

United States Senate

May 24, 2024

Charles F. "Chuck" Sams III
Director
National Park Service
1849 C Street NW
Washington, DC 20240

Director Sams,

On the eve of Memorial Day weekend, a matter of very significant concern has come to my attention and I am requesting your immediate response.

As you know, a major construction project is underway in the Denali National Park and Preserve to build a bridge at mile 45 of the Park Road, an area known as Pretty Rocks. One of the vehicles involved in the construction had a 3 x 5 foot American flag affixed to it while working on this project. For reasons that remain unclear, someone at the National Park Service (NPS) caused the construction crew to remove the American flag from the vehicle.

This is an outrage—particularly in the lead-up to our most solemn national holiday, Memorial Day, a time when Americans come together to honor those that gave their lives in service to our nation, while wearing our country's flag. The American flag, especially on Memorial Day weekend, should be celebrated, not censored by federal government employees.

There is no federal regulation or law that I can conceive of that would ban the flying of the American flag on public land – particularly in a national park the principal purpose of which is the enjoyment of American citizens.

I request that you immediately investigate this incident to figure out exactly what transpired, including whether there was a requirement made by the National Park Service's contract that prohibited the contractor's employees from flying the American flag, and the circumstances in which this incident was handled and by whom. I also request you outline what concrete steps—be they increased training, clearer guidelines, updating policies—the NPS will take to ensure an incident like this does not happen again in American national parks.

It is absurd and defies all logic that a federal contractor, working on a project which is funded by American taxpayers, in a National Park – the week before Memorial Day – is prohibited from flying the American flag. I cannot conceive of a federal law or regulation that mandates this.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Dan Sullivan". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping tail on the "n" of Sullivan.

Dan Sullivan
United States Senator

