



# FIELDREPORT

Northwest Region | Spring 2018

## Updates from Around the Northwest

### Grizzlies and a Birthday for North Cascades

As of this writing, the study of alternatives for grizzly bear recovery in the North Cascades is on hold within the Department of Interior. Meanwhile, it's time to celebrate the 50th birthday of North Cascades National Park and protection for its surrounding ecosystem. We'll be drawing attention to the value of the park and its wildlife with events and projects throughout this summer and fall.

### Thank You, Volunteers!

Last November, NPCA joined with veterans service organization The Mission Continues to honor the incredible work and commitment of our two organizations' volunteers over the past year. We celebrated at the Wing Luke Museum of the Asian Pacific American Experience, an affiliated site of the National Park Service in Seattle's International District. Thank you to all our 2017 volunteers!

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## SEATTLE PARK RANGER HELPS PUERTO RICO

With an unprecedented number of natural disasters occurring within a relatively short period of time, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) had depleted its usual cache of responders and sent out a request for help to all federal agencies. I responded.

By Guest Author Julie Fonseca de Borges, Chief of Interpretation, Seattle Area National Park Sites

**S**ervice is core to who I am. I've enjoyed being a park ranger since 2005, and I'm delighted that my "home park" is the Seattle Area National Park Sites. In September, a Department of Interior-wide email was sent seeking volunteers to join FEMA's Surge Capacity Force to support hurricane recovery efforts in Texas, Florida, Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands. This was the opportunity I was looking for to help after weeks of watching gut-wrenching and heartbreaking news pour out of these locations. I spoke to my supervisor, who fully supported my participation, and volunteered. In all, only about 10 percent of DOI employees who signed up were referred to FEMA.

It's been over two months since I've returned from my five-week detail, and I am still trying to make sense of the experience. Vignettes flash in my mind's eye: a mom alongside a main country road bathing her child under a PVC pipe; a

father not wanting to worry his kids who live off the island with the fact that he doesn't have enough food or medicine;

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**Top:** Enjoy a historic stay in the Chateau at Oregon Caves National Monument and Preserve this summer. ©Greg Vaughn | Alamy  
**Above:** National Park ranger Julie Fonseca de Borges hard at work with FEMA in Puerto Rico. ©Julie Fonseca de Borges

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NORTHWEST CORNER BY REGIONAL DIRECTOR ROB SMITH

## The Value of a Park Ranger

**T**he tree blocked the road just past the entrance station to the Hoh River Road in Olympic National Park. As the line of vehicles behind us grew, a group of would-be park visitors struggled to shove it aside.

After considering several bad ideas, such as attempting to drive around or over it, we realized that we might have to turn back after coming all this way.

Just before we lost all hope, a park maintenance ranger arrived on a backhoe. He pushed the tree aside and cleared the road. He didn't wait for the crowd's reaction, but turned his machine around and drove back up the road. He was just doing what needed to be done to ensure visitor safety and access.

Had we come upon the tree just two days later, during the January government shutdown, there would have been no park staff to help us enter the Hoh. This simple, but stark contrast between an open, staffed park and something that is less so hints at the insidious effects of years of shortchanging



the National Park System. As visitation booms, there are fewer rangers now than a decade ago because of an insufficient budget.

That means there are fewer opportunities to greet, teach and care for the visitors to our most special places. And fewer rangers to clear a road on a perfect park-visiting day.

**Above:** Rob Smith at Mount Rainier ©Shannon Brundle **Below:** Clear skies over the coast of Olympic National Park are threatened by the proposed BP oil refinery expansion. See "Updates" on page 3 for details. ©Jamesvancouver | Dreamstime



**SUPPORT  
NPCA  
IN 2018!**

As NPCA approaches our fiscal year-end on June 30, please support our increased local and national park protection work with a donation at [www.npca.org/give](http://www.npca.org/give). Thank you!

## MEET OUR SUPPORTERS

**Susie Wyckoff**

By Paul Balle

**I** sat down with one of our donors last month to learn what motivates her to support our parks. She's someone who values parks as places to escape the everyday, and important for wildlife habitat!

Susie, a biologist by training, has focused her life as a volunteer and board member on animal and land conservation efforts. For several years, Susie lived with her husband and children on a ranch in Paso Robles, California where they enjoyed wildlife galore—including their very own barn owl. She earned the distinction of "coolest mom ever" by dissecting the owl's pellets with her four daughters and their friends.

Susie grew up in Sacramento, California before moving to Seattle in 1993. Though Yosemite National Park was only a few hours away, her family didn't visit until she was 12 years old. She has fond memories of that trip—watching black bears, tent camping, sitting by a campfire and taking daily "showers" while hiking near Bridalveil Falls.

Since that trip, Susie has visited many national parks in the U.S. and abroad. Her travels have cemented her belief that national parks are America's greatest idea. She supports NPCA because she wants our parks to remain protected (and funded!) and feels they should also remain affordable for families to visit.

Thank you for your passion and support, Susie!

# FINDING 99

By Guest author James King Jr.,  
Intern Researcher, Klondike Gold Rush  
National Historic Monument - Seattle Unit

**Editor's Note:** Meet James, a Seattle resident and an influential leader recently featured on NPCA's blog. As a NPS partner, James aims to see national parks tell stories of all Americans. He's currently researching his master's thesis, "Finding 99," named after the 99 recorded African Americans who traveled from Seattle to the Klondike during the gold rush. Learn more from James below, and visit Klondike National Historic Monument in Pioneer Square this summer to see James' research on display.

