



NEWS RELEASE

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NEWS RELEASE

December 5, 2005

Maureen Oltrogge, 928-638-7779

Woman evacuated from canyon after fall from mule

Grand Canyon, AZ – A 68 year old woman fell from a mule on the South Kaibab Trail in Grand Canyon National Park yesterday. A string of passenger mules operated by Xanterra South Rim, LLC (Xanterra) was heading back from an overnight stay at Phantom Ranch, located at the bottom of Grand Canyon when the accident occurred. The fall occurred just above Cedar Ridge at approximately 12:00 noon Sunday. Initial reports indicate the woman fell approximately 12 feet below the trail, then slid another 75 feet before coming to rest on a rock outcropping.

A Xanterra mule wrangler contacted the National Park Service Emergency Dispatch Center to report the accident. National Park Service rangers flew to the site and conducted a helicopter short-haul operation, transporting the patient to Cedar Ridge which is located approximately 1.5 miles below the rim. Guardian Air Transport then transported the patient by helicopter from Cedar Ridge to the Flagstaff Medical Center, in Flagstaff, Arizona, where she was treated for her injuries.

An investigation into the accident is being conducted by the National Park Service.



NEWS RELEASE

November 10, 2005

Maureen Oltrogge, 928-638-7779

FINAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT TO REVISE COLORADO RIVER MANAGEMENT PLAN FOR GRAND CANYON NATIONAL PARK NOW AVAILABLE

Grand Canyon, AZ – Grand Canyon National Park Superintendent, Joseph F. Alston, today announced the availability of the final environmental impact statement (FEIS) to revise the Colorado River Management Plan (CRMP) for Grand Canyon National Park. The National Park Service (NPS) prepared the FEIS for the CRMP under the provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969. The Hualapai Tribe was a cooperating agency in the preparation of the EIS.

Publication of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Notice of Availability (NOA) in the *Federal Register* on November 10, 2005 initiates a 30-day no-action period. Although the NPS is not accepting public comment on the FEIS, the document is available for public review. Following the 30-day no-action period, a Record of Decision (ROD) will be prepared that documents the NPS decision and rationale for that decision. The ROD will be released to the public and a summary will be published in the *Federal Register*.

A complete copy of the FEIS can be downloaded at www.nps.gov/grca/crmp. A CD with the complete document is also available by sending an email to grca_crmp@nps.gov (grca_crmp@nps.gov) or writing to CRMP Team at P.O. Box 129, Grand Canyon AZ 86023.

The FEIS identifies and evaluates a full range of alternatives and comprehensively evaluates effects to natural and cultural resources, visitor and wilderness experience, and socioeconomic conditions from visitor uses on the Colorado River. The FEIS includes the modified NPS preferred alternatives for management of 277 miles of the Colorado River.

"We believe our process has been open minded, transparent and fair," stated Superintendent Alston, adding, "we have spent the last several years listening to and responding to a wide range of comments from individuals, groups, and organizations."

The proposed CRMP is a visitor use management plan which specifies actions to preserve park resources and the visitor experience, while enhancing recreational opportunities. The plan is intended to cover at least the next 10 years, and will also establish goals and objectives for a longer timeframe.

For the FEIS, the Colorado River is divided into two geographic sections that recognize the different management zones on the river, with a specific set of alternatives for each section. The first section of river is from Lees Ferry (River Mile [RM] 0) to Diamond Creek (RM 226). The second section is from Diamond Creek (RM 226) to Lake Mead (RM 277).

Where the Hualapai Reservation and Grand Canyon National Park share boundaries, the Colorado River Management Plan describes management zones that reflect the variety and intensity of visitor activities, particularly in the river segments downstream of Diamond Creek. The plan addresses cooperative management issues with neighboring units of the national

park system, tribal governments, and other agencies with jurisdiction or interests affected by, or that may themselves affect, management of the Colorado River corridor in the park.

Eight alternatives were developed for the Lees Ferry to Diamond Creek section, a no-action alternative (Alternative A), plus Alternatives B through H. Modified Alternative H is the preferred alternative. Modified Alternative H is a mixed motor/no-motor alternative with 5.5 months of mixed use occurring from April 1 through September 15, and 6.5 months of non-motorized use from September 16 through March 31. It is characterized by smaller group sizes and fewer daily allowable launches except during winter months. This alternative would allow for a moderate increase in estimated yearly passenger totals. The NPS would allow passenger exchanges at Whitmore only during the mixed-use period, April 1 through September 15, and in the non-motorized season only for those trips launching during the mixed-use period.

Five alternatives were developed for the section of river from Diamond Creek to Lake Mead, a no-action alternative (Alternative 1) plus Alternatives 2 through 5. Modified Alternative 4 is the NPS preferred alternative. Modified Alternative 4 is characterized by use limits and a redistribution of Hualapai River Runner (HRR) operations. This alternative represents a consensus between Grand Canyon National Park and the Hualapai Tribe on levels of HRR use and other uses originating at Diamond Creek. However, Modified Alternative 4 represents the NPS's preference for lower levels of pontoon boat use compared to levels proposed by the Hualapai Tribe. Peak daily use for commercial day trips launching from Diamond Creek would be comparable to current conditions, with smaller maximum group sizes, while commercial overnight trips could increase from a current average of three launches per month to up to three launches per day. The number of pontoon boat passengers in the Quartermaster area would be capped at 480 per day, but could increase to 600 per day based on favorable performance reviews and resource monitoring data. No jet boat tours would be allowed, and upriver travel would continue to be allowed up to River Mile 240.

The NPS preferred option for an allocation system is the No Action/Split Allocation system, which continues to allocate use between the commercial and noncommercial sectors in a ratio that is reflected in the preferred alternative. This ratio would remain the same for the life of the plan.

The NPS preferred option for the noncommercial permit system is a "hybrid," weighted lottery for trip leaders. Each year a single lottery would take place and result in the initial awarding of the following year's noncommercial launch opportunities. Chances in the lottery would vary depending on whether or not applicants had been on a river trip recently.

A transition from the current waitlist to the new system would be instituted, and is outlined in the FEIS.

Once the ROD has been published, an implementation and monitoring plan will be developed that outlines how the NPS will implement the provisions specified in the ROD. The final CRMP, including the implementation and monitoring plan, will be published and made available to all interested parties.

Background on the CRMP process:

The first CRMP was developed for Grand Canyon in 1979. It was updated several times, and was the subject of two lawsuits in 2000-2001. Settlement of one of the lawsuits began the current effort to update the CRMP in the spring of 2002; public scoping meetings were held throughout the country in summer and fall 2002. A Draft EIS was released for public review and comment on October 8, 2004. Public comments were accepted through February 1, 2005. Public meetings were again held throughout the country during the fall of 2004. A substantial number of public comments were received through these outreach efforts.

Major issues and concerns regarding resource protection, visitor experience and services raised during the 2002 and 2004/2005 public processes include:

- Appropriate levels of visitor use consistent with natural and cultural resource protection, visitor experience goals,

and wilderness character

- Allocation of use between commercial and noncommercial groups
- Noncommercial permit system
- Appropriate levels of motorized and nonmotorized boat use
- Determination of the range of public services
- Levels of helicopter use to transport river passengers to and from the river
- Appropriate levels and types of upstream travel from Lake Mead
- Quality of river trips including crowding, trip length, group size, and scheduling issues
- Administrative use

A revised CRMP is needed to address both long-standing and recent issues concerning resource protection, visitor experience, and public services along the river; to consider the impacts of the NPS river management on federally recognized American Indian tribes whose reservations adjoin Grand Canyon National Park; and to fulfill the requirements of a 2002 agreement that settled the lawsuit about the river management plan.

Note: Copies of the document will also be available at the following libraries:

Flagstaff Public Library (East and West), Flagstaff, Arizona
Cline Library, Northern Arizona University, Flagstaff, Arizona
Phoenix Public Library, Phoenix, Arizona
Denver Central Library, Denver, Colorado
Salt Lake City Library, Salt Lake City, Utah
North Las Vegas Library, Las Vegas, Nevada
San Francisco Library, San Francisco, California
Page Public Library, Page, Arizona
Kanab City Library, Kanab, Utah



NEWS RELEASE

October 31, 2005

Maureen Oltrogge, 928-638-7779

Final Environmental Impact Statement for Grand Canyon's Colorado River Management Plan anticipated to be released within the next two weeks

Grand Canyon, AZ – Although a Notice of Availability of the Final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the Colorado River Management Plan (CRMP), Grand Canyon National Park, was published by the National Park Service (NPS), Department of the Interior, in the Federal Register today, the document will not be available to the public until it is cleared by the Environmental Protection Agency and a Notice of Availability is published by the EPA in the Federal Register. It is expected that EPA's NOA will be published within the next two weeks.

A 30-day no-action period will follow publication of EPA's NOA on the Final EIS for the CRMP in the Federal Register. Following the 30-day no-action period, a Record of Decision (ROD) will be prepared that documents the NPS decision and rationale for that decision. The ROD will be released to the public and a summary published in the Federal Register.

The NPS will issue a news release at the time EPA publishes the NOA in the Federal Register announcing the availability of the Final EIS for the CRMP. At that time, the document will be available online at <http://www.nps.gov/grca/crmp>.

Copies of the document will also be available on compact disk (CD) by sending an email message to grca_crmp@nps.gov with the word "CD" in the subject line. Include your name and current mailing address in the body of the message, and a CD will be sent when they are available. Requests can also be sent to: CRMP Team, Grand Canyon National Park, P.O. Box 129, Grand Canyon, AZ 86023.

For further information please contact Rick Ernenwein, Lead Planner for the CRMP at (928) 779-6279 or Mary Killeen, Special Assistant at (928) 638-7885.



NEWS RELEASE

September 28, 2005

Jennie Albrinck 928 638-7739

AUTUMN COLORS PRELUDE NORTH RIM CLOSURE

Grand Canyon, AZ - The changing of the season is occurring on the North Rim of Grand Canyon National Park. Fall colors are currently at their peak.

As colors on the North Rim change it is a reminder that the North Rim's visitor season is winding down. The staff on the North Rim has begun preparations to shut down visitor services and facilities, though the park will remain open to visitors on a day-use basis until snow closes Highway 67 leading into the park.

The National Park Service's (NPS) North Rim Visitor Center will close at 11:00 a.m. on Saturday, October 22. Regularly scheduled ranger-led program, as advertised in "*The Guide*" will be offered through October 14. Advanced campground reservations for the North Rim Campground will be taken through October 21. A limited number of campsites with limited services, (portable toilets), will be available on a first-come, first-served basis until snow closes Highway 67. Hikers and cross-country skiers will be permitted to use the park's group campsites throughout the winter months if they have obtained a permit through the park's South Rim Backcountry Information Center, or by going to the Visitor Center desk at Pipe Springs National Monument. The South Rim Backcountry Information Center is open year-round and can be reached by calling (928) 638-7875, Monday through Friday from 1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. MST. Permit requests can be faxed year-round to (928) 638-2125. Permits are not considered earlier than the first of the month, four months prior to the proposed start date.

