & Preserve

PO Box 7

King Salmon, AK 99613



Re: [EXTERNAL] From NPS.gov: Politico's E&E News: Fat Bear Week voting scandal

Ellie Borst <eborst@eenews.net>

Tue 10/11/2022 11:15 AM

o: Candice Rusch <crusch@explore.org>; Kraft, Amber D <amber_kraft@nps.gov>

Cc: PR@explore.org <pr@explore.org>

Thank you, Candice and Amber. Appreciate the proactive response to save the democracy of this paramount competition

From: Candice Rusch <crusch@explore.org>

Sent: Tuesday, October 11, 2022 2:54 PM

To: Kraft, Amber D <amber_kraft@nps.gov>

Cc: Ellie Borst <eborst@eenews.net>; PR@explore.org <pr@explore.org>

Subject: Re: [EXTERNAL] From NPS.gov: Politico's E&E News: Fat Bear Week voting scandal

EXTERNAL SENDER: Use caution with links and attachments.

Hi,

I'm happy to answer your questions.

We first became suspicious about the spam voting when 435 Holly came back from being down 6,000 votes in a matter of a couple hours. While not unheard of, it is very uncommon for a bear to come back late in the day like that. We ended up finding just over 9,000 spam votes. It appears as if the spamming stopped when 435 took a decent lead. There were some spam votes for 747 as well, maybe to throw us off? We don't want to share too much about the process we used to sort out the spam votes, as we don't want to teach the spammers how to spam better. But we did add a captcha to the poll which is working to prevent future spamming.

The important thing to remember is that despite which bear wins the most votes in the Fat Bear Week competition, they are all winners. Bears get fat to survive and the health of Katmai's ecosystem, as demonstrated by the sustained run of salmon, clean water and thriving flora and fauna, enables their survival. Bears don't actually get anything from competing in or winning Fat Bear Week. Instead, it's a way to raise awareness about brown bears: survival, competition, hunger, reproduction, conflict, skill, adaptation, learning, consequences, and the importance of protecting a healthy ecosystem for wildlife and for humans.

We hope that the awareness that Fat Bear Week brings will grow into caring, and action in whatever way makes the most sense for each individual.

On Tue, Oct 11, 2022 at 11:50 AM 'Kraft, Amber D' via DL-EXP-PR <pr@explore.org> wrote:

Good Morning Ellie,

Our partners at explore.org have looked into the issue and can answer questions and provide further details about the voting system that they manage for Fat Bear Week. I have copied them to this email for you

Fat Bear Week raises awareness by bringing the relationship between the bears and the salmon to the forefront. Bears depend on a healthy salmon run to secure the needed calories and fat required to survive winter. Preservation of a healthy ecosystem for Brooks River is essential for all the animals of Katmai.

Thanks, and [Happy Fat Bear Tuesday!](#)

Amber Kraft

Interpretation and Education Program Manager

907 246 2137

amber_kraft@nps.gov

Katmai National Park & Preserve | Alagnak Wild River | Aniakchak National Monument & Preserve
PO Box 7
King Salmon, AK 99613



From: no-reply@nps.gov <no-reply@nps.gov>

Sent: Tuesday, October 11, 2022 10:27 AM

To: Kraft, Amber D <amber_kraft@nps.gov>

Subject: [EXTERNAL] From NPS.gov: Politico's E&E News: Fat Bear Week voting scandal

<p>This email has been received from outside of DOI Use caution before clicking on links, opening attachments, or responding.</p>
--

Email submitted from: eborst@eenews.net at /katm/learn/news/fat-bear-week-2022.htm

Use eborst@eenews.net to reply to this message

Category: Other

Hello, My name is Ellie Borst, and I'm a reporter with Politico's E&E News. I had a few questions about the recent ballot-box-stuffing incident for Fat Bear Week. 1. How did [explore.org](https://www.explore.org) learn the votes were fake? 2. What corrective actions have been taken? Any additional comment would be appreciated. My deadline is 3 p.m. EDT (10 a.m. AKST) Thank you! Ellie Borst 480-234-3300
eborst@eenews.net

--

Candice Rusch

Director of New Media | [Explore.org](https://www.explore.org)

fall in love with the world again

Re: Fw: [EXTERNAL] From <http://NPS.gov> Media request: Fat bear week voting scandal?

Martin, Saleen <SDMartin@usatoday.com>

Tue 10/11/2022 12:31 PM

To: Candice Rusch <crusch@explore.org>; Kraft, Amber D <amber_kraft@nps.gov>

Cc: PR@explore.org <pr@explore.org>

Hi!

Yes, I think we're good to go! Thanks to you both!

Ms. Saleen D. Martin

NOW Reporter, USA TODAY

Office: (703) 375-9560

Portfolio saleendion.com

Twitter: twitter.com/saleen_martin

Facebook: facebook.com/SaleenMartinTV

From: Candice Rusch <crusch@explore.org>

Sent: Tuesday, October 11, 2022 4:29 PM

To: Kraft, Amber D <amber_kraft@nps.gov>

Cc: Martin, Saleen <SDMartin@usatoday.com>; PR@explore.org <pr@explore.org>

Subject: Re: Fw: [EXTERNAL] From <http://NPS.gov> Media request: Fat bear week voting scandal?

Hi,

I think we might have already been in contact about this but I'm happy to answer any questions that come up.

On Tue, Oct 11, 2022 at 1:27 PM 'Kraft, Amber D' via DL-EXP-PR <pr@explore.org> wrote:

Hello,

Our partners at explore.org have looked into the issue and can answer questions and provide further details about the voting system that they manage for Fat Bear Week. I have cced them to this email for you.

Fat Bear Week raises awareness by bringing the relationship between the bears and the salmon to the forefront. Bears depend on a healthy salmon run to secure the needed calories and fat required to survive winter. Preservation of a healthy ecosystem for Brooks River is essential for all the animals of Katmai.

Thanks, and [Happy Fat Bear Tuesday!](#)

Amber Kraft

Interpretation and Education Program Manager

907-246-2137

amber_kraft@nps.gov

Katmai National Park & Preserve | Alagnak Wild River | Aniakchak National Monument & Preserve

PO Box 7
King Salmon, AK 99613



From: KATM Visitor Information, NPS <KATM_Visitor_Information@nps.gov
Sent: Tuesday, October 11, 2022 6 39 AM
To: Kraft, Amber D amber_kraft@nps.gov
Subject: Fw [EXTERNAL] From [NPS.gov](https://www.nps.gov) Media request Fat bear week voting scandal?

Visitor Information
Katmai National Park & Preserve
Aniakchak National Monument & Preserve
Alagnak Wild River
907-246-2113 or 907-246-2103

From: no-reply@nps.gov <no-reply@nps.gov>
Sent: Tuesday, October 11, 2022 6:01 AM
To: KATM Visitor Information, NPS <KATM_Visitor_Information@nps.gov>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] From [NPS.gov](https://www.nps.gov) Media request: Fat bear week voting scandal?

<p>This email has been received from outside of DOI Use caution before clicking on links, opening attachments, or responding.</p>
--

Email submitted from: sdmartin@usatoday.com at /katm/contacts.htm

Use sdmartin@usatoday.com to reply to this message

Category: Other

Hello! I'm a USA TODAY reporter writing about the Fat Bear Week scandal. Is there someone who can talk to me about how the spam bots were found? You can reach me at 757-580-0065. Thanks!

--

Candice Rusch
Director of New Media | [Explore.org](https://www.explore.org)
fall in love with the world again

Yesterday = Oct 11, 2022

[Yesterday 3:13 PM] Sturm, Mark G

You have been tracking the whole FBW ballot stuffing controversy right? We are doing the best we can...

[Yesterday 3:14 PM] Christian, Peter A

I saw the headline but haven't gotten any inquiries.

[Yesterday 3:15 PM] Sturm, Mark G

We got in trouble with WASO a bit because we went off script to deal with it.

[Yesterday 3:15 PM] Sturm, Mark G

Fyi

[Yesterday 3:19 PM] Christian, Peter A

Got it, thanks!

Re: [EXTERNAL] From NPS.gov: Fat Bear Week Update?

Bill Chappell <BChappell@npr.org>

Tue 10/11/2022 6:26 PM

To: Candice Rusch <crusch@explore.org>

Cc: Kraft, Amber D <amber_kraft@nps.gov>; pr@explore.org <pr@explore.org>

Thank you both!! Glad it all worked out!!

Bill

Bill Chappell

NPR

On Oct 11, 2022, at 4:39 PM, Candice Rusch <crusch@explore.org> wrote:

Hi Bill,

I'll be happy to answer any questions you have. Here is our statement on the Fat Bear Week voting issues.

We first became suspicious about the spam voting when 435 Holly came back from being down 6,000 votes in a matter of a couple hours. While not unheard of, it is very uncommon for a bear to come back late in the day like that. We ended up finding just over 9,000 spam votes. It appears as if the spamming stopped when 435 took a decent lead. There were some spam votes for 747 as well, maybe to throw us off? We don't want to share too much about the process we used to sort out the spam votes, as we don't want to teach the spammers how to spam better. But we did add a captcha to the poll which is working to prevent future spamming.

The important thing to remember is that despite which bear wins the most votes in the Fat Bear Week competition, they are all winners. Bears get fat to survive and the health of Katmai's ecosystem, as demonstrated by the sustained run of salmon, clean water and thriving flora and fauna, enables their survival. Bears don't actually get anything from competing in or winning Fat Bear Week. Instead, it's a way to raise awareness about brown bears: survival, competition, hunger, reproduction, conflict, skill, adaptation, learning, consequences, and the importance of protecting a healthy ecosystem for wildlife and for humans.

We hope that the awareness that Fat Bear Week brings will grow into caring, and action in whatever way makes the most sense for each individual.

