

HIGHLIGHTS OF 2017



NPS INVESTIGATIVE SERVICES BRANCH



Investigative Services Branch
Law Enforcement, Security, and Emergency Services

National Park Service
US Department of the Interior



2017

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE NPS INVESTIGATIVE SERVICES BRANCH

The Investigative Services Branch of the National Park Service provides critical investigative and other law enforcement support to a wide range of customers.


Our core mission is the immediate and long-term protection of park resources, visitors, assets, employees, and residents.

We accomplish this through detection, investigation, apprehension, and successful prosecution of persons who violate laws of the United States of America while within, or while affecting, the National Park System.

- from the ISB Mission Statement



www.nps.gov/ISB

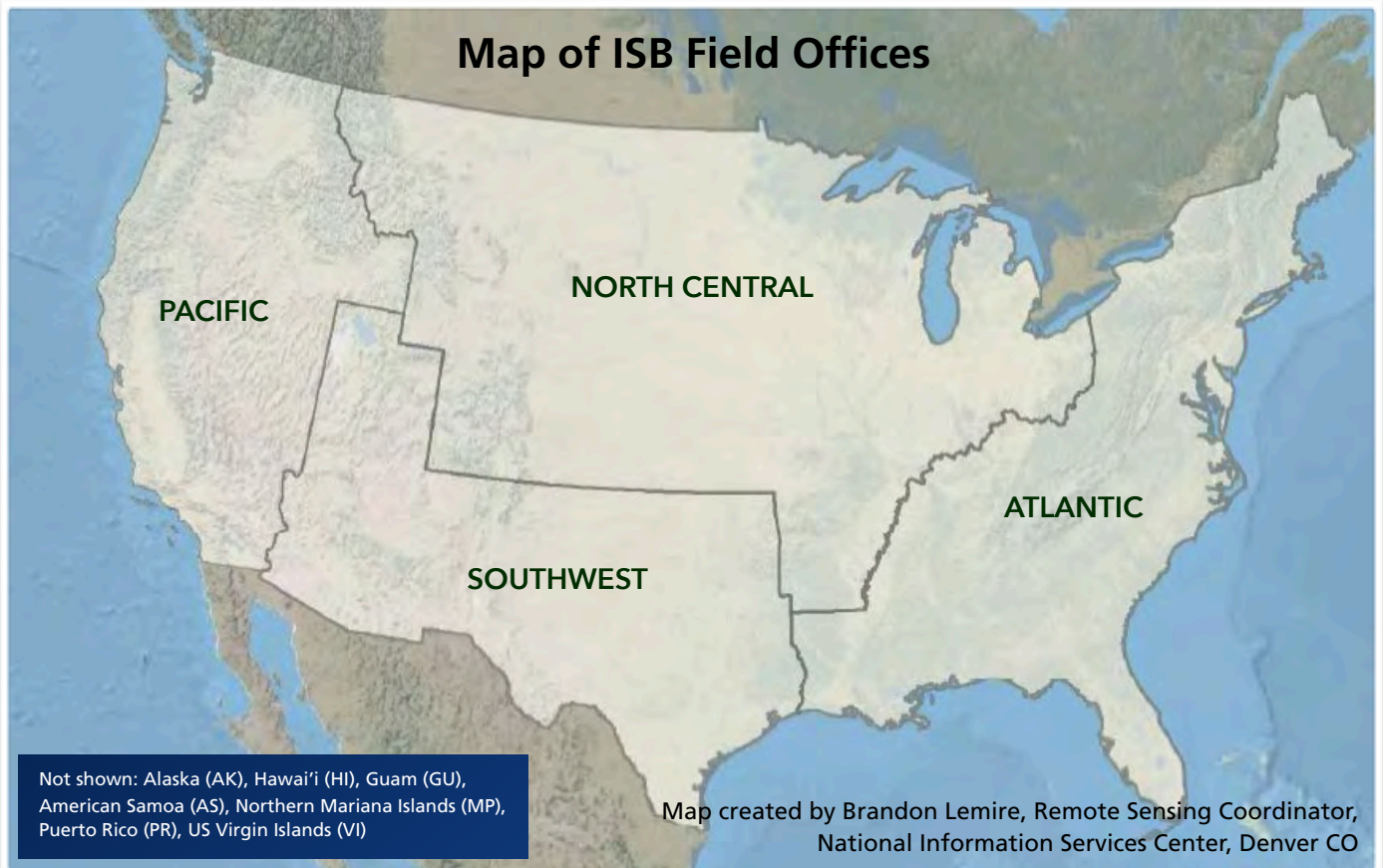
 **Tip
Line** **888-653-0009**

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Map of ISB Field Offices



Pacific Field Office: WA, OR, ID, CA, NV, HI, GU, AS, MP

Southwest Field Office: UT, AZ, NM, TX, OK

North Central Field Office: AK, MT, WY, CO, ND, SD, NE, KS, MN, IA, MO, AR, WI, IL, IN, MI, OH

Atlantic Field Office: ME, NH, RI, VT, MA, CT, NY, PA, WV, VA, MD, DC, KY, DE, NJ, TN, NC, SC, GA, AL, MS, LA, FL, PR, VI

To reach the ISB Duty Agent,
NPS personnel may call the
Emergency Incident Coordination Center (EICC)
888-246-4335



Message from Russell Roy, Chief of ISB

The National Park Service law enforcement program is comprised of the United States Park Rangers, Special Agents, and the United States Park Police. Together, we serve the public interest to protect and preserve resources and people by conducting investigations, apprehending criminals, and preventing crime.

While the primary function of the Investigative Services Branch (ISB) is to investigate felony crimes and sensitive, long-term cases, our success relies heavily upon the preliminary investigations performed by US Park Rangers. The support and collaboration from NPS dispatchers, chief rangers, superintendents and the US Park Police are likewise critical.

This team researches, analyzes, investigates, and brings to justice those who violate the laws of the United States while within, or while affecting, the National Park System.

I am proud of the investigative, social media outreach, and administrative work performed by my staff each day, but I also appreciate the working relationships shared between US Park Rangers, US Park Police, and our Special Agents. Together we stand; divided, we are not!

In 2018, ISB will continue to conduct thorough, factual, and complete investigations. We will continue to provide the greatest level of support to the field. We will also communicate our successes and need for public assistance via our website and social media platforms.

It is an honor and a privilege to serve this program and this great organization.



Chief Russell Roy. NPS photo.

Our mission, vision, and values are clear:

MISSION: The immediate and long-term protection of park resources, visitors, assets, employees, and residents.

VISION: Provide the highest-quality investigative and law enforcement support to parks, regions, and other stakeholders.

VALUES: Honesty. Integrity. Respect. Service.



A bald eagle in Lake Clark National Park & Preserve. NPS photo.

What We Do: Investigations and More

Services we provide include:

Case Preparation Guidance and Support

Computer Forensics Support and Investigation

Covert and Undercover Operations

Crime Scene Management and Processing

Criminal Investigations

Intelligence Analysis and Support

Interviews and Interrogations

Investigative Skills Instruction

Operations Planning and Support

Outside Agency Liaison

Technical Surveillance Support and Equipment

Sources of Information Management

Training and Mentoring

Warrant Planning, Support, and Execution

Wildland and Structure Fire Investigation

ISB Special Agents carry out a wide range of investigative and law enforcement activities for parks and regional offices across the National Park System.

As our Special Agents investigate complex, sensitive, and/or long-term cases of all types of crimes, we work closely with US Park Rangers in the field every day. Investigations include crimes of violence, major property crimes, fraud, embezzlement, major resource violations, drug cultivation, and other incidents.

We are available year-round and around the clock. ISB typically covers the costs associated with deployment of assets.

Agency deployment requests - call the EICC:
888-246-4335

ISB Business Line:
202-379-4761

Tip Line - any NPS site, any time:
888-653-0009



ISB Special Agents and US Park Rangers work closely in the field. NPS photo.

Message from Christopher Smith, Special Agent in Charge

Each year I look back at how the staff of the Investigative Services Branch (ISB) worked hard to ensure justice was done and victims were heard. 2017 was no different.

Through their hard work and daily sacrifices, the employees of this branch changed the lives of others for the better. ISB Special Agents repeatedly responded when called, and helped ensure those who violate the law while in or affecting the National Park System are held accountable.

In addition to conducting investigations into felony violations throughout the year, ISB employees participated in the federal response for natural disasters impacting our country. Our administrative staff were always available to accomplish any task necessary to ensure the agents could do what they do. Our intelligence analyst repeatedly dropped everything to fill critical needs of the agents. All of these pieces make a whole that is strong and effective.

The women and men who make up this branch, all of this branch, are extremely dedicated to the pursuit of justice. Most of them engaged into this profession to help people. They work long hours and sacrifice quality time with their loved ones to further this pursuit.

The agents put their lives at risk to accomplish our mission. It is critical that we acknowledge this. No matter what is in the news, what the politics are surrounding an issue, each ISB employee reports to work giving it their all in furtherance of one mission: that justice is done.

Our staff is dedicated. They push themselves. This year there were many signs of employee stress within ISB, and supervisors spent considerable time discussing and adjusting procedures to mitigate this. We must ensure the work we are asking of our employees is reasonable and balanced.

As new agents are starting their career with ISB, I feel it is critical to note: you have to take care of yourselves physically and mentally. No one can do this for you. There will never be a convenient time to get in a workout, visit a mental health professional, or go on vacation. You owe it to yourself and the people who love you to make it through this career healthy, whole, and as close as possible to the person you were before.

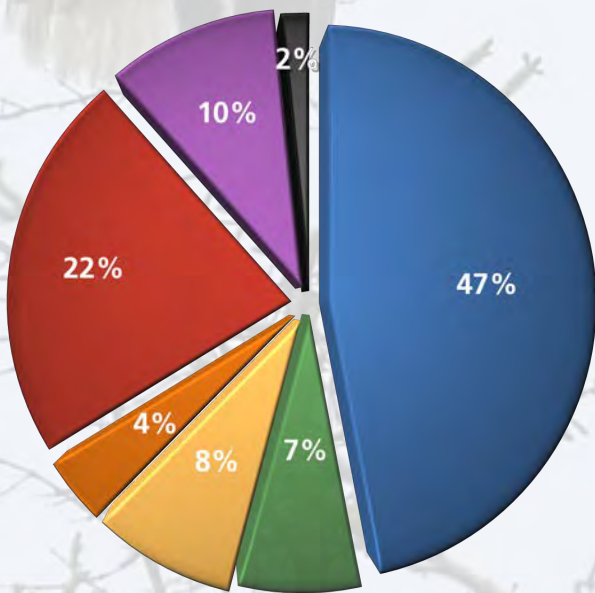
I am immensely proud of the work done by every employee in the Investigative Services Branch. You make sacrifices every day to make the world a better place for us and our children. Thank you for what you do.



SAC Christopher Smith. NPS photo.