Overnight accommodations on the North Rim of the park, the service station and related visitor services will close before noon on October 22nd. The last meal served at the Grand Lodge will be breakfast. The final day for mule rides on the North Rim will be October 13. The Kaibab Lodge, four miles from the park boundary, will be closed after breakfast on November 3, at 10:00 a.m. The Country Store, located outside of the park boundary, will remain open until mid-November, and then will be closed until mid-May, 2006. The Kaibab Plateau Visitor Center at Jacob Lake will be open on weekends only beginning October 1.

Arizona Department of Transportation officials have assured the park staff that Highway 67 into the North Rim will remain open to public travel through November 15, but cautioned that beginning November 16, Highway 67 could be closed for the season on short notice due to major storms and heavy snowfall. After November 15, visitors are encouraged to call (928) 638-7870 in advance of their trip to check on the status of Highway 67.

During daytime visitation, from October 22, until final closure of State Highway 67, only emergency services will be provided by the NPS, and visitors are reminded to pay special attention to their gas gauge, since gas will no longer be available in the park. Gas and diesel fuel will be available five miles north of the park at the Country Store through mid-November. Jacob Lake Inn, restaurant and gas station, 44 miles from the park, remains open year-round.

The South Rim and Inner Canyon facilities remain open year-round. For additional trip planning information, please write: Trip Planner (or) Backcountry Trip Planner, Grand Canyon National Park, PO Box 129, Grand Canyon, AZ 86023 or call

the park at (928) 638-7888.

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<http://www.nps.gov>

[Visitor Information](#)



NEWS RELEASE

September 26, 2005

Maureen Oltrogge, 928-638-7779

Grand Canyon National Park to participate in National Parks America Tour

Grand Canyon, AZ - On Saturday, October 1, the National Park Service at Grand Canyon National Park will participate in the National Parks America Tour. The National Parks America Tour is a volunteer-driven initiative designed to provide national parks with the resources to complete important projects and engage communities in the national park experience.

Sponsored by Unilever, the National Park Foundation, Wal-Mart Stores, Inc. and Take Pride In America, these organizations hope to donate more than 100,000 volunteer hours to the National Park Service through the National Parks America Tour each year, resulting in an annual in-kind donation of \$1.6 million.

The National Parks America Tour hosts 25 events each year providing volunteer and material resources to national parks enabling them to complete a myriad of projects ranging from clean-ups, painting, trail restoration, installation of sustainable boardwalks, and visitor use area improvements.

The work that is planned for Grand Canyon National Park volunteers on October 1, will include a general clean up of the historic cemetery, resealing of the ponderosa long on the cemetery gate, litter pickup, and pulling exotic weeds. Those interested in participating in this event can register by calling Bob Powell, Historical Architect, at (928) 638-7649. To register the day of the event, volunteers should report to the park headquarters parking lot (parking lot A on park maps) between 8:30 and 9:00 a.m. Volunteers should wear comfortable work clothes. All necessary supplies will be provided. At noon, lunch will be provided to those who volunteered their efforts.

For more information on the National Parks America Tour, as well as a tour schedule and photos, please visit www.nationalparksamerica.com.



NEWS RELEASE

September 21, 2005

Maureen Oltrogge, 928-638-7779

Body of man found in Grand Canyon identified

Grand Canyon, AZ – The body of a man found in the Grand Canyon on Tuesday, September 13, has been identified as that of Michael Alvarado, 37, from El Paso, Texas.

Officials at the El Paso Police Department released his identity earlier today. A missing person report was taken by the Department on Monday, September 12. Alvarado was last seen leaving his home in El Paso Texas on that same day.

Alvarado's body was located just east of Yavapai Point, an overlook on the South Rim of Grand Canyon National Park, more than 300 feet below the rim. His body was discovered during an aerial search being conducted for a missing Phoenix man.



Grand Canyon

National Park Service
U.S. Department of Interior
Arizona



MISSING PERSON

Grand Canyon National Park requests your assistance in locating this person.

SUBJECT: RANDY ROGERS

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION

Age: 46 years
Height: 5'-10"
Weight: 160 lbs
Hair: Brown/Long/Curly
Eyes: Blue



Randy Rogers, a resident of Chandler, Arizona, was staying in Mather Campground between Friday, Sept 9th & Monday Sept. 12th. He was driving a Silver Ford Escape XLT (Arizona License 700RFC), which was found at the campsite. He may have been taking short day hikes from the campground. His personal interests include, hiking, blues music & fantasy football.

If you were visiting Grand Canyon National Park

If you were visiting Grand Canyon National Park
between September 9 & 11 and have
any information regarding this individual
PLEASE CONTACT NPS DISPATCH (928) 638-7805

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NEWS RELEASE

September 19, 2005

Maureen Oltrogge 928-638-7779

Update on Search Efforts for Phoenix Man Randy Rogers

Grand Canyon, AZ – Search efforts continue today for 46 year old Randy Rogers. Park rangers first became concerned when Rogers failed to check out of his campsite in Mather Campground on the South Rim of Grand Canyon National Park on his scheduled departure date, Sunday, September 11.

Incident objectives in today's search for Rogers include maintaining investigative efforts and following up on leads, continuing to search segments which require additional search efforts, evaluating search accomplishments to date and considering transition into a limited continuous search mode (an example of which would be: incorporating search activities into existing front country and back country patrol efforts as well as other park work activities occurring the in search area), and keeping Randy Roger's family informed of continuing incident activities.

With no new leads in the areas of high probability investigators have begun to widen their search efforts to areas outside of the park. Investigators have been working with police officers in Flagstaff, Arizona; with officials from Arizona State University, where Rogers is employed; with the Telluride Marshall's Office in San Miguel County, Colorado, where Rogers planned to be over the weekend at a blues festival.

Investigators would like to talk with visitors and residents that may have seen Randy Rogers during his visit to Grand Canyon. Interviews are currently being conducted with those who had campground reservations during the period of September 9 through 11, hoping to gain any additional information that may be helpful in their search efforts.

Investigators are asking those who were in the park, and more specifically in the campground, from September 9 through 11, and who may have seen Randy Rogers to contact the National Park Service Dispatch Center at Grand Canyon National Park at 298-638-7805.

Search efforts through September 18, have included approximately 3000 personnel hours, almost 600 of which have been volunteer efforts, and have totaled more than \$66,000.

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<http://www.nps.gov>



NEWS RELEASE

September 16, 2005

Maureen Oltrogge, 928-638-7779

Update on Search Efforts for Phoenix Man Randy Rogers

Grand Canyon, AZ – Park rangers continue to search for Randy Rogers, a 46 year old Phoenix man missing from a campground at Grand Canyon National Park since last weekend.

Search efforts today include completing the search of high probability areas around Mather Campground as well as along rim areas of the canyon. A technical search team will also investigate areas below the rim where search dogs have shown an interest over the last several days.

Low altitude aerial searches will continue and will include areas south of the Grand Canyon Village and Mather Campground on the South Rim.

The National Park Service has increased the scope and intensity of the investigation and is working with the Telluride Marshall's Office in San Miguel County in Colorado, as Randy Rogers plans included attending a blues festival in Telluride this weekend. Missing person flyers will be distributed at the festival.

Park rangers have also been working with campus officials at Arizona State University, where Rogers is employed, hoping to gain any information that may be helpful in the search effort.

Anyone with information on Randy Rogers is asked to contact the National Park Service Dispatch Center at Grand Canyon National Park at 928-638-7805.

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NEWS RELEASE

September 15, 2005

Maureen Oltrogge, 928-638-7779

Search continues for Phoenix Man Randy Rogers

Grand Canyon, AZ – A ground and aerial search continued for a Phoenix man, Randy Rogers, today. Park rangers are concentrating their efforts in and around Mather Campground, Trailer Village an area adjacent to the campground, and areas along the rim.

Park rangers are looking for any clues that might help point them in a direction that Rogers may have traveled in. Search dogs and their handlers have provided some clues that Rogers was at several points along the Rim Trail, a popular pedestrian trail that goes from Pipe Creek Vista west to the Historic Village within Grand Canyon National Park. It is unknown at this point how long he may have been at these locations and when.

Technical search teams were flown into areas below the rim to search trails and routes that Rogers may have hiked.

Park rangers have expanded their search areas outside of the park and are increasing the scope and intensity of the investigation, as high probability areas haven't yielded any further clues to his whereabouts.

It is known that Randy Rogers checked into his campsite on late Friday afternoon, September 9, and made a purchase at one of the gift shops within the park Friday evening around 8:15 p.m. Anyone with information about Randy Rogers is asked to contact the National Park Service Dispatch Center at (928) 638-7805.



NEWS RELEASE

September 14, 2005

Maureen Oltrogge, 928-638-7779

Park Rangers Continue Search for Randy Rogers

Grand Canyon, AZ – Park rangers continue their search efforts for Randy Rogers, a 46 year old man from Phoenix, who had been camping in Grand Canyon National Park. Rogers checked into his campsite at Mather Campground on Friday, September 9 and was planning on checking out Sunday morning, September 11. When Rogers failed to check out, park rangers were notified.

An investigation and hasty search was conducted Sunday evening and continued throughout the following day. A search dog and handler were brought in on Tuesday to help with the search. Park rangers have been searching high probability areas including those areas around Mather Campground, his last known location; and along the Rim Trail, Bright Angel, South Kaibab and Hermit Trails and the Tonto Trail between Bright Angel and Hermit Trail. Aerial searches have also been conducted along the rim.

A second search dog joined the effort this morning. Both dogs and their handlers, from the Department of Public Safety, started in Mather Campground this morning continuing their efforts to help provide a general direction of travel and narrow the search field.

Aerial searches continue today with flights in various areas along the rim and corridor trails. Search teams also continue to search inner canyon trails, where Rogers may have taken day hikes – something he had done often during previous visits to the park.

During an aerial search for Rogers yesterday, park rangers located the body of an adult male approximately 300 feet below the rim, just east of Yavapai Point on the South Rim of Grand Canyon. The body was recovered and transported to the Coconino County Medical Examiner's Office in Flagstaff, Arizona. Physical characteristics of the body did not match those of Rogers. Park rangers are following up on investigative leads and are working with the Medical Examiner to identify the body. An investigation is being conducted by the National Park Service.

Park rangers continue to search for Rogers. The National Park Service continues to be interested in talking with anyone that may have information on Randy Rogers. Anyone with information regarding this individual is asked to contact the National Park Service Dispatch Center at Grand Canyon National Park at (928) 638-7805.



NEWS RELEASE

September 13, 2005

Maureen Oltrogge, 928-638-7779

Park Rangers Searching for Missing Phoenix Man

Grand Canyon, AZ – Park Rangers at Grand Canyon National Park began a search for a 46 year old Phoenix man late Sunday after finding his campsite abandoned in Mather Campground. Randy Rogers, was staying in Mather Campground on the South Rim of Grand Canyon and had reservations beginning Friday, September 9th through Sunday morning, September 11th. Park rangers became concerned when Mr. Rogers campsite was still set up after his scheduled departure time on Sunday.

Family members reported that Rogers had taken an annual trip to Grand Canyon over the last several years and would take short day hikes during his stay. He is 5'10" tall, weighs approximately 160 lbs, and has long curly brown hair and blue eyes.