On Tue, Oct 11, 2022 at 1:33 PM 'Kraft, Amber D' via DL-EXP-PR <pr@explore.org> wrote:

Hello Bill,

Our partners at explore.org have looked into the issue and can answer questions and

provide further details about the voting system that they manage for Fat Bear Week. I have cced them to this email for you

Fat Bear Week raises awareness by bringing the relationship between the bears and the salmon to the forefront. Bears depend on a healthy salmon run to secure the needed calories and fat required to survive winter. Preservation of a healthy ecosystem for Brooks River is essential for all the animals of Katmai.

Thanks, and [Happy Fat Bear Tuesday!](#)

Amber Kraft
Interpretation and Education Program Manager
907 246 2137
amber_kraft@nps.gov

Katmai National Park & Preserve | Alagnak Wild River | Aniakchak National Monument & Preserve
PO Box 7
King Salmon, AK 99613



From: KATM Visitor Information, NPS <KATM_Visitor_Information@nps.gov>
Sent: Tuesday, October 11, 2022 6:39 AM
To: Kraft, Amber D <amber_kraft@nps.gov>
Subject: Fw: [EXTERNAL] From NPS.gov: Fat Bear Week Update?

Visitor Information
Katmai National Park & Preserve
Aniakchak National Monument & Preserve
Alagnak Wild River
907-246-2113 or 907-246-2103

From: no-reply@nps.gov <no-reply@nps.gov>
Sent: Tuesday, October 11, 2022 5:05 AM
To: KATM Visitor Information, NPS <KATM_Visitor_Information@nps.gov>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] From NPS.gov: Fat Bear Week Update?

<p>This email has been received from outside of DOI - Use caution before clicking on links, opening attachments, or responding.</p>
--

Email submitted from: bchappell@npr.org at /katm/contacts.htm

Use bchappell@npr.org to reply to this message

Category: Information

Mailing Address:

Bill Chappell

NPR

Washington, DC

Hello, I'm a reporter who's been following Fat Bear Week, and now I'm hearing about a possible problem with the voting process -- would anyone be able to discuss that in a quick phone chat, or perhaps there is a statement about it? Thank you for any help, and good luck with this fun event! Bill

--

Candice Rusch

Director of New Media | Explore.org

fall in love with the world again

Re: [EXTERNAL] TEGNA media inquiry: Photo permissions for Fat Bear Week

Candice Rusch <crusch@explore.org>

Wed 10/12/2022 7:33 AM

o: Lick, Val vlick@kare11.com

Cc: Kraft, Amber D <amber_kraft@nps.gov>; PR@explore.org <pr@explore.org>

otally understand! Youre welcome.

On Wed, Oct 12, 2022 at 3:23 AM Lick, Val vlick@kare11.com wrote:

Thank you, Candice! The statement was really helpful. Sorry for doubling up — I had reached out to both of you at the same time.

Have a great day

Thank you,
Val

VAL LICK

DIGITAL CONTENT PRODUCER

TEGNA CENTRAL CONTENT TEAM

EMAIL VLICK@TEGNA.COM

WUSA9.COM

From: Candice Rusch <crusch@explore.org>

Sent: Tuesday, October 11, 2022 3:26 PM

To: Kraft, Amber D <amber_kraft@nps.gov>

Cc: Lick, Val <vlick@kare11.com>; Central Content Team <cct@tegna.com>; PR@explore.org <pr@explore.org>

Subject: Re: [EXTERNAL] TEGNA media inquiry: Photo permissions for Fat Bear Week

CAUTION EXTERNAL EMAIL Please use caution opening attachments and never share your password. Send suspicious email to infosec@tegna.com .

Hi again Val,

I know we talked about this earlier today. I really wish I could provide some more information on how we found out, but the reality is that it was so easy to tell that any future spammer could use that information to create a more clever spam than what we encountered. Here is our statement again. Let me know if you have any other questions

We first became suspicious about the spam voting when 435 Holly came back from being down 6,000 votes in a matter of a couple hours. While not unheard of, it is very uncommon for a bear to come back late in the day like that. We ended up finding just over 9,000 spam votes. It appears as if the spamming stopped when 435 took a decent lead. There were some spam votes for 747 as well, maybe to throw us off? We dont want to share too much about the process we used to sort out the spam votes, as we don't want to teach the spammers how to spam better. But we did add a captcha to the poll which is working to prevent future spamming.

The important thing to remember is that despite which bear wins the most votes in the Fat Bear

Week competition, they are all winners. Bears get fat to survive and the health of Katmai's ecosystem, as demonstrated by the sustained run of salmon, clean water and thriving flora and fauna, enables their survival. Bears don't actually get anything from competing in or winning Fat Bear Week. Instead, it's a way to raise awareness about brown bears: survival, competition, hunger, reproduction, conflict, skill, adaptation, learning, consequences, and the importance of protecting a healthy ecosystem for wildlife and for humans.

We hope that the awareness that Fat Bear Week brings will grow into caring, and action in whatever way makes the most sense for each individual.

On Tue, Oct 11, 2022 at 1:21 PM 'Kraft, Amber D' via DL-EXP-PR <pr@explore.org> wrote:

Hello Val,

Our partners at explore.org have looked into the issue and can answer questions and provide further details about the voting system that they manage for Fat Bear Week. I have cced them to this email for you.

Fat Bear Week raises awareness by bringing the relationship between the bears and the salmon to the forefront. Bears depend on a healthy salmon run to secure the needed calories and fat required to survive winter. Preservation of a healthy ecosystem for Brooks River is essential for all the animals of Katmai.

Thanks, and [Happy Fat Bear Tuesday!](#)

Amber Kraft
Interpretation and Education Program Manager
907-246-2137
amber_kraft@nps.gov

Katmai National Park & Preserve | Alagnak Wild River | Aniakchak National Monument & Preserve
PO Box 7
King Salmon, AK 99613



From: Lick, Val <vlick@kare11.com>

Sent: Tuesday, October 11, 2022 7:46 AM

To: Kraft, Amber D <amber_kraft@nps.gov>

Cc: Central Content Team <cct@tegna.com>

Subject: Re: [EXTERNAL] TEGNA media inquiry: Photo permissions for Fat Bear Week

Hi Amber, I have another question if you have time. I saw Katmai's Facebook post Sunday about spam votes in the Fat Bear Week poll. Do you have any information on how this was detected, and what the vote totals were with the spam votes? The post said it was "easy to tell" which votes were spam, so I was

I can also call to ask about this if that would be easier.

Thanks!

Val

VAL LICK

DIGITAL CONTENT PRODUCER

TEGNA CENTRAL CONTENT TEAM

EMAIL: VLICK@TEGNA.COM

WUSA9.COM

From: Lick, Val <vlick@kare11.com>

Sent: Monday, October 10, 2022 8:50 AM

To: Kraft, Amber D <amber_kraft@nps.gov>

Cc: Central Content Team <cct@tegna.com>

Subject: Re: [EXTERNAL] TEGNA media inquiry: Photo permissions for Fat Bear Week

Hi Amber,

Thank you for the quick response!

Best,

Val

VAL LICK

DIGITAL CONTENT PRODUCER

TEGNA CENTRAL CONTENT TEAM

EMAIL: VLICK@TEGNA.COM

WUSA9.COM

From: Kraft, Amber D <amber_kraft@nps.gov>

Sent: Monday, October 10, 2022 8:44 AM

To: Lick, Val <vlick@kare11.com>

Cc: Central Content Team <cct@tegna.com>

Subject: Re: [EXTERNAL] TEGNA media inquiry: Photo permissions for Fat Bear Week

<p>CAUTION - EXTERNAL EMAIL - Please use caution opening attachments and never share your password. Send suspicious email to infosec@tegna.com.</p>

Good Morning Val,

Thanks for sharing [Fat Bear Week](#) with your audience!

Here are links for photos, videos, and other resources. You are welcome to use any of the photos. Please include the credit line given for the ones you select.

- [Katmai National Park Flickr page - photos](#)
- [Fat Bear Week before/after sliders](#)
- [Rangers Respond to Fat Bear Week FAQ- YouTube](#)
- [Fat Bear Week Press Kit](#)

Please let me know if there is anything else I can assist with.

Amber Kraft
Interpretation and Education Program Manager
907-246-2137
amber_kraft@nps.gov

Katmai National Park & Preserve | Alagnak Wild River | Aniakchak National Monument & Preserve
PO Box 7
King Salmon, AK 99613



From: Lick, Val <vlick@kare11.com>
Sent: Monday, October 10, 2022 4:43 AM
To: Kraft, Amber D <amber_kraft@nps.gov>
Cc: Central Content Team <cct@tegna.com>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] TEGNA media inquiry: Photo permissions for Fat Bear Week

This email has been received from outside of DOI - Use caution before clicking on links, opening attachments, or responding.

Hi Amber,

I'm a digital producer for TEGNA, which owns more than 60 local news stations and websites in the U.S. I'm reaching out to check photo permissions for the end of Fat Bear Week.

Are there photos of the bears left in the running available for media use? If so, I would love to get those along with information on who to credit.

Please reply all in case I'm unavailable.

Thank you,
Val

VAL LICK
DIGITAL CONTENT PRODUCER
TEGNA CENTRAL CONTENT TEAM
EMAIL: VLICK@TEGNA.COM
WUSA9.COM

--

Candice Rusch

Director of New Media | [Explore.org](https://www.explore.org)

fall in love with the world again

--

Candice Rusch

Director of New Media | [Explore.org](https://www.explore.org)

fall in love with the world again

Re: [EXTERNAL] Media inquiry: Requesting your interview about the voter fraud fat bear week

Niranjana Rajalakshmi <niranjana.rajalakshmi@slate.com>

Wed 10/12/2022 1:54 PM

To: Candice Rusch <crusch@explore.org>

Cc: Kraft, Amber D <amber_kraft@nps.gov>; PR@explore.org <pr@explore.org>

Thanks! I've sent you a calendar invite with a zoom link in it.

Looking forward to talking to you tomorrow.

