



NEWS RELEASE

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- 20-Feb-03 [Grand Canyon National Park Seeks Public Comment on Environmental Assessment for North Rim Emergency Services/Wildland Fire Facility and Preservation Treatments of Exposed Frame Cabins](#)
- 27-Jan-03 [Grand Canyon National Park Seeks Public Comment On Environmental Assessment For Proposed Rehabilitation Of The Ranger Operations Building](#)
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NEWS RELEASE

December 29, 2003

Dawn O'Sickey, 928/638-7779

Series of Breaks in Sprinklers and Pipes on South Rim

Grand Canyon, AZ - On Sunday, December 28, 2003, a series of pipe breakages and sprinkler system activations had rangers scrambling on the South Rim. The first call came in at 1:30 p.m. for a response to alarms at the Grand Canyon Unified Schools complex. Rangers and the structural fire brigade responded. Smoke was not found, but water was. A pipe for the sprinkler system had broken in the storage room in the new wing of the high school building and flooded three classrooms and the hallway.

The next call, at approximately 4:30 p.m., was in response to an alarm at the Grand Canyon Community Building. The responders found water flowing from the attic area of the building. They discovered a rupture in the pipes serving the sprinkler system.

Finally, around 5:20 p.m., an alarm in the new NPS warehouse facility sounded. Grand Canyon Fire Chief Kent Mecham responded and found that the pipes serving the eyewash stations and other safety features had burst. Shortly thereafter, the sprinklers activated.

There were no injuries, and cleanup and recovery efforts are well underway in all three locations. Classroom and office use is temporarily suspended in the Community Building. Investigations into the causes are ongoing, and both Grand Canyon National Park Deputy Superintendent Kate Cannon and Grand Canyon Unified Schools Superintendent Sheila Breen have stated that any lessons to be learned will be used to make improvements in the future.

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NEWS RELEASE

December 16, 2003

Jeff Cilek, The Peregrine Fund, 208/362-3811, cell 208/890-6685

Bill Heinrich, The Peregrine Fund 208/362-3811, cell 208-890-0163

Jeff Humphrey, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 602/242-0210

David Boyd, Bureau of Land Management, 435/688-3303

Dawn O'Sickey, Grand Canyon National Park, 928/638-7779

Andi Rogers, California Condor Coordinator, Arizona Game and Fish Department, 928/774-5045

More Condors On Their Way To Vermilion Cliffs

Note to editors: Condor images are available at

http://arizonaes.fws.gov/image_library.htm

http://www.gf.state.az.us/nrm/photo_downloads.html

http://www.peregrinefund.org/press_condor.html

Photos of previous condor transports are available by contacting Jeff Humphrey at jeff_humphrey@fws.gov.

Photos of this transport will be available on December 22, 2003 from Jeff Cilek (jcilek@peregrinefund.org) or Linda Behrman (lbehрман@peregrinefund.org).

Arizona's population of California Condors will increase on December 19 when ten condors will be transported to the release site in the Bureau of Land Management's Vermilion Cliffs National Monument. All of the young condors hatched last year at The Peregrine Fund's World Center for Birds of Prey. On December 1, there were 217 California Condors in the world, 84 of those were in the wild in Arizona, California, and Mexico.

The ten young condors will be transported by Norm Freeman of Chino Valley, Arizona, in a specially designed motor coach. The condors will travel from the World Center for Birds of Prey in Boise, Idaho to a transfer area below the release site at the base of the cliff in the Bureau of Land Management's Vermilion Cliffs National Monument. The condors will be divided into separate four-wheel drive vehicles for the steep drive to the release aviary on the top of the 1,000 foot cliff.

After an acclimation period of at least six to eight weeks, the young condors will be released in small groups. The public will be invited to view those releases. As information becomes available about the releases, it will be placed on The Peregrine Fund's web site (www.peregrinefund.org/whats.html).

"This is an exciting time for the project," stated Dr. William A. Burnham, President of The Peregrine Fund. "Last month's successful fledging of the first condor chick in the wild in decades is a major step in establishing a viable population in the wild," finished Burnham.

"With the fledging of a wild condor chick, 2003 was truly a historic year in the California Condor recovery effort in northern Arizona. We are optimistic that the arrival of these new condors marks the beginning of another great year in the recovery of these remarkable birds," said Roger Taylor, Field Manager for the BLM Arizona Strip.

"This has been such a great year for condors and it's always exciting to get new birds into the program. We are looking

forward to these young condors' successful integration into the wild flock in Arizona," stated Andi Rogers California Condor Coordinator for the Arizona Game and Fish Department.

The historic Arizona reintroduction is a joint project among the Bureau of Land Management, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, National Park Service, The Peregrine Fund, Arizona Game and Fish Department, Southern Utah's Coalition of Resources and Economics, and others. Funding for the project is being provided by The Peregrine Fund, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Arizona Game and Fish Department, Peter Pfendler, National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, Nina Mason Pulliam Charitable Trust, Disney Wildlife Conservation Fund Awards, Steve Martin/Natural Encounters, Grand Canyon National Park Foundation, Bureau of Land Management, Grand Canyon National Park, Kearney Alliance, Grand Canyon Trust, Patagonia, Turner Foundation, Globe Foundation, Earth Friends, Arizona Public Service, Wallace Research Foundation, Mattie Wattis Harris Foundation, Arizona Community Foundation, Oracle Corporation, Grand Canyon Conservation Fund, and others.

The California Condors are being released as a "non-essential/experimental population" under section 10(j) of the Endangered Species Act. Section 10(j) provides that the species can be released in an area without impacting current or future land use planning. However, in Grand Canyon National Park condors are provided full protection as a federally protected endangered species. This authority has been spelled out further in an innovative agreement between the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and local governments. This "Implementation Agreement" spells out a positive working relationship between the Federal government and the various local governments.

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NEWS RELEASE

December 9, 2003

Dawn O'Sickey, 928-638-7779

Hold Placed on Adding Names to Noncommercial River Permit Waitlist

Grand Canyon, AZ - Grand Canyon National Park is placing a hold on adding new members to the noncommercial river permit waitlist. As part of the current Colorado River Management Plan (CRMP) planning effort, park staff and planners are carefully examining and considering alternatives to the current waitlist permit system. An overwhelming majority of public comments stated the opinion that the permit system should be overhauled. With this in mind, park management does not want to perpetuate the current system while other alternatives are being considered. There are now over 8,000 people on the waitlist, and more than 1,000 are typically added each year. In the event that the current system is selected as part of the final CRMP decision, to be completed by December 31, 2004, the system for allowing additions to the waitlist would simply be reinstated.

Until a record of decision is made for the CRMP, current waitlist members will be served in the same manner as they have been in the past. They will soon receive the familiar annual letter regarding waitlist procedures, the schedule of release dates, and other topics. The River Permits Office may be contacted at 1-800-959-9164 or 928-638-7843.

Please go to www.nps.gov/grca for more information regarding Grand Canyon National Park. Information about the Colorado River Management Plan may be found at www.nps.gov/grca/crmp.

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NEWS RELEASE

December 5, 2003

Dawn O'Sickey, 928-638-7779

Housing Construction Begins

Grand Canyon, AZ - During the week of December 1, 2003, construction activities will start to be visible at the corner of Albright Avenue and Mohave Street, the site of two new eight-plex housing units. Salvage of vegetation will occur first, followed by site grubbing and clearing and then building construction. Staging of equipment, supplies, and materials will occur within the utility corridor to the south of the construction site. The project is expected to take approximately nine months to complete.

The completed units will be under the management of the National Park Service. Xanterra Parks and Resorts is the project manager, and Shrader Martinez is the prime contractor. The construction site and staging areas will be fenced or flagged to protect pedestrians and wildlife. Every effort will be made to minimize traffic and other disruptions for residents and other users of the area. However, social paths through the area will be blocked and eventually eliminated with the new construction. Therefore, pedestrians will be required to find new routes to and from their routine destinations. Standard quiet hours will be observed to minimize noise impacts.

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NEWS RELEASE

November 20, 2003

Dawn O'Sickey, 928-638-7779

Grand Canyon Depot Rehabilitation Commences

Grand Canyon, AZ - Beginning Wednesday, November 19, 2003, construction workers and equipment will be visible around the Grand Canyon Depot. The structure, built in 1909-1910, is a National Historic Landmark - a distinction enjoyed by a mere 4% of all buildings, structures and sites on the National Historic Register. The building is the only railway depot still in active service in the National Park system, and it is the only log structure still functioning as a depot in the United States. The Grand Canyon Depot is currently vulnerable to fire, and it is threatened by physical deterioration due to the ravages of time, weather, and deferred maintenance. Improvements to be made include the installation of an automatic fire sprinkler system, improvements to the existing alarm system for fire, smoke, particulates and carbon monoxide, reconstruction of the retaining wall to the east of the depot, lighting protection, and the demolition of the small outbuilding close to the depot (not an historic structure).

The contractor, Pacific General Incorporated (PGI), will minimize impacts to visitors, the Grand Canyon Railway, Xanterra transportation, and the National Park Service employees who have office space in the building. Tasks that may create noise disturbance for El Tovar patrons will be started at a reasonable time; work will be minimized during the unloading and loading of train passengers; and traffic will not be halted, although occasionally it may be slower than usual. Fencing will be in place to ensure the safety of the visitors and wildlife. The bulk of the work should be complete by the end of December with one portion of the project to occur in the spring of 2004.

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NEWS RELEASE

November 12, 2003

Don Singer, Safety Officer, 928-638-7858

Rabid Fox Found at Phantom Ranch Area of Grand Canyon National Park

Grand Canyon, AZ - Grand Canyon National Park, the Arizona Department of Health Services, and the Coconino County Health Department are attempting to determine whether anyone had contact with a rabid fox while visiting the Phantom Ranch area of Grand Canyon National Park. On Friday, November 7, 2003, the fox was killed when it tried to attack a Park Ranger. The fox was submitted to the Arizona State Health Laboratory, where it tested positive for rabies.

Anyone who had any contact with a fox in the Phantom Ranch area of Grand Canyon National Park between October 24, 2003 and November 7, 2003 should contact one of the following offices:

- Coconino County Health Department (928) 226-2741
- Arizona Department of Health Services (602) 364-4562
- Grand Canyon National Park (928) 638-7858

People and pets can be exposed to rabies when they attempt to assist, feed or handle wild animals. If a wild animal is seen that is sick or acting strangely, it should immediately be reported to park staff. Examples of unusual behavior include: wild animals that show no fear of people and pets; nocturnal animals that are active in daylight; and bats found on the ground, in swimming pools, or that have been caught by a pet.

The Arizona Department of Health Services recommends the following precautions:

- Keep people and pets away from wild animals. Do not pick up, touch, or feed wild or unfamiliar animals, especially sick or wounded ones. If someone has been bitten or scratched, or has had contact with the animal, report it immediately to animal control or health officials.
- Do not "rescue" seemingly abandoned young wild animals. Usually, the mother will return. If the mother is dead or has not returned many hours later, call the Arizona Game and Fish Department.
- Vaccinate all dogs and cats against rabies. Pets should be kept in a fenced yard.
- Take precautions when camping, hunting or fishing. Avoid sleeping on the open ground without the protection of a closed tent or camper. Keep pets on a leash and do not allow them to wander.
- Do not disturb roosting bats. If a bat is found on the ground, do not touch it. Report the bat and its location to the local animal control officer or health department. Place a box over the bat to contain it. Be careful not to damage the bat in any way since it must be intact for rabies testing.

For more information about rabies, call the local health department or the ADHS Vector-Borne & Zoonotic Disease Section at (602) 230-5820.



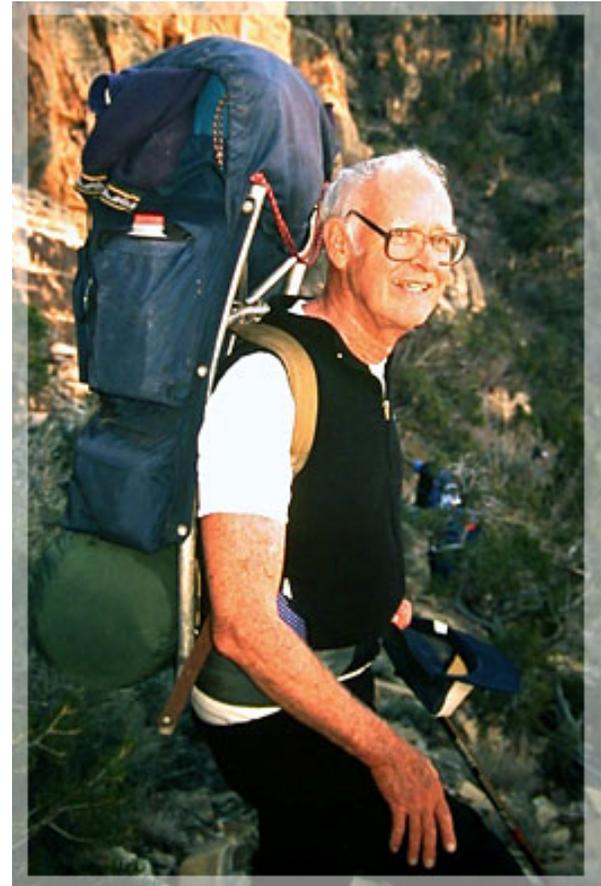
NEWS RELEASE

November 7, 2003

Dawn O'Sickey, Grand Canyon National Park, 928/638-7779

An Evening with George Steck - Author and Hiker- Extraordinaire

Grand Canyon, AZ - On Thursday, November 13, 2003, "An Evening with George Steck" is being presented by the Grand Canyon Association, Grand Canyon National Park, and many friends and admirers. A reception will be held from 4:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. at Kolb Studio on the South Rim. George will be on hand to chat and sign books, and refreshments will be provided by Xanterra Parks and Resorts. The activities will move to the Grand Canyon Community Building at 7:00 p.m. for a slide-show by photographer Gary Ladd, the film "Worm Hole" by author Tom Myers, and assorted historical video and film footage.



George Steck is one of Grand Canyon National Park's premier hikers. He has hiked approximately 6,000 miles, spent 1,100 days in the canyon, and in 1982 hiked the entire length of the canyon from Lees Ferry to Grand Wash Cliffs on the north side of the Colorado River. He even repeated the effort the following year from Lees Ferry to Lava Falls Rapids. His well-known books, *Grand Canyon Loops I & II*, have been republished and compiled into one edition by the Falcon Press, and followers fondly known as "Steckies" are regularly seen with his book in hand while finding their way through the canyon.

George has worked as a Volunteer In Park (VIP) over the years on many projects including compiling a list of Grand Canyon place names and correlating them to topographical maps prior to the GIS era. He has also been consulted as a subject-matter expert by incident commanders for search and rescue operations. Those who wish to join in the tribute are invited to attend. Please contact Dawn O'Sickey, Public Affairs Specialist, at 928-638-7779 for more information.

For information about Grand Canyon National Park, please visit www.nps.gov/grca. For information regarding the Grand Canyon Association, please visit www.grandcanyon.org.

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NEWS RELEASE

November 6, 2003

Dawn O'Sickey, Grand Canyon National Park, 928/638-7779

Andi Rogers, California Condor Coordinator, Arizona Game and Fish Department, 928/774-5045

Jeff Cilek, The Peregrine Fund, 208/362-3811 office, 208/890-6685 cell

David Boyd, Bureau of Land Management, 435/688-3303

Bill Austin, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 928/ 226-0614

Victoria Fox, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 505/248-6455

Young California Condor in Arizona Takes Flight

Biologists from Grand Canyon National Park and The Peregrine Fund have confirmed the fledging of the first California Condor nestling in Arizona in perhaps over a century. The flight was observed at 1:30 p.m. on Wednesday, November 5. The chick jumped out looking like it wanted to land but there was nothing there. It ungracefully circled and landed 500 - 600 feet below cave in a remote canyon. The California Condor was included on the first Federal Endangered Species List in 1967.

"It was spectacular!" stated Sophie Osborn, Field Manager of The Peregrine Fund. "It was not was not the graceful flight we had envisioned, more like a controlled fall and our hearts were in our throats as it dropped 500 to 600 feet below the nest cave. Minutes after the chick landed it started to explore its environment, tugging on a yucca plant and hopping from boulder to boulder. We waited and hoped so long for this to happen that being part of it was indescribable!" finished Osborn.