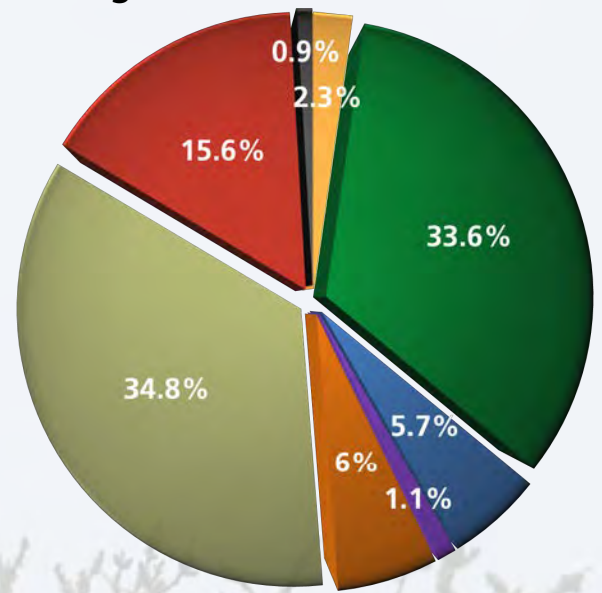
The Year at a Glance: Statistics

Types of New Cases in 2017



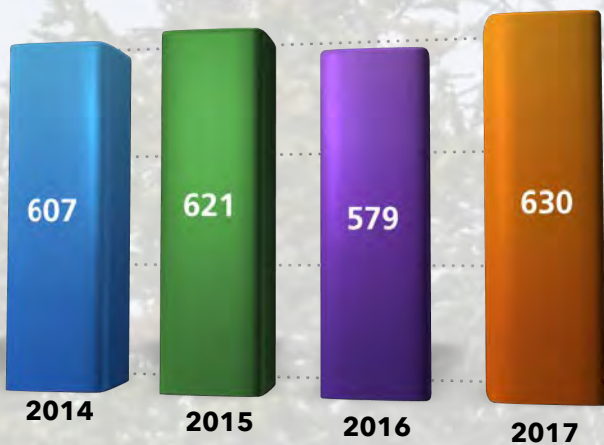
- Crimes Against Persons 47%
- Cultural Resource Crimes 7%
- Drug Crimes 8%
- Natural Resource Crimes 4%
- Property Crimes 22%
- Society Crimes 10%
- Other 2%

New ISB Cases & Assists by NPS Region in 2017

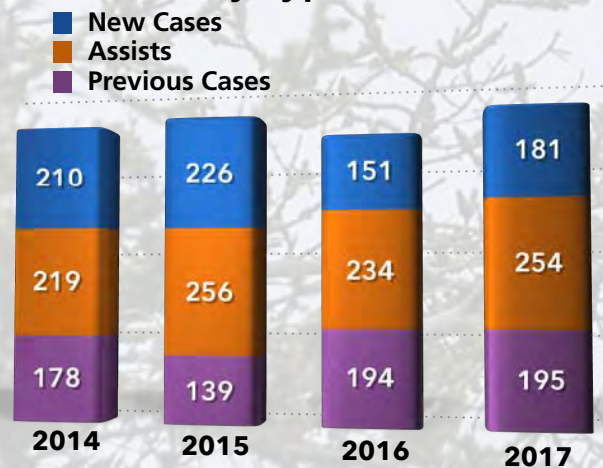


- AKR: Alaska Region 2.3%
- IMR: Intermountain Region 33.6%
- MWR: Midwest Region 5.7%
- NCR: National Capital Region 1.1%
- NER: Northeast Region 6%
- PWR: Pacific West Region 34.8%
- SER: Southeast Region 15.6%
- Other NPS 0.9%

Four Year Comparison: Total Cases by Year



Four Year Comparison: Total Cases by Type



A bald eagle in Kenai Fjords National Park. NPS photo by M Bradburn.

Awards and Recognitions

Each year, ISB employees (Special Agents, Intelligence Analyst, and support staff) receive accolades from our agency and partnering stakeholders. What follows are a few notable acknowledgements.

Multi-year, interagency investigation continues to safeguard wildlife

As an example that authorities will not rest until justice is done, a seized "trophy" Dall sheep ram shoulder mount is displayed at the office of the Assistant Secretary for Fish, Wildlife and Parks in the Main Interior Building (US Department of the Interior). It serves as a lasting reminder of who we are and what we do. The plaque with the mount reads in part:

"This Dall sheep is one of over 20 animals harvested by an illegal outfitting and guiding operation which operated on the Noatak National Preserve... After over 3 1/2 years of investigation, nine defendants pleaded guilty to violations of the Lacey Act and other violations... The host pleaded guilty to 2 felony counts of the Lacey Act and, in addition to paying fines, served 16 months in prison. This case was investigated by Special Agents of the US Fish and Wildlife Service and NPS Investigative Services Branch. Thank you to all of the NPS Rangers and other LE agencies who assisted with the case. A special thanks to the US Attorney's Office in Alaska, Assistant US Attorney Steve Skrocki, and the US Attorney's Office in Jackson, MS."

More about this case, including the 9 defendants and popular TV show associated with it, can be found in our 2016 Highlights edition.

Time in Service Awards: Two members of the NPS Investigative Services Branch achieved the milestone of 10 years of US Government service, one reached 15 years, two reached 20 years, and two marked 25 years of US Government service.

Moving Up, Moving On: A Special Agent with 25 years of service with the National Park Service retired in 2017, and another Special Agent accepted a post as Chief Ranger of an NPS Midwest Region park. Congratulations!

US Attorney's Certificate of Commendation

US Attorney Annette Hayes commended an ISB Special Agent for contributions to the successful prosecution of a cold-case sexual assault against children. The man who committed the crimes will serve more than 8 years in prison.

"But for the efforts of [the Special Agent]," said Hayes, "the two victims in this case, together with their mother, would still be seeking justice. They entrusted their stories to [the agent] who consistently honored that trust by treating them with compassion and dignity. As a result of his diligent work, a dangerous predator was removed from the community for an extended period and his activities will be monitored following his release from prison... It has been an honor for this office to work with [the Special Agent]. As set forth above, his pursuit of justice in the Butcher case was exemplary, and an outstanding example of the work done by the Investigative Services Branch of the National Park Service."

See page 32 for more information about this case.

Regional award issued to an ISB Special Agent

The Northeast Region of the National Park Service recognized an ISB Special Agent with a Star Award:

"[The Special Agent] has always answered the call for service for any park within the northeast, and other regions, when help is most needed... Each of these cases takes hundreds, if not thousands, of hours of research, personal time, investigation, and hard work... [he] never stops [and] brings definition to the word service and deserves recognition for his work and sacrifices... [He] is always there for the parks to call for advice, guidance, leadership, and any hour support. To that, we are thankful."

A Dall sheep ram in Alaska. NPS photo.

Driven by the Dream: ISB Special Agents

We grew up dreaming of being US Park Rangers protecting our national parks. We dreamed of doing law enforcement, search and rescue, emergency medical services, and fighting fire. Along the way to becoming Special Agents we found great love for working law enforcement investigations that involve the protection of our cultural and natural resources, and the people who live in and visit our national park units.

Most Special Agents of the NPS Investigative Services Branch (ISB) were US Park Rangers stationed across the system. Some had left the NPS to become special agents with another federal agency before returning to the NPS with ISB. They all brought with them the skills necessary to be successful investigators - excellent report writing, attention to detail, networking, resourcefulness, and working with others to accomplish one goal: justice.

The realities of our day-to-day operations involve investigating all the same crimes found in just about every other population in the United States. Protecting the citizens who live in and visit our national parks makes up the largest percentage of our case load. Nevertheless, the variety of criminal investigations is one of the greatest aspects of being an ISB Special Agent for the National Park Service. These assignments always keep the job interesting and challenge us daily to become better guardians of our parks and visitors.

We personally know that ISB Special Agents have all embraced these qualities. Each agent strives to work diligently with all aspects of the National Park Service. These dedicated professionals hold a multitude of job descriptions. We all have the shared purpose of protecting our national parks, the resources therein, and the millions of people who visit them each year.



An ISB Special Agent. NPS photo.

Our mission and vision statement hangs near the entrance of each of our offices. It enfoldes the overall mission of the National Park Service, emphasizing the values related to protecting our country's most sacred lands and the people who visit and live in our national parks.

ISB Special Agents dedicate themselves to working with local, state, national, and international partners in law enforcement. Our number one marching order is to work well with others in times of need for parks and people.

For information about opportunities with ISB, please see page 39. Contact us by email at nps_isb@nps.gov or call (202) 379-4761. Visit our website at www.nps.gov/ISB

A Chief Ranger's Perspective

In this guest column, the chief ranger of Grand Teton National Park shares his perspective on the lasting effects of collaborations between US Park Rangers and ISB Special Agents.

Working in a remote, yet busy, western park has many challenges. One of these is that many of our law enforcement investigations have a tendency to extend well beyond the park boundaries. With just under 5 million visits annually there is virtually no limit to where a lead, tip, or suspect may take a case.

Over the past few years, US Park Rangers of Grand Teton National Park have initiated and investigated cases involving arson, Lacey Act violations, sexual assaults, structural fires, suicides, missing persons, and drug trafficking, to name a few. These cases were not easy to solve and took months or even years to develop and close.

Investigations have led to suspects, leads, indictments, and arrests in places like Georgia, Pennsylvania, Oregon, North Dakota, and Utah. The diversity of these cases in geography, complexity and time required far more attention than our ranger program can support while keeping up with day-to-day operations — but that did not mean that these cases didn't need to be pursued.

This is where the long arm of the Investigative Services Branch (ISB) provides expertise. Through the use of technology, advanced training, and professional network contacts, ISB is able to diligently investigate these cases and implement tactics that are often unavailable to field staff.

Often working independently in secluded areas, ISB Special Agents have been able to take many cases before grand juries and ultimately bring justice to the victims of some of our more significant crimes.

Managing a ranger program is difficult enough with keeping positions filled and maintaining a healthy work/rest balance for staff. Day-to-day operations, emergency medical services, search and rescue, structural and wildland fire programs are demanding. Having the support of ISB to give complex and significant cases the time and attention they need is critical to the agency's ability to successfully investigate and prosecute criminal activity.

While this is not typical to associate with visitor experience, taking these cases to conclusion arguably provides closure and satisfaction for some of our most vulnerable visitors. The work accomplished by ISB is an integral component of the healing and recovery process for these victims.

As a chief ranger, I appreciate the invaluable support that ISB Special Agents provide to ranger operations, both immediately on scene as well as long after a crime has occurred. Working with ISB brings resources and expertise not otherwise available to the park. I encourage all parks to reach out and build a solid relationship with ISB.



PUERTO RICO & US VIRGIN ISLANDS
Map inset not to scale.

