

The Protection Ranger



The Newsletter of the U.S. Park Rangers Lodge, Fraternal Order of Police
www.RangerFOP.com

Vol. XIV • No. 1 • 2003

Executive Director's Message

In this issue are several letters the Lodge has written to try and right things within the NPS. We are not alone: NAPA, the IACP and, most recently and thoroughly, the Inspector General of the Department of the Interior have lashed out against how upper management mismanages the agency's law enforcement program. We seem to be making headway, albeit on the lives of four fine rangers and the circumscribed careers of many others who have boldly stood up for what is right.

The message here is what we have always emphasized: park rangers are respected for the work we do. As field rangers, we **can** influence issues that affect our safety and our ability to protect our parks. The Ranger Lodge continues to be the sole advocate for law enforcement field rangers. You, as members, know and appreciate this. We call upon our members to spread the word to rangers who are not members.

Inside This Issue:

Letter to Dep. Director Murphy	2
Senator Grassley Letter	2
New York Times NPS Article	4
FLRA Protection	4
Conflict in Chain of Command	5
Wall Street Journal Letter	5

Not only is there strength in numbers, but the Lodge benefits tremendously from the influx of new ideas, expertise and opinions.

The Lodge has now received information that a long-time ranger in the Great Smokies has been threatened, intimidated, and physically assaulted by a commissioned manager there.

You can help by actively recruiting your friends and colleagues. Get them to join the Lodge. Leave a copy of *The Protection Ranger* in the office or coffee room so they can see what we've accomplished and what we have yet to do. Get involved in the issues we address by joining the discussion groups on the Lodge discussion web site (www.RangerFOP.com) or by writing letters and being available to talk to reporters or Congressional staff when we need field contacts.

We appreciate the incredible efforts our membership has shown over the years to improve our parks. We hope you'll continue this by staying active and recruiting others in our collective task.

Be prepared to continue to fight in the venue of public opinion as rangers before you have done. It will probably come down to that. The time may come to put your knowledge of corruption and unethical behavior before the forum of public opinion

Ranger Assaulted in the Smokies

Not only are National Park rangers sustaining more assaults (up to 40% more!) from the public than any other agency, the Lodge has now received information that a long-time ranger in the Great Smokies has been threatened, intimidated and physically assaulted by a **commissioned manager** there. In addition, the event was witnessed.

The information the Lodge has received concerning the allegations are alarming. Even more startling, we have learned that management of Great Smoky Mountains National Park has declined to investigate the report by the ranger. Not only are these allegations a criminal offense under both state and federal law that require an investigation and provide due process and civil process of law, they are also a gross violation of the Department of Interior Workplace Violence Policy that requires an immediate investigation.

This is a perfect example of needed line authority and policies for internal and impartial investigations to eliminate the ongoing cronyism of management and the continued abuse of National Park rangers. This is definitely stepping over the line. Rangers should not have to be faced with this type of abuse by the public and most especially not by the management of the National Park Service.

The Lodge has prepared a letter with documentation of the allegations and has appealed to the Director of the National Park Service for an immediate investigation and inquiry. There are two issues to investigate:

1. Why was this ranger intimidated, threatened and assaulted?
2. Why were laws, regulations and policies ignored by management and no investigation conducted into a report of serious allegations of criminal and abusive behavior?

This is very disturbing and must be investigated and immediate action taken. Lodge members who have been intimidated and threatened by managers in the performance of their law enforcement duties or know of other rangers that have been threatened are encouraged to contact the us immediately.

Lodge to Deputy Director: Reforms Needed

Dear Mr. Murphy:

Best wishes for a wonderful Thanksgiving holiday. I know that this year the field is thankful for your success in establishing a field training program. This has been a critical need for so many years, and to see it approved this year is very good news. We are also pleased with your last comments that the Regional Law Enforcement Specialist positions will evolve back into the ranger ranks.

Funding for these positions was originally taken from ranger ONPS money – volunteered by the ranger ranks to get much needed USPP experience. With the NAPA report and IACP report both recommending that these positions be returned to the rangers, we hope that this can be accomplished in a timely manner. As we have said to our USPP colleagues, we do not want this change to result in a loss to the USPP, however.

As you may know, in the last few weeks we've written the Director suggesting that the NLC be redesigned to put Regional Directors more in an operations capacity rather than in policy development. We do not believe that it benefits the Service to give the Regional Directors such a tremendously powerful role in government operations. They are effectively able to thwart many of the Director's efforts and Congressional mandates due to the current imbalanced power structure. We believe that removing the Regional Directors from the NLC and evolving their positions into regional managers responsible for implementing the Director's policies will benefit the Service and make it better able to change to meet the challenges of the future. We have run this idea through a variety of people, from Superintendents to Chief Rangers, and have found solid acceptance of the idea. We hope that you will consider it.

