



Written by [Warren Mass](#) on December 4, 2019

## Trump Sending National Park Service Rangers to Assist Border Patrol

The Trump administration has ordered National Park Service (NPS) rangers from around the country to travel to the U.S.-Mexican border to help fight illegal immigration and drug traffickers. Though this policy is not new, having been started last year, a recent investigative report from *USA Today* brought it to the forefront of the news again.



The operation, known as the Department of Interior Border Support Surge, began as a pilot program in May 2018.

This was done by the Trump administration to increase resources for border enforcement at a time when House Democrats have refused to approve the \$5 billion that Trump asked for to fund a wall along the U.S.-Mexico border. *USA Today* reported that the president and his staff are using existing resources since Congress has refused to fund the president's proposed plan, which seeks an increase in the number of immigration enforcement officials as well as border-wall construction.

Customs and Border Protection Acting Commissioner Mark Morgan praised the law-enforcement surge during a media briefing November 14, saying his agency "has taken action," absent "a single piece of meaningful legislation" from Congress on border security.

Administration officials said that the rangers and other officers have given valuable assistance to Border Patrol agents facing a steady stream of migrants trying to enter the United States.

Park Service rangers from the Great Smoky Mountains National Park in North Carolina, Wrangell-St. Elias National Park in Alaska, the National Mall in Washington, D.C., Zion National Park in Utah, and other locations will temporarily be relocated to Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument in Arizona on the border with the Mexican state of Sonora, as well as Big Bend National Park in West Texas, also bordering Mexico. The park rangers will work with U.S. Border Patrol agents. Park officials say they've been told they should continue sending park rangers to the border through September 2020.

"The National Park Service continues to support our federal partners by deploying law enforcement personnel to Department of the Interior managed lands along the southern border," an NPS spokesperson told Britain's *Guardian*. "Due to operational security, we will not be disclosing any additional information about our officers assisting in the operations."

Andrew Fitzgerald, deputy chief ranger at Zion national park, confirmed to the *Guardian* that they would be sending three rangers to the border by the end of the year for three-week rotations.

The large number of illegal migrants crossing our southern border has strained the resources of our border enforcement agencies. [The New American reported on November 15](#) that border agents apprehended 45,250 illegal immigrants during the month of October.



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A National Park Service news release on February 12, 2018 noted that U.S. Park Rangers and Special Agents of the National Park Service Investigative Services Branch (ISB) were working closely with interagency partners to reduce the impact of cross-border illegal activity. The release named a successful operation in the Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument where U.S. Park Rangers were assisted by agents from the U.S. Border Patrol, the DEA, and the Pima County, Arizona, Sheriff's Department.



Image: [Daniel Schwen / Wikimedia Commons](#)

*Warren Mass has served The New American since its launch in 1985 in several capacities, including marketing, editing, and writing. Since retiring from the staff several years ago, he has been a regular contributor to the magazine. Warren writes from Texas and can be reached at [wmass@thenewamerican.com](mailto:wmass@thenewamerican.com).*

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