"Our biggest worry after the chick left the cave was how long it would take for the parents to find it," stated Chad Olson, Raptor Technician for the National Park Service. "Both parents were away from the area when the chick fledged. To our great relief, female 127 flew to the nest about two hours after the chick fledged, realized the chick was not in the nest cave, immediately found it, and dropped down to feed it. Since fledging is such a dangerous time for the chick it is tremendous to be past this and on to another exciting phase." finished Olson

The chick is healthy and alert to its surroundings. Biologists are planning to attach telemetry equipment and assess overall health issues. The bird will be closely monitored.

"A fledgling condor chick spreads its wings and flies into the wild, and not just the parents share in the pride. The partners who have worked for decades to rescue this species from the brink of extinction see it as a great cause for hope," said Interior Secretary Gale Norton."

"I have watched adult condors soaring above the spectacular beauty of the Grand Canyon. The birth and flight of this young condor creates optimism that condors will flourish in the Canyon for many generations to come," finished Norton.

Biologists first suspected that Condors 123 and 127 were incubating an egg in March 2003. Daily observations were made, with assistance from a group of "Nestwatch" volunteers. The parents became very attentive to the nest in early May. The existence of the chick was confirmed on August 18 after biologists made an arduous 24-mile hike in 100 degree heat down to below the nesting cave. Daily monitoring continued.

"We are very pleased about this new step in the recovery of the California Condor species," stated Joseph Alston, Superintendent of Grand Canyon National Park. "We are proud to be a part of this highly anticipated and monumental event for both the park and the Colorado Plateau. We look forward to working with our partners in order to ensure the well-being of this new arrival to the condor population and to ensure continued success in the program."

Three pairs of California Condors produced eggs in Arizona in 2003 (one in BLM's Vermilion Cliffs National Monument and two in Grand Canyon National Park). Two of the eggs did not hatch, which is not uncommon for California Condors during their early breeding years. In fact, this was the second egg laid by Condor 127 and the third laid by Condor 119. In California this year, one egg was laid and hatched in early May, but, unfortunately, the chick did not survive.

As Roger Taylor, Arizona Strip Field Manager for the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) states, "We have been anxiously awaiting this bird's first flight. With the good condor viewing opportunities that are typically available along the Vermilion Cliffs, perhaps the public will have an opportunity to view the young condor this winter."

"The significance of the first wild-hatched condor in Arizona is tremendous. While captive-bred condors have exceeded our expectations, it is this chick and others like it in the future that ensure condor recovery in Arizona," says Arizona Game and Fish Director Duane Shroufe.

"The partners have watched this chick prepare to fledge with as much anticipation as any natural parent might," said H. Dale Hall, Southwest Regional Director of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. "We all wish the best for this fledgling and look forward to further successes."

The historic Arizona reintroduction is a joint project among the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the National Park Service, The Peregrine Fund, the Arizona Game and Fish Department, the Bureau of Land Management, Southern Utah's Coalition of Resources and Economics, and others. Funding for the project is being provided by The Peregrine Fund, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Arizona Game and Fish Department, Peter Pfendler, National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, Nina Mason Pulliam Charitable Trust, Disney Wildlife Conservation Fund Awards, Steve Martin/Natural Encounters, Grand Canyon National Park Foundation, Bureau of Land Management, Grand Canyon National Park, Kearney Alliance, Grand Canyon Trust, Patagonia, Turner Foundation, Globe Foundation, Earth Friends, Arizona Public Service, Wallace Research Foundation, Mattie Wattis Harris Foundation, Arizona Community Foundation, and Oracle Corporation Grand Canyon Conservation Fund, and others.

Images and other information may be obtained from the following websites:

- The Peregrine Fund: www.peregrinefund.org/press/condor_chick_fledges_2003.html
- The Grand Canyon National Park Foundation: www.gcnpf.org,
- Grand Canyon National Park: www.nps.gov/grca







The California Condors are being released as a "non-essential/experimental population" under section 10(j) of the Endangered Species Act. Section 10(j) provides that the species can be released in an area without impacting current or future land use planning. However, in Grand Canyon National Park condors are provided full protection as federally protected threatened species. This authority has been spelled out further in an innovative agreement between the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and local governments. This "Implementation Agreement" spells out a positive working relationship between the Federal government and the various local governments.



NEWS RELEASE

November 2, 2003

Donna Nemeth 928-638-7944

Firefighters Going Home

Grand Canyon, AZ - While the majority of firefighters will be travelling back to their home units, the Poplar and Rose Fires will continue to be monitored by engine crews checking for hot spots. They will remove snags along roads, mop-up, and patrol for any flare-ups. Surface fire will remain minimal due to cool weather and shorter days therefore fire behavior will be smoldering and creeping. However, neither fire will be completely out until significant snowfall takes place. Firefighters have completed a burnout along the W-1 road. The road closures will remain in effect due to falling snags and other safety concerns. Firefighters did an excellent job during the past weeks while working on the fires, and no injuries occurred.

Smoke from the California fires has drifted over not only the Grand Canyon, but also the entire region. Smoky days may be experienced in the Canyon again. You may view the smoke column from the California fires by pulling up the park's web site at www.nps.gov/grca.

These fires pose potential hazards associated with continued burning, and numerous snags have fallen across the roads on a daily basis. A temporary closure to ensure public safety has been implemented in the Swamp Ridge area. The Swamp Ridge Road (W-4) is closed from the Kanabownits Road junction, west to Swamp Point. The North Bass Trail has been closed from the trailhead at Swamp Point to Redwall Canyon. The Powell Plateau Trail has also been closed from the trailhead at Swamp Point to its terminus on Powell Plateau (full closure). The W-1 Road has been closed at Tiyo Point Road junction to Sublime Point. These areas will reopen as soon as fire behavior has moderated and the area is safe for reentry.

Fire Name	Status	Approximate Location	Start Date	Size
Poplar Fire	active	Big Springs area	09/04/03	11,306 acres
Rose Fire	active	south of Swamp Ridge Rd	10/07/03	3,482 acres

For additional information about the fires, call 928-638-7819. For backcountry travel information, call 928-638-7875. (www.nps.gov/grca/fire/)



NEWS RELEASE

November 1, 2003

Donna Nemeth 928-638-7944

Poplar Fire And Rose Fire Remain Inactive

Grand Canyon, AZ - Weather has reduced the Poplar Fire's behavior, as a result, fire managers have begun to release firefighters back to their home units. The perimeter of the Poplar Fire is now 11,306 acres. Crews will resume patrol today for any hot spots, check roads for snags, mop-up, and monitor the northeast portion of the fire. Safety is a major concern for firefighters, as they remove snags along roads.

The Rose Fire remains inactive at this time. Fire behavior is creeping and smoldering. Firefighters continue to watch the fire for any hot spots or snags. One engine will continue to be assigned for patrol to monitor the fire. The Rose Fire is 3,482 acres. Both fires will show a minimum of fire behavior until significant snow falls.

On Wednesday afternoon smoke and haze began to infiltrate the South Rim of the Grand Canyon. Smoke from the California fires has drifted over not only the Grand Canyon, but also the entire region. Smoky days may be experienced in the Canyon again. You may view the smoke column from the California fires by pulling up the park's web site at www.nps.gov/grca.

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NEWS RELEASE

October 31, 2003

Donna Nemeth 928-638-7944

Poplar Fire And Rose Fire Show Little Activity

Grand Canyon, AZ - Lower temperatures and higher humidities kept the Poplar Fire on the North Rim from making any significant growth. Firefighters conducted another successful burnout on the east side of the W-4 Road and the north side of the W-1 Road. The perimeter of the Poplar Fire is 11,265 acres. Firefighters continue proactive measures for structures in the area, which include engines staged for protection, protective wrapping if necessary, and debris clearing. Today crews will continue to patrol for any hot spots, check roads for snags, mop-up, and monitor the northeast portion of the fire.

The Rose Fire is showing very little activity at this time. Fire behavior is creeping and smoldering. Firefighters continue to watch the fire for any hot spots or snags. One engine will continue to be assigned for patrol to continue to monitor the fire. The Rose Fire is 3,482 acres.

On Wednesday afternoon smoke and haze began to infiltrate the South Rim of the Grand Canyon. While the Poplar Fire is still active, smoke from the California fires has drifted over not only the Grand Canyon, but also the entire region. This is due to weather patterns that have established over the area during the past few days and smoky days may be experienced in the Canyon again. If you would like a view of the California fires from a satellite view, you may see it by pulling up the park's web site at www.nps.gov/grca.

These fires pose potential hazards associated with continued burning. A temporary closure to ensure public safety has been implemented in the Swamp Ridge area. The Swamp Ridge Road (W-4) is closed from the Kanabownits Road junction, west to Swamp Point. The North Bass Trail has been closed from the trailhead at Swamp Point to Redwall Canyon. The Powell Plateau Trail has also been closed from the trailhead at Swamp Point to its terminus on Powell Plateau (full closure). The W-1 Road has been closed at Tiyo Point Road junction to Sublime Point. These areas will reopen as soon as fire behavior has moderated and the area is safe for reentry.

Fire Name	Status	Approximate Location	Start Date	Size
Poplar Fire	active	Big Springs area	09/04/03	11,265 acres
Rose Fire	active	south of Swamp Ridge Rd	10/07/03	3,482 acres

For additional information about the fires, call 928-638-7819. For backcountry travel information, call 928-638-7875. (www.nps.gov/grca/fire/)



NEWS RELEASE

October 30, 2003

Dawn O'Sickey (928) 638-7779

Grand Canyon Storytelling Festival

Grand Canyon, AZ - Grand Canyon National Park in partnership with the Grand Canyon Association is sponsoring a series of storytelling programs in order to enhance community outreach, school partnerships, and arts in education efforts. The festival will occur November 3-6, 2003, 7:00 p.m. - 8:30 p.m. each evening, at the Shrine of the Ages. The schedule of events follows:

- Monday, November 3: Sunny Dooley is a native Navajo (Dine) storyteller, poet, lecturer, and folksinger who has traveled throughout the United States sharing her culture's rich artistic heritage.
- Tuesday, November 4: Liz Warren is a teacher and cofounder of the South Mountain Community College Storytelling Institute. She tells a variety of stories about growing up in Arizona, folktales, and myths from ancient traditions.
- Wednesday, November 5: Ricardo Provencio tells stories, myths, and trickster tales that paint vivid images of his Latino culture. Ricardo is one of the cornerstones of the South Mountain Community College Storytelling Institute.
- Thursday, November 6: Michael Lacapa is a Hopi/Apache/Tewa Indian whose stories revolve around his native culture and heritage. He is also a talented artist, author, illustrator and storyteller.

Programs are free to the public. For more information call Robin White, Supervisory Park Ranger, at 928-638-7765, or Phyllis Kachinghongva, Park Ranger, at 928-638-7789.

For more information regarding Grand Canyon National Park, please visit the park's website at www.nps.gov/grca. For more information regarding the Grand Canyon Association, please go to www.grandcanyon.org.



NEWS RELEASE

October 30, 2003

Dawn O'Sickey (928) 638-7779

Grand Canyon Announces Interpreter of the Year

Grand Canyon, AZ - Superintendent Joe Alston is pleased to announce Pam Cox as the recipient of Grand Canyon National Park's Interpreter of the Year for 2003. Pam was nominated and selected by her peers for this honor. She consistently provides visitors with opportunities to connect with the canyon and ensures that resource messages are included in her programs.



Pam is one of two interpretive park rangers who live and work at Phantom Ranch on the floor of the canyon. Pam's spouse works for the National Park Service and her son attends the Grand Canyon High School. Although she spends most of her time in the canyon, she continues to be integral part of the South Rim interpretive team. Pam did an outstanding job coordinating the commemoration of the anniversary of the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) at Grand Canyon. She spent numerous hours on research and developed an exhibit on the CCC for Yavapai Observation Station. She also provides training to staff on CPR and Automated Electronic Defibrillator use, she ensures that first aid supplies are on hand, and she has been an excellent mentor to the new interpretive ranger at Phantom Ranch.

"Pam always has a smile on her face and finds the best that others have to offer," stated Judy Hellmich, Chief of Interpretation. "The National Park Service is very well represented at Grand Canyon National Park by the efforts of rangers like Pam Cox."



NEWS RELEASE

October 30, 2003

Donna Nemeth 928-638-7944

Poplar Fire Grows Little, Smoke And Haze Due To California Fires

Grand Canyon, AZ - The Poplar Fire on the North Rim is still active, however, even with strong winds firefighters saw little growth in the fire's perimeter. The most active portion of the fire, on the northwest corner, burned through heavy fuels but moved very slowly. Firefighters also conducted a successful burnout near the North Rim Entrance Station on the east side of the fire to establish a safety zone for firefighters. New acreage for the Poplar Fire is 11,105. Firefighters continue proactive measures for structures in the area, which include engines staged for protection, protective wrapping if necessary, and debris clearing. Today crews will continue to patrol for any hot spots, mop-up, and monitor the northeast portion of the fire.

The Rose Fire is showing very little activity at this time. Fire behavior is creeping and smoldering. Firefighters continue to watch the fire for any hot spots or snags. One engine will continue to be assigned for patrol to continue to monitor the fire. New mapping has established the Rose Fire to be 3,482 acres.

Wednesday afternoon smoke and haze began to infiltrate the South Rim of the Grand Canyon. While the Poplar Fire is still active, a major smoke plume from the California fires has drifted over not only the Grand Canyon, but also the entire region. This is due to weather patterns that have established over the area during the past few days. If you would like a view of this fire plume and its activity from a satellite view, you may see it by pulling up the park's web site at www.nps.gov/grca.

People who are sensitive to smoke should limit their outdoor activities. This includes active children, older adults, and people with preexisting respiratory diseases (e.g., asthma, chronic obstructive lung disease).

These fires pose potential hazards associated with continued burning. A temporary closure to ensure public safety has been implemented in the Swamp Ridge area. The Swamp Ridge Road (W-4) is closed from the Kanabownits Road junction, west to Swamp Point. The North Bass Trail has been closed from the trailhead at Swamp Point to Redwall Canyon. The Powell Plateau Trail has also been closed from the trailhead at Swamp Point to its terminus on Powell Plateau (full closure). The W-1 Road has been closed at Tiyo Point Road junction to Sublime Point. These areas will reopen as soon as fire behavior has moderated and the area is safe for reentry.

Fire Name	Status	Approximate Location	Start Date	Size
Poplar Fire	active	Big Springs area	09/04/03	11,105 acres
Rose Fire	active	south of Swamp Ridge Rd	10/07/03	3,482 acres

For additional information about the fires, call 928-638-7819. For backcountry travel information, call 928-638-7875.

[\(www.nps.gov/grca/fire/\)](http://www.nps.gov/grca/fire/)

[2003 Media Home](#)

<http://www.nps.gov>



NEWS RELEASE

October 29, 2003

Donna Nemeth 928-638-7944

Fire Managers Postpone Hearst Prescribed Fire

Grand Canyon, AZ - Fire managers postponed the Hearst prescribed fire scheduled to take place near Grandview on the South Rim Wednesday, October 29, 2003, due to windy conditions. While all other components of the burn plan were met, fire managers' first priority is to provide for safety of firefighters and the public. The burn will be rescheduled when conditions are favorable.

Prescribed fires are one of the most effective tools available to resource managers for restoring fire dependent ecosystems. Prescribed fires are based on burn plans that must be approved by the park superintendent before any of the recommended actions are implemented.

The park's General Management Plan, Resource Management Plan, and Fire Management Plan call for fire to be restored to the Park's ecosystem to reduce excess fuels and promote forest health. Fire managers seek to strike a balance between suppressing fires that threaten lives or property, and utilize fire as a tool to establish healthy forests.

For additional information, please call Grand Canyon National Park's Fire Information at 928-638-7819. (www.nps.gov/grca/fire/)



NEWS RELEASE

October 29, 2003

Donna Nemeth 928-638-7944

Hearst Prescribed Fire Due To Start At 10:00 Am Today

Grand Canyon, AZ - Firefighters will ignite the Hearst prescribed fire today, Thursday, October 29, 2003, if weather conditions permit. The fire is located approximately eight miles southeast of Grand Canyon Village in the Grandview area south of Highway 64 on the Park's South Rim. The objective of the Hearst prescribed fire is to reduce excess fuel and promote forest health.