Thanks,
Niranjana

On Wed, Oct 12, 2022 at 5:47 PM Candice Rusch <crusch@explore.org> wrote:

Hi,

Tomorrow at 1pmPT works for me.

On Wed, Oct 12, 2022 at 2:43 PM Niranjana Rajalakshmi <niranjana.rajalakshmi@slate.com> wrote:

Hi Candice,

Thanks for getting back to me and giving me a background of what has happened. I understand it might have been difficult to speak today.

I assume you are in PT. Would you by any chance be available anytime after 1 pm PT tomorrow?

A 15-min Zoom call would be great. Please let me know. Thanks!

On Wed, Oct 12, 2022 at 3:33 PM Candice Rusch <crusch@explore.org> wrote:

Hi Niranjana,

I'll be happy to answer your questions. Here is our statement about the voting issue. I won't have time before 4pm ET to talk on a zoom, but I can reply over email if you need any information that isn't here.

We first became suspicious about the spam voting when 435 Holly came back from being down 6,000 votes in a matter of a couple hours. While not unheard of, it is very uncommon for a bear to come back late in the day like that. We ended up finding just over 9,000 spam votes. It appears as if the spamming stopped when 435 took a decent lead. There were some spam votes for 747 as well, maybe to throw us off? We added a captcha to the poll which worked to prevent future spamming.

The important thing to remember is that despite which bear wins the most votes in the Fat Bear Week competition, they are all winners. Bears get fat to survive and the health of Katmai's

ecosystem, as demonstrated by the sustained run of salmon, clean water and thriving flora and fauna, enables their survival. Bears don't actually get anything from competing in or winning Fat Bear Week. Instead, it's a way to raise awareness about brown bears: survival, competition, hunger, reproduction, conflict, skill, adaptation, learning, consequences, and the importance of protecting a healthy ecosystem for wildlife and for humans.

We hope that the awareness that Fat Bear Week brings will grow into caring, and action in whatever way makes the most sense for each individual.

On Wed, Oct 12, 2022 at 12:21 PM 'Kraft, Amber D' via DL-EXP-PR <pr@explore.org> wrote:

Good Morning Niranjana,

Our partners at explore.org have looked into the issue and can answer questions and provide further details about the voting system that they manage for Fat Bear Week. I have cced them to this email for you.

Fat Bear Week raises awareness by bringing the relationship between the bears and the salmon to the forefront. Bears depend on a healthy salmon run to secure the needed calories and fat required to survive winter. Preservation of a healthy ecosystem for Brooks River is essential for all the animals of Katmai

Thanks,

Amber Kraft

Interpretation and Education Program Manager

907-246-2137

amber_kraft@nps.gov

Katmai National Park & Preserve | Alagnak Wild River | Aniakchak National Monument & Preserve

PO Box 7

King Salmon, AK 99613

**FIND YOUR
PARK**



From: Niranjana Rajalakshmi niranjana.rajalakshmi@slate.com

Sent: Wednesday, October 12, 2022 7:07 AM

To: Kraft, Amber D amber_kraft@nps.gov

Subject: [EXTERNAL] Media inquiry Requesting your interview about the voter fraud fat bear week

This email has been received from outside of DOI Use caution before clicking on links, opening attachments, or responding.

Hi Amber,

I'm a journalist at Slate magazine, New York. I've been following fat bear cams and they are so cool!

I came across the voter fraud that happened during fat bear week recently, and would love to talk to you about it. We are planning to look into what had actually happened.

Would you be available for a 15-minute Zoom interview sometime today before 4 PM EST? It'd be great if you could share your thoughts with me on this.

Looking forward to hearing from you.

Thanks,
Niranjana

--

Candice Rusch
Director of New Media | Explore.org
fall in love with the world again

--

Candice Rusch
Director of New Media | Explore.org
fall in love with the world again

Re: Fw: [EXTERNAL] From NPS.gov: Request from ABC News

Candice Rusch <crusch@explore.org>

Wed 10/12/2022 11:32 AM

To: Kraft, Amber D <amber_kraft@nps.gov>

Cc: julia.jacobo@abc.com <julia.jacobo@abc.com>; PR@explore.org <pr@explore.org>

Hi Julia,

I'll be happy to answer any questions you have. Here is our statement about the ballot issue. Let me know if you have any other questions.

We first became suspicious about the spam voting when 435 Holly came back from being down 6,000 votes in a matter of a couple hours. While not unheard of, it is very uncommon for a bear to come back late in the day like that. We ended up finding just over 9,000 spam votes. It appears as if the spamming stopped when 435 took a decent lead. There were some spam votes for 747 as well, maybe to throw us off? We added a captcha to the poll which worked to prevent future spamming.

The important thing to remember is that despite which bear wins the most votes in the Fat Bear Week competition, they are all winners. Bears get fat to survive and the health of Katmai's ecosystem, as demonstrated by the sustained run of salmon, clean water and thriving flora and fauna, enables their survival. Bears don't actually get anything from competing in or winning Fat Bear Week. Instead, it's a way to raise awareness about brown bears: survival, competition, hunger, reproduction, conflict, skill, adaptation, learning, consequences, and the importance of protecting a healthy ecosystem for wildlife and for humans.

We hope that the awareness that Fat Bear Week brings will grow into caring, and action in whatever way makes the most sense for each individual.

On Wed, Oct 12, 2022 at 12:18 PM 'Kraft, Amber D' via DL EXP PR <pr@explore.org> wrote:

Good Morning Julia,

Our partners at explore.org have looked into the issue and can answer questions and provide further details about the voting system that they manage for Fat Bear Week. I have cced them to this email for you.

Fat Bear Week raises awareness by bringing the relationship between the bears and the salmon to the forefront. Bears depend on a healthy salmon run to secure the needed calories and fat required to survive winter. Preservation of a healthy ecosystem for Brooks River is essential for all the animals of Katmai.

Thanks,

Amber Kraft

Interpretation and Education Program Manager

907-246-2137

amber_kraft@nps.gov

Katmai National Park & Preserve | Alagnak Wild River | Aniakchak National Monument & Preserve
PO Box 7



From: KATM Visitor Information, NPS <KATM_Visitor_Information@nps.gov>
Sent: Wednesday, October 12, 2022 8:56 AM
To: Kraft, Amber D <amber_kraft@nps.gov>
Subject: Fw: [EXTERNAL] From NPS.gov: Request from ABC News

Interview request

Visitor Information
Katmai National Park & Preserve
Aniakchak National Monument & Preserve
Alagnak Wild River
907-246-2113 or 907-246-2103

From: no-reply@nps.gov <no-reply@nps.gov>
Sent: Wednesday, October 12, 2022 7:41 AM
To: KATM Visitor Information, NPS <KATM_Visitor_Information@nps.gov>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] From NPS.gov: Request from ABC News

<p>This email has been received from outside of DOI - Use caution before clicking on links, opening attachments, or responding.</p>
--

Email submitted from: julia.jacobo@abc.com at /katm/contacts.htm

Use julia.jacobo@abc.com to reply to this message

Category: Other

To Whom It May Concern: My name is Julia Jacobo, and I'm a reporter for ABC News in New York. I'm writing a story about the Fat Bear and the allegations of ballot stuffing. Would someone be available to chat about the controversy today? If not, would you please send a comment or statement? Thank you in advance. Best, Julia

Candice Rusch
Director of New Media | E_plore.org
fall in love with the world again

Teams conversation with Katmai media team:

[Sunday 8:49 AM] Kraft, Amber D

Happy Sunday- No new interview requests today.

like 4

[Sunday 9:56 PM] Kraft, Amber D

Media Request: Australian Broadcasting Corporation's breakfast TV show News Breakfast

Monday (10/10) @ 11:40am AKDT / 06:40am AEDT (10/11) Live

They are looking for a general chat about what Fat Bear Week is... how it works and what is the aim

Cheryl was interviewed last year.

[Monday 5:06 AM] Kliesrath, Christine D

I can take this one

like 1

[Monday 5:32 AM] Kraft, Amber D

Kliesrath, Christine D - sending the info your way now

[Monday 5:32 AM] Kliesrath, Christine D

Thanks

[Monday 2:17 PM] Moore, Keith J

[Fat Bear Week Rocked By Egregious Cheating Scandal \(jezebel.com\)](http://jezebel.com)

Fat Bear Week Rocked By Egregious Cheating Scandal

Anal beads in chess, weights in fish, a rigged Irish dancing competition, and now this.

[Monday 2:19 PM] Law, Lian E

oh man haha

[Monday 2:20 PM] Law, Lian E

but we never did announce 435 won

[Monday 2:20 PM] Law, Lian E

unless NPS twitter account did

Teams FBW chat in conjunction with call 10/11/2022

Message List

- Hernandez, Cynthia E named the meeting FBW chat.

Hernandez, Cynthia E named the meeting FBW chat.

- Meeting started

Yesterday 9:30 AM Meeting started

- How do you see the excitement & interest pe... by Kraft, Amber D

Kraft, Amber D Yesterday 9:44 AM

How do you see the excitement & interest people have in FBW translate into greater stewardship, environmentalism, and/or care for the park & the effects of climate change it is subject to?

Awareness is a great first step. We hope that the awareness that Fat Bear Week brings will grow into caring, and action in whatever way makes the most sense for each individual. It could look like talking about important issues with friends and family, cleaning up a watershed or volunteering with a conservation organization, or any number of other actions. Our friends group, the [Katmai Conservancy](#), is the official nonprofit fundraising partner of Katmai. They are the third partner with us in Fat Bear Week and have a [fundraising campaign](#) they do in conjunction to the event.

- Meeting ended: at Yesterday 9:45 AM after 15 minutes 10 seconds

Yesterday 9:45 AM Meeting ended: 15m 10s

-

Hi Amber, just another note for your staff ... by Hernandez, Cynthia E

Hernandez, Cynthia E Yesterday 10:20 AM

Hi Amber, just another note for your staff going into interviews today. I think we really need to be intentional with our language and clear about the NPS role in the situation. We need to avoid saying things like "*we* looked into the issue and *we* added captcha", and instead say "The explore.org team looked into the issue", etc.