Can you imagine walking through a museum knowing something is missing: an untold story, an overlooked individual?

"Finding 99" highlights the courageous African Americans who journeyed along the Klondike Gold Rush in 1900 and whose story is often overlooked in modern history. For the last several months, I've searched for the stories of these individuals. Along the

**"The Negro has gone everywhere. On the bleak hillsides of New England, through the middle states, in far away Texas, on the Pacific slope and by the Rocky mountains—there is not a state or territory without its Negro population. Even on the Youkon, in Alaska, the Negro has been found hunting gold in the Klondike, and amid the ice and snow of arctic seas he has been seen in search of the North Pole."**

*"The Negro Element in American Life: an Oration," delivered by Rev. A.L. DeMond in the Dexter Avenue Baptist Church, Montgomery, Alabama, Jan. 1, 1900.*



way, my work has benefited from countless African American newspapers, historians, and social justice activists of various time periods. Throughout my research, I have come across the same sentiment from people: African Americans are contributors to this country and their stories need to be shared.

So 118 years later, this inspiring collection of African American stories will be interpreted for the visitors who retrace the steps of the Klondike Gold Rush.

**Above (Left):** James King in Cuba ©James King  
**(Right):** Several black and white men at Devil's Bluff portage in Klondike, Alaska ©Library of Congress

## Updates from Around the Northwest

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### Keeping the Skies Clean over Olympic and North Cascades

NPCA, represented by EarthJustice, is challenging BP's proposal to expand its oil refinery north of Bellingham without installing the best pollution controls. We're asking the state pollution control board to require BP to use the best technology

available to protect the vistas of Olympic and North Cascades National Parks as well as reduce BP's contribution of greenhouse gases.

### Reichert and Herrera Beutler Oppose Oil Rigs off Olympics

Reps. Jaime Herrera Beutler (R-WA03) and Dave Reichert (R-WA08) joined the outcry against opening Washington's coastline to offshore oil leasing as proposed by the

Trump administration. Much of the coastal zone is designated as a protected marine sanctuary, wildlife refuge or wilderness within Olympic National Park.

### Telling the Stories of Stonewall

New York City's new Stonewall National Monument is the first national park unit to tell the story of the LGBT movement. This year, as the park determines how best to interpret the site's history, NPCA encourages our members to reflect on what Stonewall means to them. To that end, look for events this spring that we will co-host with local LGBT community groups.

### An Olympian for the Olympics

NPCA continues to advocate for natural quiet in Olympic National Park by encouraging the Navy to conduct their electromagnetic warfare training elsewhere. Kara Winger, Olympic javelin thrower from Vancouver, Washington, recently wrote in support of our Hear Our Olympics campaign in the Seattle Times. Read the article here: <http://bit.ly/2oqcMdg>.



### Military Vets Speak Up for Natural Quiet in New Film

We're proud to announce that we've partnered with Spruce Tone Films to create a new short film: "Hear Our Olympics." The film features several military veterans presenting the case for preserving natural quiet in Olympic National Park. See the event calendar on the back page for our official release party!

**Left:** Palmer Morse of Spruce Tone Films films a veteran in Olympic National Park. ©Spruce Tone Films



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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

## Seattle Park Ranger Helps Puerto Rico

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a home where the kitchen wall is the only thing left standing; a chef living out of a broom closet who makes a hot meal for her neighbors each day; and the mountain farmers who share everything they have with family, friends and volunteers.

I left my family and my life in Seattle because I needed to do something real, something tangible to help people recovering from the hurricanes. At every turn, I was humbled by the way we were received, the warmth we experienced, and the resiliency and resoluteness we witnessed to rebuild the island. I am left by this experience with the need to continue to help. Four months after Hurricane Maria, Puerto Rico is still largely without reliable and consistent electricity; families are still in temporary or substandard housing; and fresh food continues to be scarce. My role then was to assess damages and register families for FEMA assistance. My role now is to continue to bring awareness of what Puerto Ricans are facing every day and help inspire the changes that are needed to improve life on the island. Staying informed and finding small ways to help is something everyone can do.

**Right:** Volunteers at our annual volunteer appreciation party give “thumbs up” for parks (see page 1). ©Julia Tesch | NPCA

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### March 27 Hear Our Olympics Release Party at Seattle Central Cinema

Be among the first to see our new short film about preserving natural quiet in Olympic National Park. Tickets at <http://bit.ly/2BUkV2g>

### April 21 Coast Cleanup at Olympic National Park

Help us remove trash and debris from the wilderness beaches of Olympic during this annual favorite. Details TBA.

### May 19 National Kids to Parks Day at Ebey's Landing National Historical Reserve

Bring the whole family as we partner with veteran service organization The Mission Continues for kid-friendly activities in a local national park. Details TBA.

### June 2 National Trails Day at North Cascades National Park

Join us for trail restoration in North Cascades. Details TBA.

Check [npca.org/northwest](http://npca.org/northwest) regularly for the most up-to-date information on upcoming events.