Prescribed fires are one of the most effective tools available to resource managers for restoring fire dependant ecosystems. Prescribed fires are based on burn plans that must be approved by the Park Superintendent before any of the recommended actions are implemented. Park resource managers and the Arizona Department of Environmental Quality are involved in the process of planning prescribed burns and 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. Smoke impacts may be possible in the adjacent community of Tusayan. Smoke impacts may also occur along the river at night and in the early morning hours. No park or road closures are anticipated at this time.

Prescribed Fire	Size	Location
Hearst	60 acres	Grandview area, approximately eight miles southeast of Grand Canyon Village

For additional information, please call Grand Canyon National Park's Fire Information at 928-638-7819. (www.nps.gov/grca/fire/)



NEWS RELEASE

October 28, 2003

Donna Nemeth 928-638-7944

Prescribed Fire Scheduled To Occur At Grand Canyon Wednesday, October 28, 2003

Grand Canyon, AZ - A prescribed fire is scheduled to take place at Grand Canyon National Park Wednesday October 28, 2003 when environmental factors such as wind, temperature, relative humidity, and fuel moisture levels are favorable. The Hearst prescribed fire will be implemented on the Park's South Rim.

Prescribed fires are one of the most effective tools available to resource managers for restoring fire dependant ecosystems. Prescribed fires are based on burn plans that must be approved by the Park Superintendent before any of the recommended actions are implemented. Park resource managers are involved in the process of planning prescribed burns and 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. Smoke impacts may be possible in the adjacent community of Tusayan. Smoke impacts may also occur along the river at night and in the early morning hours. No park closures are anticipated at this time.

Prescribed Fire	Size	Location
Hearst	60 acres	Grandview area, approximately eight miles southeast of Grand Canyon Village

For additional information, please call Grand Canyon National Park's Fire Information at 928-638-7819. (www.nps.gov/grca/fire/)



NEWS RELEASE

October 28, 2003

Donna Nemeth 928-638-7944

Wind Shift May Give South Rim A Break From Smoke

Grand Canyon, AZ - Wednesday afternoon smoke began to lift from the Canyon, as winds shift to the southwest in advance of a cold front that is predicted to arrive over the next few days. The wind shift will help push new smoke away from the Canyon, and assist Canyon ventilation. Hopefully, this clearing will last until Friday. The colder temperatures will also play a part in slowing the fires' growth, and will be a factor in improving air quality at the Grand Canyon.

Today, fire fighters experienced more active fire behavior on the Poplar fire as the front began to move in. Because there is a great deal of fuel in the area, combined with the current dry weather, the fire has continued to be active. Crews, however, are working hard to make sure that the fire stays within National Park boundaries. The Poplar Fire is now 11,020 acres in size.

The Rose Fire continues to be managed under a Wildland Fire Use strategy, which allows some lightning caused fires to burn, under specific conditions and within a predetermined area, for resource benefit. The Rose fire also experienced increased fire behavior due to the current weather conditions. The Rose Fire is 3,694 acres.

These fires pose potential hazards associated with continued burning. A temporary closure to ensure public safety has been implemented in the Swamp Ridge area. The Swamp Ridge Road (W-4) is closed from the Kanabownits Road junction, west to Swamp Point. The North Bass Trail has been closed from the trailhead at Swamp Point to Redwall Canyon. The Powell Plateau Trail has also been closed from the trailhead at Swamp Point to its terminus on Powell Plateau (full closure). The W-1 Road has been closed at Tiyo Point Road junction to Sublime Point. These areas will reopen as soon as fire behavior has moderated and the area is safe for reentry.

Fire Name	Status	Approximate Location	Start Date	Size
Poplar Fire	active	Big Springs area	09/04/03	11,020 acres
Rose Fire	active	south of Swamp Ridge Rd	10/07/03	3,694 acres

For additional information about the fires, call 928-638-7819. For backcountry travel information, call 928-638-7875. (www.nps.gov/grca/fire/)



NEWS RELEASE

October 24, 2003

Donna Nemeth 928-638-7944

Burn Out Operation Planned For Northern Edge Of Poplar Fire

Grand Canyon, AZ - Fire managers are planning a burn out operation to secure the Poplar Fire on its northern edge, in an attempt to keep it within the boundaries of Grand Canyon National Park. This tactic is used to consume unburned fuel from between the main fire and the fire line, to slow the progress of the main fire, thereby preventing it from building momentum and jumping the fire line.

The 8,238-acre Poplar Fire, which became very active in its southeast quadrant yesterday, is being managed under a suppression strategy. The 19-acre Rose Fire continues to be managed under a Wildland Fire Use strategy. This approach allows some lightning-caused fires to burn, under specific conditions and within a predetermined area, for resource benefits.

A Type 3 Incident Management Team has been established to manage both fires. Other resources include representatives from the Craig Hotshots, the Diamond Mountain Hotshots, two engines, one water tender, and numerous park personnel. A total of 40 people are assisting with this effort.

North winds caused smoke impacts yesterday. Unhealthy PM (Particulate Matter) 2.5 levels for sensitive groups have occurred again today. Sensitive groups at increased risk to PM 2.5 effects include active children and people who regularly engage in outdoor activities and people with preexisting respiratory diseases (e.g., asthma, chronic obstructive lung disease). This sensitive group should limit their exposure by reducing the duration or intensity of physical exertion or by rescheduling activities until levels have dropped below unhealthy levels. Weather patterns are expected to improve over the weekend and cleaner air is expected. Smoke will continue to be highly visible, particularly when the burnout operations are implemented.

Fire Name	Status	Approximate Location	Start Date	Size
Poplar Fire	active	Big Springs area	09/04/03	8,238 acres
Rose Fire	active	south of Swamp Ridge Rd	10/07/03	19 acres

For additional information about the fires, call 928-638-7819. For backcountry travel information, call 928-638-7875.

www.nps.gov/grca/fire/



NEWS RELEASE

October 18, 2003

Dawn O'Sickey (928) 638-7779

Grand Canyon National Park Announces Child Safety Seat Awareness Week

Grand Canyon, AZ - Child Safety Seat Awareness Week is October 20 -24 at Grand Canyon. The week will culminate in a free Child Safety Seat Inspection Station in the Grand Canyon Recreation Center parking lot on Friday, October 24, from 1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. Certified technicians from the National Safe Kids Buckle Up Campaign will offer parents and caregivers personal instruction and information on the proper selection and installation of child safety seats. The technicians will also be available to inspect car seats to ensure correct installation.

The goal of Child Safety Seat Awareness Week is to increase community awareness about the significant risk to the health and safety posed by transporting unrestrained children in vehicles and to encourage parents and caregivers to buckle-up their kids. Motor vehicle crashes are the leading cause of death and disability for children between the ages of four and 14 and are the second leading cause of death and disability for children under five. When correctly installed and used, child safety seats reduce the risk of death by 70% for infants, by 54% for toddlers, and reduce the need for hospitalization by 69%.

For additional information about the Child Safety Seat Awareness program, please call (928) 638-7788.

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NEWS RELEASE

October 16, 2003

Dawn O'Sickey (928) 638-7779

Park Contract Helicopter Crashes on Kaibab National Forest, North District

Grand Canyon, AZ - On Thursday, October 16, 2003, at 4:50 p.m. MDT, the Grand Canyon National Park helicopter - contracted from Papillon Grand Canyon Helicopters - was involved in a non-injury crash two miles north of the park boundary. The McDonnell Douglas 900 Explorer (No Tail Rotor/NOTAR) helicopter had just completed a reconnaissance flight of the Poplar Fire Complex on the North Rim and was en route to a landing zone on the North District of the Kaibab National Forest when the aircraft experienced a loss of control on final approach. The ship rolled onto its left side upon landing. The aircraft was severely damaged.

The pilot, M. Bordon Miller, has 25 years experience (10,000 hours) including 7.5 years contracted by the National Park Service. The others on board were Russ Truman (District Fire Management Officer, Kaibab NF); Mark Murray (Helicopter Manager, Grand Canyon NP); Lynn Emerick (Poplar Fire Incident Commander, Grand Canyon NP); and Mark McCutcheon (Acting North Rim Unit Manager, Grand Canyon NP). All occupants were taken to Kane County Hospital in Kanab, Utah, for evaluation.

"We are extremely relieved that no one was apparently injured in this incident," stated Grand Canyon Superintendent Joe Alston. Grand Canyon National Park Management and Aviation staff members are working with the US Forest Service and the Coconino County Sheriff's Department to ensure site safety and integrity. Department of the Interior, Papillon Grand Canyon Helicopters, and Federal Aviation Administration investigators are expected to arrive at the crash site Friday.

Photographs available below.













NEWS RELEASE

October 6, 2003

Donna Nemeth 928-638-7944

Public Scoping Process Begins For Grand Canyon's Fire Management Plan

Grand Canyon National Park has initiated the process to update the existing Fire Management Plan (FMP). This plan, prepared in 1992, revised in 1993, 1994, 1995, 1998, and 2003, needs to be updated. The National Park Service (NPS) is now beginning preparation of a new FMP that incorporates the latest science and the most recent federal fire policy to guide the fire management program at Grand Canyon National Park. When completed, the FMP will describe a detailed program of actions to safely carry out fire management policies and objectives at Grand Canyon National Park.

The plan is needed:

- to fully recognize the importance of fire management in promoting ecosystem sustainability;
- to prescribe methods to protect communities, developed areas, cultural resources and key wildlife habitat from unwanted, high-intensity wildland fires;
- to form the basis for short- and long-term project planning and scheduling;
- to form the basis for communication, coordination and project planning with regulatory and partner agencies;
- to provide a framework for managing fire in wilderness areas for wilderness resource goals and to minimize impacts to visitors in these areas; and
- because periodic maintenance of helispots and roads are necessary for the implementation of the FMP.

There are typically three broad phases to producing a plan like this, with each phase consisting of various steps. During Phase One, the planning team sets program objectives, identifies issues and collects data related to these issues. Phase Two efforts focus on defining alternative means for achieving goals and resolving issues. Phase Three consists of identifying a preferred alternative. Key public involvement steps occur during Phases One and Two. NPS is currently in Phase One where public input is gathered through written comment, electronic outreach and public meetings. Public participation is very important to this process.

How You Can Be Involved

1) Write: Comments may be submitted in writing to National Park Service, Grand Canyon National Park, P.O. Box 129, Grand Canyon, Arizona 86023-0129 or by e-mail to grca_fmp@nps.gov. (If submitting comments electronically, please send as a text file avoiding the use of special characters and any form of encryption. Also, please include your name, e-mail address, and mailing address in your message.)

2) Attend Public Scoping Meetings: A series of public open houses will be held this fall in Phoenix, Flagstaff, Kanab, Page, and Grand Canyon. Dates and locations for these open houses are as follows:

- Kanab, Utah: Wednesday, October 15, 2003. The meeting will be held from 4 pm to 7 pm at the Holiday Inn

Express at 815 East Highway 89 in Kanab.

- Page, Arizona: Monday, October 20, 2003. The meeting will be held from 4 pm to 7 pm at Glen Canyon National Recreation Area, 691 Scenic View Drive.
- Grand Canyon, Arizona: Tuesday October 21, 2003. The meeting will be held from 4 pm to 8 pm in the Community Building in Grand Canyon National Park.
- Phoenix, Arizona: Wednesday, October 22, 2003. The meeting will be held from 4 pm to 7 pm at Fire Station Number 30, 2701 W. Belmont (1 block south of Northern).
- Flagstaff, Arizona: Thursday, October 23, 2003. The meeting will be held from 4:15 pm to 7:30 pm at the Flagstaff Public Library, 300 West Aspen.

3) Stay Informed: Visit www.nps.gov/grca/fire/plan/ to keep apprised of the planning process and to submit comments during the public comment periods. It is the goal of the National Park Service to post all future information and documents related to the FMP on this website.

Your involvement in this process is greatly appreciated! If you have any specific questions regarding the fire management planning process, please call Dan Oltrogge, Fire Management Officer, at 928-638-7822.

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NEWS RELEASE

October 5, 2003

Grand Canyon Reopens Swamp Ridge Road on North Rim

Grand Canyon, AZ – The Grand Canyon National Park has reopened the Swamp Ridge Road providing access to the North Bass Trail. The W-4 Road from the Swamp Ridge Road intersection to the Point Sublime Road intersection remains closed. Crews continue to clear hazardous tree snags along the W-4 Road and anticipate reopening this road in the near future.

The Poplar fire will continue to burn with low intensity until the fire is blanketed by winter snow. Fire management officials will continue to monitor the Poplar fire. No structures, roads or trails are threatened.

All North Rim trails and services are open, including lodge, dining facilities, campground and associated operations.

The Grand Canyon National Park would like to thank the public for their cooperation during the closure. While some visitors to the North Rim were inconvenienced, the North Rim forest ecosystem has and will continue to benefit from the Poplar Complex fires.

For recorded information about the fires, call 928-638-7819 or visit www.nps.gov/grca/fire/. For backcountry travel information, call 928-638-7875.



NEWS RELEASE

October 3, 2003

Poplar Fire Complex Receives Precipitation

Grand Canyon, AZ - A cold front moved in to Grand Canyon on Thursday and blanketed the Poplar Complex with heavy precipitation resulting in greatly reduced fire activity. Within the past 24 hours, high humidity, low temperatures and six tenths of an inch of rain and hail have stopped the fire advance. Precipitation, including rain and snow, is expected to continue over the next 24 hours. The weather's affect on the fire has prompted fire management to begin releasing crews, support equipment and most personnel.

Both the Big and Corral Fires have been contained. The Poplar Fire Complex will be turned back to the Grand Canyon National Park on Sunday. The Poplar Fire is expected to continue to burn at low intensity but is not expected to affect visitor use of the North Rim.

Fire Name	Status	Approximate Location	Start Date	Size
Big Fire	contained	Big Springs area	08/23/03	455 acres
Poplar Fire	active	Big Springs area	09/04/03	7,726 acres
Corral Fire	contained	North Kaibab Trailhead	08/15/03	19 acres

All North Rim services are open, including lodge, dining facilities, campground and associated operations.

For recorded information about the fires, call 928-638-7819 or visit www.nps.gov/grca/fire/. For backcountry travel information, call 928-638-7875.



NEWS RELEASE

October 3, 2003

Jennifer Kish Albrinck 928-638-7739

Autumn Colors Prelude North Rim Closure

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 6:00 p.m. on Monday, October 13th. The "Nature Walk" will be given on October 14th as indicated in the park publication, "The Guide". Advanced campground reservations for the North Rim Campground will no longer be taken, however, 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. The North Rim Backcountry Office will be open until 5:00 p.m. on October 31st. 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 Office, or by going to the Visitor Center desk at Pipe Springs National Monument. The South Rim Backcountry Office 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 through the concessioner, the service station and related visitor services will close before noon on October 14th. The last meal served at the North Rim's Grand Lodge will be breakfast. The final night for lodging will be October 13. The camper store and gift shop will close for the season at 9:00 p.m. October 13. The final day for mule rides on the North Rim will be October 11th. The Kaibab Lodge, four miles from the park boundary, will be closed after breakfast on October 14th and the Country Store, located outside of the park boundary, will remain open until mid-November, and then will be closed until May 15, 2003.

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 15th, but cautioned that from November 16th on, Highway 67 could be closed for the season on short notice due to major storms and heavy snowfall. After November 15th, visitors are encouraged to call in advance of their trip to check on the status of Highway 67.

During daytime visitation, from October 14th 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

Information may also be found at www.nps.gov/grca/ or by calling the park at (928) 638-7888.

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NEWS RELEASE

October 2, 2003

Dawn O'Sickey 928-638-7779

North Rim of Grand Canyon Open

North Rim, AZ - Visitor access to the North Rim of Grand Canyon National Park reopened Wednesday at 2:00 p.m. due to reduced fire activity from favorable weather conditions. All North Rim services are open, including lodge, dining facilities, campground and associated operations.