Legend:

- ▲ ISB Resident Office: staffed by Special Agent(s)
- ★ ISB Supervisory Office: staffed by an ASAC and Special Agent(s)
- ▣ Headquarters

Map created by Brandon Lemire,
Remote Sensing Coordinator,
National Information Services Center, Denver CO

Atlantic Field Office

The Atlantic Field Office of the NPS Investigative Services Branch spans three NPS regions: the Northeast, National Capital, and Southeast. Within that area are 23 states (46%), 167 NPS units (40%), and half of the US population. As of December 2017, this field office is comprised of one supervisor and four Special Agents.

The Assistant Special Agent in Charge (ASAC) for the Atlantic Field Office began his tour in January 2017. Previously stationed as a Special Agent in Sequoia & Kings Canyon National Parks, he joined this field office in 2015, and in 2016 served a detail as Acting ASAC. His experiences as both an NPS GOAL Academy graduate (2014) and a supervisory US Park Ranger prior to joining ISB in 2009 have also helped shape his vision for the Atlantic Field Office.

Having stability in leadership throughout the year enabled the field office to renew its commitment to working with the regions. The Northeast Regional Chief Ranger met with the ASAC in January to discuss the region's needs and how ISB can help meet them. A central theme revolved around ranger awareness of ISB as a resource, and training US Park Rangers to become the next ISB Special Agents.

In July the ASAC met with the chief rangers of the south Florida parks and gained a better understanding of the area's particular challenges. ISB and the region are working together to create solutions for the future.

The Atlantic Field Office welcomed a new Special Agent in January. Now stationed at Great Smoky Mountains National Park, he came to ISB from the South Rim of Grand Canyon National Park where he served as a US Park Ranger. He has also served at Big South Fork National River & Recreation Area, and with the US Fish and Wildlife Service.

In August we congratulated one Special Agent on his retirement after 25 years with the NPS. He was stationed in Shenandoah National Park and previously worked in the Caribbean, the Southeast Region in Atlanta, GA and as a US Park Ranger in Everglades National Park and Big Cypress National Preserve. This Special Agent was remarkably dedicated to the pursuit of justice throughout his 15 years with ISB.

During 2017, Special Agents of the Atlantic Field Office opened 46 investigations and closed 36. This field office also continues to investigate complex cases spanning several years. Many cases this year involved crimes against persons including homicide, sexual assault, and vehicular assault. Other investigations included property crimes (theft of US Government property, theft from government contractors, theft from visitors) and cultural resource cases involving violations of the the Archeological Resources Protection Act (ARPA).

Please see the following pages for noteworthy new, ongoing, and adjudicated investigations.

A snowy owl in Cape Hatteras National Seashore. NPS photo by VIP Edwards.



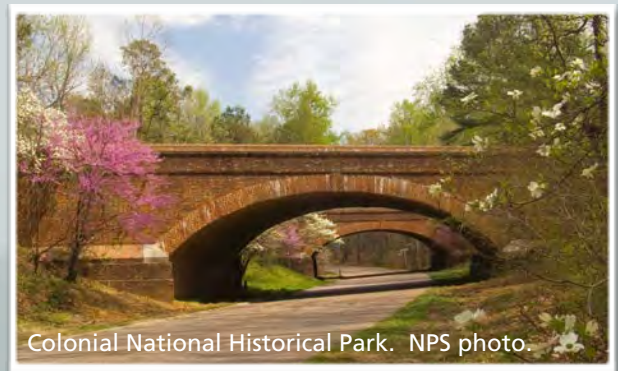
Atlantic Field Office

Tips from the public throughout the year brought to light new incidents on NPS and other public lands, and aided cold case investigations. They have also been instrumental in many of ISB's cases in 2017.

Here are two examples:

Colonial National Historical Park – ARPA Violation:

An anonymous tip sent to the park in October alerted investigators to the illegal looting of artifacts by two people. ISB Special Agents initiated an investigation into violations of the Archeological Resources Protection Act (ARPA) within the park.



Colonial National Historical Park. NPS photo.

Cape Hatteras National Seashore – Repatriation of Stolen Lyle Gun:

A tip from the public in April alerted ISB Special Agents to a Lyle Gun with NPS markings being sold online. Investigators determined that the gun had been stolen from the park in the early 1980s; the park later replaced it with a replica. ISB Special Agents identified the seller, located in New York, and arranged for the Lyle Gun to be recovered by local law enforcement agencies and returned to the park.



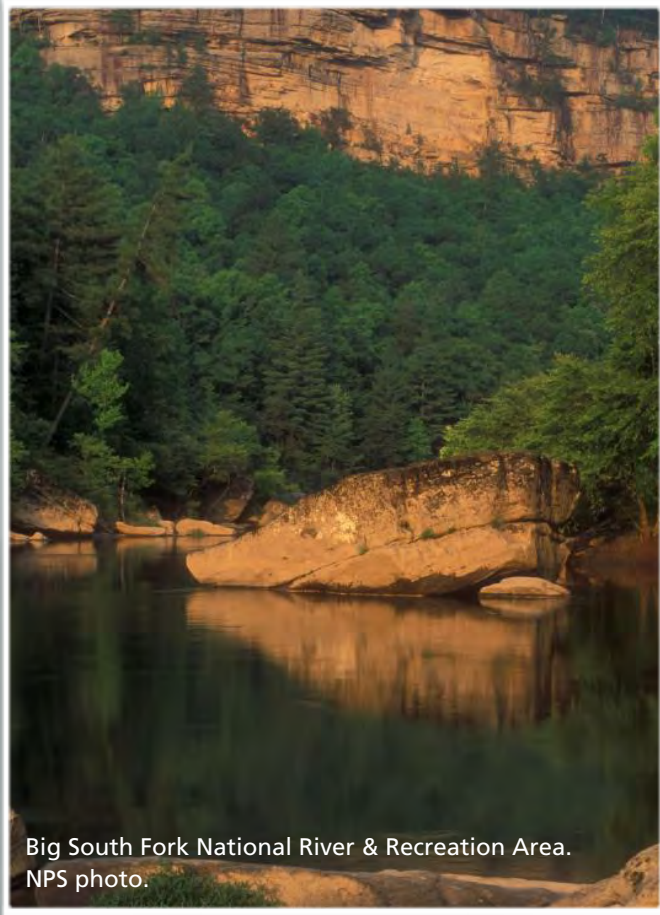
A Lyle Gun. NPS photo.

The Lyle Gun

"Ships running aground in heavy seas could be lost within sight of safety, with the wild surf making rescue by small craft impossible. Soon after Congress authorized a Federal agency to operate coastal facilities in 1871, attention turned to making improvements in lifesaving apparatus. Assigned to this task, ordnance officer David A. Lyle developed a small cannon that shot a projectile, to which a light line was attached, to a stranded vessel. The ship's crew pulled progressively heavier lines from shore or another ship; then a breeches buoy suspended from a rope carried one person at a time from the ship to safety."

Source: Springfield Armory National Historic Site

Atlantic Field Office



Big South Fork National River & Recreation Area.
NPS photo.

Great Smoky Mountains National Park – Vehicular Assault Conviction:

A woman was left with a permanent disability after a motor vehicle collision in the park in May 2016. She was a passenger in a car driven by Christopher Johnson, age 20, who was arrested for driving under the influence. An ISB Special Agent initiated a felony investigation of vehicular assault under Tennessee state law, and Johnson was indicted by a federal grand jury in November 2016. He pleaded guilty in June 2017 and was sentenced in November to serve 30 days in prison, 5 months house arrest, 3 years supervised probation, and community service. Johnson must also pay restitution.

Big South Fork National River & Recreation Area – Kidnapping, Aggravated Assault, Arson:

ISB Special Agents initiated an investigation in February when a man reported being kidnapped, assaulted, and having his car set on fire. Several suspects have been identified and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF) is assisting in the investigation.

Great Smoky Mountains National Park – Reckless Endangerment:

A 13-year-old girl was struck by a motorcycle in July and severely injured. She was standing next to a truck in a park pullout when the motorcycle hit her. The driver lost control going around a corner at a high rate of speed, hit the girl, then fled the scene. ISB Special Agents investigated the hit-and-run collision and identified the driver of the motorcycle. In early 2018 the driver was charged with reckless endangerment, leaving the scene of a collision, and altering a license plate; he was arrested pursuant to a federal warrant.

Great Smoky Mountains National Park – Transport of Minors with Intent to Engage in Sexual Activity Conviction:

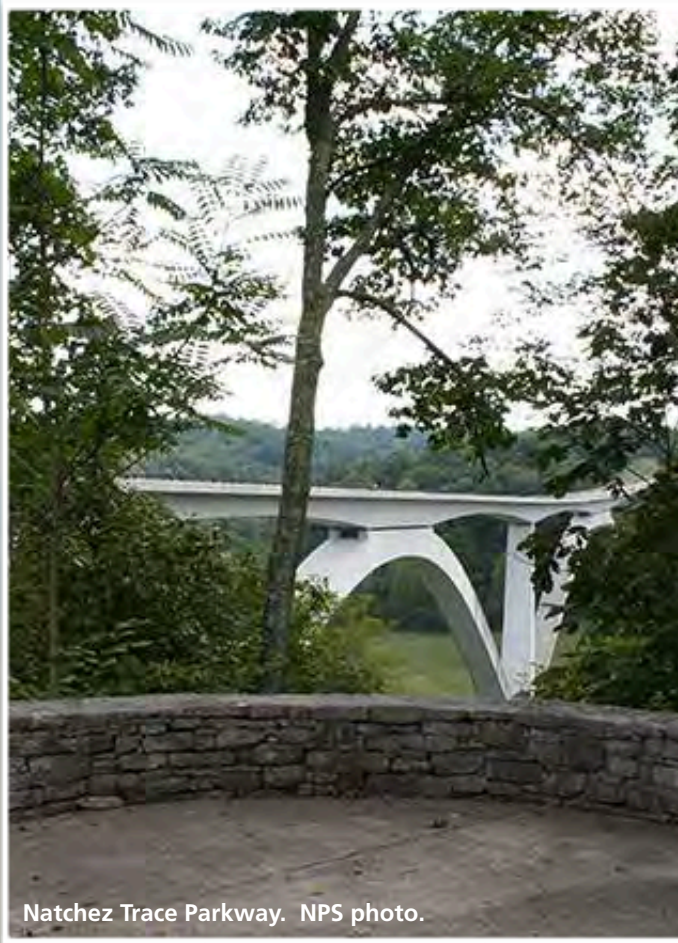
In February 2017, Joseph Patterson of South Carolina was sentenced to serve more than 17 years in prison for transporting minors with the intent to engage in sexual activity. The case was initiated in August 2015 when an ISB Special Agent was contacted by a minor's parent about Patterson's behavior while on a church camping trip to Smokemont Campground during the summer of 2011.

Atlantic Field Office



Cape Cod National Seashore – Arson:

In late December, two unoccupied structures once used as park residences were found burned down to their foundations. US Park Rangers, county, and state investigators initiated an interagency investigation and determined the cause of the fires to be arson. An ISB Special Agent is conducting the criminal investigation in coordination with the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF).