Park rangers began an investigation and hasty search late Sunday and continued their search efforts early Monday morning. Search efforts continued throughout the night in areas adjacent to Mather Campground, along the Rim Trail, as well as Bright Angel, South Kaibab, and Hermit Trails, known as corridor trails. Hoping to provide a general direction of travel, rangers started their search this morning with search dogs in Mather Campground, his last known location. In addition to search dogs, park rangers will continue to search canyon corridor trails by foot and will conduct aerial searches along and over the rim areas.

By mid-afternoon today, park rangers hope to have completed a search of the corridor trails and the Tonto Trail between the South Kaibab and Hermit Trails.

Park rangers are interested in talking with anyone who may have seen Randy Rogers in the Grand Canyon area. Anyone with information regarding this individual is asked to contact the National Park Service Dispatch Center at Grand Canyon National Park at (928) 638-7805.



NEWS RELEASE

September 13, 2005

Maureen Oltrogge, 928-638-7779

Man's body recovered from Grand Canyon

Grand Canyon, AZ – The body of a man was recovered from Grand Canyon at approximately 4:30 p.m. today. The body was discovered during an aerial search for a missing man. Park rangers repelled to the site, estimated to be more than 300 feet below the rim, to recover the body. The body was then transported by helicopter to the South Rim Helibase at Grand Canyon National Park.

Park rangers have been searching for a missing man since late Sunday when they were notified that a campsite he was staying in was still set up in Mather Campground after a scheduled departure time. The missing man was identified as 46 year old Randy Rogers from Phoenix, Arizona.

Physical characteristics of the body recovered earlier today do not appear to match those of the missing man. The body will be transported to the Coconino County Medical Examiner's Office in Flagstaff, Arizona. Park rangers will work with the Medical Examiner to help identify the body.

The search for Randy Rogers continues. A search dog and handler from the Department of Public Safety in Page, Arizona, was brought in this morning to help in the search effort. The search team started their search from Mather Campground; Rogers last know location, hoping to determine a general direction of travel and to help narrow the search area. In addition to the aerial search this morning park rangers have also searched the Rim Trail, and corridor trails, including the Bright Angel, Hermit and South Kaibab Trails and continue their search of the Tonto Trail between Bright Angel and Hermit Trails. The search for Randy Rogers will continue until Rogers is found or until search options have been exhausted.

Park rangers are interested in talking with anyone who may have seen or have information about Randy Rogers. Anyone with information regarding this individual is asked to contact the National Park Service Center at Grand Canyon National Park at (928) 638-7805.

Investigations are being conducted by the National Park Service.



NEWS RELEASE

September 13, 2005

Maureen Oltrogge, 928-638-7779

Park Rangers Locate Body Below the Rim of Grand Canyon

Grand Canyon, AZ – Shortly before noon today, park rangers at Grand Canyon National Park located a body below the rim of the Grand Canyon. A recovery team is working below the rim to access the body.

The body was located just east of Yavapai Point, and appears to be more than 300 feet below the rim. It was discovered during an aerial search just before noon today.

A search has been underway for a 46 year old Phoenix man, identified as Randy Rogers, since late Sunday, when rangers were notified that the man's campsite was still occupied after his scheduled departure on Sunday. It is not known at this time if the body is that of the missing camper. Identification of the body cannot be confirmed until recovery personnel can reach the scene.

A search dog and handler from the Department of Public Safety in Page, Arizona, was brought in this morning to help in the search effort. The search team started their search from Mather Campground; Rogers last know location, hoping to determine a general direction of travel and to help narrow the search area. Rangers also conducted an aerial search this morning of rim locations, searched the Rim Trail, and corridor trails, including the Bright Angel, Hermit and South Kaibab Trails and are currently completing a search of the Tonto Trail between Bright Angel and Hermit Trails.

Once the body, located east of Yavapai Point, has been recovered it will be transported to the Coconino County Medical Examiners Office in Flagstaff, Arizona.

An investigation will be conducted by the National Park Service.

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NEWS RELEASE

September 13, 2005

Maureen Oltrogge, 928-638-7779

Agencies work together on pilot program to corral bison

Grand Canyon, AZ – The National Park Service (NPS), USDA Forest Service and the Arizona Game and Fish Department will conduct a cooperative effort to test the feasibility of herding and corralling bison that have wandered into Grand Canyon National Park from adjacent national forest lands.

The bison are managed by the Arizona Game and Fish Department at House Rock Wildlife Management Area (House Rock WMA) east of the Kaibab Plateau on the Kaibab National Forest.

The bison were introduced over 100 years ago by rancher Charles J. "Buffalo" Jones as part of an effort to cross breed bison with cattle to create an economically viable ranching operation. The project failed and in 1926 the herd was purchased by the State of Arizona. Since that time the Arizona Game and Fish Department managed the bison herd in House Rock WMA for hunting and watchable wildlife purposes under a Memorandum of Understanding with the Kaibab National Forest. However, during the past four to five years the bison have migrated from the House Rock WMA up onto the Kaibab Plateau and into Grand Canyon National Park.

Last year Grand Canyon National Park personnel assisted Arizona Game and Fish Department biologists in collaring several bison within the herd to determine the bison's migration patterns. That research and aerial surveys determined that most, if not all of the herd, estimated in the summer of 2005 to be between 170 and 190 bison, migrate into the park in late summer and remain there throughout the fall, winter and early spring months. In recent years, the herd has returned to House Rock WMA only for the calving season, May through September.

The NPS has found no direct evidence that bison were native to the Grand Canyon in the last 1000 years. "In general, non-native species will not be introduced into parks," stated Joe Alston, Park Superintendent, adding "and, where feasible, management actions to remove them will be undertaken."

A Bison Working Group was formed in 2004 with a representative from the NPS, USDA Forest Service and the Arizona Game and Fish Department to seek a solution to the problem of bison migrating into Grand Canyon National Park. This pilot project, one of the recommended actions by the Working Group, will test the effectiveness of this method of removing the House Rock bison from the park.

"The Arizona Game and Fish Department is working with Grand Canyon National Park to find mutually acceptable solutions to NPS concerns," said Ron Sieg, AGFD Region II Supervisor, adding "this trapping test is one of many actions to address NPS concerns."

The project will begin the week of September 12th, with the set up of a portable, temporary corral in a disturbed area at Fire Point on the North Rim of Grand Canyon National Park. Expert bison wranglers will then be utilized to herd up to 30 bison into the corral during the week of October 3rd. Project managers believe that the bison will become acclimated and enter the corral to forage on vegetation that will be placed in the structure. If this occurs, a spring loaded corral gate will be

triggered remotely. Corralled bison will then be transported out of the park and returned to the House Rock WMA. Ron Sieg stated, "Once returned, these bison will either be hunted during special population management hunts or sold and removed from the area."

In addition to this pilot project, members of the Working Group are also looking at options to keep the bison from migrating into the park.

The results of this effort could be used in determining long-term solutions for returning the herd to the House Rock WMA.

Additional Contacts:

USDA Forest Service
Cathie Schmidlin
928-635-8314

Arizona Game and Fish Department
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928-214-1241

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NEWS RELEASE

September 12, 2005

Maureen Oltrogge GRCA 928-638-7779

Marianne Karraker GLCA 928-608-6325

Grand Canyon National Park, Glen Canyon National Recreation Area and the Grand Canyon National Park Foundation celebrate National Public Lands Day with a weekend volunteer event

National Park Service waives entrance fees on September 24 in recognition of National Public Lands Day

Grand Canyon, AZ – Saturday, September 24, 2005, is the twelfth annual *National Public Lands Day* (NPLD). NPLD is an annual event that provides opportunities for the public to participate in volunteer projects that accomplish much needed work on public lands. NPLD is organized by the National Environmental Education & Training Foundation supported by nine federal land management agencies, and sponsored by Toyota and other businesses.

This year the annual Fee Free Day will also be celebrated on Saturday, September 24, 2005. In recognition of NPLD, entrance fees and commercial tour fees will be waived at Grand Canyon National Park and at Glen Canyon National Recreation Area. Recreation "user fees" such as backcountry permit fees, camping fees, launch fees and fees for other activities offered in the parks will not be waived.

During National Public Lands Day 2004, nearly 90,000 volunteers built trails and bridges, planted trees and plants, removed trash and invasive plants, as well as numerous other projects. "Take Pride in America" is a national partnership program that encourages, supports and recognizes these volunteers who work to improve our public parks, forests, grasslands, reservoirs, wildlife refuges, cultural and historic sites, and other recreation areas. Their dedication continues the legacy of the 1930s-era Civilian Conservation Corps, which enrolled 3 million Americans in service to improve public lands.

To celebrate NPLD, the National Park Service invites volunteers to join biologists and members of the Grand Canyon National Park Foundation at Lees Ferry along the Colorado River for a fun-filled weekend of hands-on activities including invasive plant removal, social trail rehabilitation and garbage collection.

Located at the boundary between Grand Canyon National Park and Glen Canyon National Recreation Area, these projects offer an excellent opportunity for volunteers and agency staff to work together to protect and improve this popular historic location.

The weekend project will concentrate on removing several invasive plant species that are targets of control efforts in both parks. In addition to the control and mapping of invasive plants, volunteers will lend a hand rehabilitating social trails and cleaning up garbage from along the river, roads and boat launch area. The weekend of activities will give the public an opportunity to protect and restore these public lands that provide astounding outdoor recreation opportunities.

The event is open to people of all ages and abilities, but is limited to 30 people, and spots are rapidly filling. Volunteers will be outfitted with tools and gloves and should wear close-toed shoes and bring water bottles (3 liter capacity) and a broad-brimmed hat. Lunch and snacks will be provided both days, in addition to meals on the evening of the 24th and the morning of the 25th. For more information or to sign up for this event, please contact Volunteer Coordinator Kari Malen, Grand Canyon National Park Foundation, at (928) 774-1760 or 774-7488 extension 217 or by email at gcvolunteers@yahoo.com.

Since NPLD is a fee free day for all visitors, organizers wanted to provide that same benefit to the volunteers so that they could enjoy their fee free day at another time. Coupons will be issued to those volunteers participating in this event. The coupons are valid until September 26, 2006. This is the second year that coupons will be issued to volunteers.

Free entry passes issued at Grand Canyon and Glen Canyon on NPLD to commercial tour operators will be valid only for that individual tour. Free entry passes issued to single visit entries issued on NPLD will be valid for seven days on both the North and South Rims of Grand Canyon, as well at all Glen Canyon entry locations, so visitors are reminded to hold on to their receipts.

The National Park Service is proud to take part in this coordinated Federal recreation effort and would like to extend a warm welcome to all visitors in recognition of NPLD.

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NEWS RELEASE

August 17, 2005

Maureen Oltrogge, 928-638-7779

Fall from North Rim of Grand Canyon Results in Fatality

Grand Canyon, AZ – A sixteen year-old boy fell approximately 100 feet from a point at the south end of the Walhalla Glades Overlook on the North Rim of Grand Canyon National Park sometime around noon today. His family called from their vehicle on the North Rim to report the incident. The call was routed from an On-Star Processing Center into the Grand Canyon Regional Dispatch Center located on the South Rim of Grand Canyon National Park. National Park Service Search and Rescue Rangers were dispatched to the scene where rangers confirmed the young man had died from injuries suffered in the fall. Park rangers are currently in the process of conducting a recovery effort from below the rim.

