



May 21, 2008

Ms. Mary Bomar  
Director, National Park Service  
1849 C Street NW  
Washington, DC 20240

Dear Director Bomar:

As you know a draft regulation was published in the Federal Register in April that, if adopted, would allow individuals with concealed-carry weapons permits to carry loaded firearms in some units of the National Park System, depending on state laws. This draft regulation has a public comment period that runs through June 30, 2008.

Our question to you is: What specific steps have you taken or will you take to ensure that National Park System visitors and National Park Service employees will be informed of this proposed change to a regulation that has been in place in some form for 88 years? Will you provide them with the opportunity to know that they have the ability to officially comment on this proposed change? In our opinion the current regulation has served park resources, park visitors, and park employees well over the decades.

National Park Service employees were denied the ability to comment in their official capacities by Departmental directive earlier this year. Their professional expertise in managing parks should not be ignored in making this decision, nor should it be hidden from the public as they weigh their individual decision on whether to oppose or support the proposed change.

The more than 280-million-plus visitors to the National Park System is the exact constituency that the Department and agency should be making every effort to involve in this decision making process. Notice of this proposed change and instructions on how to send in comments should be placed in park newspapers or leaflets inserted in park brochures, on park bulletin boards and visitor center desks, added to park web sites, and broadcast on park radio stations. Park visitors are the group that will be most affected by the proposed change, and they should be informed of the proposed change and challenged to think through how such a change may impact the quality of their future park visits from a park resources standpoint as well as considerations related to personal safety and an atmosphere of tranquility.

In this decade where “civic engagement” has become an NPS buzzword and a mandatory process for all controversial NPS decision-making, surely the NPS intends to make every effort to “engage” its

primary constituency before a final decision on this draft regulatory change is made. The members of the Association of National Park Rangers, the Coalition of National Park Retirees, and the US Rangers Lodge of the Fraternal Order of Police look forward to your timely response.

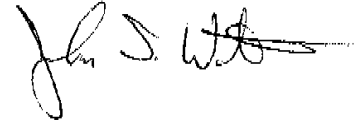
Sincerely,



A. Scot McElveen  
President, Association of National  
Park Rangers  
25958 Genesee Trail Road  
PMB 222  
Golden, CO 80401



J. W. "Bill" Wade  
Chair, Executive Council  
Coalition of National Park Service  
Retirees  
5625 N. Wilmot Rd.  
Tucson, AZ 85750



John Waterman, President  
U.S. Park Rangers Lodge,  
Fraternal Order of Police  
P.O. Box 1481  
Twain Harte, CA 95383

*About the Association of National Park Rangers:*

ANPR is the responsible and credible voice of National Park Service workers, and we are passionate about comprehensive protective stewardship of the national parks. We are dedicated to the preservation and enhancement of a vital National Park System and a vibrant National Park Service, and we defend and promote the stewardship of the vital natural, cultural and caretaker resources of the national parks through education, training, advocacy and public information. ANPR has 1,100 members.

*About the Coalition of National Park Retirees:*

The 640 members of the Coalition of National Park Service Retirees are all former employees of the National Park Service with a combined 19,000 years of stewardship of America's most significant natural and cultural resources. In their personal lives, CNPSR members reflect the broad spectrum of political affiliations. CNPSR members now strive to apply their experience, credibility and integrity as they speak out for national park and program solutions that uphold law and apply the results of sound scientific research. They also support the mission of the National Park Service through public education. The Coalition counts among its members: former National Park Service directors and deputy directors, regional directors, superintendents, rangers and other career professionals who devoted an average of nearly 30 years each to protecting and interpreting America's national parks on behalf of the public.

*About the U.S. Park Rangers Lodge of the Fraternal Order of Police:*

The U.S. Park Rangers Lodge of the Fraternal Order of Police was organized to protect and advance the professional needs of commissioned law enforcement rangers while providing the camaraderie and social support system for which the FOP has been famous for since 1917. The lodge is run by rangers to benefit rangers. The U.S. Park Ranger Lodge has been in the forefront fighting to improve the professional lives of commissioned rangers since 1988.