Natchez Trace Parkway – Murder Conviction:

An interagency investigation led by an ISB Special Agent culminated in a lengthy prison sentence for a man who fatally shot a woman on the Natchez Trace Parkway in 2014. On July 3, 2014, Christopher E. Lemon, age 37, stole a firearm from his employer. After work Lemon and a coworker were traveling on the Natchez Trace Parkway in Leake County, Mississippi, where he fatally shot his coworker five times while inside the vehicle. She was later found deceased by a US Park Ranger. A federal grand jury indicted Lemon in September 2016, charging him with Murder in the Second Degree as well as Felon in Possession of a Firearm, Possession of a Stolen Firearm, Stealing a Firearm, and Use of a Firearm in Relation to a Crime of Violence. Lemon pleaded guilty to second degree murder in September 2017. He will serve 480 months (40 years) in federal prison followed by 5 years of supervised release. At the sentencing hearing, Lemon was also ordered to pay \$7,269 in restitution to the Office of Attorney General - Crime Victim Compensation Fund.

Atlantic Field Office

Foothills Parkway (Great Smoky Mountains National Park) – Hate Crime: ISB Special Agents, the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), and investigators with the state of Tennessee are conducting an interagency investigation into kidnapping, robbery, aggravated assault, and attempted murder that occurred on the parkway in March. Information developed during the investigation indicates the incident was a hate crime. Four suspects have been indicted on state charges and are under investigation for federal hate crimes.



Fort Sumter National Monument – ARPA Violation: Park visitors reported seeing a man forcibly removing a support from a casement within the walls of the historic structure in May 2016. The man's actions caused the partial collapse of one of the fort's walls. An ISB Special Agent initiated an investigation. In May 2017, the suspect was indicted by a federal grand jury for violating the Archeological Resources Protection Act (ARPA).



Archeological resources are an irreplaceable part of America's heritage, increasingly endangered because of the escalating commercial value of a small portion of the contents of archeological sites. The **Archeological Resources Protection Act (ARPA)** was enacted in 1979 to secure, for the present and future benefit of the American people, the protection of archeological resources and sites which are on public lands and Indian lands, and to foster increased cooperation and exchange of information between governmental authorities, the professional archeological community, and private individuals. The main focus of ARPA is on regulation of legitimate archeological investigation on public lands and the enforcement of penalties against those who loot or vandalize archeological resources. However, both the original statute and, especially, the amendments to it in 1988 provided authority to Federal officials to better manage archeological sites on public land.

See more at www.nps.gov/archeology/tools/laws/arpa.htm

2017

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE NPS INVESTIGATIVE SERVICES BRANCH

Legend:

- ▲ ISB Resident Office: staffed by Special Agent(s)
- ★ ISB Supervisory Office: staffed by an ASAC and Special Agent(s)



MONTANA

NORTH DAKOTA

MINNESOTA

YELLOWSTONE NP

GRAND TETON NP

WYOMING

SOUTH DAKOTA

WISCONSIN

MICHIGAN

IDAHO

NEBRASKA

IOWA

ILLINOIS

INDIANA

OHIO

UTAH

LAKEWOOD, CO

KANSAS

MISSOURI

JEFFERSON NATIONAL
EXPANSION MEMORIAL

KENTUCKY

OKLAHOMA

BUFFALO NATIONAL RIVER

TENNESSEE

ARKANSAS

MISSISSIPPI

ALABAMA

GEORGIA

ALASKA

ANCHORAGE

TEXAS

LOUISIANA

Map inset not to scale.

Map created by Brandon Lemire,
Remote Sensing Coordinator,
National Information Services Center, Denver CO

North Central Field Office

The North Central Field Office of the NPS Investigative Services Branch includes the Midwest Region, Alaska Region and the northern parks within the Intermountain Region of the National Park System. Seventeen states and 110 NPS sites fall under its umbrella.

Though many of our cases in 2017 were not as high profile as some in past years, Special Agents of the field office were no less busy. Collectively they spent over 230 days in travel status while conducting investigations and supporting parks, the agency, and the department. Some of our cases and operations are shown on the following pages.

ISB Special Agents also supported other federal agencies during several events throughout the year. We responded alongside US Park Rangers and US Park Police in February to assist the Bureau of Indian Affairs at the Standing Rock Sioux Reservation in North Dakota. In September, Special Agents across the nation expediently responded to support parks and people affected by hurricanes Irma and Maria (see pages 36-37 for more information).

Additionally, an ISB Special Agent of the North Central Field Office served as the acting chief ranger of a park in the Midwest Region during a challenging time. His leadership has provided unequivocal support for the rangers stationed there.

At the close of 2017, we congratulated an ISB Special Agent of the North Central Field Office on his new post as chief ranger for Effigy Mounds National Monument. He served as an ISB Special Agent from 2006 through early 2018 and began his agent career in Yellowstone National Park before moving to the Midwest Region. His career has included working such prominent cases as the investigation that led to the location and repatriation of stolen American Indian human remains in Effigy Mounds. More about this case is featured in our 2016 Highlights edition.

See pages 36-37 for more on our response to support people and parks impacted by severe weather events in 2017.
NPS photo by the Investigative Services Branch.



North Central Field Office

Standing Rock Sioux Reservation – Support for the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA):

In February 2017, the ongoing Dakota Access Pipe Line (DAPL) protest was putting a strain on the community of the Standing Rock Reservation. To aid its officers from many nations who had been working on extended details away from their families and homes, the BIA requested assistance from the US Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS), Bureau of Land Management (BLM), and the National Park Service (NPS) — its sister agencies in the Department of the Interior (DOI). Special Agents, US Park Rangers, US Park Police, and other DOI law enforcement officers formed a special events team to answer the call for help and provide incident command support. Many tons of trash and extensive resource damage were left in the wake of people illegally homesteading on and near the reservation. This interagency team helped the BIA resolve what was a difficult and contentious time for the Standing Rock Sioux community, and was a positive example of how agencies with unique missions can serve together and support one another in times of need.

Trash and resource damage in the wake of illegal homesteading on the Standing Rock Sioux Reservation. DOI team photos.

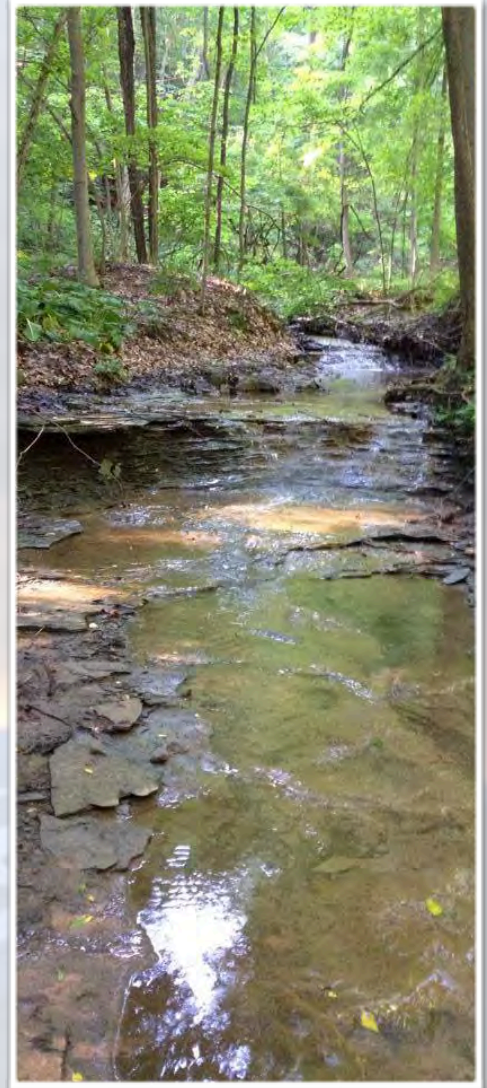


North Central Field Office

Cuyahoga Valley National Park – Attempted Homicide:

At a 2017 court hearing, DeZay M. Ely was sentenced to serve life in prison for shooting a woman in Cuyahoga Valley National Park in 2016. Ely, age 28, pleaded guilty earlier this year to charges including attempted murder, discharging a firearm during a crime of violence, and being a felon in possession of ammunition. Court documents detail how Ely attempted to kill the woman on July 3, 2016 by shooting her repeatedly in the head. Ely wanted to test a gun "before he robbed somebody." The victim was found near a park trail by passers-by. During transport to an area hospital she was unable to speak and in critical condition. The investigation of this crime was an interagency effort between US Park Rangers of Cuyahoga Valley National Park, ISB Special Agents, the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), and the Ohio Bureau of Criminal Investigation (BCI). "The collaboration between the FBI, the Cuyahoga Valley National Park Service [sic], BCI, and the public was invaluable to identifying and holding Ely accountable for this senseless crime," said the Special Agent in Charge of the FBI's Cleveland Office. At the sentencing hearing, the judge ordered Ely to serve 20 years in prison for attempted murder, to be followed by a consecutive sentence of life in prison for discharging a firearm during a crime of violence. "This defendant took a firearm into a national park and tried to murder a young woman," said the US Attorney for the Northern District of Ohio, who prosecuted the case. "He left her with lifelong, serious injuries. Our community is a safer place with him behind bars."

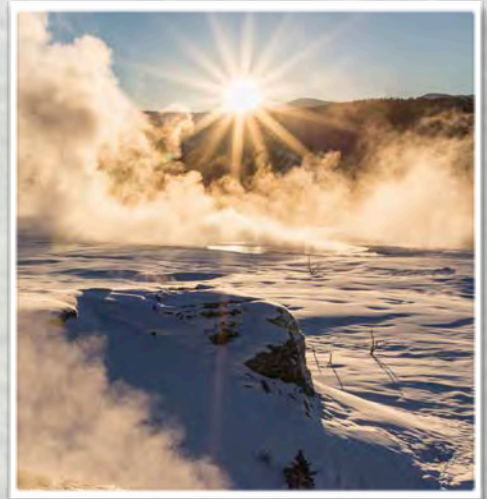
Distillery Run in Cuyahoga Valley National Park.
NPS photo.



Yellowstone National Park – Embezzlement:

Special Agents of the NPS Investigative Services Branch were alerted in January 2017 to possible embezzlement of funds from a child care center in Yellowstone National Park. Following an investigation, Danielle Miles admitted to ISB Special Agents that she made unauthorized personal purchases using center funds. Miles is a former director of Little People's Learning Center, a private daycare located in Mammoth Hot Springs. At the sentencing hearing in federal court, Miles was fined, ordered to pay restitution, and sentenced to serve 14 days incarceration.

Mammoth Hot Springs in Yellowstone National Park.
NPS photo.





Special Feature: Our Story

Since the beginning of our national parks, incident investigations and inquiries have been a part of their protection and preservation for future generations. Cavalry troopers and then US Park Rangers were the first to track down culprits who committed crimes, poached wildlife, looted resources, and generally caused trouble on these most sacred of America's lands.