We expect little fire spread for the rest of the week due to lower temperatures, higher relative humidity and expected rain. Rain showers are predicted from Thursday through Sunday. The heavy fuels will continue to burnout within the fire perimeter. Thunderstorm activity is expected Thursday with possible high winds. This could create hazardous conditions within the fire perimeter due to falling snags. Given these conditions, firefighter and public safety remains a high priority.

Both the Big and Corral Fires have been contained. Mop up work will continue today. On the Poplar Fire, helicopters will continue to be used to suppress burning and torching of unburned fuel near the southern portion of the fire.

Thursday, crews will construct hand-line from the Big Fire to the dozer line previously constructed along the Kaibab National Forest and Grand Canyon National Park boundary. This contingency line was constructed last week as a break to prevent fire growth to the north.

Currently 158 personnel are committed to the fires including two crews, six helicopters, six engines, two dozers and six water tenders.

Fire Name	Status	Approximate Location	Start Date	Size
Big Fire	contained	Big Springs area	08/23/03	455 acres
Poplar Fire	active	Big Springs area	09/04/03	7,186 acres
Corral Fire	contained	North Kaibab Trailhead	08/15/03	19 acres

For recorded information about the fires, call 928-638-7819 or visit www.nps.gov/grca/fire/. To speak with a Fire Information Officer, call 928-638-7922. For backcountry travel information, call 928-638-7875.



NEWS RELEASE

October 1, 2003

Donna Nemeth 928-638-7944

Poplar Complex Fires Slow, Highway 67 Reopens This Afternoon

Weather conditions are expected to be favorable for fire suppression efforts today with cooler temperatures and higher humidity. Given these conditions and the current fire behavior, Highway 67 will reopen to all traffic early this afternoon.

Suppression efforts continue on the 7,180-acre Poplar Fire, as well as the 455-acre Big Fire today. The Corral Fire was fully contained at 19-acres on Monday. All three fires in the Poplar Complex had been managed under a Wildland Fire Use strategy, which allows some lightning-caused fires to burn for resource benefits. This strategy also calls for suppression actions to occur when resource management objectives are not being met.

Visitors entering the park should be aware of continued smoke being created by the Poplar Complex fires. Firefighters, along with engines and other suppression equipment will be present. Please drive cautiously and observe speed restrictions around the park entrance and other areas where fire traffic is present.

All North Rim facilities are open for regular operating hours, including the lodge and dining facilities. The campground and the camper store are open.

Fire Name	Status	Approximate Location	Start Date	Size
Big Fire	active	Big Springs area	08/23/03	455 acres
Poplar Fire	active	Big Springs area	09/04/03	7,180 acres
Corral Fire	contained	North Kaibab Trailhead	08/15/03	19 acres

For recorded information about the fires, call 928-638-7819. To speak with a Fire Information Officer, call 928-638-7922 after 2:00 pm today. For backcountry travel information, call 928-638-7875.



NEWS RELEASE

September 29, 2003

Jeff Cilek, The Peregrine Fund, 208/362-3811 office, 208/890-6685 cell

Bill Austin, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 928/ 226-0614

David Boyd, Bureau of Land Management, 435/688-3303

Dawn O'Sickey, Grand Canyon National Park, 928/638-7779

Andi Rogers, California Condor Coordinator, Arizona Game and Fish Department, 928/774-5045

Three Condors to be Released October 4

On October 4, 2003, three additional California Condors will be released from an aviary atop the Vermilion Cliffs in Arizona. The 14th release in Arizona will increase the Southwest's population of North America's largest flighted bird to 37 in the wild, including one young in a nest. Four additional condors currently in the flight pen will be released later this year.

All three condors hatched at The Peregrine Fund's World Center for Birds of Prey, two during the spring of 2002 and one in the spring of 2001. All three are males.

"The recovery of the California Condor continues to make steady progress," stated Bill Burnham, Ph.D., President of The Peregrine Fund. "These three condors have a significant challenge ahead of them, but the field team has tremendous abilities and will smooth the way," finished Burnham.

"We're looking forward to seeing three more condors released from the Vermilion Cliffs National Monument," said BLM Arizona Strip Field Manager Roger Taylor. "This release, in conjunction with the successful nesting of condors in the wild this year, moves us closer to a self-sustaining population of California Condors in Arizona."

"The release of new condors is always an exciting and challenging time for project personnel. Even though we are in the 7th year of condor reintroduction, with each release we learn more details about individual condor behavior, release strategy, and post-release monitoring," said Arizona Game and Fish Condor Biologist, Andi Rogers.

"This is a dynamic period in the condor reintroduction experiment," said Fish and Wildlife Service's Southwest Regional Director, Dale Hall. "For the first time in decades, condors are reproducing in the wild and learning parenting skills. The birds we'll be releasing will be exposed to these demonstrably successful mentors; we anticipate this will increase their success in the wild and contribute to the species' recovery."

"Grand Canyon National Park welcomes the continuation of the condor program and looks forward to seeing more birds being released into the wild," says Kate Cannon, Deputy Superintendent, Grand Canyon National Park.

Since their arrival from Idaho, the condors have been maturing and acclimating to their new surroundings in a large release facility on top of the cliff. One condor (#243) was released for a few weeks in 2002 (February 16 - May 5) but biologists felt it lacked maturity to sustain itself in the wild and returned it to the release site. After they are released, the birds are expected to stay close to the release site and slowly explore their new home. Regular updates are provided on The Peregrine Fund's home page (www.peregrinefund.org).

The historic Arizona reintroduction is a joint project among The Peregrine Fund, the Arizona Game and Fish Department, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Bureau of Land Management, National Park Service, Southern Utah's Coalition of Resources and Economics, and numerous other partners. Funding for the project is being provided by The Peregrine Fund, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Arizona Game and Fish Department, Peter Pfendler, National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, Nina Mason Pulliam Charitable Trust, Disney Wildlife Conservation Fund Awards, Steve Martin/Natural Encounters, Grand Canyon National Park Foundation, Grand Canyon National Park, Kearney Alliance, Grand Canyon Trust, Patagonia, Turner Foundation, Globe Foundation, Earth Friends, Arizona Public Service, Wallace Research Foundation, Grand Canyon Conservation Fund, and others.

The California Condors are being released as a "non-essential/experimental population" under section 10(j) of the Endangered Species Act. Section 10(j) provides that the species can be released in an area without impacting current or future land use planning. However, in Grand Canyon National Park condors are provided full protection as federally protected threatened species. This authority has been spelled out further in an innovative agreement between the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and local governments. This "Implementation Agreement" spells out a positive working relationship between the Federal government and the various local governments.

* * * *

Who: Everyone is invited. Project biologists will be on site to provide program information. However, no structured program has been established.

When: Scheduled for 9:00am, Saturday, October 4.

Where: At the far west end of the Vermilion Cliffs, 27 miles west of Marble Canyon, Arizona on Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Road 1065 (aka Upper House Rock/Coyote Valley Road) three miles north of US Highway 89A (at the western end of Vermilion Cliffs). This is a graded, sedan-accessible road. From this vantage point, attendees will have a clear, but distant, (one mile away and 1,000 feet up) view of the release facility atop the Vermilion Cliffs.

How: All are advised to bring warm, layered clothing (temperatures can range from 20-60° F), snacks, warm beverage, plenty of water, spotting scopes, binoculars, and folding chairs. Project biologists will be on site to provide program information.

Note to Editors: To obtain video or still images of California Condors, please see www.peregrinefund.org/press/images/condor290302_photos.html or contact:

Jack Cafferty, The Peregrine Fund, 208-362-3811

Jeff Humphrey, US Fish and Wildlife Service, 602-242-0210

Gary Schafer, Arizona Game and Fish, 602-789-3232

* * * *

CALIFORNIA CONDOR (*Gymnogyps californianus*) FACT SHEET

SIZE: Weight: 16 to 23 pounds

Wingspan: Up to 9.5 feet (3 meters)

Body Length: 46 to 55 inches

VOICE: None, but may grunt or wheeze

NEST SITE: Usually a cave in a cliff or a crevice among boulders on a steep slope.

REPRODUCTION: Condors reach sexual maturity and attain adult plumage and coloration by 5-6 years of age and breeding is likely between 6-8 years of age. A mature condor will lay one egg (average incubation period for a condor egg is 56 days) every other year during a successful nesting cycle. The species provides extensive parental care to very few young.

In 2002, three young were produced in the wild in California and two eggs were laid in Arizona. These are the first successful hatches in the wild since the early 1980s.

In 2003, two pairs of California Condors nested successfully. One in California and one in Arizona.

FEEDING: Condors are strict scavengers. Historically, carcasses of bison, elk or deer in inland areas. Seals and beached whales along coasts. With fluctuating populations of wild game, the condor has adapted to utilizing carcasses of domestic animals too. Unlike Turkey Vultures, condors do not have an exceptional sense of smell. They find their food visually, often by investigating the activity of ravens, coyotes, eagles, and other scavengers. Without the guidance of their parents, young inexperienced juvenile condors may also investigate the activity of humans. As young condors learn and mature this human directed curiosity diminishes.

RANGE: Occurred historically from British Columbia south to northern Baja California and in other parts of southwestern United States. Has ability to travel 150 miles a day in search of food.

POPULATION: On September 1, 2003, there were 222 California Condors in the world -- 84 in the wild in California and Arizona. In 1982, there were only 22 California Condors in the world. By 1987, the remaining wild California Condors were brought into captivity to reduce the risk of extinction. Since then, captive propagation has produced a sufficient number of condors to allow for the reintroduction of California Condors in the wild.

RECOVERY: The immediate goal of downlisting the California Condor from endangered to threatened status is to establish three, self sustaining, 150-bird populations; one in captive breeding facilities and two separate wild populations.

YOUNG: Nestlings fledge (leave nest) full grown at six months of age, however, historically juvenile condors may be dependant on their parents for more than a year. Reintroduced condors are released on their own and must learn to forage and survive with the now-existing free-flying population.

SEXES: There is no sexual dimorphism (observable difference in size or appearance) between males and females.

FEEDING: Condors are strict scavengers. Unlike Turkey Vultures, condors do not have an exceptional sense of smell. They instead find their food visually, often by investigating the activity of ravens, coyotes, eagles, and other scavengers. Without the guidance of their parents, young inexperienced juvenile condors may also investigate the activity of humans. As young condors learn and mature this human directed curiosity diminishes.

IDENTIFICATION: Numbered wing tags, white or mottled triangle under wing, no feathers on head, and head color black in juveniles or orange/pink in adults, not dark red as in Turkey Vultures.

CAUSE OF DECLINE: Unsustainable mortality rate in the wild and a naturally low reproductive rate. Predation, shootings, poisoning, lead poisoning, and collisions with power lines are some of the major threats.

CONDOR ENCOUNTER: Please enjoy the birds from a distance. Do not approach or attempt to feed a condor. Never feed, shoot, or throw objects at a condor. California condors, hawks, eagles, vultures, and owls are protected under the Migratory Bird Treaty and some, including the California Condor, are protected under the Endangered Species Act. Under these acts it is illegal to pursue, hunt, take, capture, kill, or attempt any of these activities to a bird of prey. If a condor approaches you,

or you observe anyone harassing or harming a condor, immediately notify:

The Peregrine Fund - (928) 355-2270 (azcondors@aol.com)

Arizona Game & Fish - (928) 774-5045

Bureau of Land Management - (435) 688-3200

National Park Service - (928) 638-7756

If you should observe a condor please report your sighting to The Peregrine Fund biologists at (928) 355-2270 or e-mail us at azcondors@aol.com. Helpful information would include date, time, location, number of birds observed, and wing tag numbers if possible.

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NEWS RELEASE

September 29, 2003 (as of 5:00 pm)

Donna Nemeth 928-638-7944

Highway 67 at Grand Canyon National Park's North Rim Temporarily Closed due to Poplar Fire Complex

Grand Canyon National Park has temporarily closed Highway 67 southbound to the North Rim at the park boundary. Northbound traffic is free to travel with the potential for restrictions pending fire behavior.

These precautions are necessary due to the Poplar Fire's eastward movement. The Poplar Fire is the largest fire within the Poplar Complex. This complex is being managed under a Wildland fire Use Strategy that allows certain lightning caused fires to burn within certain predetermined conditions. This strategy also calls for suppression actions to be taken on portions of the fires that are not meeting resource management goals and objectives. All fires at Grand Canyon National Park are managed with firefighter and public safety as the highest priority.

Road closures will be lifted as soon as fire behavior has moderated, and the area is considered safe for reentry. Smoke will continue to have impacts depending on fire intensity and local wind patterns.

Fire Name	Status	Approximate Location	Start Date	Size
Big Fire	active	Big Springs area	08/23/03	354 acres
Poplar Fire	active	Big Springs area	09/04/03	3,065 acres
Corral Fire	contained 9/29/03 12pm	North Kaibab Trailhead	08/15/03	14 acres

For additional information about the fires, call 928-638-7819. For backcountry travel information, call 928-638-7875.



NEWS RELEASE

September 28, 2003

Donna Nemeth 928-638-7944

Suppression Actions are Taken to Slow Progress of the Poplar Fire

Suppression efforts are being used to slow progress of the Poplar Fire, on the park's North Rim, to prevent it from spreading onto the Kaibab National Forest and into Big Springs Canyon. These activities consist of both water and retardant drops along the northeast and east flanks the fire. In addition, members of the Northern Pueblo hotshot crew are working to contain the Corral fire, to reduce further smoke impacts.

The park's Wildland Fire Use Strategy allows some lightning-caused fires, such as those in the Poplar Complex, to be managed for resource benefits, under specific conditions and within a predetermined area. This strategy also calls for suppression actions to be taken on portions of the fires that are not meeting resource management goals and objectives.

All fires at Grand Canyon National Park are managed with firefighter and public safety as the highest priority. To insure public safety, the W-4 Road has been closed from the Swamp Ridge Road intersection to the Point Sublime Road intersection. In addition, The Swamp Ridge Road has been closed from the National Park Service boundary to Swamp Ridge Point. This road closure eliminates access to the North Bass trail. These closures will be lifted as soon as fire behavior has moderated, and the area is considered safe for reentry. Smoke will continue to have some impacts depending on fire intensity and local wind patterns.

Fire Name	Status	Approximate Location	Start Date	Size
Big Fire	active	Big Springs area	08/23/03	320 acres
Poplar Fire	active	Big Springs area	09/04/03	1,730 acres
Corral Fire	active	North Kaibab Trailhead	08/15/03	12 acres

For additional information, please call Grand Canyon National Park's Fire Information at 928-638-7819.



NEWS RELEASE

September 23, 2003

Donna Nemeth 928-638-7944

The Poplar Complex Continues to Grow on the Park's North Rim

Grand Canyon, AZ - The Poplar Complex, consisting of the Poplar, Big, and Corral Fires, is being managed under a Wildland Fire Use strategy on the park's North Rim. This strategy allows some lightning-caused fires to burn, under specific conditions and within a predetermined area, for resource benefits. Suppression actions are taken on these fires if their behavior contradicts resource management objectives.

The Poplar Fire grew in size from 100 to 400 acres yesterday. As of this morning, it was 540 acres. It is approximately two miles from the park's north boundary, burning in mixed conifer and heavy fuels. The Poplar Fire immediately threatens no values; however, actions to slow the fire's northeast progression will be taken today in an effort to keep it within the park's boundary. The Big Fire, located just west of the W-4 Road, is approximately 105 acres in size.

Resources committed to the Poplar Complex include one Hotshot Crew, one Fire Use module, two engines and one water tender. Two helicopters and two air tankers have been ordered and are expected to arrive today. A Fire Use Management Team has also been ordered to help monitor and manage progression of the Poplar Complex.

All fires at Grand Canyon National Park are managed with fire fighter and public safety as the first priority. To ensure public safety, the W-4 Road, located west of Highway 67, remains closed from the Swamp Ridge Road intersection to the Point Sublime Road intersection. The Swamp Ridge Road remains open at this time. The W-4 Road will be reopened once fire behavior has moderated and the area is considered safe for reentry.

Fire Name	Status	Approximate Location	Start Date	Size
Big Fire	active	Big Springs area	08/23/03	105 acres
Poplar Fire	active	Big Springs area	09/04/03	540 acres
Corral Fire	active	NE of North Kaibab Trailhead	08/15/03	less than 1 acre

For additional information, please call Grand Canyon National Park's Fire Information at 928-638-7819.