The body will be flown to the South Rim of Grand Canyon National Park and then transported to the Coconino County Medical Examiner's Office in Flagstaff, Arizona.

A Family Liaison Officer from the National Park Service is providing support services to the family.

No further details are currently available. An accident investigation will be conducted by the National Park Service.

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NEWS RELEASE

August 17, 2005

Maureen Oltrogge, 928-638-7779

Yavapai Observation Station to close for rehabilitation and installation of exhibits

Grand Canyon, AZ – Yavapai Observation Station, located on the South Rim of Grand Canyon National Park near Mather Point, will close after Labor Day so construction crews can begin rehabilitation of the building.

Yavapai Observation Station currently contains temporary exhibits about the fossil record at Grand Canyon and features wonderful views from large panoramic windows. Educational materials about the park and region are sold in the non-profit bookstore operated by the Grand Canyon Association.

Yavapai Observation Station was originally built in 1928 for the purpose of observing and understanding the geology of the Grand Canyon. It is one of the earliest park museums and is of national significance in National Park Service (NPS) architecture and interpretation. The approximately 3,000 square foot building is included on the NPS List of Classified Structures and was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1990. The building is considered eligible for listing as a National Historic Landmark.

In accordance with the Park's 1995 General Management Plan, Yavapai is being returned to a museum that will focus on geology, physiography and related themes.

Rehabilitation of the building will occur in two phases. The first phase will include a new roof, an updated heating and cooling system, sprinklers and other items to enhance public safety, as well as stabilization of the historic structure. The construction phase is expected to be completed by early June of 2006. Once phase one is completed the building will reopen for park visitors to once again view the canyon from its large panoramic windows.

The second phase of this project will include the installation of new interpretive exhibits. The new exhibits and small bookstore are scheduled to be installed in March 2007 in time for the busy summer season.

Once Yavapai closes for rehabilitation, the area will be closed to buses, commercial vehicles, and vehicles over 22 feet in length. When Yavapai reopens in summer 2006, these restrictions will remain in place. With the installation of new interpretive exhibits, the facility will no longer accommodate the large groups associated with commercial tours and buses.

Commercial buses are encouraged to park at Canyon View Information Plaza (CVIP) as the alternative to Yavapai Point. CVIP was constructed to accommodate large groups and offers two large restroom facilities, a Visitor Center staffed by park naturalists, a large bookstore, and is located a short distance from scenic Mather Point.



NEWS RELEASE

August 17, 2005

Maureen Oltrogge, 928-638-7779

Construction to Begin on Market Plaza Shuttle Bus Stops in Grand Canyon National Park

Grand Canyon, AZ – A popular shuttle bus stop located at Market Plaza on the South Rim of Grand Canyon National Park is slated for improvements following the Labor Day Weekend. Construction on the Market Plaza Shuttle Bus Stops project will begin on Tuesday, September 6, 2005, and is expected to be completed by the first week in November. Routes and time schedules of the park's free shuttle bus service will not be altered during construction, but the existing shuttle stop will be temporarily relocated to an close-by area in the Market Plaza parking lot.

Once the project has been completed, there will be two distinct shuttle bus stops. The stop at the existing location beside Yavapai Lodge Gift Shop and Cafeteria will service only eastbound routes. A second, new stop will be constructed across the street from Yavapai Lodge Lobby, and will service only westbound routes. Informational route signage will be located at both stops.

The work involves construction of new canopied seating areas, concrete pedestrian staging areas, as well as concrete braking and loading pads for buses and provisions for storm water drainage. Improvements will be in compliance with current accessibility standards.

This project is being funded through the Recreation Fee Demonstration Program. Authorized in 1996, the program allows participating federal agencies to retain a percentage of fee revenues collected to help address unmet needs for visitor services, repairs and maintenance, and resource management. Preliminary design was provided by the National Park Service Denver Service Center, with parkwide consultation. A contract for final design and construction was awarded to At Your Service Companies (AYS) of Phoenix, AZ.

These improvements are in keeping with the Park's 1995 General Management Plan, and are designed with an emphasis on transit-oriented visitation that will improve visitor safety and provide for a better visitor experience. Approximately 1 million visitors annually ride the park's free shuttle bus system. The system provides service throughout the South Rim developed area including Market Plaza, which is a hub of retail outlets and visitor services that include a lodge, cafeteria, gift shop, general store, bank and post office.

For more information about this project, please contact Kate Hammond, DSC Project Manager at 303-969-2949, or by email at Kate_Hammond@nps.gov or Michael Leary, Grand Canyon Project Manager at 928-226-0160, or by email at Michael_Leary@nps.gov



NEWS RELEASE

August 5, 2005

Maureen Oltrogge, 928-638-7779

National Park Service Announces Award of Contract to Operate Grand Canyon Clinic

Grand Canyon, AZ – Grand Canyon National Park Superintendent Joseph Alston today announced the award of a contract for the operation of the Grand Canyon Clinic located on the South Rim of Grand Canyon National Park. The National Park Service received several proposals from qualified companies. After an extensive evaluation process North Country Community Health Center, a non-profit organization based in Flagstaff, Arizona, was selected for the performance-based contract and is expected to begin operation of the clinic on September 1, 2005. The contract was issued for a term of one year with four option years.

North Country Community Health Center, under the direction of Dr. Andrew Saal, will provide community residents, employees, and visitors with primary, urgent, and preventative health care. The clinic will also provide the in-park and gateway community school-related and occupational physicals. The contractor anticipates being open 10 hours per day seven days per week during the summer with reduced hours of operation in the winter season.

North Country Community Health Center's mission is to provide accessible, affordable comprehensive, quality primary healthcare in an atmosphere of respect, dignity and cultural sensitivity. The health and well-being of patients and community alike are promoted through direct services, training/education, outreach, and advocacy.

"We felt North Country Community Health Center was an excellent fit for the community and look forward to working with their management team and provider staff to provide quality care for our residents and park visitors," stated Alston.

The contract requires North Country Community Health Center to accept a broad range of payment forms; specifically accepting payments made by the Indian Health Service, insurance carriers for federal employees and all other major employers with the park. They will offer a sliding scale payment scheme for uninsured and underinsured patients.

The Contractor is required to comply with all applicable regulatory requirements from the United States Public Health Service, the State of Arizona, and Coconino County, Arizona for the operation of medical clinics.

Representatives from the National Park Service, North Country Community Health Center, and the Walk-in Clinic (the current operator); will immediately begin preparations for transition of services.

A community meeting will be held on Tuesday, August 16, from 6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m. in the Shrine of the Ages within Grand Canyon National Park to provide local residents an opportunity to meet the new management team and provider staff and to learn more about the services that will be offered.



NEWS RELEASE

July 14, 2005

Maureen Oltrogge, 928-638-7779

Man Collapses and Dies on Bright Angel Trail

Grand Canyon, AZ – A 28-year old man collapsed and died on the Bright Angel Trail yesterday at approximately 5:00 p.m. Avik Chakravarty from England and a hiking companion started a rim to river to rim hike yesterday at approximately 7:30 a.m. The two started their hike on the South Kaibab Trail and had hiked to Phantom Ranch near the Colorado River. At Phantom Ranch they talked with a National Park Service (NPS) Interpretive Ranger and were advised not to begin their hike to the rim until later in the evening due to the extreme temperatures. The temperature at Phantom Ranch in the shade yesterday was reported to be 113 degrees.

Despite the advice the two hikers began hiking back to the South Rim on the Bright Angel Trail by mid to late-afternoon yesterday. They were approximately three miles north of Phantom Ranch in an area known as Devil's Corkscrew when Mr. Chakravarty collapsed. His hiking partner then hiked up to Indian Garden, which is located approximately two miles north of where Chakravarty collapsed, to report the incident. He arrived at approximately 5:30 p.m.

National Park Service Search and Rescue Rangers arrived on scene at approximately 6:00 p.m. Mr. Chakravarty had already passed away.

His body was recovered and flown to the South Rim this morning and will be transported to the Coconino County Medical Examiner's Office in Flagstaff, Arizona.

Park Rangers suspect Mr. Chakravarty died from heat related illness. An autopsy will be performed later today to confirm cause of death.

"This is a tragic reminder that a rim to river to rim hike in the middle of summer when temperatures are well above 100 degrees in the inner canyon, can be extremely dangerous," stated Ivan Kassovic, an Inner Canyon Ranger at Grand Canyon National Park. He added, "the rim to river to rim hike the two had planned was approximately 17 miles. The NPS strongly discourages rim to river to rim, and rim to rim hikes during the summer when temperatures are extreme. Yesterday, a temperature gauge within the rescue helicopter logged a temperature of 120 degrees at 6:00 p.m. near the recovery site."

To avoid trouble, the NPS suggests, planning your hike well before starting; hiking during the cooler, shadier times of the day; eating salty foods and drinking water or sports drinks; and to go slowly, resting often in the shade.

Park Rangers warn of the "Danger Zone," which is a combination of distance traveled, elevation, temperature, and direct sunlight that can easily overwhelm the body's ability to keep itself cool, fueled, and hydrated.

Emergency situations can be avoided by knowing how to avoid the following hazards:

- **Heat Exhaustion** is the result of dehydration due to intense sweating. Hikers can lose one to two liters of water per hour. Rangers at both Phantom Ranch and Indian Garden treat as many as 20 cases of heat exhaustion a day.

Symptoms include: pale face, nausea, cool and moist skin, headache, and cramps. **Treatment:** drink water, eat high-energy goods, rest in the shade, and cool the body.

- **Heatstroke** is a life threatening emergency where the body's heat regulating mechanisms become overwhelmed by a combination of internal heat production and environmental demands. Grand Canyon has two to three cases of heatstroke a year. Symptoms: flushed face, dry skin, weak and rapid pulse, high body temperature, poor judgment or inability to cope, unconsciousness. Treatment: find shade, aggressively cool victim with water, and send for help!
- **Hyponatremia** is an illness that mimics the early symptoms of heat exhaustion. It is the result of low sodium in the blood, which is caused by drinking too much water and losing salt through sweating. Symptoms: nausea, vomiting, altered mental states, and frequent urination. Treatment: have the victim eat salty foods. If mental alertness decreases, seek help!

High temperatures are expected to continue in Northern Arizona and in the inner canyon until the monsoons arrive.

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NEWS RELEASE

July 14, 2005

Maureen Oltrogge, 928-638-7779

Grand Canyon National Park Seeks Public Comment on Environmental Assessment for North Rim Development Plan

GRAND CANYON, AZ - Grand Canyon National Park Superintendent Joseph F. Alston today announced the release of an Environmental Assessment (EA) for the North Rim Development Plan, which is tiered to Grand Canyon National Park's 1995 General Management Plan. The park proposes actions on the North Rim that would improve visitor orientation and interpretation, vehicle and non-vehicular circulation, employee housing, and the use of various historic and non-historic buildings. The boundary of the planning area includes National Park Service land along the State Highway 67 road corridor from the North Rim Entrance Station to Bright Angel peninsula and the developed areas on the peninsula. Proposed actions include expanded interpretive exhibits and media in the existing visitor center and the Lodge; reconfiguration of the Lodge road and parking area; widening of the North Kaibab Trailhead parking area; and construction of a Greenway trail segment between the North Kaibab Trailhead and the Lodge, among others.