With the hiring of a law enforcement specialist stationed at Yosemite National Park in the mid 1960s, the National Park Service (NPS) laid the foundation for a dedicated work unit with the sole purpose of law enforcement and investigations. Populations living near the national parks were steadily growing, and park visitation was rapidly increasing. Rangers of the time knew that officers were needed who could dedicate more time and specialize in complex investigations.

US Park Rangers are a true icon, wearing many hats and for many years serving as "generalists." They rapidly shift from law enforcement to emergency medical services, fire suppression to search and rescue, and visitor services to resource education throughout their workdays. Over the years the NPS has made several attempts to dedicate personnel solely to criminal investigations.

The myriad duties of the US Park Ranger are all critically needed functions. A ranger's skill set must be kept up every day; opportunities to dedicate extended time for criminal investigations are necessarily limited.

This is where the dedicated investigation operation provides the most benefit to our national parks. Criminal investigators have the time and experience to take those crimes that rangers initially investigate and carry them onward to successful resolution through prosecutions and adjudications. Civil settlements and the documentation of criminal incidents likewise have value as part of the park system's historical and operational records.

In 1976 Yosemite National Park and Olympic National Park started the first offices within their Ranger Divisions that were solely dedicated to criminal investigations. A Chief Criminal Investigator and two investigators were stationed at Yosemite, while Olympic began with just one investigator. Other parks, noting the success of those operations, soon followed suit.

Yosemite National Park also employed the first female and American Indian criminal investigators in the NPS.



NPS Collections photo of the first National Park Service Rangers, 1914.

by ISB and SAC Scott Hinson (retired)

The Office of Inspector General (OIG) of the US Department of the Interior (DOI) released a report in March 2002 concerning DOI law enforcement operations. Secretary of the Interior Gale Norton directed the department's bureaus to address issues identified in that report with a series of law enforcement reforms.

One of those reforms brought about the placement of all criminal investigators in the National Park Service into a single line of authority. Accounts vary as to how many criminal investigators the NPS had going into the early 2000s; a safe estimate puts the number at 60-65 stationed at various parks, regional offices, and the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center. In April 2003, those investigators moved from the supervision of specific parks to an office created within the Washington Support Office (WASO). This office is now known as the Investigative Services Branch (ISB).

As with any changes in a large government agency, the new line authority was a difficult adjustment at times. Many NPS managers were upset or had concern that local parks would lose control over what investigators did in their parks. Funding for the criminal investigators' positions was also shifted from the parks to WASO.

But the change also brought relief. One immediate benefit of the line authority change was the ability to provide investigative support to those parks without dedicated investigators.

Initially the new ISB was headed by a national Special Agent in Charge (SAC). Six other SACs oversaw investigations in each of the NPS regions. As budgets became tighter and the need to place more investigators in the field became more apparent, the command structure

for the branch was pared down to three SACs with two Assistant Special Agents in Charge (ASAC) reporting to each SAC. This model divided the country into three areas of responsibility: East, Central and West. Further reductions in budget, increases in operational costs, and staffing the NPS Office of Professional Responsibility left a loss in not only supervisors but in field investigators, too.

Today, ISB operates with approximately half the number of criminal investigators as it had at its inception. The Chief, SAC, and five ASACs lead ISB. Investigators are stationed throughout the National Park System across four field offices.

Despite shrinking resources, ISB found a true force multiplier with the addition of two administrative support personnel positions and an Intelligence Analyst. Their work frees up a great amount of time for Special Agents in the field - a vitally necessary component given the current lean staffing level.

ISB is in the Associate Directorate of Visitor and Resource Protection and is a branch of the Division of Law Enforcement, Security and Emergency Services.

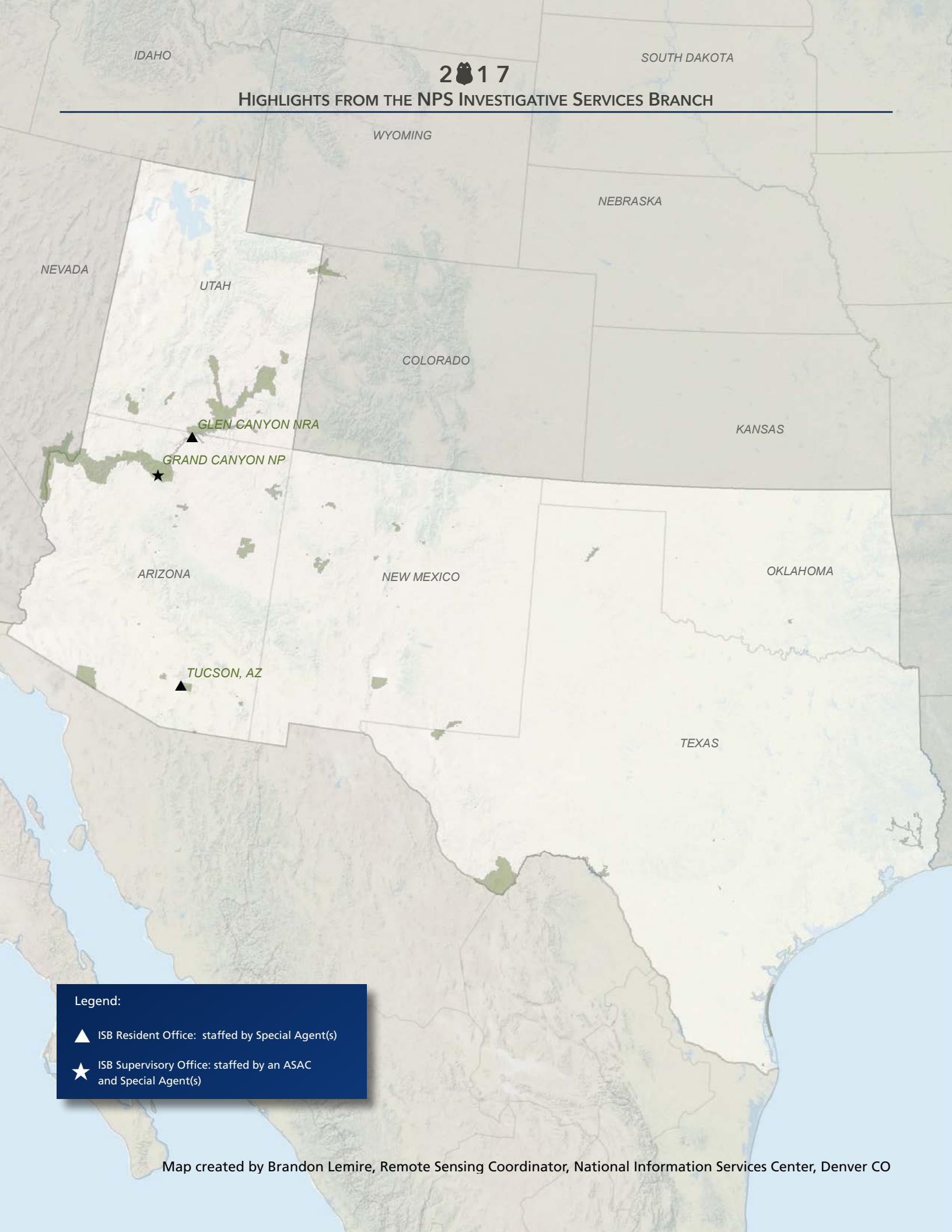
More at www.nps.gov/ISB



An ISB Special Agent.
NPS photo.

2017

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE NPS INVESTIGATIVE SERVICES BRANCH



Legend:

- ▲ ISB Resident Office: staffed by Special Agent(s)
- ★ ISB Supervisory Office: staffed by an ASAC and Special Agent(s)

Southwest Field Office

The Southwest Field Office serves the ISB mission for parks located within Arizona, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Texas, and Utah. We currently have Special Agents stationed at Glen Canyon National Recreation Area, Grand Canyon National Park, Saguaro National Park, and in Tucson, Arizona.

2017 was a year of transition for the field office. After the former Assistant Special Agent in Charge (ASAC) moved into a new role within ISB in January, three Special Agents served as ASAC in rotating temporary promotions throughout the year.

This year the field office welcomed a new Special Agent who previously served as a US Park Ranger at Grand Canyon National Park. She is a graduate of the DOI (US Department of the Interior) Investigator Training Program where she earned the Director's Leadership Award.

We also hosted an investigative intern at the Grand Canyon Field Office. This intern was a tremendous help to ISB throughout his internship and went on to become a US Park Ranger at Cape Cod National Seashore.

Throughout 2017, Special Agents from the Southwest Field Office investigated a wide array of cases involving crimes against people (sexual assault, physical assault, child abuse, homicide, stalking), property crimes (burglary, auto theft), drug crimes (drug smuggling, drug distribution), and resource crimes (Lacey Act).

Special Agents from the Southwest Field Office also traveled to other field offices to assist parks with cases outside of our immediate area of responsibility.

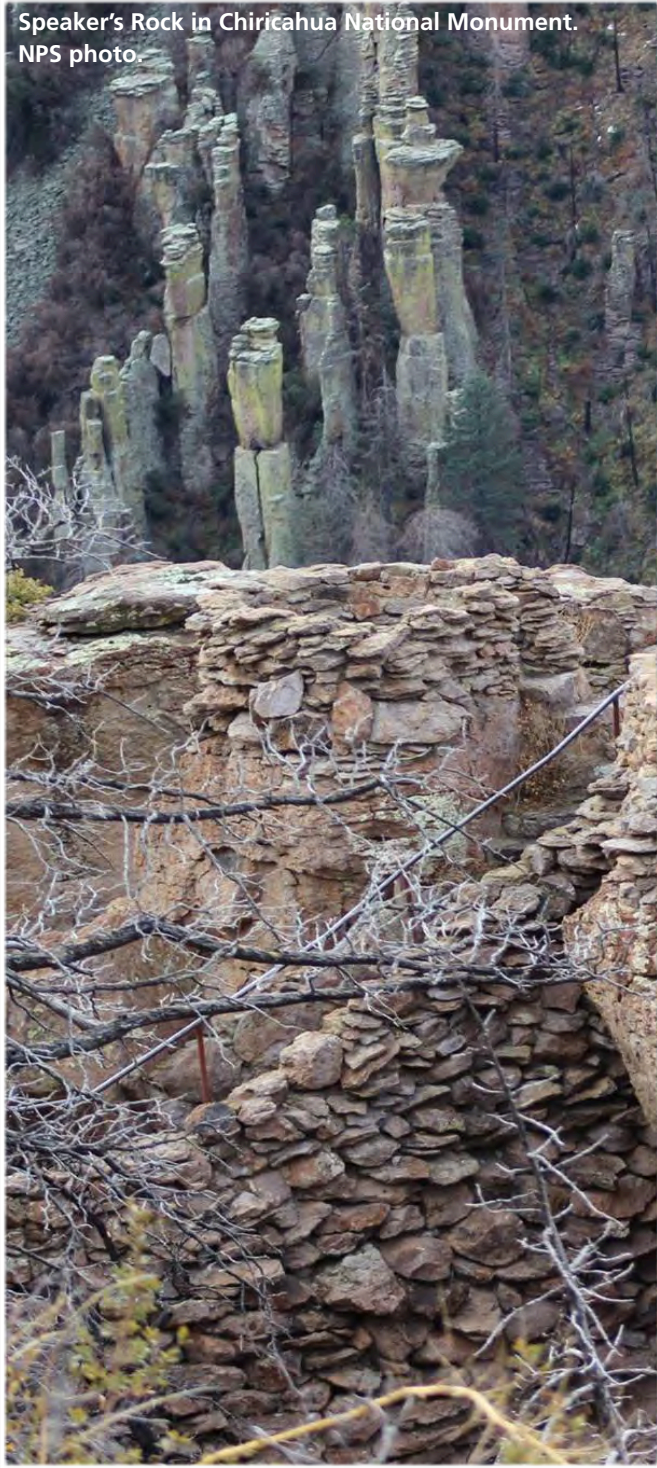
Noteworthy cases closed or adjudicated in 2017 are included on the following pages.