NEWS RELEASE

September 22, 2003

Jennifer Albrinck (928)638-7739

Kristy Speers (928) 638-7646

Construction to Occur While North Rim Campground Remains Open

North Rim, AZ - The Grand Canyon North Rim Campground will be open to walk-in visitors only beginning September 23, 2003. All reservations that have been made in advance will be honored, but no additional reservations will be taken. Walk-ins will be on a first come/first served basis. The public may call 928-638-7814 for a status on campground availability but must be present to get a site. Paving will occur during this time and will affect the number of sites available.

After October 14, 2003, restroom and shower facilities will be closed for the season. Camping after this time is primitive, requiring visitors to bring in their own water, and carry out all trash and other waste. Fees will not be charged after October 14, 2003.

Other camping options until mid-October are DeMotte campground and Jacob Lake campground, both run by the U.S. Forest Service. DeMotte campground is just outside the north entrance to the park. Jacob Lake is a one-hour drive north. Also, at large primitive camping is available at multiple U.S. Forest Service areas on the North Kaibab and the Dixie National Forests. Please contact U.S. Forest Service offices for additional information.

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NEWS RELEASE

September 18, 2003

Jennifer Albrinck (928)638-7739

Artist-in-Residence at Grand Canyon National Park, North Rim

North Rim, AZ - The National Park Service announces the selection of Velida Palmer of Tulsa, Oklahoma as the 2003 Artist-in-Residence. Ms. Palmer, a member of Women Artists of the West, is accomplished in a variety of media: oil, pen-and-ink, and watercolor. Her participation in the Artist-in-Residence program continues the legacy of art in our national parks. Ms. Palmer will be in residence September 21 through October 10, 2003.

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 prompted politicians to establish the national parks as an enduring heritage. 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. Palmer 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 programs - a demonstration on the back porch of the Lodge on September 27 at 11:00 a.m., and an evening presentation on October 4 at 8:00 p.m. in the Lodge auditorium. She will also present several informal discussions and demonstrations on her work on the back porch of the Lodge. Join her to experience Grand Canyon through the eyes of an artist.

For information on next year's Artist-in-Residence application process, please inquire at the North Rim Visitor Center.

Advance overnight lodging reservations for North Rim facilities may be made by contacting Xanterra reservations in Denver at (303) 297-2757, and specifying the North Rim. Advance reservations for the North Rim Campground must be made through Spherix, and can be made up to five months in advance by calling 1(800) 365-2267. Callers from outside of the United States must call (301) 722-1257.



NEWS RELEASE

The following news release was issued by Xanterra Parks & Resorts Tuesday, September 16, 2003. For National Park Service/Grand Canyon National Park questions please contact Dawn O'Sickey, Public Affairs Specialist, at (928) 638-7779. For Xanterra questions, please see below.

Mule Trips at South Rim of Grand Canyon National Park Suspended for Trail Maintenance

GRAND CANYON, Ariz. - September 16, 2003 - Xanterra Parks & Resorts, operator of lodges, restaurants and activities at the South Rim of Grand Canyon National Park, is suspending both day and overnight mule trips while the National Park Service and Xanterra perform maintenance on the Bright Angel and South Kaibab Trails.

Xanterra's visitor mule rides will close beginning September 22, and mule operations will remain suspended until further notice. The National Park Service has advised Xanterra that maintenance work will take at least six months to complete.

"We cannot predict an exact reopening date for mule operations until the trail workers get in there and determine just how much change to the landscape the forces of erosion have made," said Bill Johnston, Xanterra's general manager of South Rim operations. "Fortunately, the National Park Service here at the Grand Canyon has recently received the funding necessary to do this job."

Xanterra is now contacting its guests who have reservations for day trips to Plateau Point or overnight trips to Phantom Ranch on the floor of the canyon. The company will also not accept any new reservations for mule rides until the trail work is completed. Reservations for mule rides are typically accepted up to 23 months in advance. Both trails will remain open and unrestricted for hikers and private stock users. Mule operations on the North Rim of the Grand Canyon will continue as scheduled.

Johnston added that Phantom Ranch will remain open and provide overnight accommodations for hikers. While the trail work is being performed, Xanterra will conduct maintenance operations of its own with updates to cabins and restrooms at Phantom Ranch. "Even though we will be working on some of the cabins, more beds will be available for hikers because of the mule rides being on hiatus," he said.

Xanterra's other operations on the South Rim will not be affected. On the South Rim, Xanterra operates six hotel properties, 10 restaurants and 11 retail shops as well as motorcoach tours. For advance reservations or questions about existing reservations, visitors can call 888-297-2757 or 303-297-2757.

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Xanterra Parks & Resorts operates lodges, restaurants and other concessions at national parks and state parks and resorts. Xanterra is the country's largest national park concessioner. The company operates concessions in the following locations: Yellowstone National Park, the North and South Rims of Grand Canyon National Park, Bryce Canyon National Park, Zion National Park, Crater Lake National Park, Death Valley National Park, Petrified Forest National Park, Everglades National Park, and Mount Rushmore National Memorial; and at the Silverado Resort in Napa, Calif.; Gideon Putnam Hotel in

Saratoga Springs, N.Y. and eight Ohio State Parks.

For more information about Xanterra and links to individual properties, visit: www.xanterra.com. For reservations and more information about Grand Canyon, Bryce or Zion, call (1) 303-297-2757 or toll-free at (1) 888-297-2757. For reservations and more information about Yellowstone, call (1) 307-344-7311. For reservations and more information about Flamingo Lodge in Everglades National Park, call (1) 800-600-3813 or (1) 239-695-3101. For reservations at Crater Lake Lodge, call (1) 541-830-8700. For reservations and more information about Ohio State Park Resorts, call (1) 800-282-7275.

Media contact:

Mesereau Public Relations

(1) 720-842-5271

mona_mesereau@msn.com

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NEWS RELEASE

September 12, 2003

Donna Nemeth 928-638-7944 - for media use only

Prescribed Fires Scheduled to Occur at Grand Canyon This Fall

Grand Canyon, AZ - Three prescribed fires are scheduled to take place at Grand Canyon National Park this fall when environmental factors such as wind, temperature, relative humidity, and fuel moisture levels are favorable. The Outlet and Walhalla prescribed fires will be implemented on the park's North Rim, and the Long Jim prescribed fire on the South Rim.

Prescribed fires are one of the most effective tools available to resource managers for restoring fire dependant ecosystems. Prescribed fires are based on burn plans that must be approved by the Park Superintendent before any of the recommended actions are implemented. Park resource managers are involved in the process of planning prescribed burns and 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. Smoke impacts may be possible in adjacent communities, including Cameron, Page, and Tusayan. Smoke impacts may also occur along the river at night and in the early morning hours. No park closures are anticipated at this time.

Prescribed Fire	Size	Location
Outlet	1000 acres	three miles west of the North Rim developed area
Walhalla	1000 acres	five miles southeast of the North Rim developed area
Long Jim	1600 acres	one mile southeast of the South Rim developed area

For additional information, please call Grand Canyon National Park's Fire Information at 928-638-7819.



NEWS RELEASE

September 12, 2003

Dawn O'Sickey, 928-638-7779

National Public Lands Day

Grand Canyon, AZ - In previous years the National Park Service designated Founder's Day, August 25th, as Fee-Free Day at all national parks that collect an entrance fee. This year, to increase consistency and coordination across Federal recreation programs, Interior bureaus and the USDA Forest Service will adopt National Public Lands Day as a single interagency Fee-Free Day. Although National Public Lands Day is typically the last Saturday in September, this year it will be celebrated on Saturday, September 20, 2003.

Grand Canyon will waive entrance fees and commercial tour fees as part of National Public Lands Day on September 20th. Recreation "user fees" such as backcountry permit fees, camping fees and fees for other activities offered in the park will not be waived.

Free entry passes issued that day to commercial tour operators will be valid only for that individual tour. Free entry passes issued to single visit entries issued on that day, will be valid for seven days on both the North and South Rims, 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 National Public Lands Day.

For additional information about Grand Canyon National Park, please call (928) 638-7888 or check our web site at <http://www.nps.gov/grca/>.



NEWS RELEASE

August 18, 2003

Jeff Cilek, The Peregrine Fund, 208/362-3811 office, 208/890-6685 cell

Bill Austin, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 928/ 226-0614

David Boyd, Bureau of Land Management, 435/688-3303

Maureen Oltrogge, Grand Canyon National Park, 928/638-7779

Andi Rogers, California Condor Coordinator, Arizona Game and Fish Department, 928/774-5045

California Condor Nestling in Arizona Biologists Confirm Existence of Chick

Images may be obtained from The Peregrine Fund's web site at: http://www.peregrinefund.org/press/condor_chick_8_03.html

Biologists from Grand Canyon National Park and The Peregrine Fund confirmed the existence of the first California Condor nestling in Arizona in decades, perhaps centuries. The sighting was confirmed on Saturday during an arduous 24-mile hike in 100 degree heat to observe the nest. The biologists observed the feathered chick at the edge of the nest cave near the top of a 400 foot cliff in the Salt Creek drainage. The chick appeared to be very healthy and is estimated to be 15 - 16 weeks of age.

"It was amazing!" stated Sophie Osborn, Field Manager for The Peregrine Fund. "The chick was right on the edge of the nest cave sitting on a rock preening and looking around," continued Osborn. "The setting so timeless, remote, and magnificent that I wondered how it could be the only one of its kind in such a vast tremendous place." finished Osborn.

Since March, biologists suspected that Condors 123 and 127 were incubating an egg. Suddenly, in early May the behavior of the pair changed and they became very attentive to the nest, switching nest duty on a daily basis. This appeared to indicate the presence of a nestling (incubation period for condors is usually 56-58 days). Due to the location and depth of the nest, however, the only way to confirm the existence of a nestling was to wait until the chick was old enough to move to a location in the nest where it could be seen.

"This is truly what wildlife reintroductions are all about - natural reproduction in the wild. This is wildlife history in the making and we are confident it is just the first in a long line of Arizona-hatched condors soaring across our skies," stated Arizona Game and Fish Director Duane Shroufe. "This is the end result for which everyone has been working for so diligently," finished Shroufe.

"This chick is a tremendous reward for more than seven years of hard work by all reintroduction cooperators," stated Andi Rogers, California Condor Coordinator for the Arizona Game and Fish Department. "This is unbelievably exciting," finished Rogers.

"This is wonderful news. We've been anxiously awaiting this news since 1996, when condors were first released in the Vermilion Cliffs in Arizona," stated Roger Taylor, Arizona Strip Field Manager for the Bureau of Land Management.

"It's news we've all been waiting for. It marks a giant step forward in the wild recovery of a spectacular species," said H. Dale Hall, Regional Director, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Southwest Region.

"It was great to see such a healthy, energetic chick. It was alert and active. After the female fed it, it bounced around the cave like a little rabbit. It was indescribable to see the first condor chick in Arizona in more than 100 years in a setting like the Grand Canyon," stated Chad Olson, Raptor Technician for the National Park Service.

"Although Park and Peregrine Fund biologists have been confident of a viable chick nesting within the redwall from the daily observations, we are thrilled at this visual confirmation. This chick faces a daunting task for survival. We will continue to monitor the chick and provide full protection to the nesting area as the last four weeks prior to fledging are critical. Restoration of condors marks a monumental event in the Colorado Plateau," stated Joseph Alston Superintendent of Grand Canyon National Park.

This is the last of three nests that biologists were monitoring in Arizona this year. Two other nests produced eggs but neither were successful. In California this year one egg was laid and hatched in early May.

Regular updates from the field on all of the California Condor activities in the Southwest are provided on the Notes from the Field section of The Peregrine Fund's web site (www.peregrinefund.org).

On another front, the Phoenix Zoo successfully treated Condors 203 and 235 who had lead fragments in their digestive systems. Both condors were suspected to have ingested lead from a coyote carcass on the Kaibab Plateau. Biologists plan to re-release the two birds later this week.

The historic Arizona reintroduction is a joint project among The Peregrine Fund, the Arizona Game and Fish Department, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Bureau of Land Management, National Park Service, Southern Utah's Coalition of Resources and Economics, and numerous other partners. Funding for the project is being provided by The Peregrine Fund, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Arizona Game and Fish Department, Peter Pfendler, National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, Nina Mason Pulliam Charitable Trust, Disney Wildlife Conservation Fund Awards, Steve Martin/Natural Encounters, Grand Canyon National Park Foundation, Grand Canyon National Park, Kearney Alliance, Patagonia, Turner Foundation, Globe Foundation, Earth Friends, Arizona Public Service, Wallace Research Foundation, Grand Canyon Conservation Fund, and others.

The California Condors are being released as a "non-essential/experimental population" under section 10(j) of the Endangered Species Act. Section 10(j) provides that the species can be released in an area without impacting current or future land use planning. However, in Grand Canyon National Park condors are provided full protection as federally protected threatened species. This authority has been spelled out further in an innovative agreement between the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and local governments. This "Implementation Agreement" spells out a positive working relationship between the Federal government and the various local governments.



NEWS RELEASE

August 15, 2003

Maureen Oltrogge, 928-638-7779

National Park Service Announces Annual Fee Free Day

Grand Canyon, AZ - Every year the National Park Service designates Founder's Day, August 25th, as Fee-Free Day at all national parks that collect an entrance fee. This year to increase consistency and coordination across Federal recreation programs, Interior bureaus and the USDA Forest Service will adopt National Public Lands Day as a single interagency Fee-Free Day. Although National Public Lands Day is typically the last Saturday in September, this year it will be celebrated on September 20, 2003.

Grand Canyon will not waive entrance fees on August 25th, this year, but will waive entrance fees and commercial tour fees as part of National Public Lands Day on September 20th. Recreation "user fees" such as backcountry permit fees, camping fees and fees for other activities offered in the park will not be waived.

Free entry passes issued that day to commercial tour operators will be valid only for that individual tour. Free entry passes issued to single visit entries issued on that day, will be valid for seven days on both the North and South Rims, 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 National Public Lands Day.

For additional information about Grand Canyon National Park, please call (928) 638-7888 or check our web site at <http://www.nps.gov/grca>.

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NEWS RELEASE

July 22, 2003

Maureen Oltrogge, NPS 928-638-7779

Fran Joseph, GCNPF 928-774-1760

Grand Canyon National Park Foundation and National Park Service Launch Effort to Save Canyon's River Running Legacy

Grand Canyon, AZ - On Wednesday, July 23, the Grand Canyon National Park Foundation, in collaboration with the National Park Service, embarks on an effort to save the Grand Canyon's river running legacy by conserving fifteen historic boats currently suffering from decades of benign neglect. The "Save Our Boats - the Grand Canyon Historic Boat Project" is an estimated three-year \$300,000 effort to:

- remove these boats from inadequate outdoor storage conditions,
- provide a thorough cleaning of the craft,
- conduct conservation treatments to stabilize and protect the boats in their used condition; and
- capture the history and stories associated with their use on the Colorado River.

"This project is very exciting to us," commented Joe Alston, Superintendent of Grand Canyon National Park and a river boatman. "These boats tell the story of river running on the Colorado River through the Grand Canyon. The opportunity to make right the damage caused by decades of neglect, and protect these boats and their history, is incredible. We appreciate greatly the Foundation for initiating this effort."

"We are delighted to be in partnership with the park on this project," stated Deborah Tuck, President of Grand Canyon National Park Foundation. "With the help of a coalition of dedicated boatman and boat company owners, we have quickly positioned ourselves to jumpstart this project, contributing energy and expertise to conserve this piece of Grand Canyon's legacy."

The first phase of this project begins on July 23 with the moving of three boats from the outdoor display area at the park's former Visitor Center where one has rested since the 1950's to a newly established indoor Conservation Workshop. There they will be cleaned and evaluated as to the extent of damage and appropriate conservation treatments to be completed in the coming year.

The three boats being moved are:

- An unnamed boat, known as the Stone Boat for its use on a trip sponsored by Julius Stone, the oldest remaining boat to have run the Colorado River through Grand Canyon. The 1909 trip of 1300 miles ran from Green River, Wyoming to Needles, California.
- The Edith, a white cedar and oak-hulled boat named for Emery Kolb's daughter, which was used by Emory and Ellsworth Kolb for their 1911-12 photographic expedition, and
- The Glen, a wooden Galloway boat, used on the 1921-1923 United States Geological Survey expedition, lead by Emery Kolb to survey for dam sites along the Colorado River.

