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Dear DOI employee,

Last week, Mike Finley, Rick Smith and Bill Wade - three former career employees in the National Park Service who have almost 100 years of government service - were joined by more than 25 of their former colleagues who signed a letter to President Bush and Secretary Norton demanding that they reverse the current policies that threaten our National Parks. Many of the worst proposals have not received the public attention and scrutiny they deserve. That is why they came forward. They simply could not sit idly by while the national landmarks that they spent their working lives preserving and protecting are under such attack. And they know it is not only the National Parks that are at risk under the policies of the current Administration.

Many public lands are in danger and so too is the very process to keep the American people involved in the decision-making process of their own government. We are writing you to ask that you join your former colleagues and us in our efforts to let the public know what is at stake if this Administration continues on its present course.

Please call the numbers or visit the Web sites on this page if you have information that the public needs to know about their Department of Interior or the proposals in the works to roll back the protection of our cherished public lands.

**The Campaign to Protect America's Lands
Public Employees for Environmental Responsibility**

**Government Accountability Project
Project on Government Oversight**

May 19, 2003

President George W. Bush
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, D.C. 20500

Secretary Gale Norton
United States Department of the Interior
1849 C Street NW
Washington, D.C. 20240

Dear President Bush and Secretary Norton:

We are all former non-political career employees of the National Park Service. As rangers and park managers we devoted our professional lives to maintaining and protecting our national parks for the benefit of all Americans. The national parks belong to every American and we are dismayed to see that they are being turned over piece by piece, contract by contract, to well-connected special interests whose foremost concern is maximizing profit and personal gain, not preserving the essence of the places that collectively represent our national heritage.

Specifically, we refer to the following actions:

- **Sacrificing the public interest for private profits.** Turning over important jobs at our parks to the lowest bidding private company will have a negative impact on the resource and lower the quality of the visitor experience - without real cost savings
- **Allowing oil and gas drilling in and near units of the National Park Service.** It is inappropriate to allow exploration and drilling in or near national parks. Once again, this sacrifices wildlife resources and the public interest for private profits.
- **Paving large portions of our national parks.** Using an obscure 19th century law to allow paving of thousands of miles of roads in our parks is unacceptable. Grand Canyon National Park alone could see hundreds of miles of newly paved roads, spoiling the hauntingly beautiful landscape.
- **Cutting park professionals “out of the loop” in protecting park air quality.** In places like Great Smoky Mountain, Shenandoah and Grand Canyon parks, protecting the air quality is as important as maintaining the environment on the ground

Please rethink your support of these initiatives. America’s national parks are natural treasures and we cannot allow them to be spoiled, polluted, or turned into profit centers.

Protecting our parks has always been an ideal shared by Democrat and Republican administrations alike. We are asking you today to live up to that commitment in policy, as well as speeches. We know that many of our former Park Service colleagues agree with our concerns.. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Rick Smith

Associate Southwest Regional Director

Bill Wade

Superintendent, Shenandoah National Park

Mike Finley

Superintendent, Yellowstone National Park

Rick Gale

Chief of Interagency Fire Center

Denny Galvin

Deputy Director

Bob Barbee

Regional Director, Alaska

Reginald Hagood

Chief of Training Division

Roland H. “Ro” Wauer

Chief Scientist, SW Regional Office; Chief of Natural Resources, WASO

Loretta Neumann

Chief, Branch of Internal Communications, WASO

Bill Everhart

Assistant Director, Education and Interpretation

Marc Sagan

Manager, Harper’s Ferry Center

Anthony J. Bonanno

Regional Chief Ranger, Intermountain Region

Ann Belkov

Superintendent, Statue of Liberty

Bill Brown

Park Historian, Denali National Park

David E. Gackenbach

Superintendent, Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area

Larry Hakel

Chief Park Ranger, Shenandoah National Park

James S. Rouse

Superintendent, Crater Lake National Park

Rock Comstock

Chief, Interpretation and Visitor Services, National Capital Region

Georgia A. Ellard

Superintendent, Rock Creek Park

Chester L. Brooks

Regional Director, Northeast Region

Roger Rudolph

Assistant Superintendent, Olympic National Park

Jim Coleman

Regional Director, Southeast Region

John E. Cook

Associate Director

Donna J. Donaldson

Chief, Visitor Services, National Capital Park Central

William R. Failor

Chief of Interpretation, National Capital Region

Cleve Pinnix

National Park Ranger, Mt. Rainier National Park

John H. "Jack" Davis

Associate Director

Charles “Butch” Farabee

Superintendent, Padre Island National Seashore

Bill Tanner

Regional Chief Ranger, Southwest Region

George E. Buckingham

Chief Ranger, Crater Lake National Park

P.J. Ryan

Historian, John Muir National Historical Site

Tim J. Setnicka

Superintendent of Channel Islands National Park

Don H. Castleberry

Director, Midwest Region

Owen Hoffman, Ph.D.

Park Ranger-Naturalist, Crater Lake National Park