The EA evaluates one alternative for addressing the purpose and need for action (Alternative B). The evaluation of taking no action at this time (Alternative A, No Action) is also included for comparison.

Copies of the EA can be obtained by writing to the Superintendent, Grand Canyon National Park, P.O. Box 129, Grand Canyon, Arizona 86023, Attn: Sara White, Environmental Compliance Officer, or on-line at www.nps.gov/grca/compliance/nr-dvpt-plan.htm. Comments will be accepted for 30 days and should be sent to Sara White at the above address by August 16, 2005. For questions or additional information, please contact Debbie Lutch, project compliance lead, at 928-774-0095.

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NEWS RELEASE

July 14, 2005

Maureen Oltrogge, 928-638-7779

GRAND CANYON NATIONAL PARK SEEKS PUBLIC INPUT ON PRELIMINARY PROPOSAL TO REHABILITATE HERMIT ROAD

Grand Canyon, AZ -Grand Canyon National Park Superintendent Joseph F. Alston today announced the continuation of a public involvement effort initiated in June 2004 for the rehabilitation of Hermit Road. Hermit Road is an approximately seven-mile long, two-lane paved road that connects Grand Canyon Village to Hermits Rest along the west rim of Grand Canyon National Park. The National Park Service (NPS) initiated the public process for this project in June 2004 with a request for comments on several preliminary alternatives under consideration for rehabilitation of the road. Based on the input received from the public, other agencies and groups, and from NPS staff, the park has refined the objectives for this project and developed a more detailed project proposal that addresses the purpose and need for the project and the objectives for taking action.

Hermit Road and its associated overlooks and parking areas are historic, designed and constructed in 1934/35 by the Civilian Conservation Corps and Bureau of Public Roads and still retains a high degree of integrity. However, the overall road condition is poor and does not meet current safety standards. It is too narrow for safe passage of buses, especially when bicyclists and pedestrians are on the road.

The NPS proposes to widen Hermit Road up to 24 feet to provide two 11-foot-wide vehicle lanes and two, six-inch to one-foot shoulders on each side of the road. Road width would be increased by three to six feet and would continue to provide two-way bus traffic, with no changes in current bus operations. The proposal would create a two-way bicycle/pedestrian trail, called a Greenway, between Grand Canyon Village and Hermits Rest. In some places the Greenway would be on the south side of the existing road and in other areas it would be on the north side. The Greenway distance from the roadway would depend on existing landscape features and slope. The trail would be paved and would be approximately eight to ten feet wide. Improvements are also being considered for the existing unpaved rim trail and overlook parking areas.

Copies of the scoping letter, detailing the project proposal, can be obtained by writing to the Superintendent, Grand Canyon National Park, P.O. Box 129, Grand Canyon, Arizona 86023, Attn: Sara White, Environmental Compliance Officer, or on-line at www.nps.gov/grca/compliance/hermit-road.htm. Comments will be accepted for 30 days and should be sent to Sara White at the above address by August 19, 2005. For questions or additional information, please contact Debbie Lutch, project compliance lead, at 928-774-0095.

**NEWS RELEASE**

July 6, 2005

Contact(s): Louis Haynes, Bruce MacDonald, Diane Williams

Phone: 928-638-7819

PLANNING FOR MANAGED FIRES IN GRAND CANYON NATIONAL PARK

Grand Canyon, AZ – Grand Canyon, AZ – The Dragon Complex Fires, located on the North Rim about four miles west of North Rim Lodge, are being managed under a strategy called Wildland Fire Use. The Dragon Fire is the largest and most active of the fires now burning on the North Rim. By July 5, the fire reached approximately 1645 acres and is expected to continue growing. The remote Tiyo Point Trail on the North Rim is currently closed. There are no other closures in the Grand Canyon NP at this time.

Grand Canyon National Park and Kaibab National Forest management met with William Clark's Great Basin Fire Use Management Team on Tuesday to review and approve a plan for the Dragon Fire. The Stage III Plan states natural and cultural objectives, defines the area under management, examines values threatened and sets guidelines for different contingencies.

Objectives for this fire include providing first for safety of all assigned personnel and the public in the area, and to avoid adverse impacts to cultural and natural resources, including air quality and soundscape. Ensuring that fire effects are within the range of acceptable levels defined by Grand Canyon fire monitoring guidelines is also a priority. Other important elements in this plan are long range weather and fire behavior predictions.

A priority for park officials is keeping the fire away from the North Rim developed area, including the Lodge, campground and administrative buildings. Fire crews continue to work along existing roads in the path of the fire. Removing down trees and other burnable materials near the roads will enable them to stop the fire if suppression action is needed.

Smoke impacts may be possible. Smoke in the park is constantly monitored and when conditions that effect public safety or canyon air quality occur, warnings will be issued. For additional fire information, please call 928-638-7819.



NEWS RELEASE

July 1, 2005

Maureen Oltrogge, 928-638-7779

Man Collapses and Dies on North Kaibab Trail in Grand Canyon

Grand Canyon, AZ - A 45 year-old California man collapsed and died while hiking with a Boy Scout group in Grand Canyon National Park this morning. The man, Joseph Roitz, and 10 others had hiked into the canyon on Wednesday with the intention of spending several days hiking in the Grand Canyon. The group spent last night at Cottonwood Campground on the north side of the Colorado River and were on a day hike to the North Rim when Roitz collapsed.

A member of the group administered CPR but was unable to save Roitz.

The incident occurred on the North Kaibab Trail approximately two miles below the rim and approximately five miles above Cottonwood Campground.

His body has been flown to the South Rim and will be transported to the Coconino County Medical Examiner's Office in Flagstaff, Arizona.

An investigation will be completed by the National Park Service.

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NEWS RELEASE

June 22, 2005

Maureen Oltrogge, 928-638-7779

Grand Canyon National Park Announces Solicitation for Medical Clinic Services for South Rim

Grand Canyon, AZ - A solicitation for a performance based procurement contract for the clinic operation at Grand Canyon National Park was issued on June 17th. The clinic is located in Grand Canyon National Park in the park's south rim developed area and is approximately 60 miles from any other medical care provider. Grand Canyon National Park hosts approximately 4.6 million visitors annually and has 1,500 to 2,500 residents, depending on the season. The Grand Canyon clinic operates on a year-round basis and provides park residents, employees and visitors with primary, urgent and preventative health care.

The successful contractor will begin operations on September 1, 2005. The contract will be for the base term of one year with four optional years to follow.

A site visit for potential contractors is scheduled for July 7, 2005. Proposal submissions are due by July 18, 2005 at 10:00 a. m. Mountain Standard Time. Proposal submissions should include a detailed description of how potential bidders would operate the clinic at Grand Canyon to meet visitor and community needs. The solicitation and more detailed information about the clinic operation, including instructions for proposal submissions, can be found on the Federal Business Opportunities website at www.fedbizopps.gov. For additional information contact Ted Koppenhafer, Contract Specialist for the National Park Service at (928) 226-0125.

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NEWS RELEASE

June 16, 2005

Maureen Oltrogge 928-638-7779

California Man Dies After Being Struck By Lightning

Grand Canyon, AZ – A California man visiting the Grand Canyon on Saturday, June 11, was struck by lightning as he was walking along the west rim of Grand Canyon National Park. Ben Bernal a 55 year old man and another visitor, a 47 year old female also from California, were standing close to a tree when both were struck by lightning. Both received injuries and were treated at the scene by park rangers before being transported to Flagstaff Medical Center in Flagstaff, Arizona.

According to park rangers who responded to the scene, it appeared that lightning had hit the tree that both visitors were standing close to before the lightning struck them.

The female victim suffered burns to her legs and chest and was transported by ground ambulance to the hospital. Bernal suffered critical injuries and was transported by ground ambulance to Valle, Arizona then by air ambulance to the Flagstaff Medical Center. Incoming storms prevented evacuation by air from the Park.

Bernal passed away early this morning from his injuries.

Lightning strikes are common on the South Rim of Grand Canyon. This is a tragic reminder that lightning strikes can be very dangerous. Visitors are reminded to stay away from exposed rim areas during thunderstorms. The safest place during a storm is inside a vehicle with the windows closed or inside a building. It is also important to remember that when in or near a storm avoid touching anything metal.

Hair standing on end is a sign that an electrical charge is building near you and a warning that lightning may strike. If this occurs, park rangers advise to move away from the rim immediately.



Park Ranger stands close to tree that was struck by lightning and close to where victims were standing.

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NEWS RELEASE

June 14, 2005

Maureen Oltrogge 928-638-7779

Grandview Trail to Remain Closed Until October

Grand Canyon, AZ – The Grandview Trail, which was closed to the public in March after a rock slide eliminated a quarter-mile section of the trail, will remain closed until October. Although the National Park Service had hoped to have the trail repaired and open by mid-June, trail crews were kept busy over the last few months with repairs to several of the corridor trails which were damaged by heavy rain and snowfall this past winter.

Trail work on the Grandview Trail began this week and is anticipated to continue until October. Trail crews will need to rebuild several rock walls and switchbacks that are located in steep and rugged areas adding to the time and complexity of the reconstruction effort.

No additional backcountry permits will be issued for the Grandview Trail before October. “We have been working with permit holders to reschedule trips where we can,” stated Steve Sullivan, Permits Program Manager. “For those that can’t be rescheduled, we have offered to refund permit fees. Its always frustrating when trails need to be closed,” added Sullivan, “people plan for these trips well in advance and are generally disappointed when they have to alter their plans.”

All other inner canyon trails are currently open for pedestrian use. A backcountry permit is needed for any overnight hike below the rim. Temperatures are beginning to get much warmer in the inner canyon and hikers are advised to go well prepared for both day and overnight hikes. Park rangers emphasize avoiding trouble by “hiking smart” and suggest that all hikers plan their hike well before they start; hike during the cooler, shadier times of the day; to eat salty foods and drink enough water or sports drinks, and to go slowly and rest often in the shade.

Further information on hiking in Grand Canyon National Park can be obtained by calling the Backcountry Information Center at (928) 638-7875.



NEWS RELEASE

June 12, 2005

Donna Nemeth 928-638-7944

FIRE MANAGERS AT GRAND CANYON ARE MANAGING THE TUWEEP FIRE

Grand Canyon, AZ – The National Park Service fire program has evolved from one of suppressing fire to one of managing fire. While suppression is appropriate at times, other management options allow fire to be used as a tool to enhance ecosystem restoration.

The Tuweep Fire, located five miles southwest of the Tuweep Ranger Station, is being managed under a strategy called Wildland Fire Use, which allows some lightning-caused fires to burn, under specific conditions and within a predetermined area, for resource benefits. This fire is being carefully monitored to ensure that the desired objectives are being met. Suppression actions will be taken if fire behavior begins to compromise these objectives.