- Make sense? by Hernandez, Cynthia E

Hernandez, Cynthia E Yesterday 10:20 AM

Make sense?

- yes by Kraft, Amber D

Kraft, Amber D Yesterday 10:21 AM

yes

-

Link 'Fat Bear Week' Hit By Voter-Fraud Att... by Hernandez, Cynthia E

Hernandez, Cynthia E Yesterday 10:21 AM

['Fat Bear Week' Hit By Voter-Fraud Attempt – Rolling Stone](#)

On further review, none of the previous rounds bore signs of suspicious activity, and **NPS has now added a captcha to its system** “in order to create another barrier to stop fraudulent voting.”

'Fat Bear Week' Hit By Voter-Fraud Attempt

The National Park Service detected a spam influence campaign in the semifinal round of its annual tournament and has taken steps to ensure election integrity.

www.rollingstone.com

- Thanks! by Hernandez, Cynthia E

Hernandez, Cynthia E Yesterday 10:21 AM

Thanks!

-

Anything to add to the draft media form? L... by Hernandez, Cynthia E, has an attachment.

Hernandez, Cynthia E Yesterday 10:31 AM

Anything to add to the draft media form? [2022 Fat Bear Week voting issue statement](#)

2022 Fat Bear Week_voting issue statement.docxpersonal > cehernandez_nps_gov

-

It looks good to me. The only thing I would... by Stiteler, Sharon K

Stiteler, Sharon KYesterday 10:35 AM



1 Like reaction.

1

It looks good to me. The only thing I would add is to stress with anyone giving live interviews to really make sure to say "Our partners took care of it" or "Explore.org addressed the issue" and be careful to avoid saying something along the lines of, "We addressed it with captcha" or "Our team addressed the issue."

- I added in the WaPo interview for today and... by Kraft, Amber D

Kraft, Amber DYesterday 10:35 AM



1 Like reaction.

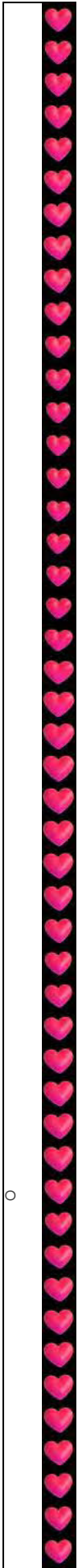
1

I added in the WaPo interview for today and the two groups the previous statement was sent to

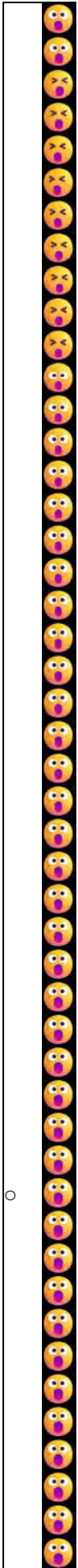
-

any other interviews scheduled for today? by Hernandez, Cynthia E

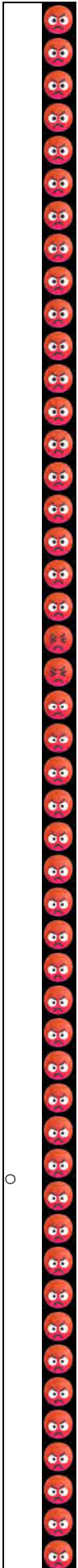












Hernandez, Cynthia EYesterday 10:36 AM

any other interviews scheduled for today?

- not as of right now... there are some for t... by Kraft, Amber D

Kraft, Amber DYesterday 10:37 AM



1 Like reaction.

1

not as of right now... there are some for tomorrow scheduled and more in the works... people will want to talk about the FBW winner. the WaPo one was scheduled before all of this and is supposed to be to about the 2 bears in the final and get some quotes about the potential winning bear

•

Gotcha. If y'all are good with it, I'll acc... by Hernandez, Cynthia E

Hernandez, Cynthia EYesterday 10:38 AM



2 Like reactions.

2

Gotcha. If y'all are good with it, I'll accept changes and send this along to DOI

-

sent! I emphasized the time crunch for them by Hernandez, Cynthia E

Hernandez, Cynthia EYesterday 10:47 AM

sent! I emphasized the time crunch for them

- Thanks by Kraft, Amber D

Kraft, Amber DYesterday 10:47 AM

Thanks

-

Q from DOI - why does Holly have a name and... by Hernandez, Cynthia E

Hernandez, Cynthia EYesterday 12:29 PM

Q from DOI - why does Holly have a name and 747 doesn't?

- How do the bears get their names? In Katmai... by Kraft, Amber D

Kraft, Amber DYesterday 12:30 PM

How do the bears get their names?

In Katmai, we employ a Bear Monitor Ranger who observes the bears and keeps records of their physical characteristics, behaviors, and personal histories. Once an adult or subadult bear is observed utilizing the Brooks River at least 3 times during a season, that individual would be considered a “regular user of the Brook’s River” and will be assigned a 3-digit number. While some bears do have nicknames like Otis, Grazer, or Divot, the park’s policy is to no longer name bears, but these names have been grandfathered in.

-

Thank you! Can you remind me what time the ... by Hernandez, Cynthia E

Hernandez, Cynthia EYesterday 12:33 PM

Thank you! Can you remind me what time the announcement is tonight?

- we're getting really close on the statement by Hernandez, Cynthia E

Hernandez, Cynthia E Yesterday 12:33 PM

we're getting really close on the statement

- We have a live broadcast that day about the... by Kraft, Amber D

Kraft, Amber D Yesterday 12:34 PM



1 Like reaction.

1

We have a live broadcast that day about the lives of the two final contestants and the importance of fat to brown bears. That takes place at 7pm EDT/ 3pm AKDT. The winning bear is announced on the social media channels for all 3 partners (Katmai Conservancy, explore.org, and Katmai NP) and on www.fatbearweek.org at 5pm AKDT once voting closes for the day.

•

The news is picking it up more and more but... by Stiteler, Sharon K

Stiteler, Sharon K Yesterday 12:35 PM



1 Heart reaction.

1

The news is picking it up more and more but the positive spin appears to be that FBW is persevering despite attempted voting scandal

-

Just emailed the approved statement from DO by Hernandez, Cynthia E

Hernandez, Cynthia EYesterday 12:48 PM

Just emailed the approved statement from DOI

- Note their edits, and they also removed the... by Hernandez, Cynthia E

Hernandez, Cynthia EYesterday 12:48 PM



2 Like reactions.

2

Note their edits, and they also removed the final sentence of the statement. I wouldn't use that sentence in other communications

-

Thanks for jumping in this. I won't be abl... by Christian, Peter A

Christian, Peter AYesterday 3:16 PM

Thanks for jumping in this. I won't be able to focus on it until after 430 pm.

-

I think it's good to go so don't worry abou... by Stiteler, Sharon K

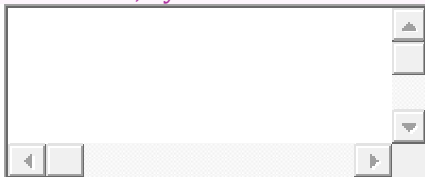
Stiteler, Sharon KYesterday 3:16 PM

I think it's good to go so don't worry about it.

has context menu

Compose

Hernandez, Cynthia E is out of office and may not respond



- Copy

From Explore.org Slack channel

Fatbearweek_2022

Beginning Sunday, Oct.9 – time received FOIA request Oct.12

Sunday, October 9th



Lian 12:10 PM

@crusch Today, a pair of promising powerhouse protagonists face off! Regardless of raising rambunctious rascals, 128 Grazer managed to maximize her mass. As a single sow, independent newcomer 901 set her sights on self-care and synthesizing size. Will 128 and her two back up bouncers be able to show 901 and her remarkable rolls out? Choose your lardaceous lady at www.fatbearweek.org by 5pm AKDT.

👍1



Lian 3:37 PM

Did someone hack because holly is winning

3:38

And that wasn't possible earlier

3:38

@here

(b) (6)

(b) (6)



3:42 PM

In wooobox, I downloaded the votes csv and it does look like there's someone who spammed a lot of garbage emails from the same IP address.

3:42

Well, at least two IP addresses



crusch 3:45 PM

i'm seeing that now too.



Lian 3:45 PM

do we need to change it?



crusch 3:45 PM

the thing is we cant delete those votes

3:45

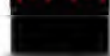
unless @ (b) (6) you can see something i dont



Lian 3:45 PM

so are we calling it for who because we need to rewrite

(b) (6)



(b) (6) 3:46 PM

Wow this is absurd



Lian 3:46 PM

yes it is



(b) (6) 3:47 PM

Yeah, there's nothing to specifically delete votes it seems. The only way to filter it would be to take the results into excel. and remove all suspicious ones and manually get the vote totals, but those wouldn't be reflected in the polls



crusch 3:47 PM

@Lian what do you think about this ^



(b) (6) 3:48 PM

Approx. how many votes would that be?



Amber Kraft 3:48 PM

People watch the vote numbers pretty closely

3:48

Can we just block that IP address for the future



(b) (6) 3:48 PM

and I just told the bear cam chat there wasn't anything suspicious



Amber Kraft 3:48 PM

I think people will notice if the votes just go down randomly



Lian 3:49 PM

Maybe we shouldn't call a vote tonight

I mean, we can't really honor the cheating write.... so should we right a post about ballot stuffing

3:50

right*

3:50



Amber Kraft 3:50 PM

I wouldn't event get into that



Lian 3:50 PM

So we just won't post tonight?