Sunset in Saguaro National Park. NPS photo.

Southwest Field Office

Speaker's Rock in Chiricahua National Monument.
NPS photo.



Chiricahua National Monument – Attempted Murder:

In March 2017, the man who attacked a National Park Service (NPS) employee in Chiricahua National Monument was sentenced to serve 76 years in prison. The sentence followed a jury trial wherein Gil Gaxiola was ultimately found guilty of Attempted First Degree Murder, Armed Robbery, three counts of Aggravated Assault, Kidnapping, and motor vehicle theft.

The charges stemmed from an incident in August 2013 when an NPS maintenance employee was savagely beaten in the park. After inflicting serious and life-threatening injuries, Gaxiola stole the employee's assigned work vehicle. US Park Rangers provided life saving care for the employee and called ISB to investigate. In the days that followed, four Special Agents were deployed to the area and initiated joint investigation with detectives of the Cochise County Sheriff's Office. Over the course of several months, investigators worked tirelessly through countless hours to obtain and investigate leads.

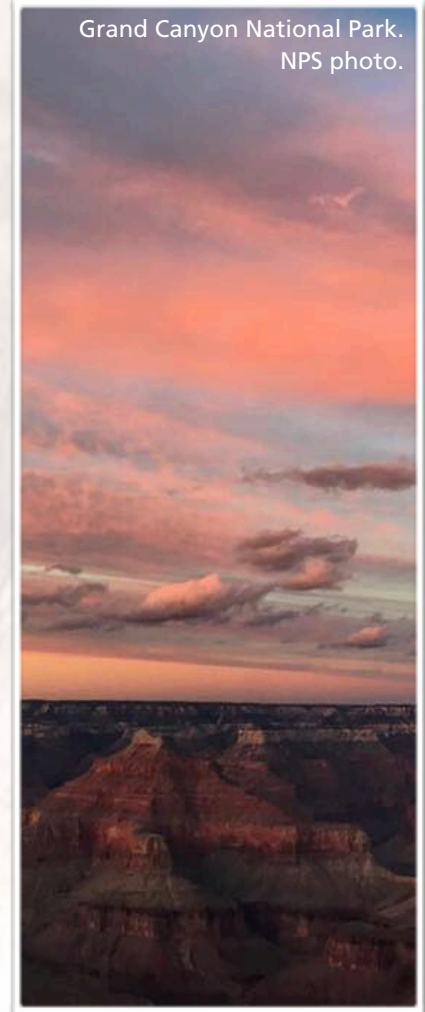
Cochise County ultimately charged Gaxiola in December 2013 after a positive DNA match identified him. Gaxiola was incarcerated at the time on another charge. Over the next three years, ISB continued to support the case which culminated in 2017 with a successful prosecution. Other agencies that significantly contributed to the detection, apprehension, and successful prosecution of the case include the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) the Arizona Department of Public Safety Laboratory, Customs and Border Patrol, and the US Attorney's Office in Tucson.

Though the assaulted employee was unable to return to NPS employment, her physical and mental recovery is inspiring.

Southwest Field Office

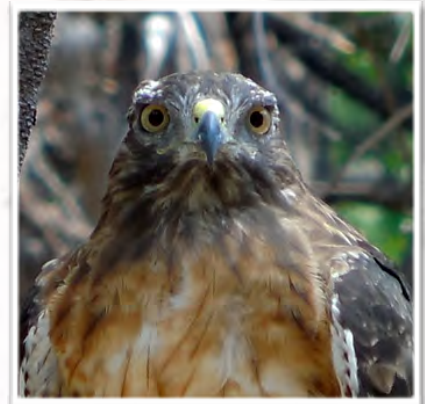
Grand Canyon National Park – Suicidal Veteran Intervention:

An ISB Special Agent responded with a US Park Ranger for a disturbance call in March at a public tavern in South Rim Village. A loud verbal altercation was taking place between an intoxicated and belligerent concessionaire employee and another patron. During an interview with the concessionaire employee, investigators determined that the man suffered from Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) resulting from previous military service and helped him return to his park residence. Two days later, the Veterans Administration (VA) crisis hotline alerted the park that this concessionaire employee had placed a call to their hotline and, based on that conversation, there was concern that he may attempt suicide. Rangers immediately developed an intervention plan involving ISB Special Agents, a trained crisis negotiator, and EMS responders. With security in place, a Special Agent spoke with the employee outside his residence. The man disclosed that months earlier he had run out of medication prescribed for his PTSD, and that he had been consuming a considerable quantity of alcohol. He also stated that he felt abandoned by the government he proudly served and did not think anybody around him understood what he was going through. The man showed the Special Agent several scars on the inside of his arm and said he thought about killing himself. "I don't know what to do," the man told the investigator. In time, the man voluntarily agreed to get into a park ambulance for transport to a VA hospital for treatment. Because of the concern and patient efforts of the US Park Rangers, EMS personnel, and Special Agents, this veteran in crisis received the help he needed in time to avoid a tragic outcome.



Petrified Forest National Park – Migratory Bird Treaty Act Violation:

On the night of July 5, 2016, a US Park Ranger out on patrol contacted a driver for multiple traffic violations. During the contact, the ranger located bird wings, a dead Tiger Salamander inside a cooler, and approximately 35 pounds of petrified wood in the vehicle. An ISB Special Agent led the ensuing investigation, working with Special Agents of the US Fish and Wildlife Service to identify the bird wings as those of a Barn Owl and a Red-tailed Hawk. These species are protected under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act. The US Attorney's Office for the District of Arizona charged Joseph Nolan, age 43, with possession of petrified wood, several traffic violations, and violating the Act. In addition to the fine, Nolan was ordered to pay special assessment fees and was sentenced to serve one year of unsupervised probation.



A Red-tailed Hawk. NPS photo.

Southwest Field Office

Big Bend National Park – Smuggling of Archeological Artifacts: A cooperative investigation by ISB Special Agents, US Park Rangers of Big Bend National Park, Homeland Security Investigations, and the US Coast Guard Investigative Service resulted in the successful federal prosecution of Andrew Kowalik for smuggling goods into the United States. Kowalik will serve five years of supervised release/home confinement and is not allowed to leave his home after the hours of darkness, travel from his home county, or visit any national park area. He was also fined \$10,000 and ordered to forfeit all artifacts previously identified as having originated in Mexico. A ceremony for returning the artifacts to Mexico was scheduled for late 2017.



Grand Canyon National Park – Assault: US Park Rangers responded to the North Rim Campground in July for a reported domestic assault. During the course of the initial investigation, the assailant's juvenile daughter disclosed a lengthy history of physical and sexual abuse by her father in multiple states. ISB Special Agents worked with rangers and other agencies including the Safe Child Center, the Arizona Department of Child Safety, the Arizona Attorney General's Office, Bonner County Sheriff's Office in Idaho, and the Spokane Police Department in Washington. Richard J. Paytosh pleaded guilty to Disorderly Conduct, served 30 days in jail, and was placed on supervised probation for 2 years for the assault within Grand Canyon National Park. The juvenile was removed from parental custody and placed in foster care. The sexual abuse investigation is ongoing with the Spokane Police Department and the Arizona Attorney General's Office is seeking permanent removal of the juvenile from parental custody.

Grand Canyon National Park – Assault: While contacting a driver in August, US Park Rangers observed that he was covered in blood that did not appear to be his own, nor that of the female passenger in the vehicle. Rangers and ISB Special Agents determined that the driver, Nathan D. Goodman, had violently assaulted his mother, who was located hours later and treated for her injuries. Goodman pleaded guilty to the assault, driving under the influence of alcohol, possession of a controlled substance, and other violations. He was sentenced to serve 2 concurrent terms of 6 months in prison followed by 2 concurrent terms of 4 years supervised probation. The passenger in the vehicle, Treacia V. Cly, pleaded guilty to alcohol-related charges and was sentenced to a year of supervised probation. The victim of the assault is residing with family members and enrolled in supportive services.

Southwest Field Office



Vandalism by smugglers in Organ Pipe Cactus Nat'l Monument. NPS photo.

Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument – Narcotics Smuggling:

US Park Rangers identified two individuals in November 2016 engaged in surveillance activities believed to be directly related to drug smuggling and/or human trafficking operations in and around the park. Rangers documented the pair's activities in the area for about 10 days, witnessing the two communicating to unknown parties via cellular telephone/handheld radio and scanning their viewshed with various optics. On the day of the apprehension, both were observed conducting similar scouting activities. Despite considerable challenges posed by the precarious terrain, the team established a perimeter and took one of the suspects into custody. Solar panels, radio chargers, optics, and provisions were recovered from the scouts' original location. Refuse and human waste indicated that the site had been occupied for a considerable amount of time. ISB Special Agents responded to investigate the case at the park's request and obtained a confession and description of the scouting activity from the subject during an interview. Investigators prepared the case for prosecution and presented it to the Assistant US Attorney, who accepted the case and charged the suspect with the violation of conspiracy to possess, sell, or transport controlled substances. The defendant was later sentenced to serve 13 months in prison for his actions.

Grand Canyon National Park – Stalking:

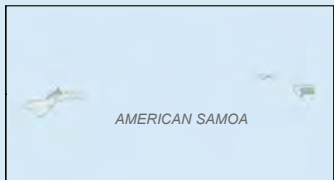
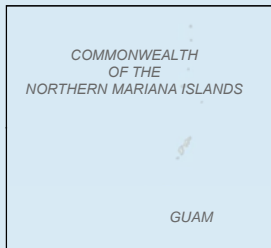
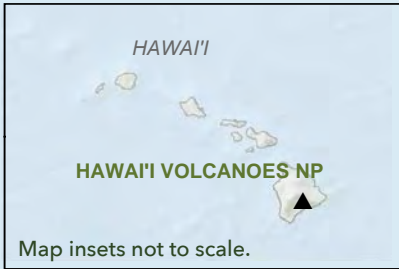
A park resident arrived home one day in May and heard a loud noise inside their home and found an open window with its screen removed. US Park Rangers responded, cleared the home, and found another window also had its screen removed. In a joint investigation with ISB Special Agents, rangers processed the scene for evidence. Investigators determined that a series of events were consistent with stalking. They identified and interviewed a suspect who confessed to the burglary and stalking. Due to the suspect's escalating dangerous behavior, he was arrested and ultimately sentenced to serve prison time. He was also banned from the park, must serve 3 years supervised probation, and must stay away from the victim. Additional sentencing terms included a mandatory mental health assessment and payment of restitution for the damage done during the break-in.