The Tuweep Fire is burning in grass, sage, and pinyon-juniper. As of this evening, the fire is 1,021-acres in size. Five fire fighters are currently assigned to the incident.

Historically, southwestern forests burned regularly. The absence of fire for nearly one hundred years, combined with other human influences, has increased the potential for extreme fire behavior. This fire, ignited naturally by lightning on June 11th, is considered beneficial, and is being monitored as it reduces dead forest debris such as pine needles, duff and logs to ash.

Smoke impacts may be possible. For additional fire information, please call 928-638-7819.



NEWS RELEASE

June 9, 2005

Maureen Oltrogge 928-638-7779

SEMI TRUCK ROLLS OVER ON IT'S SIDE WHILE DELIVERING ASPHALT AT GRAND CANYON

Grand Canyon, AZ – A semi truck delivering asphalt in Grand Canyon National Park rolled over on it's side this morning at approximately 10:00 a.m. The accident occurred on a service road between the south side of the El Tovar Hotel and the Grand Canyon Depot. When the semi truck rolled it spilled it's load of asphalt on a slope above the Grand Canyon Depot. The asphalt was contained to an area immediately surrounding the truck. The driver did not suffer any apparent injuries and declined transport to the local clinic.

The asphalt was for the resurfacing of the service road on the backside of the El Tovar and was being delivered by a contractor.

Park rangers will attempt to upright the vehicle with two large tow trucks that have been requested from Flagstaff and Cottonwood, Arizona. During this effort traffic will be routed around the accident scene, but should not affect access to any of the lodges, restaurants or other retail operations near the rim. Once the truck has been removed cleanup efforts will begin to remove the asphalt from the accident scene.

The accident is under investigation by the National Park Service.







NEWS RELEASE

June 8, 2005

Maureen Oltrogge 928-638-7779

New Chief of Concessions Announced for Grand Canyon National Park

Grand Canyon, AZ – Superintendent Joe Alston today announced the selection of the new Chief of Concessions Management for Grand Canyon National Park. Rebecca Rhea, currently the Chief of Business Resources at Grand Teton National Park has been selected to fill the job that was vacated in October.

As Chief of Concessions Management, Ms. Rhea will manage all concessions and commercial use operations and will serve as an advisor to the Superintendent in establishing park policy for the Park's Concessions Management Program. Additionally she will represent the National Park Service (NPS) in the development and management of new and existing concessions contracts within Grand Canyon National Park. Included in the program is the management of 22 concession operations with services that include: restaurants, hotels, gift shops, tour bus operations, mule/livery operations, commercial river running services, camper services, grocery, service stations, guided rail tours and other retail operations. She will also administer the Incidental Business Use Permit Program that includes over 300 commercial tour bus permits, as well as permits for other commercial business operations including guided hiking services.

Ms. Rhea has an extensive background in Concessions Management with the National Park Service. She has been the Chief of Business Resources at Grand Teton since November of 2002. Prior to that she was a Concessions Analyst at Grand Teton since February 1997 and in concessions management with the NPS since 1991. She also worked as Acting Regional Chief of Concessions in the Alaska Regional Office, as a public affairs specialist at Grand Teton, a park ranger in law enforcement at Shenandoah National Park, as a park naturalist at Sandy Hook Unit of Gateway National Recreation Area and as a park ranger at Mount Rainier. She started with the NPS in 1973.

In addition to developing the prospectus for the largest concession operation at Grand Teton, she is also credited with the development and release of numerous other prospectuses for concessions operations at Grand Teton. She is also a training instructor for the Concessions Management Program and serves on a task force for the Standards, Evaluation and Rate Approval Program for the NPS.

"Ms. Rhea brings with her a great deal of experience and strong background in concessions management, along with a broad knowledge of NPS operations," stated Superintendent Alston. "She will be a great asset to Grand Canyon National Park, our concessioners and the million of visitors who come to enjoy the Park annually. We are looking forward to her joining our management team and providing her valuable insight into the management of this large and complex program."

Ms. Rhea attended Bryn Mawr College in Bryn Mawr, PA and graduated from the University of Montana with a degree in Resource Conservation from the School of Forestry. She is originally from Findlay, OH and has three children: William Griffin of Burlington, VT, Brian Griffin, a senior at the University of Arizona, and Kelsey Griffin, a freshman at Cal Poly in San Luis Obispo, CA.

"I am thrilled to be moving to Grand Canyon National Park and have the opportunity to work with the great staff there and take on new challenges in such a grand and inspiring setting. It's a privilege for me to get to spend part of my life at such an amazing place. I'm looking forward to getting to know the park and working with the concessioners and the park staff. Plus, the thought of warmer weather sounds quite appealing. This will be my first time living in the Southwest," stated Ms. Rhea.



Rebecca Rhea, Selected as New Chief of Concessions Management at Grand Canyon National Park



NEWS RELEASE

June 2, 2005

Donna Nemeth 928-638-7944

ATOKO PRESCRIBED FIRE SCHEDULED

Grand Canyon, AZ – The Topeka prescribed fire is scheduled to take place on the park’s South Rim sometime within the next few weeks, as conditions permit. Prescribed fires are ignited when environmental factors such as wind, temperature and relative humidity are favorable, so that fire may be used to obtain desired resource objectives. Aerial ignition will be used to treat 2,123-acres, located immediately southwest of Grand Canyon Village. This is a third entry burn, meaning that the area has been treated with prescribed fire twice in recent years.

Prescribed fires are one of the most effective tools available to resource managers for restoring fire dependant ecosystems. These fires mimic natural fires by reducing forest fuels, recycling nutrients and increasing habitat diversity. Each prescribed fire is designed to meet specific objectives. For example, a prescribed fire might be implemented to improve wildlife habitat. The Topeka prescribed fire will create a more defensible space around the South Rim developed area. All prescribed fires are managed with firefighter and public safety as the first priority.

Thorough planning is used to minimize smoke impacts; however, it is impossible to predict weather patterns and smoke behavior with complete accuracy. A large smoke column is to be expected on the day of the burn and residual smoke impacts may occur in Grand Canyon or Tusayan. Smoke impacts may also occur along the river at night and in the early morning hours, since smoke settles when the air temperature cools and lifts during daylight hours. No park closures are anticipated at this time.

For additional fire information, please call 928-638-7819.



NEWS RELEASE

May 23, 2005

Donna Nemeth 928-638-7944

TOPEKA PRESCRIBED FIRE SCHEDULED

Grand Canyon , AZ – The Topeka prescribed fire is scheduled to take place on the park’s South Rim sometime within the next few weeks, as conditions permit. Prescribed fires are ignited when environmental factors such as wind, temperature and relative humidity are favorable, so that fire may be used to obtain desired resource objectives. Aerial ignition will be used to treat 2,123-acres, located immediately southwest of Grand Canyon Village. This is a third entry burn, meaning that the area has been treated with prescribed fire twice in recent years.

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NEWS RELEASE

May 16, 2005

Jennie Albrinck 928-638-7739

Greg Litten 928-638-7647

ARTIST-IN-RESIDENCE NORTH RIM

Grand Canyon, AZ – The National Park Service announces the selection of Ann Legge of Prescott, Arizona as the spring 2005 Artist-in-Residence. Ms. Legge works with a multi-dimensional mix of woods and paints. Her participation in the Artist-in-Residence program continues the legacy of art in our national parks. She will be in residence on the North Rim of Grand Canyon National Park from May 15 through June 4, 2005. The Artist-in-Residence program on the North Rim of Grand Canyon National Park began in 2002 with a resident writer. Artists from around the world compete for three residencies per year – spring, summer and fall. Artistic mediums can include painting, pen and ink drawing, charcoal, sculpture, wood working, photography, dance, music or writing.

The broad vistas and overwhelming landscapes of the American West have inspired generations of artists. Their idyllic paintings, rough and tumble novels, sepia prints, and soaring musical scores, in part, prompted politicians to establish the national parks as an enduring heritage. This artistic heritage began with the artwork and photography that accompanied the Yellowstone Expedition of 1871. This art helped to influence Congress to preserve Yellowstone as our first national park. Today's Artist-in-Residence programs at the North Rim of Grand Canyon National Park, as well as at other parks around the country, preserve that memory today. The nation and the National Park system are changing. So too has a new generation of artists emerged with contemporary techniques and bold new mediums. It is the task of these new artists to help frame our invaluable national heritage in enduring words and images for those who visit now, those who will come later and for those who will know the parks only in this artistic legacy.

Few parks have inspired as much wonder as the Grand Canyon, a world-renowned symbol of the American dreams of exploration and endless possibilities. Ms. Legge will experience a unique opportunity to live and work in this unparalleled setting. Come and share in the beauty of her art. She will present two evening slide programs at 8:00 p.m. on Friday May 27 and Friday June 3 in the Lodge auditorium on the North Rim of Grand Canyon National Park. She will also present several informal discussions and demonstrations of her work on the back porch of the Lodge. Join her to experience Grand Canyon through the eyes of an artist.

For more information on the Artist-in-Residence, including the application process for next year's Artist-in-Residence program, please inquire at the North Rim Visitor Center, or at <http://www.nps.gov/volunteer/air.htm>.

Advance overnight lodging reservations for North Rim facilities may be made by contacting Xanterra reservations in Denver at (888) 297-2757. Callers from outside of the United States must call (303) 297-2757. Advance reservations for the North Rim Campground must be made through Spherix, and can be made up to five months in advance by calling (800) 365-2267. Callers from outside of the United States must call (301) 722-1257.



NEWS RELEASE

May 3, 2005

Jennie Albrinck, 928-638-7739

GRAND CANYON NORTH RIM SEASONAL OPENING DELAYED DUE TO WINTER CONDITIONS

Grand Canyon, AZ - Highway 67 to the North Rim of Grand Canyon National Park, which is closed each winter, is anticipated to be opened to the public beginning Monday, May 16, 2005 at 8:00 a.m. Delays to the original opening date of May 10, 2005 were necessitated by unusually heavy late season snowfall and persistent cold weather conditions. Continued snowfall and cold weather could necessitate further delays to the opening. The delayed road opening will cause disruption to previously scheduled visitor services. Please contact the following offices to confirm reservations:

- Xanterra Parks and Resorts, Inc. reservations at (888) 297-2757
- Grand Canyon Trail Rides reservations at (435) 679-8665
- Spherix campground reservations at (800) 365-2267
- National Park Service Backcountry Information Center for backcountry permits and access to North Rim backcountry areas at (928) 638-7875 or for general information on the North Rim including road conditions at (928) 638-7870

Xanterra Parks & Resorts, Inc. at the North Rim (Xanterra) will commence their seasonal operations on May 16 as well, continuing through October 14, 2005. Xanterra operations include lodging, camper services, food services, groceries and a service station. All concessions facilities will open at 11:00 a.m.

Grand Canyon Trails Rides, which offers a variety of mule trips along the rim and inner canyon, will resume operations when conditions permit.