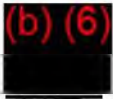
(b) (6) 3:50 PM

The polls don't close for an hour. We got time



crusch 3:51 PM

my suggestion is to just tell people that we will post the vote totals tonight after analyzing the data for suspicious activity



(b) (6) 3:51 PM

Idk, it might be worthwhile to make a post about it

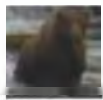
3:51

Good idea



crusch 3:51 PM

its a real quick task in excel filter out the repeat IPs



(b) (6) 3:51 PM

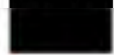
Don't say a thing until we figure it out



crusch 3:51 PM

and no, woobox has no way to block any one IP

(b) (6)



3:51 PM

yeah, it doesn't seem that way

3:52

I don't know why woobox lets you limit by email but doesn't require to user to verify said email

3:53

there's a bunch of emails that look like (b) (6) @gmail.com



crusch 3:53 PM

it used to let you block whole countries from your polls by default but that feature went away and now we'd have to ask them what country they are from. its so dumb



3:53 PM

lame. there are IP lookup tools online but that's a chore to do for a bunch of them



Amber Kraft 3:54 PM

like the bears stuff themselves with fish our ballet box got stuffed...



crusch 3:54 PM

this is the guy (b) (6)



Amber Kraft 3:54 PM

How many votes from there?



crusch 3:54 PM

checking



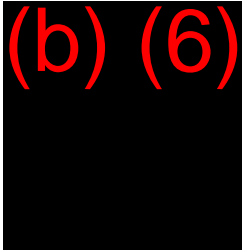
(b) (6) 3:54 PM

Can you block that IP from visiting explore.org?

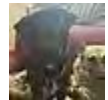


(b) (6) 3:55 PM

TBH, this whole range seems suspicious



(edited)



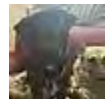
crusch 3:55 PM

and this one (b) (6)



Amber Kraft 3:55 PM

If we say that it was spammed, will that be what reporters are asking about instead of staying on the interpretive message?



crusch 3:56 PM

maybe, this was always a possibility. there isn't a single voting widget out there thats not vulnerable to spammers.



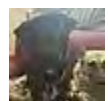
Lian 3:56 PM

But we have to acknowledge it and not just pretend like we don't know



Amber Kraft 3:57 PM

true



crusch 3:57 PM

its an easy fix tbh



(b) (6) 3:57 PM

Yes, we'll have to say something but we should give Dan and Candice a chance to do their magic



crusch 3:57 PM

we just have to post the real total at the end of the night

✓ 1



Lian 4:00 PM

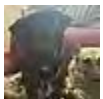
About what time do you think that would be



crusch 4:01 PM

by 6:30 at the latest. Its really not that hard since its trash emails from a handful of IPs addresses

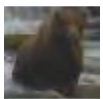
👍 2



crusch 4:06 PM

my suggestion on a statement, along the lines of

Yes, it appears someone has decided to spam the Fat Bear Week poll. Almost every online voting system is vulnerable to attacks like this, but because we ask people of unique email addresses, it is very easy for us to tell which are the fraudulent votes. We will be discarding the spam votes and posting the real total after the voting ends.



(b) (6) 4:07 PM

Guess I'll do that in the main chat since I ALREADY said there wasn't anything to worry about.

😄 2



crusch 4:07 PM

we ALSO used to be able to restrict these things to once per IP address but that feature is gone too. one of the many things i don't like about the new woobox "updates"

4:08

@(b) (6) if it helps it was hard to see at first because we had SO MANY real votes that the spam ones got lost until i filtered by email name

✓1



(b) (6) 4:08 PM

I'll post in a few minutes.

4:11

Or I can wait till you think you've got a handle on the vote totals. @crusch



Lian 4:11 PM

we aren't going to post anything right now

4:11

I think at least on Katmai's end. We will wait until we have numbers to deliver to people



crusch 4:11 PM

more details for the inevitable questions. The spammer is generating unique gmail email addresses with like 28 random characters. As it went on it looked like he started to switch up the IP addresses. but the email addresses are a dead give away

4:14

@Amber Kraft so far looks like about 9,000 votes. But will likely be more by the end of the voting period



Amber Kraft 4:15 PM

wow... that's ridiculous



crusch 4:15 PM

gonna check yesterday's votes now too....cuz you know the otis fans



(b) (6) 4:17 PM

Just seeing this now, was in the comments saying that we are looking into everything just in case and that if there is something resolve we'll resolve

4:17

But I'm on the FBW page

4:19

Let me know when you're saying something @ (b) (6) and I'll follow by reiterating in various places

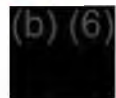
✓1



crusch 4:21 PM

@here I've learned two things. 901's win yesterday was legit. And there are a lot of Ambers who voted in fat bear week.

7001



(b) (6) 4:22 PM

LOL



Lian 4:23 PM

hahaha



(b) (6) 4:27 PM

@crusch I got my message ready but I'm sitting on it for now. I'd like to include the final vote totals once we have them.



crusch 4:27 PM

can do



(b) (6) 4:28 PM

In the meantime can continue to reiterate that we are looking into it with due diligence just in case



Lian 4:29 PM

@Amber Kraft I think we are going to post this once we have the totals-FAT BEAR WEEK SCANDAL! Like bears stuff their face with fish, our ballot box too has been stuffed. It appears someone has decided to spam the Fat Bear Week poll. Almost every online voting system is vulnerable to attack, but it is easy for us to tell which are the fraudulent votes. We have discarded the spam votes and today's official totals are:xxxAnd then follow with our real winner post

😊1



crusch 4:29 PM
hahahahahah

4:29

i wanna make a gif of holly chasing off 335 but with holly chasing of "ballot stuffers"



(b) (6) 4:29 PM

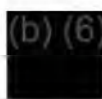
I should've read a book tonight instead of checking the internet. 😊



crusch 4:30 PM
shes too honorable to win by cheating



Lian 4:30 PM
haha



(b) (6) 4:30 PM
I really love this take @Lian

4:30

So smart

4:30

Let's inject a little laughter and fun back into it



Amber Kraft 4:30 PM
I would take out the part about "Almost every online voting system is vulnerable to attack,"...



Lian 4:30 PM
Okay



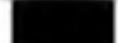
crusch 4:31 PM
ahhh yeah thats potentially opening up a conversation we dont want lol



Amber Kraft 4:31 PM

The rest is great

(b) (6)



(b) (6)

4:31 PM

Perfect Lian! Everyone loves a lil fat bear drama.



Lian 4:31 PM

corrected- It appears someone has decided to spam the Fat Bear Week poll. Fortunately, it is easy for us to tell which are the fraudulent votes. We have discarded the spam votes and today's official totals are: and then go with the real post we had prepped



Amber Kraft 4:31 PM

great!



(b) (6)

4:32 PM

@Lian @Amber Kraft Here's what I'll post in the main bearcam chat:

747 had been leading 435 Holly all day in today's FBW semifinal match, but that flipped in a short period of time. Initially, after conferring with explore.org's website techs, there didn't seem to be any hacking or suspicious activity that would have affected the vote. I posted that info in the chat earlier. This was incorrect.

After a more careful analysis, it appears someone spammed the Fat Bear Week poll.

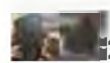
Because the voting platform requires unique email addresses, it is very easy for us to tell which are the fraudulent votes and/or whether a suspicious number of votes came from a single IP address. We discarded the spam votes. The final vote was 435 Holly: [TOTAL] and 747: [TOTAL].

I don't like making mistakes, but I do. I will admit when I'm wrong. I was earlier today, so I apologize for that.

[Explore.org](https://explore.org)'s website techs will be watching the votes more closely as FBW continues. That includes filtering for multiple votes that came from a single IP address.

The bears win nothing but our recognition in Fat Bear Week, and I argue that it doesn't really matter which bear is voted the winner. The real point of Fat Bear Week is to raise awareness and understand of Katmai National Park's bears and the incredible salmon that support them. We can all help Katmai's bears by sharing our love for them with others and encouraging more people to vote in Fat Bear Week no matter which bear wins.

[POSTSCRIPT: In case you are wondering, the website techs checked the voting activity in the 901 and 480 match and there was no suspicious activity in the votes.]



2 replies

Last reply 3 days agoView thread



Lian 4:32 PM

So we won't post anything at five but will wait until we actually have the numbers

✓ 1



(b) (6) 4:32 PM

That was my plan too



(b) (6) 4:32 PM

I'll hold off on social too if you're holding @Lian



Lian 4:33 PM

in our post we aren't saying about IP addresses and stuff earlier or the the emails because we don't want to get more people to use those methods to fake vote

✓ 1

So we left that out

4:33

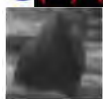


crusch 4:33 PM

gooooood thinking

4:34

@(b) (6) sorry for speaking too soon



(b) (6) 4:34 PM

I'll strike that out of mine then

4:34

It's OK, @crusch. Thanks to you and @(b) (6) for getting to the bottom of it.



Lian 4:34 PM

we just said it was easy for us to tell but not the methods they are using



crusch 4:35 PM

if people ask its probably fair to say that we dont want to tell people how we found out to give them ideas about how to cheat better

✓1

4:37

this is why we cant have nice things



Amber Kraft 4:38 PM

Thanks everyone for working this... and thanks to who discovered it in the first place. Was that @Chris Kliesrath?



Chris Kliesrath 4:39 PM

No, I think they found it before, I just asked Lian if she thought something might be up with the voting

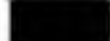
👍1



Amber Kraft 4:40 PM

Well thanks to whoever found it.

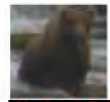
(b) (6)



(b) (6)

4:57 PM

@(b) (6) Are you still planning to hold till we have totals or post something right at 6? I think they will be wanting to celebrate at that point or complain, either they prefer



(b) (6)

4:58 PM

I was waiting.



(b) (6)

4:58 PM

I am thinking maybe a preamble? @crusch are you okay with me posting from the general account that we're not calling it yet to make absolutely sure, or do you want to let them run with it and celebrate for now

4:59

They will also wonder why we are silent on social



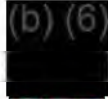
crusch 4:59 PM

yeah. i'm also gonna remove the woobox poll right at 6 so it doesnt display the results for long



(b) (6) 4:59 PM

that seems like a good idea. something similar to what you've been posting.