In October, the next group of boats will be similarly moved indoors, cleaned and conserved.

The Grand Canyon National Park Foundation is a private not-for-profit fundraising partner to the National Park Service at Grand Canyon. Established in 1995, the Foundation's mission is to help protect, preserve, and enhance Grand Canyon, through funding specific projects and programs that are beyond the financial capacity of the National Park Service and promoting citizen stewardship of the Grand Canyon.

If you wish to become involved with the "Save Our Boats - the Grand Canyon Historic Boat Project" please contact the Grand Canyon National Park Foundation at (928) 774-1760 or at www.grandcanyonfoundation.org.

Editor's Note: There are photographs of the Stone Boat, Edith, and Glen posted at www.nps.gov/grca/media/22jul03.htm. By COB on Wednesday, July 23, there will be photographs of the day's activities posted at that site.



The Kolb brothers boat, Edith, being secured in the trailer for transport to the boat conservation lab.



The Edith being unloaded at the boat conservation lab by GCNPF and NPS staff.



The Stone boat being moved into the park's boat conservation lab.



The Glen leaving the park's HQ building for a trip to the conservation lab.



Members of the GCNPF staff and advisory committee in the HQ patio after successfully moving the boats: l to r: Dave Edwards, Gaylord Staveley, Ellen Tibbetts, Fran Joseph, Cameron Staveley, Deborah Tuck, Brad Dimock, Richard Quartaroli, Dave Edwards, Gaylord Staveley, Ellen Tibbetts, Fran Joseph, Cameron Staveley, Deborah Tuck, Brad Dimock, Richard Quartaroli.



Ashley Falls, Red Canyon UT, Emery Kolb in boat, "Edith" running the chute in Ashley Falls. 18 Sept 1911. Kolb Bros.



Photo of boat "Edith". July 2003. NPS Photo, Quinn.



Grand Canyon National Park, Arizona. Upstream from the right bank 12.5 miles below the Little Colorado River. August 15, 1923. Colorado River Survey of 1923 (Birdseye). USGS LaRue



Photo of boat "Glen". July 2003. NPS Photo, Quinn.



Running a rapid in a Stone Expedition boat. Probably Whirlpool Canyon on the Green River. Circa 1909. Cogswell.



Photo of Stone Expedition boat. July 2003. NPS Photo, Quinn.



NEWS RELEASE

July 10, 2003

Joe Murray (928) 638-7944, (928) 638-7819

Swamp Ridge Road and the North Bass Trail Reopen

Grand Canyon, AZ - The Powell Fire burning on the North Rim of Grand Canyon National Park, has burned only about five acres over the past 24 hours, according to Fire Use Specialist Ed Hiatt, and now totals approximately 3,611 acres. The fire continues burn in pinyon and juniper trees at the southern end of the fire on the Powell Plateau. Some smoke is still visible.

The Swamp Ridge Road and the North Bass Trail are now open for visitor use; however, the Powell Plateau Trail remains closed for visitor safety. Please contact the Park's Backcountry Information Center at (928) 638-7875 for more information on this closure. For general park information, please call (928) 638-7888.

Please visit the following website for more information and photos of the fire: <http://www.nps.gov/grca/fire/> and <http://www.fireuse.org/>

[2003 Media Home](http://www.nps.gov)

<http://www.nps.gov>



NEWS RELEASE

July 8, 2003

Joe Murray (928) 638-7944, (928) 638-7819

The Powell Fire Wildland Fire Use

Powell Fire Winds Down

Grand Canyon, AZ - The Powell Fire, which has burned 3,606 acres on the North Rim of Grand Canyon, is winding down fast, according to Fire Use Specialist Ed Hiatt. The fire is on the Powell Plateau and was started by lightning on June 15th. It has been a low intensity ground fire since it started. The fire has progressed down the plateau, where it is expected to burn out in the near future.

After a thorough review conducted by National Park Service and Forest Service officials on Sunday, July 6th, a decision was made to release the last of the monitoring team. The fire will be checked daily by National Park Service crews until it is out. Hiatt said "during the ground inspection Sunday, much of the area was already sprouting new growth." Unlike many wildfires in the Southwest, this fire was allowed to burn in a natural manner under a "wildland fire use strategy." The conditions that permitted this included fuel condition at the high elevation of Powell Plateau, location of the fire start and weather. These factors combined to permit a low-intensity burn that did not destroy the organic soil. This has resulted in resource benefits including nutrient recycling, vegetation regeneration, and reduction of fuels. Other such fires have burned on this plateau five, six and seven years ago.

The North Rim of the Grand Canyon remains open to visitors. To ensure public safety, the North Bass Trail and Powell Plateau Trail remain closed. The Swamp Ridge Road is expected to reopen in the next day or two. Please contact the Park's Backcountry Information Center at (928) 638-7875 for more information on these closures. For general park information, please call (928) 638-7888.

Please visit the following website for more information and photos of the fire: <http://www.nps.gov/grca/fire/> and <http://www.fireuse.org/>



NEWS RELEASE

July 3, 2003

Punky Moore (928) 638-0178, (928) 638-7819

The Powell Fire Wildland Fire Use

Grand Canyon, AZ - Activity on the 3,060 acre Powell Fire is decreasing both on the spread of the fire and in the management of the incident. Fire managers anticipate that the growth will continue to decline as it moves to the south and west eventually making its way to the rock rim on the Powell Plateau. The fire is being managed under a wildland fire use strategy on the Grand Canyon, 15 air miles northwest of the North Rim developed area.

Wayne Cook's Interagency Fire Use Management Team will transfer the management of the fire back to Grand Canyon National Park on Friday, July 4. Demobilization of resources is already underway on the incident.

Ed Hiatt, Grand Canyon National Park Wildland Fire Use Specialist, will lead the local effort in the ongoing management of the fire with help from the Zion National Park Fire Use Module. The module will remain assigned to the fire and continue working from Swamp Point, one mile east of the fire perimeter.

Hiatt comments about the fire, "This fire is doing what we anticipated from the beginning. We are pleased with the accomplishments that Cook's Team made on this fire. The local unit can handle the long-term management of the fire and allow it to continue its natural progression."

Please be aware of the following closures that are still in effect: North Bass Trail, Powell Plateau Trail and Swamp Ridge Road.

Please contact the Park's Backcountry Information Center at (928) 638-7875 if your plans include a trip in close proximity to the area of the fire on the Powell Plateau. For general park information, please call (928) 638-7888.

The North Rim of the Grand Canyon remains open to visitors.

Please visit the following website for more information and photos of the fire: <http://www.nps.gov/grca/fire/> and <http://www.fireuse.org/>



NEWS RELEASE

June 30, 2003

Punky Moore (928) 638-0178, (928) 638-7819

The Powell Fire Wildland Fire Use

Grand Canyon, AZ - The smoke that is visible at different times during the day in the Grand Canyon is coming from the Powell Fire. The fire is burning in a remote location on the Powell Plateau, 15 air miles northwest of the North Rim developed area. It is about 2,030 acres and burning to the south and southwest on the Plateau.

The fire is being managed under a wildland fire use strategy that involves the management of some naturally ignited wildland fires to accomplish specific, pre-stated resource objectives in pre-defined geographic areas.

Monitoring and tracking smoke effects is one of the objectives on this incident. Carl Bowman, Air Quality Specialist for Grand Canyon National Park says, "Yesterday, air quality was not good in the Canyon as a result of a high pressure system in the area. These high pressure systems can prevent winds from dispersing smoke completely out of the Canyon. Typically, smoke is less visible from late morning through mid to late afternoon allowing for the best viewing opportunities in the Canyon. The good news is that the National Weather Service is predicting a change in the weather with a chance of showers by Wednesday or Thursday this week. Rain will help wash the air and improve visibility levels."

Personnel assigned to the fire are monitoring fire behavior and weather, mapping progression of the fire and documenting resource issues.

Today, winds will be steady 2-5 mph, becoming southwest 8 to 12 mph gusting to 20 mph by afternoon. The slow surface spread of the Powell Fire will continue with 1-2 foot flame lengths and short uphill runs off the steep brushy slopes.

To ensure public safety, the following closures are still in effect: North Bass Trail, Powell Plateau Trail and Swamp Ridge Road. Please contact the Park's Backcountry Information Center at (928) 638-7875 for more information on these closures. For general park information, please call (928) 638-7888.

The North Rim of the Grand Canyon remains open to visitors.

Please visit the following website for more information and photos of the fire: <http://www.nps.gov/grca/fire/> and <http://www.fireuse.org/>



NEWS RELEASE

June 29, 2003

Punky Moore (928) 638-0178, (928) 638-7819

The Powell Fire Wildland Fire Use

Grand Canyon, AZ - The Powell Fire continues to burn south along the Powell Plateau on the North Rim of the Grand Canyon. Since its start by lightning on June 15th, the low intensity fire has burned 1,610 acres. It is located 15 air miles northwest of the North Rim developed area.

Unlike many fires burning in other areas of the country, the Powell Fire is being allowed to continue its natural process under a wildland fire use strategy to reap the resource benefits that the fire is producing. The benefits include nutrient recycling, vegetation regeneration, and reduction of fuels.

Under the direction of Grand Canyon National Park Carnivore Biologist, Emily Garding, mitigation measures are underway to protect known goshawk nesting sites in advance of any potential fire spread. Clearing brush and debris away from the identified trees will help protect the sites. Garding says, "We want to let this fire burn as it would naturally, but at the same time we are taking measures to ensure the fire does not impact the success of the goshawk breeding season."

A noted recent change in fire behavior is the continuous burning through the night as temperatures remain high and relative humidity at night stays low. Today, winds will be steady 5-10 mph from the west, southwest. The slow surface spread of the Powell Fire will continue with 1-3 foot flame lengths and short uphill runs off the steep brushy slopes.

The North Rim of the Grand Canyon remains open to visitors. The fire is not impacting visitors in the developed areas on the South and the North Rim of the Grand Canyon. The National Park is working closely with the Arizona Department of Environmental Quality to ensure air quality standards are met.

To ensure public safety, the following closures are still in effect: North Bass Trail, Powell Plateau Trail and Swamp Ridge Road. Please contact the Park's Backcountry Information Center at (928) 638-7875 for more information on these closures. For general park information, please call (928) 638-7888.

Please visit the following website for more information and photos of the fire: <http://www.nps.gov/grca/fire/> and <http://www.fireuse.org/>



NEWS RELEASE

June 28, 2003

Punky Moore (928) 638-0178, (928) 638-7819

The Powell Fire Wildland Fire Use

Grand Canyon, AZ - The Powell Fire on the North Rim of the Grand Canyon has burned 1,250 acres. Unlike many other fires burning in southern Arizona and New Mexico, the Powell Fire is being managed under a wildland fire use strategy that allows some naturally ignited fires to burn under specific conditions for resource benefits.

The Powell fire was started by lightning on June 15th. It is playing an important role in the ecological process by burning naturally and undisturbed in a remote area of the Park. Personnel on the fire are monitoring the fire, mapping its progression and observing and documenting weather and fire behavior.

A fire must meet certain criteria in order to be considered for Fire Use Management. It has to start naturally, it has to be on lands where there is a Fire Management Plan in place and it has to meet pre-defined goals and objectives that are reviewed on a daily basis.

The slow surface spread of the Powell Fire is creating 1-3 foot flame lengths as it burns primarily Ponderosa pine needle-litter and perennial grasses. Some increased fire behavior is expected on the steep brushy slopes off the east side of the plateau. The North Rim of the Grand Canyon remains open to visitors. The fire is not impacting visitors in the developed areas on the South and the North Rim of the Grand Canyon. The National Park is working closely with the Arizona Department of Environmental Quality to ensure air quality standards are met.

Wayne Cook, Incident Commander of the Northern Rockies Interagency Fire Use Management Team on the fire says, "We are here to assist the Park and the Kaibab National Forest in the management of the Powell Fire. Our team is comprised of some of the highest skilled and experienced personnel in wildland fire management. We also use the best available science to support decision making for the successful management of this wildland fire use event."

To ensure public safety, the following closures are still in effect: North Bass Trail, Powell Plateau Trail and Swamp Ridge Road. Please contact the Park's Backcountry Information Center at (928) 638-7875 for more information on these closures. For general park information, please call (928) 638-7888.

Please visit the following website for more information and photos of the fire: <http://www.nps.gov/grca/fire/>



NEWS RELEASE

June 27, 2003

Punky Moore (928) 638-0178, (928) 638-7819

The Powell Fire Wildland Fire Use

Grand Canyon, AZ - The Powell Fire on the North Rim of the Grand Canyon is 980 acres. It is located on the Powell Plateau 15 air miles northwest of the developed area. The lightning caused fire is being managed by Wayne Cook's Interagency Fire Use Management team under a wildland fire use strategy which allows for some naturally ignited fires to burn under specific conditions for resource benefits.

The slow surface spread of the fire is creating 1-2 foot flame lengths as it burns primarily Ponderosa pine needle-litter and perennial grasses. Some increased fire behavior is expected on the steep brushy slopes off the east side of the plateau.

Craig Letz, Grand Canyon National Park Fire Use Manager and agency representative for the Park says, "We are very pleased with the safe operations on this fire to date which allows us to continue monitoring the fire. Due to its remote location on the Powell Plateau, it is not impacting visitors in the developed areas, both on the South and the North Rim of the Grand Canyon, which is very important to us."

Grand Canyon National Park is working closely with the Arizona Department of Environmental Quality to ensure air quality standards are met.

There have been no injuries on this fire since it started June 15. Fire personnel gather each day for the morning briefing and receive an important safety message from Safety Officer, Allen Farnsworth. Firefighter safety remains the number one objective on this incident.

To ensure public safety, the following closures are still in effect: North Bass Trail, Powell Plateau Trail and Swamp Ridge Road. Please contact the Park's Backcountry Information Center at (928) 638-7875 for more information on these closures. For general park information, please call (928) 638-7888.

The North Rim of the Grand Canyon remains open to visitors.

Please visit the following websites for more information and photos of the fire: <http://www.nps.gov/grca/fire/> and <http://www.fireuse.org/>.



NEWS RELEASE

June 26, 2003

Punky Moore (928) 638-0178, (928) 638-7819

The Powell Fire Wildland Fire Use

Grand Canyon, AZ – The winds calmed down today on the Powell Plateau of the North Rim of the Grand Canyon, but the Powell fire continued to grow. The lightning caused fire is 830 acres and is being managed under a wildland fire use strategy which allows for some naturally ignited fires to burn under specific conditions for resource benefits. The fire is moving south on top of the Powell Plateau, 15 air miles to the northwest of the North Rim developed area.

According to Rob Seli, Fire Behavior Analyst on Wayne Cook's Interagency Fire Use Management Team, "We are experiencing a drying trend and that will cause incremental increases in fire behavior through the weekend. Since the fire has been backing into the wind and has not been wind driven, the warmer, drier conditions will actually affect the fire more than the high winds we experienced earlier this week."

There are 42 people assigned to the fire including technical specialists, natural resource advisors, a helicopter pilot and support personnel, fire use module personnel from Zion National Park and Bandelier National Monument and various core team members from Cook's team.

Today, there is more smoke visible in the Canyon from the fire. Smoke from the fire will typically settle in the Canyon at night and should dissipate by mid-day. Grand Canyon National Park is working closely with the Arizona Department of Environmental Quality to ensure air quality measures are being met.

To ensure public safety, the following closures are still in effect: North Bass Trail, Powell Plateau Trail and Swamp Ridge Road.

For more information about these closures, please contact the Park's Backcountry Information Center at (928) 638-7875. For general park information, please call (928) 638-7888.

The North Rim of the Grand Canyon remains open to visitors.

Please visit the following websites for more information and photos of the fire: <http://www.nps.gov/grca/fire/> and <http://www.fireuse.org/>



NEWS RELEASE

June 25, 2003

Punky Moore (928) 638-0178

The Powell Fire Wildland Fire Use

Grand Canyon, AZ - The Powell fire continues to grow at a slow and steady pace. It is 790 acres and moving to the south on top of the Powell Plateau on the North Rim of the Grand Canyon. The location of the fire is 15 air miles northwest of the developed area on the North Rim of the park. The fire is being managed under a wildland fire use strategy which allows for some lightning caused fires to burn under specific conditions for resource benefits.