It is anticipated that all services provided by the National Park Service including the North Rim Visitor Center, Grand Canyon Association bookstore, backcountry permit reservations, campground and ranger programs will be available on May 16, at 8:00 a.m. The first ranger-led program of the season will be the Evening Program and is currently scheduled in the lodge auditorium on May 16, at 8:00 p.m. The National Park Service expects to have the road to Cape Royal and Point Imperial open May 27, for Memorial Day weekend; however, continued snowfall and cold weather could further delay the opening of these roads. All primitive roads leading to Swamp Point and Point Sublime are not anticipated to reopen for the season until early- to mid-June. The North Kaibab Trail is open to foot traffic, however, visitors should expect and be prepared for snow and icy conditions.

Advance overnight lodging reservations for North Rim facilities may be made by contacting Xanterra reservations in Denver at (888) 297-2757. Callers from outside of the United States must call (303) 297-2757. Advance reservations for the North Rim Campground must be made through Spherix, and can be made up to five months in advance by calling (800) 365-2267. Callers from outside of the United States must call (301) 722-1257.

The Kaibab Plateau Visitor Center, operated by the U.S.D.A. Forest Service will open on May 16. The visitor center is

located on Highway 67 at Jacob Lake (approximately 45 miles from the North Rim) and will be open seven days a week from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

The North Rim lies at the southern end of the Kaibab Plateau between 8,200 and 8,800 feet in elevation. At this elevation, temperatures tend to be cooler and precipitation levels higher than the surrounding areas. Snow levels are currently at two feet in the Bright Angel Point area, but over five feet on Highway 67, the entrance road to the North Rim, and other areas within the park. Driving conditions on Highway 67 and within the park are icy and visitors need to drive with care.

Since 1930, only four years have surpassed the winter of 2004-2005 in snowfall – 1994, 1978, 1972 and 1940. The average annual snowfall in the last seventy years is approximately twelve feet. The North Rim has received close to twenty feet of snowfall to date for 2004-2005.

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Media

April 13, 2005

El Tovar Celebrates 100 Years



Bill Johnston, General Manager of Xanterra South Rim LCC, address the crowd during the centennial rededication of the El Tovar Hotel, Grand Canyon National Park

Grand Canyon
National Park
Superintendent,
Joe Alston,



expresses his appreciation to Bill Johnston, General Manager of Xanterra SR LCC, for the successful 4.6 million dollar renovation of the historic El Tovar Hotel during the centennial rededication of the property on April 13, 2005



A crowd of around 200 people attended the centennial rededication of the historic El Tovar Hotel in Grand Canyon National Park. The hotel is operated by Xanterra South Rim LCC



Xanterra South Rim LCC General Manager, Bill Johnston, introduces Andrew Whittlesey, grandson of El Tovar Hotel architect, Charles Whittlesey, during the centennial rededication ceremony



Bill Johnston, General Manager of Xanterra South Rim LCC, addressing a crowd of 200 people during the centennial rededication of the El Tovar Hotel



Andrew Whittesley (left) grandson of architect, Charles Whittesley, helps to reopen the El Tovar Hotel as Xanterra South Rim General Manager, Bill Johnston, and Grand Canyon National Park Superintendent, Joe Alston, cut the ribbon during the centennial rededication of the hotel

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NEWS RELEASE

April 13, 2005

Maureen Oltrogge, 928-638-7779

Grand Canyon National Park Employees Recognized for Safety Achievements

Employees receive awards during Safety Awareness Month in April

Grand Canyon, AZ – Employees from Grand Canyon National Park were recently recognized for their 2004 safety achievements making the workplace safer and providing the public with a safe place to visit. The awards were presented by Park Superintendent Joseph Alston at a recent managers meeting. The awards are part of the Intermountain Region Safety Awards Program which was established to recognize and celebrate the achievements for employee and public safety efforts, and highlights these successes at three different levels of park operations: individual, team and park.

Award categories included Park/Operating Unit Safety Excellence Awards for Employee and Public Safety Achievement; the Regional Director's Safety Excellence Award for Employee Safety and Health Achievement; Regional Director's Safety Excellence Award for Public Safety Achievement; and the Safety Champions Award Program.

Grand Canyon employees won in two categories. They include:

Regional Director's Safety Excellence Award for Employee Safety and Health Achievement.

Park Award:

This is the highest level award presented for employee safety achievement in the Region. All regional employees (including volunteers) are eligible. Awards are given for three levels of achievement: individual, team, and park. Grand Canyon National Park won the Park Award for the outstanding achievements of all park staff in their cumulative efforts to substantially improve the park's safety performance in 2004. They were recognized for their diligent efforts in developing an effective safety program that involves park management, first-line supervisors, and field employees which resulted in a 66 percent reduction in lost-time injuries over the past three years. Joseph Alston stated, "The commitment and dedication of park staff to continuously improve the employee and visitor safety program is exemplary. I am extremely proud of all of our employees and see them as true champions of safety excellence."

Individual Safety Champion Award:

This program is intended to augment the park and regional safety awards program by providing formal recognition of employees and others for both employee and public safety achievement. The award is designed to recognize individuals specifically outside the professional safety and health community and is awarded to individuals who show innovative work and accomplishments which support and encourage zero loss to human and material resources; enhance the cultivation of a favorable safety and health culture; and/or "champion" the leadership and development of a specific safety activity or program. Pablo Garza, Maintenance Mechanic Supervisor, received the award which recognized his outstanding long-term

achievements in providing leadership in safety excellence to his fellow employees at Grand Canyon National Park. “Pablo’s diligent efforts over the past five years have highlighted his operation with the reputation of being the safest place to work in the park,” stated Joseph Alston, adding, “ his achievements in establishing a top quality workshop environment of service-wide recognition, implementing monthly safety meetings combined with safety training, encouraging employee participation and ownership in safety systems, integrating the Job Hazard Analysis process into operations and upgrading the park’s scaffolding program are just a few of the highlights of his efforts. By fostering a ‘be safe’ culture, Pablo has influenced safety performance throughout the maintenance division. His commitment and dedication to continuously improve his safety program is exemplary and identifies him as a true champion of safety excellence.”

Regional Director’s Safety Excellence Award for Public Safety Achievement

Park Award:

This is the highest level award for outstanding public safety achievement presented in the Region. All regional employees, volunteers, groups, or non-employees are eligible nominees for this award. This year the award went to the Visitor and Resource Protection Division for their outstanding efforts in the development of the highly successful Hike Smart program. Since its inception in 1997, Hike Smart has substantially reduced the number of serious heat related medical incidents of park visitors hiking in the Grand Canyon by over 55 percent. Joseph Alston stated, “Staff members of the Visitor and Resource Protection Division can take great pride in the evolution of the Hike Smart program from an initial response only format to one of a proactive educational program that prevents heat related incidents from occurring.” According to Alston, the success of the program started with effective analysis of the problem, development of an extensive public service announcement campaign, and providing staffing for Preventative Search and Rescue (PSAR) activities. Alston added, “Hike Smart is an exemplary program that highlights the commitment of park staff to continually improve public safety.”

Recipients were presented with special plaques by Superintendent Alston recognizing their achievements. During the awards presentation, Alston also recognized Don Singer, the Park’s Safety Officer, for his leadership, and dedication to continuously improve the employee and visitor safety programs at Grand Canyon National Park. “Don provides direction and guidance to Park employees and has made substantial improvements to the Park’s safety programs over the last several years,” stated Alston, “These awards are a testament to Don’s dedication to safety excellence. He is a great asset to the National Park Service and Grand Canyon National Park.”



NEWS RELEASE

March 9 , 2005

Maureen Oltrogge, 928-638-7779

GRANDVIEW TRAIL TO REMAIN CLOSED FOR NEXT SEVERAL MONTHS

Grand Canyon, AZ – The National Park Service closed the Grandview Trail, located at Grandview Point off Desert View Drive, on February 23rd after a rock slide eliminated a one-quarter mile section of trail, approximately 1,000 feet below the rim.

Further assessments of the trail indicate that work to rebuild and stabilize the trail will take approximately three and a half months. There will continue to be no access to the Grandview Trail until work has been completed. Trail crews will work to rebuild several rock walls and switchbacks which are located in steep and rugged areas adding to the time and complexity of reconstruction.

Northern Arizona has received a significant amount of rain and snowfall this winter causing numerous rock slides and debris flows that resulted in several trail closures, including the Bright Angel and South Kaibab Trails. Although trail crews have repaired much of this damage and the Bright Angel and South Kaibab Trails have reopened to hikers, some work is still required on the South Kaibab Trail to make it ready for passenger mules. Takeouts for overnight mule trips, which normally come up the South Kaibab Trail, are currently being rerouted up the Bright Angel Trail. Trail crews will also be working on the North Kaibab Trail over the next several months to repair storm damage that has occurred throughout the winter.

Approximately 400 permit holders will be affected by this latest closure. Park staff from the Backcountry Information Center are contacting permit holders to inform them of the closure. “We will work with permit holders to reschedule trips where we can, and for those that cannot be rescheduled the National Park Service will refund permit fees,” stated Steve Sullivan, Permits Program Manager.

The closure comes at a very busy time for the Park; spring break is one of the most popular times to hike the canyon as inner canyon temperatures are typically very pleasant this time of the year. “We know there are going to be some very disappointed people,” stated Sullivan, and apologized for the inconvenience. “Erosion is a continuous process at the canyon, but with all of the moisture we’ve received this year, the process has been accelerated and has really taken a toll on the trails.”

Staff from the Backcountry Information Center will contact those holding permits for the Grandview Trail through March 21st by phone. Those with permits that are for a later date will be contacted by mail. Permittees can contact the Backcountry Information Center at 928-638-7875 for additional information about rescheduling or canceling their permit and current trail conditions.



NEWS RELEASE

March 9, 2005

Maureen Oltrogge, 928-638-7779

Archeology Day at Tusayan Museum

Grand Canyon, AZ – The Tusayan Museum in Grand Canyon National Park is celebrating Arizona Archaeology Month by hosting its annual Archaeology Day from 10:00 a.m. through 4:00 p.m. Saturday, March 19, 2005.

Archaeology provides us an opportunity to learn about our shared cultural experiences through exploration of the past. Join park staff on Saturday for archaeological programs and tours of an 800-year old ancestral Puebloan home, but dress warmly as some of the activities will be held outside.

The National Park Service cares for special places saved by the American people so that all may experience our heritage. Play a role in preserving our local treasure by participating in these free archaeological programs. Standard park entrance fees apply.

Schedule of Events:

11:00 a.m. and 1:30 p.m.; “Glimpses of Past” – Consider the people who called Grand Canyon home 800 years ago. How did they thrive in this environment? Tour the remains of an ancestral Puebloan Village with Grand Canyon Vanishing Treasures Archaeologist Ellen Brennan and a Park Ranger. The tour route follows a 0.1 mile (0.2 km) paved trail. The program will last 45-60 minutes.

12:30 p.m. and 2:30 p.m.; “Fragments of History” – Discover the connections between pottery design style and the ancestral peoples who made them by participating in this self-guided activity. Archaeologist Ellen Brennan and a Park Ranger will be on-hand to answer questions.