(b) (6) 5:00 PM

"Because of the surge of votes we saw, we want to make absolutely sure that all is right. For that reason we are holding off on calling today's vote right away.

5:00

Please check back in roughly a half hour"

5:00

Let me know if that's acceptable @crusch



crusch 5:00 PM

that sounds good



Lian 5:02 PM

The various Facebook groups are already celebrating



(b) (6) 5:03 PM

Posted in brooks falls chat and FBW page

5:03

So they'll start sharing that around shortly



(b) (6) 5:04 PM

Thanks (b) (6)



crusch 5:05 PM

schools having student emails start with numbers gave me a small panic attack. but no, they are all voting for different bears and its a .edu



(b) (6) 5:08 PM

lol. but hey, glad schools are so involved!

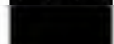


crusch 5:32 PM

almost there. just making sure im not missing any

✓ 1

(b) (6)



(b) (6) 5:33 PM

@Lian Were you going with the campy joking language on social or your initial messaging, or a combo of both?

5:33

Wasn't a hundred percent sure



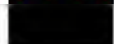
Lian 5:34 PM

Combo

5:34

Joke first, real second, original funny post for 747 winning

(b) (6)



(b) (6) 5:34 PM

I'm just going to follow your lead so we don't say anything you wouldn't be allowed to

👍 1



Lian 5:35 PM

Tag me when you have real numbers please so I can update post



crusch 5:36 PM

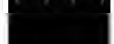
too many rows. excel froze when creating the table lol



Lian 5:37 PM

Haha

(b) (6)



(b) (6) 5:38 PM

I'm sure that was fun for you



crusch 5:40 PM
747: 37,940
435 Holly: 30,430
Total: 68,370 Votes

5:41

@here ^

5:41

having holy in the cell really threw off excel lol



(b) (6) 5:41 PM
Oh man. I was hoping that Holly pulled it out.



(b) (6) 5:41 PM
Damn that is a WIDE margin

5:41

Wider than 747's rear



crusch 5:42 PM
9,272 fraud votes. Looks like he stopped after his girl was showing in the lead



Lian 5:42 PM
Posting now or wait until six?



(b) (6) 5:43 PM
I'm going to post the final vote total.



Lian 5:43 PM
Okay I'll post now too



(b) (6) 5:43 PM
Someone had money on this I guess. We should probably just move forward if you're comfortable calling it Candice



crusch 5:43 PM

This person was working from a list of real email addresses at first. Its a good think I looked at the other voting data before doing this or I might not have noticed. I get several hundred people might be voting from the same address at a work or school but i DO NOT believe that you can convince 2,000 people to vote the same way on anything

5:43

lets call it

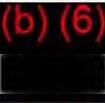
5:44

updating the website



(b) (6) 5:44 PM

Posted.



(b) (6) 5:45 PM

Thanks Mike



(b) (6) 5:45 PM

Thanks @crusch @**(b) (6)** @**(b) (6)** @Lian for helping tonight. Yinz did the hard work, I think.



crusch 5:45 PM

and since people will ask a this point i've reviewed the last 4 match ups and nothing suspicious there.

👍 3



(b) (6) 5:46 PM

Yep, and you know we appreciate that piece of info to follow up with



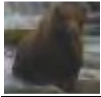
(b) (6) 5:46 PM

I'll stick around checking the comments for a bit longer in case there are follow up questions.



crusch 5:54 PM

well the response went over well



(b) (6) 5:58 PM

Is it mean of me to wish the spammer had a lot of money riding on 435?



crusch 6:05 PM

i also wish this

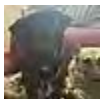


(b) (6) 6:08 PM

This them? 😊

image.png

😊1

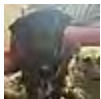


crusch 6:08 PM

@**(b) (6)** @**(b) (6)** what are the odds this spammer is in chat and started with his own home IP address? Can we search by commenter IP address in discus? if so it would be easy to compare the fraud IPs

(b) (6) 37 replies

Last reply 3 days agoView thread



crusch 6:08 PM

I WONDER. whats his IP?

(b) (6)

(b) (6) 🇳🇴 6:09 PM

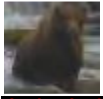
lol

Seems disqus should let you search by Ip

(b) (6)

6:10

(b) (6) 6:11 PM
Oooo detective work



(b) (6) 6:11 PM
The rest of the comments in that account seem OK. Not many but normal. Probably just a Holly fan.



Felicia Jimenez 6:38 PM

Was it only Holly that got fraudulent votes? None suspicious for 747?

6:39

They keep tagging this account on Twitter and he's a sports podcast host who does commentary with Barstool sports and they like low-key are admitting to voter fraud in the comments lol. Maybe he told a joke on a podcast episode where they talked about FBW and someone made a bot???

Screenshot_20221009-183609.png

6:40

Screenshot_20221009-183619.png

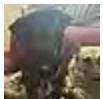
6:40

Screenshot_20221009-183626.png



(b) (6) 6:41 PM

From what I understand, they were for Holly. Once Holly got a sizeable lead, then the fraud votes stopped.



crusch 6:43 PM

@Felicia Jimenez there were also some fraud votes for 747. my guess as an attempt to throw us off



Felicia Jimenez 6:43 PM
Okay this is so silly hahaha

(b) (6)

(b) (6)

6:43 PM

This is all pretty weird at this point 😊

6:44

Well y'all, you've made it. The weird corners of the internet tried to rig the election



Lian 6:44 PM
Haha



crusch 6:45 PM
what a strange turn

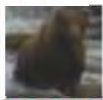
6:46

never a dull moment

Monday, October 10th



crusch 7:47 AM
@channel Woobox did something good! It looks like they support Capacha now. Shall I add it?



(b) (6) 7:47 AM
I think that's a good idea.

7:48

It'll also show the audience that we are looking for ways to improve the integrity of FBW, whatever that might be.



Lian 7:50 AM
Also sounds great. I'm glad we only have one match up now though because if we had two like at the start, would they have to do it twice?



crusch 7:51 AM

yep

7:55

its the simple "are you a robot" check box one. Not the one where you have to enter the phrase. So its not too bad



crusch 8:04 AM

oh interesting in firefox it made me do the "select images" test

8:04

but not in chrome



Lian 8:05 AM

interesting



(b) (6) 8:05 AM

It made me do the checkbox in Firefox.



(b) (6) 8:06 AM

Chrome I only needed to check a box



crusch 8:07 AM

then maybe it only does it if its suspicious youre a robot



(b) (6) 8:33 AM

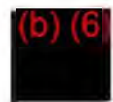
Some of them seem reassured by the captcha Candice



Lian 8:34 AM

Most people on our social are happy about the captcha. A few mobile users complaining because it is giving them pictures that are incredibly tiny apparently?

1



(b) (6)

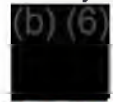
8:39 AM

Screen Shot 2022-10-10 at 9.38.58 AM.png



crusch 8:40 AM

aww yay



(b) (6)

8:42 AM

Candice out here late on a sunday with spreadsheets and IP addresses

1



crusch 8:42 AM

This is what it looks like on mobile. You can pinch-zoom but the photos themselves are low quality so I can see the issue for some (edited)

IMG_5379

8:43

and pivot tables. cant forget the pivot tables

8:46

someone in our feedback inbox has stumbled upon the exact method of spamming we encountered 😂.



(b) (6)

8:46 AM

I wish it was always a check box. That seems far more accessible than the photos but maybe its more vulnerable to bots?



crusch 8:47 AM

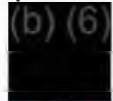
they're like "well someone could just enter their whole companies email list" which is exactly what our spammer started with it looks like

8:47

I think it shows the photos to people voting more than once on one IP. I didnt get it the first time, but I got it every time I tried to vote after

8:48

(i did two for grazer and two for 901 in my test votes so as not to sway anything)



(b) (6)



9:14 AM

Generally, with that type of captcha, if you've completed it before, your approval gets stored in cookies/local storage so from there on you typically just get the checkbox



crusch 11:04 AM

@here if you would like a comparison between yesterday and today. The captcha seems to be working. Everything with 20 or more votes is a school or a workplace and they are all voting for different people

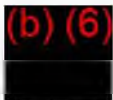
votes.PNG

👍2



Lian 11:06 AM

niceeeeeeee



(b) (6)

11:12 AM

nice



crusch 11:15 AM

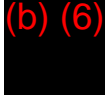
and since i'm still seeing the 901v Otis match in question randomly here is what that table looks like. Also a bunch of schools but nothing over 70 per IP

901v0tis.PNG



(b) (6) 11:17 AM

Certainly nothing that could've swayed that match one way or the other.



(b) (6) 11:20 AM

I've quashed every query about it and been clear with them anywhere they ask that it's been thoroughly reviewed

11:20

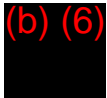
most of them seem satisfied with the response



crusch 11:20 AM
sweet

11:23

what I find truly impressive looking at all the data is the the VAST majority of votes are coming from unique IPs. Like today of the 35,000 votes I'm looking at today 28,000 are unique individuals



(b) (6) 11:25 AM
Beautiful



Lian 12:14 PM

@crusch Clash of the Titans! It's the one-time, nearly one-ton veteran victor 747 vs no-name to big-gains 901, the bear outta-nowhere. Will you choose 747, the lard-layered Leviathan with a powerful presence and the battle scars to prove it? Or back the bunyanesque behemoth bear 901, with the bring-it-on bear-itude and thicc tree trunk thighs? Vote at www.fatbearweek.org by 5pm AKDT in this #FatBearWeek salmon-seizing success story.