Wayne Cook's Interagency Fire Use Management Team is responsible for the management of the fire. Planned actions include monitoring fire behavior, weather and fire growth along with taking air surveys to map and observe the fire.

There are 36 people assigned to the fire representing many agencies including the National Park Service, U.S.D.A. Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management, Williams Interagency Zone Dispatch, Arizona Department of Environmental Quality, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service and the Bureau of Indian Affairs.

Smoke generated from the fire is monitored on a daily basis under the Grand Canyon Smoke Management Program. According to Carl Bowman, Air Quality Specialist for Grand Canyon National Park, "Up to this point, little smoke in the Canyon has been associated with this fire. However, there may be more smoke visible in the mornings as a high pressure system settles in the area through early next week. Any smoke in the Canyon should dissipate by mid-day."

To ensure public safety, the following closures are still in effect: North Bass Trail, Powell Plateau Trail and Swamp Ridge Road.

For more information about these closures, please contact the Park's Backcountry Information Center at (928) 638-7875. For general park information, please call (928) 638-7888.

The North Rim of the Grand Canyon remains open to visitors.

Please visit the following websites for more information and photos of the fire: <http://www.nps.gov/grca/fire/> and <http://www.fireuse.org/>



NEWS RELEASE

June 22, 2003

Nancy Guerrero (928) 638-7944

The Powell Fire Wildland Fire Use Strategy

Grand Canyon, AZ - The Powell Fire, which began June 15, on the North Rim of the Grand Canyon, has grown to approximately 610 acres. Wayne Cook's Interagency Fire Use Management Team accepted responsibility for the management of the fire on June 20th. The team is working closely with Grand Canyon National Park and Kaibab National Forest managers as the fire is located near the boundary between the forest and the park.

The fire continues to move in a southerly direction backing into the wind on the top of the Powell Plateau growing about 100 acres a day.

Personnel assigned to the fire are positioned at Swamp Point and other locations east of the fire at vantage points along the North Rim, monitoring smoke dispersal, taking weather observations and mapping the fire progression. According to Josh Erickson, supervisor on the Bandelier Module, "the fire is progressing naturally along the plateau, producing very little smoke and things are going quite smoothly."

The North Rim of the Grand Canyon is open to the public, however, the temporary closure of the North Bass Trail, Powell Plateau Trail, and Swamp Ridge Road remains in effect to ensure public safety.

For more information about these closures, please contact the Park's Backcountry Information Center at (928) 638-7875 or for general park information, please call (928) 638-7888.



NEWS RELEASE

June 21, 2003

Nancy Guerrero (928) 638-7944

The Powell Fire

Grand Canyon, AZ - The Powell Fire, which began June 15, on the North Rim of the Grand Canyon, has grown to approximately 511 acres as of 7:00 p.m. June 20, and is being managed under a Wildland Fire Use Strategy. The fire management staff is working in close cooperation with the Kaibab National Forest staff on this event since the fire is located near the boundary between the forest and the park.

Resource specialists continue to monitor the impacts and benefits of this natural fire.

For more than a century, fire was considered a destructive force and aggressive actions were taken to suppress wildland fires. Fire is now recognized as an essential part of many ecosystems. Numerous plants and animals evolved with fire and adapted to fire. Fire stimulates nutrient recycling and allows dormant seed to germinate. A variety of plants, including ponderosa pine, thrive on nutrients that are present in a burned area. These plants in turn, provide food for wildlife.

The North Rim of the Grand Canyon is open to the public, however, the temporary closure of the North Bass, Powell Plateau Trail, and Swamp Ridge Road remains in effect to ensure public safety.

For more information about these closures, please contact the Park's Backcountry Information Center at (928) 638-7875 or for general park information, please call (928) 638-7888.



NEWS RELEASE

June 20, 2003

Nancy Guerrero (928) 638-7944

Northern Rockies Interagency Fire Use Management Team Takes The Lead On The Powell Fire

Grand Canyon, AZ - Wayne Cook's Interagency Fire Use Management Team will take command of the Powell Fire today at 6:00 p.m.

The Powell Fire, which began June 15, on the North Rim of the Grand Canyon, has grown to approximately 446 acres as of 7:00 p.m. June 19, and is being managed under a Wildland Fire Use Strategy which promotes ecosystem restoration. According to Jim Kitchen, Incident Commander on the Grand Canyon National Park Fire and Aviation Management Team "this fire is doing exactly what we want it to do." The fire management staff is working in close cooperation with the Kaibab National Forest staff on this event since the fire is located near the boundary between the forest and the park.

Personnel continue to monitor the fire behavior and smoke impacts. Precautions are being taken to avoid adverse impacts to cultural resources and other environmental concerns.

The use of fire as a resource management tool requires a combination of science-based analysis and planning to safely and effectively manage the fire. Cook's team includes fire behavior analysts and technical specialists who will use the latest fire behavior modeling technology to provide information for decision making to meet daily and long-term management objectives.

The North Rim of the Grand Canyon is open to the public, however, the temporary closure of the North Bass, Powell Plateau Trail, and Swamp Ridge Road remains in effect to ensure public safety and firefighter safety.

For more information about these closures, please contact the Park's Backcountry Information Center at (928) 638-7875 or for general park information, please call (928) 638-7888.

Note: Additional information can be found on the NPS Fire News website at www.nps.gov/fire/news/



NEWS RELEASE

June 19, 2003

Nancy Guerrero (928) 638-7944

Fire Use Strategy Continues on the North Rim of the Grand Canyon

Grand Canyon, AZ - In accordance with Mother Nature, the Powell Fire, which was started by a lightning strike on the North Rim of the Grand Canyon June 15, is being managed under a Wildland Fire Use Strategy which promotes ecosystem restoration.

The Powell Fire has grown to approximately 375 acres as of 7:00p.m. June 18, and "things are going really well on this fire" according to Craig Letz, Acting Fire Management Officer at the Grand Canyon.

In a ponderosa pine forest, which is primarily what is burning, fire is an essential part of the ecosystem. Fire stimulates nutrient recycling and allows dormant seeds to germinate. A variety of plants thrive on nutrients that are present in a burned area. These plants, in turn, provide food for wildlife.

The fire management staff continues to work closely with the Kaibab National Forest staff, since the fire is near the border.

Two Fire Use Modules, consisting of four personnel each, along with fire overhead team members from the Grand Canyon National Park continue to monitor the fire for smoke impacts and fire behavior. Precautions are being taken to protect combustible cultural resources in the area.

The North Rim of the Grand Canyon remains open to the public, however, the temporary closure of the North Bass, Powell Plateau Trails, and Swamp Ridge Road continues to be in effect to ensure public safety in these outlying areas.

Wayne Cook's Fire Use Management Team will be arriving sometime today to transition with the Grand Canyon National Monument management team. The transition should take either place late this afternoon or early tomorrow morning.

For more information about these closures, please contact the Park's Backcountry Information Center at (928) 638-7875 or for general park information, please call (928) 638-7888.



NEWS RELEASE

June 19, 2003

Maureen Oltrogge (928) 638-7779

Grand Canyon National Park Seeks Public Comment On Environmental Assessment For Yavapai Observation Station Rehabilitation

GRAND CANYON , AZ - Grand Canyon National Park Superintendent Joseph F. Alston today announced the release of an Environmental Assessment (EA) for the Yavapai Observation Station Rehabilitation. The building, eligible as a National Historic Landmark, is located on the South Rim of Grand Canyon National Park. The proposal includes both interior and exterior rehabilitation designed to preserve historic features and elements of the building while improving functionality, safety, and accessibility for users. Installation of new exhibits is also a primary component of the project. The proposal implements direction outlined in the 1995 Grand Canyon National Park General Management Plan for the building to function as an interpretive facility, focusing on geology and related themes. The facility is currently used primarily as a bookstore with only limited interpretive exhibits. The National Park Service (NPS) is soliciting comments from the public on the proposal.

The EA considers two alternatives, Alternative A; a no-action alternative and Alternative B; an action alternative. Alternative B, the agency preferred alternative, proposes to rehabilitate the building, bringing it up to current building codes and safety and accessibility standards. This would be achieved through interior and exterior repairs and rehabilitation actions including such things as replacement of roofing, reinforcing log vigas and beams in selected locations, repainting, repairing historic doors, restoration of the original scored concrete flooring, installation of a fire detection and sprinkler system, and upgrading the structural and electrical systems. Other key components of the rehabilitation include 1) installation of new exhibits focusing on the geology of Grand Canyon and 2) the eventual removal of the observation deck windows, to restore the original open-air terrace, and installation of a glass wall with an operable door between the exhibit hall and the observation terrace.

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/. Comments will be accepted for 30 days and should be sent to Sara White at the above address by July 21, 2003. For questions or additional information, please contact Debbie Lutch, project compliance lead, at 928-774-0095.



NEWS RELEASE

June 18, 2003

Maureen Oltrogge (928) 638-7779

Fire on North Rim of Grand Canyon being Managed under Wildland Fire Use Strategy

Grand Canyon, AZ - A lightning caused fire that started on June 15, is burning on the North Rim of Grand Canyon National Park and is being managed under a Wildland Fire Use Strategy, a strategy that involves the management of naturally ignited wildland fires to accomplish specific, pre-stated resource objectives in pre-defined geographic areas.

The Powell Fire, as of 7:00 p.m. June 17, was estimated at 250 acres, and is burning primarily in ponderosa pine forest. This wildland use fire is helping to remove an accumulation of fuel, a natural process in a ponderosa pine ecosystem. The fire is approximately 15 air miles northwest of the North Rim developed area on Powell Plateau, and is burning primarily to the south and west. The fire is active and is expected to continue to burn for several weeks.

Due to its close proximity to the Kaibab Forest, Grand Canyon Fire Management staff is coordinating their efforts with the U.S.D.A. Forest Service.

Two Fire Use Modules, consisting of four personnel each, along with five overhead team members from Grand Canyon National Park are monitoring the fire for smoke impacts and fire behavior. Fire personnel are also taking precautionary measures to protect combustible cultural resources in the area.

The North Rim of Grand Canyon remains open to the public, however, a temporary closure of the North Bass and Powell Plateau Trails, along with Swamp Ridge Road is currently in effect to ensure public safety in these outlying areas.

For more information about these closures, please contact the Park's Backcountry Information Center at (928) 638-7875 or for general park information, please call (928) 638-7888.



NEWS RELEASE

June 5, 2003

Chuck Wahler 928-638-7835 or

Brian Gatlin 928-638-7644

Astronomers Present Free Star Programs at Grand Canyon National Park

GRAND CANYON, AZ - The thirteenth annual Grand Canyon Star Party will be held June 21 through June 28, 2003 at Yavapai Observation Station on the South Rim of Grand Canyon National Park. Under the sponsorship of the National Park Service and the Tucson Amateur Astronomy Association, amateur astronomers from across the country will be volunteering their expertise for this event. Free star programs will be available nightly, and telescopes will also be set up to view planets, star clusters, galaxies, and nebulae.

Grand Canyon is one of the best night sky observing sites in the United States. Expect spectacular views of the universe, weather permitting. Star slide programs will begin at 8 p.m. outside of Yavapai Observation Station; a question and answer period will follow. Volunteer astronomers will then have their telescopes available throughout the evening for the public to view the night sky. These telescopes will be set up around Yavapai Observation Station, its parking lot, and in an observing area southwest of the lower portion of the parking lot. In addition to night viewing, some volunteer astronomers will set up their telescopes during the day to provide visitors with up-close views of canyon features, as well as safe observation of the sun.

When traveling in the park, it is best to find a parking space and utilize the free shuttle service to all points of interest in the Village area and along the scenic Hermit Road on the West Rim. If you plan to stay overnight at Grand Canyon National Park, plan your visit in advance. Visit the Park's official website at www.nps.gov/grca or to receive a free Grand Canyon Trip Planner, call 928-638-7888.



NEWS RELEASE

April 22, 2003

Maureen Oltrogge (928) 638-7779

Grand Canyon National Park Extends Public Comment Period on Environmental Assessment/Assessment of Effect for Replacement, Rehabilitation And Maintenance of Backcountry and Corridor Toilets

Grand Canyon National Park Superintendent Joseph F. Alston today announced a two week extension for public comment on the Environmental Assessment/Assessment of Effect (EA/AEF) entitled: Replacement, Rehabilitation and Maintenance of Backcountry and Corridor Toilets. The National Park Service is soliciting comments from the public on the proposal. Comments, which were originally due on April 25, 2003, are now being accepted through May 9, 2003.

The NPS, at Grand Canyon, proposes to replace/rehabilitate and maintain 11 toilets in the backcountry and seven toilets in the Cross-Canyon corridor in the inner canyon. Many of the existing backcountry toilets are pit toilets that are substandard, and expose Park employees to unsanitary conditions while cleaning and servicing the toilets, and to the visitors who use them. The proposal analyzes the potential impacts created from replacement/rehabilitation of the toilets, as well as from cyclic maintenance required for periodic emptying and removal of waste.

Most of the Grand Canyon backcountry (excluding the Cross-Canyon Corridor) lies within proposed wilderness. NPS policies require that these proposed areas be managed under the provisions of the Wilderness Act. As such, maintenance of backcountry toilets falls under the "minimum tool concept," which allows for park superintendents to select the method or administrative practice necessary to successfully and safely accomplish the management objectives with the least impact on wilderness character and resources. Therefore, a "Minimum Requirement Analysis" will also be conducted to determine the minimum tools or methods necessary for both the installation and long-term maintenance of toilets located within proposed wilderness areas.

The EA/AEF evaluates three alternatives for addressing the purpose and need for action, including a no action alternative and two action alternatives. Both action alternatives include: 1) replacement of existing pit toilets at six backcountry sites with above ground vault toilets, 2) transportation of these vault units into the backcountry via helicopter, and 3) improved cyclic maintenance of all backcountry and corridor toilets throughout the year. The preferred alternative, Alternative B, also includes helicopter use for periodic emptying/removal at 11 sites and mule and/or boat use for six sites. Alternative C proposes helicopter use for periodic emptying/removal at three sites and a combination of mules, boats or backpack transport for periodic emptying/removal at the remainder of the sites.

Copies of the EA/AEF 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/. Comments should be sent to Sara White at the above address by May 9, 2003. For questions or additional information, please contact Debbie Lutch, project compliance lead, at 928-774-0095.

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NEWS RELEASE

April 17, 2003

Maureen Oltrogge (928) 638-7779

Grand Canyon National Park Celebrates National Park Week by Recognizing Park Volunteers

The National Park Service (NPS) at Grand Canyon will recognize National Park Week April 21 -27, 2003, by celebrating park volunteers.

"National Park Week is an opportunity for us to show our appreciation to the many individuals of all ages who have devoted time and energy into making our national parks a better place, and to extend warm invitations to our neighbors and friends - especially those who have never visited a national park - to experience the wonder of these special places," NPS Director Fran P. Mainella said.

"Every year volunteers work side by side with the National Park Service staff on projects to protect and care for park resources," Joseph Alston, Park Superintendent said. "Last year alone, well over 1,000 people volunteered their time and talents to help safeguard the Grand Canyon. Volunteers have helped design trails; have been involved in planting projects, invasive plant removal, visitor education, the condor reintroduction program, and many other projects and programs. Over 40,000 hours were worked by these volunteers, donating nearly \$500,000 worth of services to the National Park Service. We are grateful for their contributions and hope their experiences at the park will long be remembered."

"This year during National Park Week, the Grand Canyon High School student body will assist the National Park Service Revegetation Crew on a planting project between Mather and Yavapai Points on the South Rim of Grand Canyon," Deb Shannon, Grand Canyon Revegetation Crew Volunteer Coordinator said. "The project is in honor of Earth Day and will take place on Thursday, April 24. This is the 7th year Grand Canyon High School students have partnered with the Revegetation Crew to complete large-scale plantings in impacted areas near the rim."

National Parks are living examples of the best this Nation has to offer - our magnificent natural landscapes and our varied yet interrelated heritage. Parks can provide recreational experiences, opportunities to learn and grow, and places of quiet refuge. Many park volunteers have left with a new appreciation of the resource and knowing they have made a real difference for parks and people.