Grand Canyon National Park – Assault:

US Park Rangers responded to a 911 call about an assault in progress in Supai Camp in October. When they arrived, they found a man covered in blood and stating that he had been assaulted with a chair. The man was transported to an area hospital for treatment of traumatic injuries. ISB Special Agents and rangers conducted the investigation of the incident. Starlivia Kaska and Kyrah Kaska confessed to the assault, during which they had attacked the man with a chair and a milk crate. They were arrested due to their danger to the community and flight risk. The sisters pleaded guilty in federal court to assault and will serve a year each of supervised probation for Simple Assault. They are also banned from the park and are prohibited from possessing weapons. The case was prosecuted by the US Attorney's Office for the District of Arizona.

2017

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE NPS INVESTIGATIVE SERVICES BRANCH



Legend:

- ▲ ISB Resident Office: staffed by Special Agent(s)
- ★ ISB Supervisory Office: staffed by an ASAC and Special Agent(s)

Pacific Field Office

The Pacific Field Office of the Investigative Services Branch provides investigative and law enforcement support services for the entire NPS Pacific West Region. With its supervisory office located in Yosemite National Park in the central Sierra Nevada Mountain Range of California, it staffs resident offices at Lake Mead National Recreation Area, Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park, and Olympic National Park.

Of the 76 NPS units covered by the Pacific Field Office, 29 are in California, 17 are in Washington, 9 are in Hawai'i, 6 are in Idaho, 7 are in Oregon, 4 are in Nevada, and 1 is in Arizona. An additional 3 NPS sites are in the territories of the South Pacific Islands.

In 2017 the Pacific Field Office hired 4 new ISB Special Agents, bringing the field staff to a total of 10 investigators and 1 intelligence analyst. The larger staff was definitely a much-needed addition to cover the field office's voluminous case load. In 2017, investigators opened 65 new cases and worked a total of 149 active cases.

Our case load this year included more than 30 sexual assault complaints as well as 11 manslaughter/homicide investigations. Many of these cases are ongoing or pending adjudication.

Though details of open investigations are not available for this year's publication, we will provide official updates as cases close. Noteworthy closed or adjudicated cases in 2017 are included on the following pages.

The ISB Pacific Field Office is dedicated to maintaining a joint cooperation and effort with all of the various parks and allied agencies in the Pacific West Region. That working relationship is definitely an asset as this year our case load included more violent crimes.

Additionally, Special Agents assisted the surrounding communities and the nation with extensive wildland fires, hurricanes, missing persons cases, and civil demonstrations.

We hope to increase our support of the region in 2018 by expanding our internship and detailer programs (see page 41). US Park Rangers, other law enforcement personnel, and law enforcement diversity initiative candidates will have more opportunities to work with ISB towards career goals in investigations.



An air tanker drops retardant on the Detwiler Fire near Yosemite National Park.
NPS photo by the Investigative Services Branch.

Pacific Field Office



Second Beach in Olympic National Park.
NPS photo by S Sheltnen.

Olympic National Park – Cold Case Investigation of Sexual Assault of a Child:

A man who committed aggravated sexual assault on a child in Olympic National Park in 2001 will serve more than 8 years in prison. Charles Jason Butcher, age 46, will then serve 10 years of supervised release. He must also comply with DNA collection and lifetime sex offender registration.

The sentence was handed down in federal court in November. "The nature of this offense is extremely odious," the federal judge said at the time of sentencing.

The victim and her mother reported the assault to local law enforcement in 2012. Butcher operated Log Cabin Resort within the park on Lake Crescent when the incident occurred.

An ISB Special Agent opened an investigation into this cold case, which was particularly sensitive due to the victim's young age at the time. Despite his denials, investigators were able to collect evidence of Butcher's crime.

Careful and determined steps on the part of investigators and the brave victim led to Butcher admitting his crime in May 2016. Butcher was also implicated in further allegations of sexual assault on another child.

"For fifteen years the defendant denied sexually abusing the two young victims in this case, compounding a horrific betrayal," said the US Attorney who prosecuted the case. "I commend the courage of the victims and the commitment of the Park Service investigator who took what was considered a cold case and developed the evidence necessary to convict."

ISB is dedicated to ensuring that every victim of or witness to a crime that occurs within the National Park Service community is treated with dignity and respect, and that they are informed of their legal rights. Support and services are available throughout the continuum of care. More information is on the US Department of Justice website: ovc.gov/help/index.html

Pacific Field Office

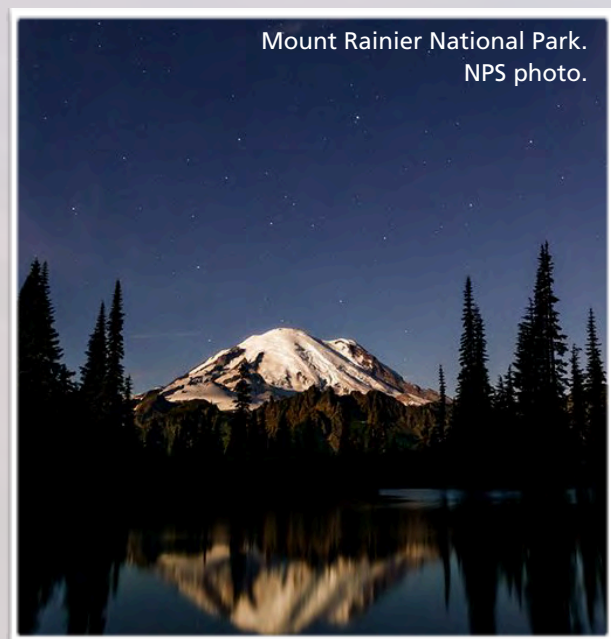
Sequoia & Kings Canyon National Parks – Homicide:

A homicide investigation by the NPS Investigative Services Branch, Visalia Police Department, and the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) concluded with a guilty verdict and lengthy prison sentence in January. Miguel Villegas Pacheco, age 36, will serve 25 years to life behind bars for the first-degree murder of his 14-year-old stepson, Dameian “Luke” Gulley, in 2013. Pacheco reported the teen as missing on November 18, 2013. The Visalia Police Department launched an extensive search for the missing juvenile, working with other agencies and volunteers. Several days later, an off-duty NPS employee was walking her dog in a remote area of Sequoia National Park when she discovered the teen's body near the end of a dirt road. According to court documents, the cause of the teen's death was determined to be ligature strangulation. Investigators also determined that Pacheco strangled the teen inside the family home the day before he reported the boy as missing. He had transported the boy's remains into the park the next morning before talking to authorities. The case was prosecuted by the Office of the District Attorney, Tulare County (CA).



Mount Rainier National Park – Felon in Possession of a Firearm:

At a July court hearing, David Edward Hall was sentenced to serve 6 months detention followed by 2 years supervised probation. Hall was convicted of being a felon in possession of a firearm, a charge that stemmed from an incident that occurred in Mount Rainier National Park. A US Park Ranger contacted Hall in August 2016 for a traffic violation in the park. The ranger determined that Hall was a fugitive from justice and was in possession of narcotics, narcotics paraphernalia, and a gun. Court records show that Hall has prior felony convictions. An ISB Special Agent investigated the incident and prepared the case for prosecution by the US Attorney's Office for the Western District of Washington.



Pacific Field Office

Crater Lake National Park – Burglary of a Government Building:

In February, someone broke into a government building and stole approximately 10,000 rounds of ammunition stored for law enforcement use and training.

During the investigation, ISB Special Agents developed a suspect identified as Byron Andresen and tied him to multiple cold cases of burglary in the area.

In early October, the Jackson County Sheriff's Office executed a search warrant at Andresen's residence in relation to a homicide investigation. Deputies found US government property during the search that matched the park's investigation.

Together with US Park Rangers of Crater Lake National Park, US Forest Service (USFS) officers, and county deputies, ISB Special Agents executed another search warrant in mid-October.

Investigators seized ammunition, equipment, and master keys related to multiple NPS and USFS burglaries. Though Andresen took his own life in late 2017, this interagency investigation closed four prior NPS burglary cases and two USFS burglaries based on evidence and property found during the execution of the search warrants.



Crater Lake National Park.
NPS photo.



Ammunition stolen from
Crater Lake National Park,
discovered by investigators
in Andresen's home.
NPS photos.

Pacific Field Office



Tuolumne Meadows in Yosemite National Park. NPS photo.

Yosemite National Park –

Sexual Assault of a Child: A man who sexually abused a child in Yosemite National Park in 2015 was sentenced in June to serve 43 months in prison. Marcus Anthony Maluhia Araiza, Jr., now age 20, was indicted by a federal grand jury in September 2015 on charges of aggravated sexual abuse and abusive sexual contact with a child under age 12. US Park Rangers of Yosemite National Park and ISB Special Agents responded to the incident in August 2015, quickly identifying the suspect and taking him into custody. The National Park Service is dedicated to supporting victims and witnesses of all ages; we understand that being a victim of a crime can be devastating and that crimes involving children are particularly egregious. While leading the investigation and throughout prosecution by the US Attorney's Office - Eastern District of California, an ISB Special Agent remained dedicated to supporting the victim and the victim's family. In addition to his prison term, Araiza will serve 15 years supervised release and must register as a sex offender.

Yosemite National Park –

Sexual Assault: In March a man was sentenced to 51 months in prison for sexually assaulting a young victim in the park. The investigation and successful prosecution was a strong collaborative effort between US Park Rangers, ISB Special Agents, and the US Attorney's Office of the Eastern District of California. The incident occurred in April 2016, and a suspect was apprehended shortly thereafter. On the strength of the investigation, as well as physical and testimonial evidence, Floyd Fowler, age 54, pleaded guilty to felony Abusive Sexual Contact. Fowler was on probation for previous crimes of violence at the time of the assault and was wearing a monitoring device on his ankle. Following his prison term, Fowler will spend 3 years on supervised probation. Additional terms of his probation include mandatory participation in a sex offender treatment and therapy program, and cooperation in the collection of his DNA as directed by probation officers.

Special Feature: Hurricane Relief Response

Special Agents with the NPS Investigative Services Branch (ISB) worked alongside responders from many agencies to support people and areas struck by severe weather events in 2017. Our work included swift and prolonged relief efforts for hurricanes Irma and Maria.