✓ 1



Keith Moore 2:17 PM

My mother just forwarded this article to me 🤖 ...<https://jezebel.com/fat-bear-week-rocked-by-egregious-cheating-scandal-1849639769>

Jezebel

Fat Bear Week Rocked By Egregious Cheating Scandal

Anal beads in chess, weights in fish, a rigged Irish dancing competition, and now this.

Oct 10th (226 kB)

<https://jezebel.com/fat-bear-week-rocked-by-egregious-cheating-scandal-1849639769>



crusch 2:20 PM

what a sub title

2:21

my favorite line in the whole article

You read that right: Four bears dominate Fat Bear Week. That, my friends, is the real scandal.

2:21

omg it gets better

Did the voters spamming the ballot box with votes for Holly have an agenda? Do they know something about 747 that we don't?



Keith Moore 2:21 PM

I know 😏



crusch 2:22 PM

good job jezebel



Lian 2:32 PM

haha yeah

2:32

redonk.



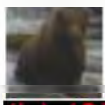
crusch 2:33 PM

One day @**(b) (6)** is gonna be making a Memorable Moments video about the day that FBW was hacked 😏



Lian 2:42 PM

rolling stone and bloomberg news have also contacted us about the scandal too
haha (edited)



(b) (6) 2:45 PM

Oh man.....



crusch 2:45 PM

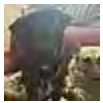
hahahahaha delightful. As long as we find a way to bring it back to the bears im gonna count it as a win



(b) (6) 2:47 PM

I've also got two emails today from different TV production companies asking about making a TV show about FBW and the bears. I'm trying to figure out a way to let them down nicely. Last thing we need is a TV show sensationalizing the bears.

😬 1



crusch 2:47 PM

If you want you can send them my way

2:49

usually asking them for any details deters them. Then when we get them i get to be like "It doesn't look like you understand the mission of bear cam"



(b) (6) 2:49 PM

One asked, "Would you be interested in...potentially developing a television series around your work in Brooks Falls?"No. No.



crusch 2:49 PM

so vague.



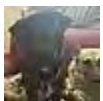
(b) (6) 2:50 PM

That person's company produced North Woods Law, the reality show about game wardens.



crusch 2:50 PM

Yikes



crusch 2:55 PM

I will say though, Mike if you ever want to develop a TV show about the bears I'm pretty sure Liz can find us a producer who actually fits the mission in like 2 seconds



(b) (6) 2:57 PM

The only person I'd trust to develop a documentary or show about it would be Naomi. I'd be afraid that anyone else would sensationalize the bears and we'd lose control of the narrative. Plus I don't want to be on TV any more than I must to help the bears.



crusch 2:58 PM

She'd be great. and she has a lot of connections



(b) (6) 2:59 PM

No anthropomorphized bears with celebrity voices? haha



(b) (6) 2:59 PM

Didn't someone ask us to do that last year?



(b) (6) 2:59 PM

turn it into the equivalent of a teen drama running for student council president



crusch 3:00 PM

YES thats exactly what that guy was pitching last year. That and moving the final vote to a one day only TV event ugh

3:00

AND He wanted us to pay for it



Amber Kraft 3:07 PM

Good Morning America asked me on Saturday if they could do the exclusive reveal of the winner on their show on Wed morning.. I told them no



(b) (6) 3:11 PM

Wow. Glad they are that vested but it would be a disaster for us overall.



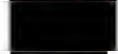
crusch 3:28 PM

any station asking for an exclusive reveal obviously is not following how FBW works

3:31

also like upsettingly last minute. If we were gonna doing any exclusive deal with any news agency wouldn't we have done it from the the start so we could promote it???

(b) (6)



(b) (6)

3:38 PM

They probably assume they're all the promotion we need



crusch 3:43 PM

of course how silly of us to assume otherwise.



crusch 3:48 PM

lets all take a minute to appreciate this headline <https://www.adn.com/alaska-life/2022/10/10/net-fish-chill-901-is-taking-the-fat-bear-week-bracket-by-storm/>

Anchorage Daily News

Net-fish & Chill: 901 is taking the Fat Bear Week bracket by storm

The young bear faces off with 128 Grazer on Monday with a spot in the championship on the line. (181 KB)

<https://www.adn.com/alaska-life/2022/10/10/net-fish-chill-901-is-taking-the-fat-bear-week-bracket-by-storm/>



1



Lian 3:49 PM

haha yesss



crusch 5:04 PM

Page updated



1

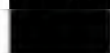
5:07

Patti out here saying what we cant

patti1938 Rebecca Larence • 2 hours ago

Please stop politicizing this, it's all for fun, the people who go to the trouble of putting it together have no reason to cheat, do not accuse them of it. Relax and enjoy, or go away.

(b) (6)

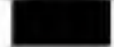


(b) (6)

5:07 PM

Thanks Patti

(b) (6)



(b) (6)

5:08 PM

Patti is a real one.



(b) (6)

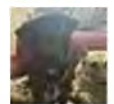
5:15 PM

@crusch Matchup still says semi finals for tomorrow

5:16

If my count is correct and if we include FBJ, then there has been almost 972,000 votes so far. Great work everyone.

👍1



crusch 5:22 PM

@(b) (6) fixed

5:22

thanks for catching

5:22

we can totally get 1m

❤️1

Yesterday



Lian 6:51 AM

for information's sake- what were the voting totals at 5pm for the Holly vs 747 match with the spam votes?



(b) (6)

7:38 AM

If I remember right, it was something like 39K for Holly.



crusch 8:02 AM

@Lian the false total was

39,640 - holly

38,002 - 747

✅1



crusch 8:18 AM

@here does anyone know anyone at USA today so they can correct this article to say 747 not Chunk <https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/nation/2022/10/11/fat-bear-week-scandal-fake-votes-alaskas/10465248002/>

USA TODAY



'Fat Bear Week scandal': Spam bots target beloved park competition with fake votes

Alaska's Katmai National Park saw a flood of fake votes for fat bear contestant Holly over the weekend but Chunk is still advancing in the contest. (1 MB)

<https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/nation/2022/10/11/fat-bear-week-scandal-fake-votes-alaskas/10465248002/>



Lian 8:21 AM

@Amber Kraft I believe Keith did something with USA today?



Amber Kraft 8:23 AM

Eve Chen - travel reporter - USA Today echen@gannett.com



crusch 8:25 AM

Thanks. I can reach out for the correction

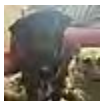


Amber Kraft 8:26 AM

Jordan Mendoza - Universal NOW Desk Reporter -USA Today jamendoza@usatoday.com

8:26

@crusch this looks like the contact for the reporter of that article



crusch 8:26 AM

oh even better



(b) (6)

9:17 AM

<https://twitter.com/SecDebHaaland/status/1579171629980319745?cxt=HHwWgoDQxeGOrOorAAAA>



Secretary Deb Haaland @SecDebHaaland

At @Interior we love Fat Bear Week! Don't forget to vote for your

favorite.  <http://fatbearweek.org>

Twitter | Oct 9th (122 kB)

<https://twitter.com/SecDebHaaland/status/1579171629980319745?cxt=HHwWgoDQxeGOrOorAAAA>

(b) (6)

(b) (6)

9:20 AM

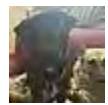
What about Forbes too? They incorrectly ended up saying that Holly won a semi-final round "according to park officials:" [https://www.forbes.com/sites/ericmack/2022/10/11/new-cheating-scandal-swallows-fat-b\[...\]/week-tourney-at-alaskas-katmai-national-park/?sh=21feef033de3](https://www.forbes.com/sites/ericmack/2022/10/11/new-cheating-scandal-swallows-fat-b[...]/week-tourney-at-alaskas-katmai-national-park/?sh=21feef033de3)

FForbes

New Cheating Scandal Swallows Fat Bear Week Tourney At Alaska's Katmai National Park

Cheating isn't just for chess, it's apparently also an issues in the surprisingly competitive world of obese osos otherwise known as Fat Bear Week. (194 kB)

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/ericmack/2022/10/11/new-cheating-scandal-swallows-fat-bear-week-tourney-at-alaskas-katmai-national-park/?sh=21feef033de3>



crusch 9:24 AM

lets see if we have a forbes contact



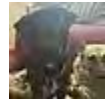
Lian 9:24 AM

Yeah... we never said that 435 won



Amber Kraft 9:30 AM

This Forbes contact is from last year--- I haven't heard from them this year: Olivia Gieger writer Forbes olivia.gieger@gmail.com



crusch 9:30 AM

@(b) (6) I cant find his email, but i did find his twitter https://twitter.com/EricCMack?ref_src=twsrc%5Egoogle%7Ctwcamp%5Eserp%7Ctwgr%5Eauthor

Twitter

[EricMack.eth \(@EricCMack\)](#) / Twitter

Upgrading journalism @JournDAO \ Also This Is Marriage Podcast \ @CNET contrib. editor, @Forbes contributor \ Tips: ericcmack@protonmail.com

9:30

can you reach out via the explore account and ask for the correction

9:30

oh wait theres his email in his twitter bio

(b) (6)

(b) (6)

9:31 AM

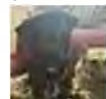
Yes

9:31

either way

9:31

you tell me



crusch 9:32 AM

i can email

9:32

if he doesnt respond we can go with twitter

(b) (6)

(b) (6)

9:34 AM

cool



Amber Kraft 10:24 AM

The WASO NPS office is directing us to refer all questions about the "voting sandal" to explore.org. I will have more details shortly about what we are going to be asked to say



crusch 10:24 AM

Got it

10:25

This is what I've been saying

We first became suspicious about the spam voting when 435 Holly came back from being down 6,000 votes in a matter of a couple hours. While not unheard of, it is very uncommon for a bear to come back late in the day like that. We ended up finding just over 9,000 spam votes. It appears as if the spamming stopped when 435 took a decent lead. There were some spam votes for 747 as well, maybe to throw us off? We dont want to share too much about the process we used to sort out the spam votes, as we don't want to teach the spammers how to spam better. But we did add a captcha to the poll which seems to be working. If we had not detected the votes it would have changed the winner. Let me know if you have any other questions.

