

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives

COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND GOVERNMENT REFORM
2157 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20515-6143

MAJORITY (202) 225-5074
MINORITY (202) 225-5051
<http://oversight.house.gov>

July 28, 2016

The Honorable Jonathan B. Jarvis
Director
National Park Service
1849 C Street NW
Washington, D.C. 20240

Dear Director Jarvis:

On July 14, 2016, the Committee held a hearing to obtain facts and testimony related to our investigation of misconduct at the National Park Service, including the extent of sexual harassment throughout the Park Service. During the hearing, witnesses testified about recent reports by the Department of the Interior Office of Inspector General (OIG) detailing sexual harassment and misconduct at two facilities within the NPS.¹ The OIG found a pattern of sexual harassment and a hostile work environment that spanned over a decade at the Grand Canyon River District, as well as a pattern of sexual harassment at Canaveral National Seashore.² In response to these reports, DOI and NPS abolished the Grand Canyon River District and will implement a survey of all NPS employees to identify the extent of sexual harassment.³ To date, however, conversations with the OIG have revealed no final agency action had been taken against any senior-level personnel as a result of the OIG's findings

These are not new problems. A recent media report stated that NPS leadership became aware of "a problem with sexual harassment and discrimination against women" more than sixteen years ago.⁴ According to media reports, in 2000, NPS was required to administer a survey on sexual harassment and created the Women in Law Enforcement Task Force (WLET) as the result of a 1999 Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) settlement agreement that stemmed from complaints of harassment and gender bias in promotions at Grand Canyon

¹Hearing before the H. Comm. on Oversight and Gov't Reform: *Oversight of the National Park Service*, 114th Cong. (July 14, 2016).

²DOI OIG, "Report of Investigation Sexual Misconduct by Chief Ranger Canaveral National Seashore" (June 7, 2016) (Report No. OI-GA-16-0317-I).

³Letter from Jonathan Jarvis, Director, NPS, to the Hon. Niki Tsongas, Apr. 19, 2016, available at http://www.eenews.net/assets/2016/04/22/document_gw_05.pdf.

⁴Lyndsey Gilpin, *Investigations show extensive harassment history in Park Service*, HIGH COUNTRY NEWS, May 4, 2016, available at <https://www.hcn.org/articles/park-service-sexual-harassment-discrimination-women-law-enforcement>.

National Park.⁵ The task force reported its findings and recommendations to NPS's senior leadership.⁶ The task force found NPS was unable to retain women in law enforcement positions due to gender bias, sexual harassment and hostile work environments.⁷ Over half of female park rangers who responded to the survey experienced sexual harassment on the job and eighty percent knew someone who experienced harassment but did not report it for fear of retaliation.⁸

The Park Service has been aware of problems with sexual harassment since 2000, but is responding to these more recent incidents with yet another survey. This response is especially disappointing in light of the fact that some of the same officials handling the Park Service's response to these cases were involved in 2000. In a February 2016 response to the recent findings of sexual harassment in the Grand Canyon River District, Intermountain Regional Director Sue Masica wrote, "I have zero tolerance for the behavior described in the (Office of Inspector General) investigation."⁹ Director Masica was a member of the NPS National Leadership Council that received the findings of the WLET report in November 2000.¹⁰ The fact that the Park Service's cultural problems have persisted for at least sixteen years shows the Park Service's response to the task force's findings was ineffective, and fresh ideas are necessary.

The final WLET report recommended that NPS institute a training program and a hotline for reporting grievances to the EEO office, among other recommendations that were to be completed by October 2005.¹¹ The Park Service never implemented any of these recommendations. It should come as no surprise that NPS is still plagued by the same serious issues.

The report also identified a lack of accountability as a significant and recurring problem with respect to preventing and responding to sexual harassment at NPS. The report states, "Accountability has proven particularly elusive as it relates to a stated policy of zero tolerance of sexual harassment."¹² It is disturbing that some of the same officials who knew of these issues sixteen years ago allowed the same serious misconduct to occur again.

To help the Committee understand NPS's response to sexual harassment and misconduct, please provide the following documents and information:

⁵Lisa Rein, *As National Park Service confronts sexual harassment, this dysfunctional park is Exhibit A*, WASH. POST, Jul. 2, 2016.

⁶Lyndsey Gilpin, *Investigations show extensive harassment history in Park Service*, High Country News, May 4, 2016, <https://www.hcn.org/articles/park-service-sexual-harassment-discrimination-women-law-enforcement>.

⁷*Id.*

⁸*Id.*

⁹Memo from Sue Masica, Regional Dir. Intermountain Region, NPS to Dir. Jonathan Jarvis, NPS, Feb. 11, 2016, available at <https://assets.documentcloud.org/documents/2714799/GRCA-OIG-Response-FINAL-1.pdf>.

¹⁰Lyndsey Gilpin, *Investigations show extensive harassment history in Park Service*, High Country News, May 4, 2016, <https://www.hcn.org/articles/park-service-sexual-harassment-discrimination-women-law-enforcement>.

¹¹*Id.*

¹²"Women in Law Enforcement Task Force Report", Aug. 17, 2000, available at <https://www.documentcloud.org/documents/2823217-NPSWomeninLEreport.html>

1. The full and unredacted final report of the Women in Law Enforcement Task Force (WLET), and any related documents and communications referring or relating to implementation of the recommendations contained therein.
2. The full and unredacted January 7, 2000, National Park Service Female Law Enforcement Questionnaire and responses received to the Questionnaire as well as any related documents and communications.
3. The full and unredacted Equal Employment Opportunity settlement agreements between the National Park Service and former NPS employees: [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] and any related documents and communications referring or relating to the 1999 settlements.

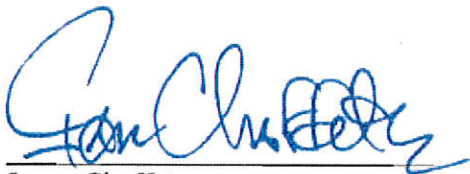
Please provide the requested information as soon as possible, but no later than by 5:00 p.m. on August 11, 2016.

The Committee on Oversight and Government Reform is the principal oversight committee of the House of Representatives and has broad authority to investigate "any matter" at "any time" under House Rule X.

When producing documents to the Committee, please deliver production sets to the Majority staff in room 2157 of the Rayburn House Office Building and the Minority staff in room 2471 Rayburn House Office Building. The Committee prefers, if possible, to receive all documents in electronic format. An attachment to this letter provides additional information about responding to the Committee's request.

Please contact Melissa Beaumont of the Committee Majority staff at (202) 225-5074 and Lucinda Lessley of the Minority staff at 202-225-5051 with any questions about this request. Thank you for your prompt attention to this matter.

Sincerely,



Jason Chaffetz
Chairman



Elijah E. Cummings
Ranking Member



Cynthia M. Lummis
Chairman
Subcommittee on the Interior



Brenda L. Lawrence
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on the Interior

Enclosure