12:30 p.m. and 2:30 p.m.; “Cultural Clues for Kids” – Explore the mysteries that lie beneath the soil by joining Archaeologist Ellen Brennan and a Park Ranger as we simulate an archaeological dig.

Other cultural demonstration programs will be presented throughout the day, staff permitting.

Tusayan Ruin and Museum is located 21 miles east of Grand Canyon Village. Please contact Ilyse Goldman or Dean Butterworth, Park Rangers, at 928-638-7968 for more information.



NEWS RELEASE

February, 2005

Maureen Oltrogge, 928-638-7779

GRAND CANYON NATIONAL PARK PROTECTS NATIVE SPECIES THROUGH INVASIVE PLANT MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

Park highlights program during National Invasive Weeds Awareness Week

Grand Canyon, AZ - The Sixth Annual National Invasive Weeds Awareness Week occurs February 27th through March 5th. Invasive plants and weeds infest more than 2.6 million acres within the national park system, threatening the complex native ecosystems for which the National Park Service (NPS) serves as guardian and steward. In a coordinated response to the threats that invasive (exotic) plant species pose to biodiversity, the NPS now deploys 17 Exotic Plant Management Teams (EPMT's) throughout the country to assist parks in the inventory, control and monitoring of invasive plants. Many individual parks, particularly the larger ones like Grand Canyon, also have invasive plant management programs.

Grand Canyon National Park began a very active invasive plant management program in 1993, when park biologists noted an increasing number of new plants in the Park. Some species were found far outside of the Park's developed areas and primary trail corridors, the usual areas for invasion. While there were only 116 known invasive plant species in the Park in 1993, there are at least 170 today, comprising about 10% of the total flora.

Grand Canyon National Park's vegetation program focuses control efforts on the highest priority species, including those demonstrating the greatest threats to the Park's native ecosystems and the species for which containment or eradication is feasible. Park staff plan to devote more effort toward prevention with special focus on 1) identifying areas with rich native species diversity, 2) slowing the spread of invasive species into the backcountry of the park, and 3) increasing educational outreach. One of Grand Canyon National Park's most successful invasive species control efforts is the Tamarisk Management and Tributary Restoration Program, which focuses on protecting riparian areas, seeps and springs in the Park. These areas contain extremely valuable habitat for wildlife and plant species, and are among some of the most rare and threatened ecosystems in the Southwest.

Tamarisk (*Tamarix ramosissima*), or salt cedar, is well-known to everyone who has spent any time along rivers in the desert areas of the Southwest. Introduced to the United States in the 19th century as an erosion control agent and ornamental plant, the highly invasive tamarisk rapidly spread and caused major changes to natural environments as it formed dense monocultures. Tamarisk reached the Grand Canyon area in the 1930s, where it occupied some pre-dam terraces and tributaries. It became a dominant species along the Colorado River following completion of Glen Canyon Dam in 1963.

Although some animals use tamarisk, and humans have used it for erosion control and shade, the impact that tamarisk exerts on native ecosystems are well-documented and present challenges for ecologists trying to preserve and restore riparian habitats. A typical mature tamarisk produces about 600,000 seeds, and a large tamarisk may produce up to 250 million seeds. Tamarisk roots can reach depths of more than 100 feet, exploiting water resources that had once been used

by native cottonwoods and willows. Tamarisk often forms dense stands and a thick layer of salty leaf litter, both of which impede the growth of native plant species. As tamarisk invades the beaches, side canyons, and springs in Grand Canyon, native vegetation is crowded out, wildlife is sometimes displaced, and fragile natural and cultural resources become vulnerable from increased fire hazard.

Prior to initiating a tamarisk control effort, park management evaluated the beneficial and adverse impacts of a tamarisk management project to natural, cultural and wilderness resources through a public review process (an Environmental Assessment/ Assessment of Effect). The approved action (the environmentally preferred alternative) includes manual treatment (i.e. hand-pulling) and targeted chemical control of tamarisk in side canyons, tributaries, developed areas, and springs. At this time, the project does not include control of tamarisk along the main river corridor due to the extent of its distribution, the difficulty of control along the 277 miles of the Colorado River within the Park, and the amount of funding required for such an extensive effort.

Grand Canyon's tamarisk control project, which began in fall 2002, has been supported by the Arizona Water Protection Fund, the Colorado River Fund, the Grand Canyon National Park Foundation, the Grand Canyon Wildlands Council, the NPS, and many thousands of hours of volunteer labor. To date, crews have completed work in 70 project areas. In just over two years, crews have removed more than 124,000 tamarisk plants that infested over 4500 acres, with only 12% of the initially controlled plants requiring follow-up treatment. Prior to project implementation, biologists installed a long-term monitoring system that includes 22 transects and 376 fixed photo points to track changes in vegetation. The vegetation transects have allowed biologists to document a 99% reduction of tamarisk cover in treated areas, and an increase in native plants. In many areas where tamarisk trees once formed dense thickets, native species of wildflowers, shrubs and trees now thrive. Park biologists will continue to monitor these project areas for 5-10 years.

For more detailed project information, refer to the [Environmental Assessment/Assessment of Effect](#). If you would like additional information about this project, please contact the park's Inner Canyon Vegetation Program Manager, Lori Makarick at 928-226-0165 or Lori_Makarick@nps.gov. The tamarisk management project is labor-intensive, but a great deal of progress has been made over the past two years largely due to the hard work and dedication of volunteers. The NPS thanks all of the volunteers and welcomes new volunteers to the team. Those interested in this or other Inner Canyon Vegetation Management projects, should visit www.volunteer.gov/gov and look for the volunteer description and apply online.



NEWS RELEASE

January 13, 2005

Maureen Oltrogge, 928-638-7779

Greg Martin, FAA (202) 267-3883

National Park Service And FAA Hosting Meeting On Grand Canyon Overflights Issues

Grand Canyon, AZ - The Department of the Interior/National Park Service (DOI/NPS) and the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) will host an informational meeting, open to the public, on interagency efforts to manage aircraft overflights above Grand Canyon National Park. The meeting will be held on Thursday, February 10, 2005, from 3:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. at the Mesa Convention Center located at 201 N. Center Street in Mesa, Arizona.

The National Parks Overflights Act of 1987 (Public Law 100-91) requires actions by the DOI/NPS and FAA to provide for substantial restoration of the natural quiet of the park and for protection of public health and safety from adverse effects associated with aircraft overflights. Previous efforts to achieve this mandate have been challenging -- both technically, in terms of developing new analytical noise capabilities, and practically, in terms of generating broad support for the specific means of accomplishing substantial restoration of natural quiet. The agencies recognize that the best means of crafting viable solutions for resolving the complexities of restoring natural quiet is through the collaborative involvement of stakeholders and sovereign tribal governments affiliated with the Grand Canyon.

The DOI/NPS and FAA have engaged the independent and impartial services of the U.S. Institute for Environmental Conflict Resolution (U.S. Institute) to facilitate interagency collaboration with effective and meaningful stakeholder involvement. The U.S. Institute is a federal program established in 1998 by the U.S. Congress to assist parties in resolving environmental, natural resource and public land conflicts. It is a program of the Morris K. Udall Foundation, based in Tucson, Arizona.

The first meeting of this kind was held September 29, 2004, in Flagstaff, Arizona. The two agencies offered updates on their efforts to implement Public Law 100-91. They also announced the initiation of a stakeholder and tribal government assessment process to help the agencies understand the perspectives of those with an interest in the issue of overflight noise at Grand Canyon National Park. Working under the direction of the U.S. Institute, Lucy Moore of Lucy Moore Associates, Inc., and her team conducted this assessment by interviewing 46 individuals representing a cross section of interests. An assessment summary of stakeholders and tribal governments views on the overflight issue for the Grand Canyon region was completed and mailed to interested parties in December 2004. Copies of the assessment summary can be obtained by contacting Lucy Moore at 505-820-2166, or lucymoore@nets.com.

DOI/NPS and FAA have continued their collaborative work and believe that they have a good foundation for this next phase of constructively engaging stakeholders and working with tribal governments. At the meeting on February 10 they will: 1) update the status of the noise model review; 2) review the results of the assessment of stakeholders and tribal governments; and 3) propose a stakeholder process design for feedback and comment. Anyone interested in Grand Canyon overflight noise issues is invited to attend.

For more information, please contact:

Ms. Karen Trevino
Manager of Natural Sounds Program
National Park Service
Fort Collins, CO
(970) 225-3563
karen_trevino@nps.gov

Ms. Lynne Pickard
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Editor's Note: A map and directions to the Mesa Convention Center can be found at http://cityofmesa.org/cencntr/pdf/directions_with_map.pdf

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NEWS RELEASE

January 12, 2005

Maureen Oltrogge, 928-638-7779

The Bright Angel Trail In Grand Canyon National Park Closes Due To Weather Impacts

Grand Canyon, AZ - The Bright Angel Trail from Cinch-up, one quarter of a mile below the trailhead on the South Rim, to Indian Gardens will be closed effective immediately to all traffic, mules and hikers. Weather has continued to take its toll on the inner canyon trails causing numerous rock slides and wall failures. Weather has also prevented trail crews from being able to perform the work necessary to re-open. A significant rock fall on January 5, 2005, closed the Bright Angel trail from mile and a half house to Indian Gardens. The closure now extends up the Bright Angel Trail to Cinch-up.

The trail will remain closed until a break in the weather allows crews to clean and stabilize the trails. It is uncertain at this point when the trail will re-open. All other trails within the park remain open, however winter conditions exist. Be prepared for snow, ice and very muddy conditions wherever you are hiking.

One-day and overnight mule trips operated by Xanterra Parks and Resorts, LLC (Xanterra) to Phantom Ranch will be suspended while the closure is in effect. Visitors holding reservations for mule trips may contact Xanterra at (928) 638-2631.

If you are planning to hike at Grand Canyon in the near future, please contact the Park's Backcountry Information Center at (928) 638-7875 for current trail conditions. They can also answer any questions you may have about backcountry permits.



NEWS RELEASE

January 5, 2005

Leah McGinnis, 928-638-7903

Rock Slide Closes A Portion Of The Bright Angel Trail In Grand Canyon National Park

Grand Canyon, AZ - The Bright Angel Trail from the mile and a half house to Indian Gardens will be closed effective immediately to mule traffic and all hikers. The recent rains and heavy snow that started falling Monday evening and continued through Tuesday caused a rock slide that completely covered the trail. This section of trail still remains unstable. Another section of trail washed out when a wall failed.

This portion of the trail will remain closed through the weekend and will be re-evaluated the beginning of next week. Whether the trail opens or not will depend on how stable the rock slide area becomes. Trail crews have already begun work on the trail. All other trails within the park remain open including the Bright Angel Trailhead to the mile and a half house.

One-day and overnight mule trips operated by Xanterra Parks and Resorts, LLC (Xanterra) will be suspended while the closure is in effect. Visitors holding reservations for mule trips may contact Xanterra at (928) 638-2631.

If you currently have a backcountry permit, or if you are planning to hike at Grand Canyon in the near future, come prepared for winter conditions and icy and or very wet trail conditions. Please contact the Park's Backcountry Information Center at (928) 638-7875 for additional information on hiking and trail conditions, or to change your current permit.



