

From: "Director, NPS" <nps_director@nps.gov>
Date: May 27, 2016 at 2:02:46 PM EDT
To: NPS All Employees <nps_all_employees@nps.gov>
Subject: An Apology and a Valuable Lesson to Share with All Employees
Memorandum

May 27, 2016

To: All National Park Service Employees

From: Director /s/ Jonathan B. Jarvis

Subject: An Apology and a Valuable Lesson to Share with All Employees

As employees of the National Park Service, we all have a responsibility to hold ourselves to the highest standards of ethical behavior every day, and we have an obligation to hold each other responsible for the public trust we enjoy. I made an error in judgment for which I want to apologize. I wrote a book to celebrate the National Park Service's Centennial without appropriate appreciation and regard for my responsibility to follow established processes, including consulting the Department of the Interior's Ethics Office, before it was published. I have been held accountable and I have learned a valuable lesson.

I wanted to write something, in my personal capacity, to inspire and engage more Americans in our national parks and share my great love and admiration for the amazing places you protect and promote each day. I directed that any book proceeds benefit the NPS through Eastern National and the National Park Foundation. I will receive no personal benefit from the sales of the book and I have donated the copyright to the National Park Foundation.

However, I did not submit my book for review by the Department, and specifically the Ethics Office, before it was published in order to obtain guidance on how to proceed in accordance with laws, policies, and regulations. Moreover, I failed to initially understand and accept my mistake. That was wrong. I regret that I did not seek guidance on the appropriate path forward to publish this book. Again, I have learned a valuable lesson. It is important that each and every National Park Service employee, including me, understand, remember, and adhere to our ethics training and requirements. I write this note as a reminder to all of us to think actively about consulting with appropriate ethics officials or attorneys in the Solicitor's Office before taking actions that could have ethical or legal implications.

As a result of my actions, which were found to violate ethics standards, I received a formal reprimand and I am receiving, and actively participating in, monthly ethics training. Additionally, my duties as the National Park Service's ethics officer were removed. Deputy Assistant Secretary Karen Hyun in the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Fish and Wildlife and Parks has replaced me in that role through the end of the Administration. We all should support her and all of the other hard working ethics officials who are here to assist us.

I understand if you are disappointed in my actions in this situation, and for good reason. I am sorry that I let you down. I have also apologized to the Secretary. I hope that my error serves as a reminder of the importance of seeking ethics guidance, and that we are all responsible and accountable for upholding a high standard of ethical behavior.