👍 1



(b) (6) 10:25 AM

I was going to say something about WASO but I decided to bite my tongue instead.



Amber Kraft 10:26 AM

I was told I should have called them on Sunday before we put anything out... oh well. too late now.



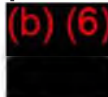
crusch 10:27 AM

Ugh annoying, but there is no way they would have gotten back to you in any sort of timely manner



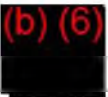
(b) (6) 10:28 AM

They need to stay out of the way and let the park staff do their job. Give me the director's phone #.



(b) (6) 10:30 AM

That's tough, you were all in a very tight spot. you had to delay announcing results as it was and who knows how long it would have taken for them to weigh in



(b) (6) 10:31 AM

I think everyone did a great job with wordsmithing and explaining it.



(b) (6) 10:32 AM

Yes, the park handled it very well and waiting for some muckety-muck in Washington to craft a response would've taken days and made things worse.

👍1



crusch 10:32 AM

not to mention they don't know ANYTHING about what we actually did. It would have been slow and wrong



(b) (6) 10:35 AM

I can make it a bigger scandal if you want. I can tell the media that the NPS leadership doesn't want the park to talk about it. What is the NPS hiding from the American people!?!?

10:35

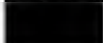
I bet Q knows.



crusch 10:35 AM

LMAO

(b) (6)



(b) (6) 10:35 AM

PLEASE DO IT hahahaha



crusch 10:35 AM

we cant. i wish we could but we can not



(b) (6) 10:35 AM

that's hilarious

10:35

The biggest NPS scandal ever



(b) (6) 10:36 AM

Sometimes I want to go all Andy Kaufman on the audience but then common sense weasels its way back into my brain

🤔 1



crusch 10:38 AM

I'm a little annoyed so many news agencies are trying to make this a thing. It was the most clumsy spam ever. We figured it out and got it fixed in like 30 minutes and one excel pivot table. Its disappointing someone would do it but its not 15 articles of news worthy.



2 replies

Last reply 1 day agoView thread



crusch 10:41 AM

I've also added this to the statement where applicable

I know that some people were disappointed since they wanted 435 Holly to win so badly. But it's important to remember that for 435, and all the bears, being fat for winter is the real win. And Holly is certainly ready for winter.

(b) (6)

(b) (6)

10:41 AM

But voter fraud is sexy to media

10:41

lol

10:42

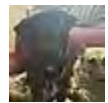
So absurd



Amber Kraft 10:42 AM

@crusch when you are responding in addition to the blurb you have above can you also be sure to include something along the lines of: The important thing to remember is that despite which bear wins the most votes in the Fat Bear Week competition, they are all winners. Bears get fat to survive and the health of Katmai's ecosystem, as demonstrated by the sustained run of salmon, clean water and thriving flora and fauna, enables their survival. Bears don't actually get anything from competing in or winning Fat Bear Week. Instead, it a way to raise awareness about brown bears: survival, competition, hunger, reproduction, conflict, skill, adaptation, learning, consequences, and the importance of protecting a healthy ecosystem for wildlife and for humans.

We hope that the awareness that Fat Bear Week brings will grow into caring, and action in whatever way makes the most sense for each individual.



crusch 10:43 AM

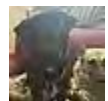
Yes this is perfect

10:43

thank you

10:43

gotta bring it back to the mission



crusch 11:16 AM

voting also back to normal today.

901v747.PNG



Lian 11:20 AM
excellent!



crusch 11:20 AM
an impressive number of schools are participating



Lian 11:21 AM
That's great!



crusch 1:21 PM
@**(b) (6)** If im doing the math correctly we just broke 1 million votes without the fat bear junior numbers

👍5 🙌1



Lian 1:22 PM
wooot!

1:22

That's amazing



crusch 1:22 PM
go team

(b) (6)

(b) (6)

(b) (6)

1:24 PM

Honestly, every aspect of this campaign this year has been amazingly slick. You all are crushing it.



crusch 3:57 PM
@here this just came in to the feedback email. Great job everyone who has been writing for this year's competition!
Hi! I'm not sure if this is the best contact method, but if not, I hope you'll forward it to the proper channel. I wanted to take a moment to praise who's doing the copywriting for Fat Bear Week. As a copy- and content writer myself, I know that this sort of prose doesn't get

as many accolades as other content types tend to do. It's clear that the writer had a great deal of fun with this project, and it shows—it's been absolutely delightful to read the updates each day. So whoever you are, FBW writer, kudos! and thank you for making this super fun event even more enjoyable. P.S. Also please tell your boss that I said you should get a raise.

👍 3

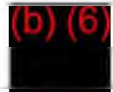


(b) (6)

4:05 PM

image.png

❤️ 1



(b) (6)

4:06 PM

That cake is so so pretty!



Amber Kraft 4:07 PM

Is it possible to purchase one of the mugs you were giving away? I got a question about it

(b) (6)



3 replies

Last reply 22 hours agoView thread



(b) (6)

4:12 PM

Those specific mugs aren't for sale but the conservancy will update their store with a mug design with this years FBW winner.



Amber Kraft 4:17 PM

thanks Mike



(b) (6)

5:00 PM

Wow. About 125K votes today.



Lian 5:01 PM

Done good.

(b) (6)

(b) (6)

5:01 PM

Wooo!!



crusch 5:05 PM

Great job everyone! Fat Bear Week 2022 in the books



(b) (6)

5:05 PM

Great work! Get some rest.

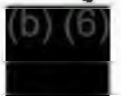


Lian 5:05 PM



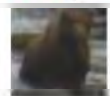
crusch 5:06 PM

Thoughts on me substituting the FBW live chat for the Woobox poll? on the FBW page?



(b) (6)

5:07 PM



(b) (6)

5:07 PM

Go for it. We'll still need an acknowledgement and photo of the winner at the top.



crusch 5:08 PM

yes for sure. If we have a champion photo i can put that up top



(b) (6)

5:09 PM

Maybe his fat photo or the horizontal before and after?

👍 1



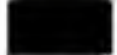
crusch 5:12 PM

thoughts? <https://explore.org/fat-bear-week>

5:14

can tweak tomorrow as needed. cheers everyone

(b) (6)



(b) (6)

5:16 PM

The presentation ends up wonky on mobile but it's probably fine

👍 1



(b) (6)

5:17 PM

Looks good on my laptop. Maybe when you have a chance tomorrow, @crusch, could be good to add a line to the vote table that shows the sum total votes from all matches.

✅ 1



Amber Kraft 5:18 PM

updated spreadsheet from Kent-

Excel Spreadsheet

Vote Totals Since 2014.xlsx

Excel Spreadsheet



2



Lian 5:22 PM

I don't know if I am more impressed by the spreadsheet or the party parrot emoji



crusch 5:23 PM

the party parrot is my greatest addition to the slack environment



1

5:23

<https://cultofthepartyparrot.com/>

cultofthepartyparrot.com

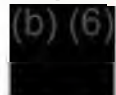
Cult of the Party Parrot

THE PARROT INSISTS (34 kB)

<https://cultofthepartyparrot.com/>

5:25

maybe @**(b) (6)** can figure out why the YT embed isnt scaling down to mobile



(b) (6)

5:26 PM

Amazing job everyone!!! That was hands down the best fat bear week so far. Also the fundraiser is clipping along already



👍2

3



(b) (6)

5:27 PM

I'm going to use the party parrot forever now.



(b) (6)



5:30 PM

Yeah I'll get the scaling fixed

👍1



Amber Kraft 6:01 PM

That is trippy!

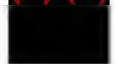
cultofthepartyparrot.com

Cult of the Party Parrot

THE PARROT INSISTS (34 kB)

<https://cultofthepartyparrot.com/>

(b) (6)



(b) (6)



6:19 PM

OK, video should scale correctly now



1



Lian 10:11 PM

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VAF4aqHPnWg&ab_channel=TheLateShowwithStephenColbert

YouTube | The Late Show with Stephen Colbert

Fat Bear Week Scandal | Russia Launches Cyberattacks Against U.S. Targets



crusch 10:40 PM

Wow

10:45

That was like half his monologue

Today

(b) (6)

(b) (6)



2:05 AM

Quite amazing

(b) (6)

(b) (6)

7:15 AM

I love that he even mentioned the sisters



crusch 8:12 AM

@Amber Kraft Gonna try to get you the Fat bear Week and seasonal Bear Cam analytics reports before you go. Would Friday be okay?



Amber Kraft 8:41 AM

sure. Thanks so much

8:41

Just as an FYI- Monday is my last day at Katmai



crusch 8:53 AM



8:54

Gonna miss this whole team at Katmai. You guys were so great. If you wind up at a park that needs a live cam you know who to call

❤️ 2



Chris Kliesrath 8:56 AM

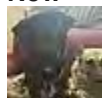
It's been a pleasure working with you too!



Lian 8:57 AM

Awww thanks!

New



crusch 11:47 AM

@here still getting requests about the voting thing. With the voting over are we okay with sharing some more details about how we sorted the votes? I saw the NPS statement did mention filtering the IPs so i figure its okay right?

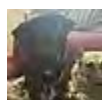
(b) (6)

(b) (6)



11:51 AM

On the technical side of it, there's no real harm in sharing. Voting is over, captcha probably mitigated any further attempts and next year we'll hopefully be even more prepared for any such thing



crusch 11:53 AM

my thought as well

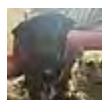
(b) (6)

(b) (6)



11:54 AM

Hopefully we'll get woobox to shore up any deficiencies on their part. Lest I have to build us an in house voting system, lol



crusch 11:55 AM

The long list of improvements I want to send them. starting with, if you say 2mb why can't i upload anything over 1mb.