When Maria slammed into the island of Puerto Rico in September, it was a high-end Category 4 hurricane that caused massive destruction. Together with personnel from the US Department of the Interior (DOI), the DOI Office of Inspector General, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), and the DOI Office of Law Enforcement and Security (DOI-OLES), ISB Special Agents flew to the island ahead of the storm aboard an Air National Guard C-130 transport.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has established roles and responsibilities during a disaster through the National Response Framework. As part of that framework, Emergency Support Function (ESF) 13 provides a mechanism for coordinating and providing support. Whether that support is Federal-to-Federal, Federal-to-State, Tribal and local authorities, and/or support to other ESFs, ESF-13 enables law enforcement, public safety, and security capabilities and resources to function quickly during potential or actual incidents requiring a coordinated Federal response.

The team answered FEMA's request for law enforcement officers and special agents to respond and be willing to work in austere and uncertain environments for an undetermined amount of time. Coordinated by DOI-OLES, the massive response included officers and agents from every bureau within DOI.



A host of responders prepare to board an Air National Guard C-130 ahead of Hurricane Maria. NPS photo.

Four ISB Special Agents from across the nation formed a Quick Response Team (QRT) with their cohorts from other federal agencies. Led by an ISB Special Agent, this QRT of 25 responders arrived in San Juan, Puerto Rico the day before Hurricane Maria made landfall.

With their gear consolidated and prepped for response as soon as the storm passed, the QRT sheltered in San Juan. They were called to action once winds dissipated enough, and began removing debris from the lobby of the hotel and clearing the exits. BLM rangers initiated medical care for a man who had suffered a large, deep laceration to his lower leg from flying storm debris.

The following hours and days continued with widespread power and communications outages. Report after report of people needing assistance came in, and the QRT helped as much as they could with little information about what was going on across the island and only the resources they had on-hand.

As the situation began to stabilize, the agents were assigned missions that included providing physical security for Disaster Medical Assistance Teams at various field hospitals and clinics across the Puerto Rico and the US Virgin Islands.

Other missions included transportation of medical personnel and equipment to areas where there was little to no infrastructure or medical aid available. Some of these areas were so decimated and inaccessible that the only way in was provided by the US Navy in the form of Sikorsky SH-60 Seahawk helicopters.

Fuel, food, and water were in short supply across the island. Communications were spotty at best and information was scarce. Despite the challenges, these agents and other DOI assets assigned to the QRT made it work.

Every day brought a new story about how a team member gave their own food or water to someone else in need. There were stories of providing medical care, clearing debris from a roadway, and doing anything they could to make a difference — no matter how large or small.

From the day they left their homes to the day they returned, most responders were gone for over a month. They put their personal lives on hold to help those whose personal lives had been destroyed.

Whether or not a nexus to a park, refuge or public land existed, the team responded all the same to help those in need.



Insets: ISB Special Agents and other members of the QRT assemble field hospital equipment, work with aviation resources, and perform relief efforts. NPS photos.

Today's Partnerships

Combating Looting and Trafficking in Antiquities: an International Forum

The Chief of the Investigative Services Branch and a Special Agent gave a presentation in July at an international conference on Combating Looting and Trafficking in Antiquities. The NPS Office of International Affairs Africa and Middle East Program and the US Department of State's International Visitor Leadership Program sponsored the conference.

The presenters spoke about National Park Service efforts to combat the illegal trade in antiquities, including efforts by the NPS Investigative Services Branch to deal with this type of crime. Representatives of 12 Middle Eastern countries participated in the discussion.

During the presentation, the ISB Special Agent discussed law enforcement strategies designed to investigate and combat the theft and trafficking of cultural heritage. Interpreters translated his presentation into several different languages as he spoke.

The ISB Special Agent then fielded 45 minutes of questions from the group on topics ranging from partnerships to protect and preserve cultural property, to knowledge of laws and law enforcement mechanisms to prevent smuggling.

The Office of International Affairs (OIA) serves the National Park Service by engaging more fully the talents and available resources of the NPS for the implementation of its domestic and global missions. The OIA evaluates opportunities and coordinates responses involving the National Park Service in international programs, projects and activities. It also provides leadership in the fulfillment of US foreign policy objectives through implementation of treaty obligations and other agreements. The OIA, using its broad network of contacts, optimizes NPS efficiency, responsiveness, and accountability in collaborating with its international partners.

www.nps.gov/orgs/1955/index.htm

Giving back to the NPS Community

Every year Special Agents with the NPS Investigative Services Branch are asked to provide training to other law enforcement professionals throughout the National Park Service. They participate in many Annual Law Enforcement Refresher Training sessions and instruct in multiple areas of criminal investigation.

Special Agents also take an active role in training prospective rangers at seasonal law enforcement training academies, where they teach classes in natural resource law, interview skills, crime scene management, and tactical EMS.

Additionally, Special Agents were invited to serve as Team Advisors during the DOI Investigator Training Program at the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center (FLETC). These advisors mentor groups of students from various DOI agencies during a two-week capstone exercise.

Students at a seasonal law enforcement training academy. NPS photo.



These pages: Bison along Niobrara National Scenic River. NPS photo by K Maxfield.

Tomorrow's Leaders

ISB Internship Program

Internships also provide strong opportunities for ISB and potential special agent candidates. Interns continued to work alongside ISB Special Agents in select field offices in 2017.

Interns have generally been those with some NPS seasonal law enforcement experience or criminal justice majors from a nearby university. Availability of housing is often a determining factor whether ISB has the ability to host interns.

Interns, who are considered volunteers and not necessarily subject to intensive background checks, may be limited or restricted as to how they can assist investigators with their criminal cases.

They have nonetheless provided valuable case support, undertaken special projects, and carried out the kinds of administrative tasks that keep daily operations strong. In 2017, interns contributed well over 900 hours of much appreciated service to ISB at minimal cost to the program.



Detailers, Interns, and US Park Rangers work closely with ISB Special Agents to advance criminal investigation skills. NPS photo by the Investigative Services Branch.

ISB Detailer Program

The ISB Special Agent Detailer Program has established a path for US Park Rangers/US Park Police Officers to enhance their criminal investigation skills since 2009. The program can help them determine whether or not they want to pursue a career as a special agent. ISB has hosted detailers in most of its field offices.

Detailers experience firsthand what work as a special agent entails. They lead investigations, execute search warrants, issue subpoenas and court orders, make arrests, and participate in court proceedings.

A major tool of the program is the Special Agent Detailer Training and Evaluation Handbook. It provides an overview of the policies and procedures administered during the ISB Detailer Program. It also provides detailers with clear program expectations and documents their training and experience.

Detailers who become self-sufficient in a short period of time assist special agents by working their own cases. This helps reduce caseload and increases ISB's overall efficiency and effectiveness. Costs associated with the detailer program are shared in most cases between ISB and the detailer's home park. Typically, base pay is funded by the park and Law Enforcement Availability Pay (LEAP) is funded by ISB. The detailer is usually converted to Criminal Investigation Series 1811 for the duration.

We were pleased to welcome several graduates of this detailer program to permanent Special Agent positions in early 2017.

As ISB Special Agents frequently work with US Park Rangers in the field, many take the initiative to mentor those rangers who show clear interest in criminal investigations. Both work groups prosper from this sharing of training and experience.

Any Device. Any Time.

Who We Are
What We Do
News
Opportunities
Submit a Tip

Thousands of people from more than 45 countries kept up with ISB online in 2017. Tips from the public throughout the year brought to light new incidents on National Park System and other public lands, and aided cold case investigations.

 **NPS Investigative Services Branch** added 3 new photos. ***
August 2, 2017 · 🌐

UPDATED: Investigators seeking info about hit-and-run in [Great Smoky Mountains National Park](#) that seriously injured 13-year-old girl - can you help?

www.nps.gov/orgs/1563/grsm-hit-and-run-update.htm
News release updated: August 3, 2017
Contact: [NPS Investigative Services Branch...](#) [See More](#)




Social media was instrumental in many of our investigations throughout the year.

One example was a hit-and-run incident in Great Smoky Mountains National Park. A motorcyclist struck and seriously injured a 13-year-old girl, then fled the scene.


We thank everyone who sent in tips to help investigators; more information about this case is on page 15.

 **SpecialAgentNPS** @SpecialAgentNPS · 3 Dec 2016
Thank you to everyone who has sent in tips about the [#ChimneyTops2Fire](#) in [@GreatSmokyNPS](#). Reach us at facebook.com/InvestigativeS...
NPS photo/ISB




 [redacted] reviewed **NPS Investigative Services Branch** — 5★ ***
November 16 at 7:37pm · 🌐

Thank you for all your hard work. Make no mistake, your work is very important for us all and generations to come.

 [redacted] [#NPS](#), still giving hope that the better part of humanity will prevail. TY!

SpecialAgentNPS @SpecialAgentNPS
Cold case investigation brings [#justice](#) for victim of sexual assault in Olympic National Park - see more at nps.gov/orgs/1563/cold...
[#SpecialAgent](#) [#OlympicNationalPark](#)



These pages: A waterfall in Yosemite National Park. NPS photo by J Edwards/Investigative Services Branch.



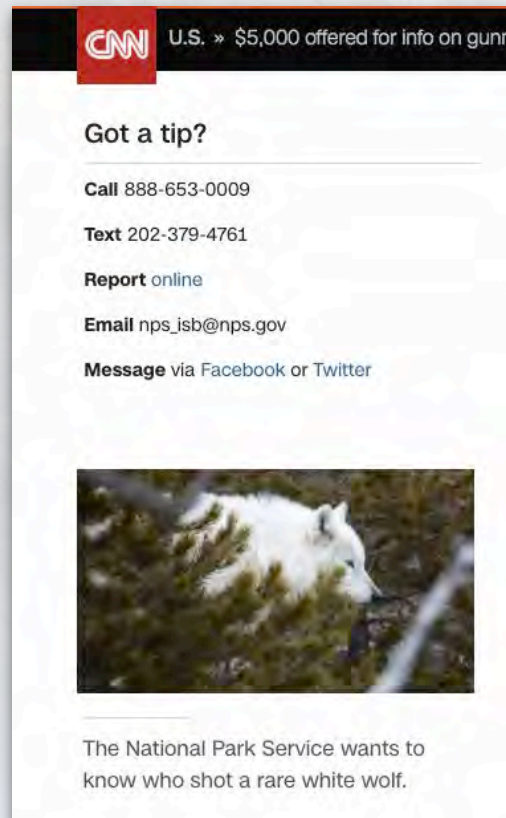
A bald eagle in Kenai Fjords National Park. NPS photo by P Calamari.

Our website and social media platforms are translated into more than 35 other languages.

Journalists include our Tip Line information in articles and have featured ISB in online magazines like Modern Hiker.

This outreach helps us protect parks throughout the National Park System and the resources, wildlife, visitors, employees, and residents therein.

It also helps us bring justice for victims of crimes.




“What a well done site. I REALLY like the look - very professional. Straight and to the point news as well.” - via email

NPS

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