"Our neighbors have a national park at their doorstep" Superintendent Alston said. "I invite everyone to come and see what Grand Canyon National Park has to offer during National Park Week and year round. During National Park Week and throughout the year, visitors can join a park ranger in one of the many daily activities for a better understanding of the Grand Canyon - it's past and present. Activities include fossil walks, geology talks, the Canyon's cultural history, the California condor and much more!

The first National Park Week celebrated the 75th anniversary of the National Park Service, and the president has proclaimed it annually since 1994. America's 388 national parks tell our country's stories and welcome visitors year round; National Park Week is an opportunity to recognize and celebrate the many ways national parks enrich people's lives and the

people who have contributed to them.

To learn more about the Volunteers in Parks Program be sure to visit the National Park Service's Volunteer In Parks area on the Web at www.nps.gov/volunteer/. For information on National Park Week events, including March for Parks, in communities and national parks across the country, check out www.nps.gov/npweek/. For more information on Grand Canyon National Park visit the park's web site at www.nps.gov/grca/ or call (928) 638-7888.

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NEWS RELEASE

April 16, 2003

Jennie Albrinck (928) 638-7739

Highway 67 to Grand Canyon North Rim to Open for the Season on May 10

Highway 67 to the North Rim of Grand Canyon, which is closed each winter, will be opened to the public beginning Saturday, May 10th at 6:00 a.m. Xanterra Parks & Resorts, Inc. at the North Rim (Xanterra), and Grand Canyon Trail Rides will also commence their season operations on May 10th, continuing through October 14th, 2003. Xanterra operations include lodging, camper services, food services, groceries and a service station. All concessions facilities will open at 11:30 a.m.

All services provided by the National Park Service including Visitor Center, Grand Canyon Association bookstore, backcountry permit reservations, campground and ranger programs will be available on May 10th at 12:00 noon.

Advance overnight lodging reservations for North Rim facilities may be made by contacting Xanterra reservations in Denver at 1(888) 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 1(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 also open on May 10th. The 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 at approximately 8,500 feet in elevation, and offers spectacular canyon views. It is approximately a 215-mile drive from the South Rim. Points of interest include: Point Imperial, Cape Royal, Point Sublime, North Kaibab Trail, and Bright Angel Point. For a copy of the park's free Trip Planner please call (928) 638-7888 or write, Trip Planner, Grand Canyon National Park, P.O. Box 129, Grand Canyon, AZ 86023. The Trip Planner is also available on the Internet at www.nps.gov/grca/.



NEWS RELEASE

April 10, 2003

Maureen Oltrogge 928-638-7779

Grand Canyon National Park Pleased With Progress of Public Participation in Revision of Colorado River Management Plan

More than 55,000 individual comments received

Response to the initial public involvement effort to update the Colorado River Management Plan (CRMP) for Grand Canyon National Park has been overwhelming, with approximately 15,000 submittals containing more than 55,000 individual comments. This response is part of the public scoping effort as the Park prepares an environmental impact statement (EIS) to update the CRMP. The National Park Service (NPS) is preparing the EIS for the Plan under the provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969.

Joseph F. Alston, Grand Canyon National Park superintendent, said, "We are very pleased that the process to update the Colorado River Management Plan has been going well, and that the public has been so engaged. One of our primary objectives is to conduct a very open and thorough process, to hear and understand the opinions of river users and other constituents, and to afford the public every opportunity to provide input."

A wide variety of outreach strategies have been used to inform the public about the process to update the CRMP and solicit input. Strategies have included public meetings, an expert panel series, and extensive electronic information dissemination. In addition, stakeholder workshops were held in late January to hear from stakeholders about their values and preferences regarding the range of recreational opportunities to be provided to the public, and private river trip permit distribution systems. A summary of the scoping comments and results of the stakeholder workshops will be posted in the near future on the Internet at www.nps.gov/grca/crmp.

Given the complexity of this plan and the extensive level of public comment, the NPS is shifting the next phase of public outreach from the summer to the fall of 2003. This will provide the NPS planning team and environmental consultants adequate time to thoroughly incorporate the public input into the development and analysis of alternatives, which is the next step in the EIS process.

Rick Ernenwein, NPS planning team leader, said, "A great deal of work has already been accomplished by the public, the NPS planning team, and our environmental consultant, SWCA, but there is still much more in-depth analysis that must be done. We always knew we were on an aggressive timetable, but we want to produce the best product possible and are working hard to meet our original December 2004 goal to complete the planning process."

Last summer, the NPS hosted initial public scoping meetings in Flagstaff, Arizona; Phoenix, Arizona; Salt Lake City, Utah; Las Vegas, Nevada and Denver, Colorado. Two additional meetings were held in Baltimore, Maryland and Oakland, California. More than 1,000 people attended all these meetings.

The NPS also contracted with The Mary Orton Company LLC to host an expert panel series, also in late January, which brought together experts in various fields to share the latest research and other information that would help the CRMP planning team further assess impacts as well as develop alternatives for management of recreational use on the Colorado River.

In addition, the National Park System Advisory Board, an independent twelve-member board appointed by the National Park Service Director, is considering a process to help facilitate stakeholder involvement on two core issues - use of motors on the river, and allocation of recreational river use among user groups. This Board routinely advises the Director of the National Park Service and Secretary of the Interior on matters relating to the National Park System.

For further information on this planning process, please contact Rick Ernenwein at 928-779-6279.

Editors Note: To be placed on the park's CRMP Newsletter mailing list, please send your request along with your email address to: grca_crmp@nps.gov.

Background on the CRMP Environmental Impact Statement Process

The purpose of this EIS is to update management guidelines for the Colorado River corridor through Grand Canyon National Park. Current guidelines can be found in the 1989 CRMP. A copy of this plan as well as background information and public comments received from past CRMP discussions can be found on the Internet at www.nps.gov/grca/crmp/.

During this process, the NPS will develop and evaluate alternatives to address resource protection issues, potential resource impacts, user capacities, and mitigation measures necessary or desirable to achieve the NPS mission. The NPS will review some key resource issues outside of the park's boundaries that affect the integrity of the Grand Canyon and will consider alternatives that include no-action (the status quo), no motorized use, and varying levels of motorized and non-motorized watercraft use.

Issues to be addressed in the EIS will include, but are not limited to:

- Appropriate levels of visitor use consistent with natural and cultural resource protection and preservation mandates;
- Allocation of use between commercial and non-commercial groups;
- Non-commercial permitting system;
- Level of motorized versus non-motorized raft use;
- The range of services and opportunities provided to the public; and,
- In consultation with the Hualapai Indian Tribe and other appropriate parties, the continued use of helicopters to transport river passengers from the Colorado River near Whitmore Wash.

Information about this planning effort and how the public can be involved throughout the process will be provided in periodic newsletters, which are available on the Internet at www.nps.gov/grca/crmp/.



NEWS RELEASE

March 24, 2003

Maureen Oltrogge 928-638-7779

Grand Canyon National Park Seeks Public Comment On Environmental Assessment/Assessment Of Effect For Replacement, Rehabilitation And Maintenance Of Backcountry And Corridor Toilets

Grand Canyon National Park Superintendent Joseph F. Alston today announced the release of an Environmental Assessment/Assessment of Effect (EA/AEF) entitled: *Replacement, Rehabilitation and Maintenance of Backcountry and Corridor Toilets*. The National Park Service (NPS) is soliciting comments from the public on the proposal.

The NPS, at Grand Canyon, proposes to replace/rehabilitate and maintain 11 toilets in the backcountry and seven toilets in the Cross-Canyon corridor in the inner canyon. Many of the existing backcountry toilets are pit toilets that are substandard, and expose Park employees to unsanitary conditions while cleaning and servicing the toilets, and to the visitors who use them. The proposal analyzes the potential impacts created from replacement/rehabilitation of the toilets, as well as from cyclic maintenance required for periodic emptying and removal of waste.

Most of the Grand Canyon backcountry (excluding the Cross-Canyon Corridor) lies within proposed wilderness. NPS policies require that these proposed areas be managed under the provisions of the Wilderness Act. As such, maintenance of backcountry toilets falls under the "minimum tool concept," which allows for park superintendents to select the method or administrative practice necessary to successfully and safely accomplish the management objectives with the least impact on wilderness character and resources. Therefore, a "Minimum Requirement Analysis" will also be conducted to determine the minimum tools or methods necessary for both the installation and long-term maintenance of toilets located within proposed wilderness areas.

The EA/AEF evaluates three alternatives for addressing the purpose and need for action, including a no action alternative and two action alternatives. Both action alternatives include: 1) replacement of existing pit toilets at six backcountry sites with above ground vault toilets, 2) transportation of these vault units into the backcountry via helicopter, and 3) improved cyclic maintenance of all backcountry and corridor toilets throughout the year. The preferred alternative, Alternative B, also includes helicopter use for periodic emptying/removal at 11 sites and mule and/or boat use for six sites. Alternative C proposes helicopter use for periodic emptying/removal at three sites and a combination of mules, boats or backpack transport for periodic emptying/removal at the remainder of the sites.

Copies of the EA/AEF 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/. Comments will be accepted for 30 days and should be sent to Sara White at the above address by April 25, 2003. For questions or additional information, please contact Debbie Lutch, project compliance lead, at 928-774-0095.



NEWS RELEASE

March 24, 2003

Maureen Oltrogge 928-638-7779

Grand Canyon National Park Seeks Public Comment On Environmental Assessment/Assessment Of Effect For North Rim Campground Rehabilitation & Water Distribution System Improvements

Grand Canyon National Park Superintendent Joseph F. Alston today announced the release of an Environmental Assessment/Assessment of Effect (EA/AEF) entitled: *North Rim Campground Rehabilitation & Water Distribution System Improvements*. The National Park Service (NPS) proposes to rehabilitate the North Rim campground including actions such as resurfacing roads, removing the existing fee collection kiosk and replacing it with a larger registration building, rehabilitating existing restrooms, and constructing new restrooms in the group site. Grand Canyon National Park also proposes to improve the North Rim water distribution system, including the establishment of a fire protection system, by replacing undersized and leaking antiquated piping, adding or replacing fire hydrants where necessary, upgrading a pressure booster (pumping) station, and connecting existing reclaimed water piping hydraulically to the potable water system. The 1995 Grand Canyon National Park General Management Plan addresses improvements to the campground and water distribution system on the North Rim. The NPS is soliciting comments from the public on the proposal.

The EA/AEF evaluates three alternatives for addressing the purpose and need for action, including a no action alternative and two action alternatives. Both action alternatives include upgrading the existing water distribution system through replacement of existing piping, use of the existing reclaimed pipeline for potable water for the fire protection system, installation of a new pumping station, and the addition of some new fire hydrants. Both alternatives also include repaving roads within the campground, rehabilitating five existing campsites into universally accessible campsites, campground restroom and walkway rehabilitation, and construction of a comfort station and a vault toilet at the group site. The primary difference between the action alternatives is the way in which the campground entry is addressed. Alternative B also includes reconfiguration of the campground entrance to include construction of a new entrance and exit, removal of the existing campground kiosk and replacement with a new drive-up fee collection kiosk, and construction of four new tent campsite spurs. The preferred alternative, Alternative C includes the removal of the existing campground kiosk and the construction of a new walk-up registration building adjacent to the existing parking area.

Copies of the EA/AEF 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/. Comments will be accepted for 30 days and should be sent to Sara White at the above address by April 30, 2003. For questions or additional information, please contact Debbie Lutch, project compliance lead, at 928-774-0095.



NEWS RELEASE

February 20, 2003

Maureen Oltrogge 928-638-7779

Grand Canyon National Park Seeks Public Comment on Environmental Assessment for North Rim Emergency Services/Wildland Fire Facility and Preservation Treatments of Exposed Frame Cabins

Grand Canyon National Park Superintendent Joseph F. Alston today announced the release of an Environmental Assessment (EA) titled *North Rim Emergency Services/Wildland Fire Facility and Preservation Treatments of Exposed Frame Cabins*. The EA outlines the National Park Service's (NPS) proposal to construct an emergency services/wildland fire facility, replace an existing kiosk and storage building at the helibase, and to preserve historic exposed frame cabins on the North Rim of Grand Canyon National Park. The National Park Service (NPS) is soliciting comments from the public on the proposal.

The EA considers four alternatives, Alternative A: a no-action alternative, and three action alternatives: Alternatives B, C and D. Alternative B, the agency preferred alternative, proposes to construct the new emergency services/wildland fire facility adjacent to the existing water storage tanks in the administrative area of Bright Angel peninsula. The facility would occupy approximately 10,590 square feet and would house both emergency medical service (EMS) and wildland fire operations. The facility would include storage areas for emergency services, equipment caches, office space, a conference room, maintenance areas, and holding cells. Construction of the facility and associated parking would result in approximately two acres of ground disturbance (some of which has been previously disturbed) and tree removal. This new facility is needed to consolidate those operations that are currently housed in separate facilities. Existing facilities are old (dating back to the 1930's), they were not designed for modern equipment and they are inadequately ventilated, violating National Fire Protection Act standards. The new facility would allow for improved emergency response time and address the inadequacies present in the existing facilities.

The preferred alternative also includes the removal of a kiosk and associated storage building at the existing helibase. These buildings would be replaced with a single 200-square-foot building adjacent to the helipad. The new building would accommodate office space and equipment storage. The project site has been previously disturbed and no vegetation would be removed during construction.

The exposed frame cabins are located in the North Rim Inn and Campground Historic District, near the North Rim campground. These buildings were constructed around 1929 and were remodeled in the 1930s and 1960s. There are 26 one-room cabins, a shower facility, and a laundry facility. These buildings were last used in 1989 and have not been maintained since then. As part of the preferred alternative, all 28 buildings would be restored, rehabilitated or reconstructed. The extent of efforts necessary to make the buildings functional would vary, depending on the existing condition of each cabin. Treatment of these cabins would provide much-needed seasonal fire crew housing on the North Rim. During the early spring and late fall months, the ability to accomplish wildland fire projects is limited by the housing that is available. The lack of housing has restrained the wildland fire effort on the North Rim and has affected employee retention and the ability

of the Park to recruit new employees.

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/. Comments will be accepted for 30 days and should be sent to Sara White at the above address by March 21, 2003. For questions or additional information, please contact Debbie Lutch, project compliance lead, at 928-774-0095.

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NEWS RELEASE

January 27, 2003

Maureen Oltrogge 928-638-7779

Grand Canyon National Park Seeks Public Comment On Environmental Assessment For Proposed Rehabilitation Of The Ranger Operations Building

Grand Canyon National Park Superintendent Joseph F. Alston today announced the release of an Environmental Assessment (EA) for the rehabilitation of the historic Ranger Operations Building. The building, a National Historic Landmark, is located within Grand Canyon Village on the South Rim of Grand Canyon National Park. The proposal includes both interior and exterior rehabilitation designed to preserve historic features and elements of the building while improving functionality, safety, and accessibility for users. The National Park Service (NPS) is soliciting comments from the public on the proposal.

The EA considers two alternatives, Alternative A; a no-action alternative and Alternative B; an action alternative. Alternative B, the agency preferred alternative, proposes to rehabilitate the building, bringing it up to current safety and accessibility standards and to improve functionality. This would be achieved through interior and exterior repairs and rehabilitation actions including such things as replacing the roof shingles, replacing deteriorated wood siding and log rafters, creation of accessible exterior walkways, upgrade of the heating, ventilation and cooling system, modification of interior walls to create more office and storage space, removal of walls in some areas to return these spaces to their historic configuration and restoring the lobby to its original configuration. The proposed project is needed to address several management concerns including the fact that the building does not comply with current building code, safety standards, seismic and structural code, and accessibility requirements; exterior rustic lap siding and exposed log elements are severely deteriorated and in need of stabilization to prevent further loss of historic fabric; masonry needs repair; and aged plumbing and mechanical systems are outdated and inefficient.

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, Compliance Officer, or on-line at www.nps.gov/grca/compliance/. Comments will be accepted for 30 days and should be sent to Sara White at the above address or by email to sara_white@nps.gov by February 26, 2003. For questions or additional information, please contact Debbie Lutch, Project Compliance Officer at 928-774-0095.