

# **Summary: Violations of Government Charge Card and Contracting Rules by NPS Employee**

**Report Date: October 3, 2017**

OIG investigated allegations that a National Park Service (NPS) employee who served as an administrative officer for several parks directed the misuse of government charge cards. In addition, we investigated alleged conflicts of interest related to the employee's use of contractors.

We found numerous examples of prohibited split purchasing directed by the employee to avoid exceeding the spending limits of government charge cards, and identified charge card purchases that should have been made through competitive contracting procedures. Both of these findings were in violation of the Federal Acquisition Regulation as well as Department and NPS policies.

The employee also excessively directed the use of an online payment system, which afforded less protections than traditional charge card purchases. The transactions included two occasions when it was used to pay the wages of two IT contract workers.

In an appearance of a conflict of interest, we found that the employee hired a water testing vendor that subcontracted some of the park water testing to a company owned by the employee's family and in which the employee himself had a financial interest. We did not find that the employee specifically requested the vendor use his family's company. Lastly, we found that the employee created the appearance of preferential treatment and using his official position for private gain by hiring park contractors to conduct personal work on his home and rental properties.

This is a summary of an investigative report that we issued to the Director of NPS for any action deemed appropriate.