We also have been in contact with the Inspector General's office on several matters. The most serious overall problem in internal affairs seems to be a tolerance for corrupt practices. The quality of investigations appears to be high, but the Service's willingness to tolerate dishonesty, fraud, and abuse of government property among its highest managers defeats the purpose of the investigations. Quite often the NPS Morning Report reports on the fee collector who is fired for stealing a few hundred dollars in entrance fees. Yet when an investigation of a top manager finds lies in a job application, or misuse of government property, nothing is done, and nothing is heard. We would like to see the Service develop higher standards for its leaders, especially since the Service insists on keeping them in charge of supervising law enforcement programs and budgets.

In the same spirit, a surprising amount of internal problems occur from hiring back the same problem personnel that have been released from other assignments. From the seasonal NPS trail worker who threatened to kill an NPS ranger with an assault weapon he brought to work and was re-hired in the same region, to employees who misuse computer equipment to view pornography and who use the seasonal employment system to

get jobs at other parks – the lack of a central database on seasonal employees puts staff and the Service at risk. We hope that you would consider some sort of centralized employee watch list to prevent these problem employees from using the seasonal hiring system to move their problems to different parts of the country.

Another item we wish to bring to your attention is the need for an update to RM-9. RM-9 was drafted to be a dynamic document, with sections changing and being updated regularly. Since it was adopted, it hasn't been touched. We urge you to see that in 2003 a needs assessment has been completed and any urgent changes be implemented. I hope that we can continue to work together, and that next year sees solid accomplishments in our common journey.

Sincerely,

Randall Kendrick
Executive Director
US Park Rangers Lodge

Senator Grassley Pushes for Reforms in NPS

November 12, 2002
The Honorable Chuck Grassley
United States Senate
135 Hart Senate Building
Washington, D.C. 20510-1501

Dear Senator Grassley:

On behalf of the members of the Rangers Lodge of Fraternal Order of Police (FOP), I want to thank you for your extraordinary efforts to affect critical reforms to the law enforcement program of the National Park Service (NPS).

Unfortunately, as you know, the management of the National Park Service continues to offer determined resistance to any meaningful implementation of reforms recently directed by the Department of the Interior (DOI), as first recommended by the DOI Office of the Inspector General

in their January 2002 report, *A Disquieting State of Disorder*. The culture of the NPS, as perpetuated by its National Leadership Council and the many park superintendents and other managers who are a part of that fraternity, is simply too vested in the current structure that affords them nearly complete autonomy to arbitrarily manipulate programs and funding, and to avoid any meaningful form of accountability.

Therefore, we respectfully request your support and action to initiate hearings before the Senate Judiciary Committee's Subcommittee on Crime and Drugs, designed to meticulously examine not only the Service's law enforcement program, but its overall structure and organization, that has for decades been so successful in avoiding accountability and behaving with disgraceful autonomy through the complete absence of a credible internal system of checks and balances.

Broad categories of topics that we believe warrant particular examination by the subcommittee include:

1. The systematic obstruction of critical law enforcement program reforms directed by the Secretary's Office, including the establishment of a centralized and credible internal affairs program and protected systems for reporting misconduct.
2. The widespread practice of diverting appropriations targeted for NPS law enforcement activities and programs, to fund the pet projects of local and regional managers. This same practice is replicated in other critical program areas, compromising the overall protection of park visitors and resources.
3. Ongoing efforts by members of the Service's National Leadership Council as well as area managers to lobby members of the House Subcommittee on Interior Agencies and other Congressional oversight committees. Of additional concern is the widespread practice of expending operational funds and assigning park staff (including law enforcement personnel diverted

from their public safety responsibilities) to "wine and dine," chauffeur, and attend to members of the media, celebrities and other powerful public figures in an attempt to affect legislation, gain influence, and acquire funding and "donations" for "discretionary funds" and other pet projects sponsored by local and regional managers.

The culture of the NPS ... is simply too vested in the current structure that affords them nearly complete autonomy, and avoids any meaningful form of accountability.

4. The widespread and accepted management practice of reprisal against agency whistleblowers, designed to protect Agency-ingratiated managers, discourage reports of management misconduct, and simultaneously drive whistleblowers into isolation or out of the agency. Reliable information has come to us that nowhere is this practice more evident than within the Service's Intermountain Region. At both Yellowstone and Grand Canyon National Parks, whistleblowers have been openly targeted for harassment and intimidation. We understand that senior managers, both within the regional office (Regional Director Karen Wade and former Deputy Regional Director – now Colorado State Director – Ron Everhart), as well as at these parks (Superintendent Suzanne Lewis, and Superintendent Joe Alston, respectively) have all demonstrated a disregard for programmatic integrity and honest management practices, and should be held accountable.
5. The widespread management practice of affording "protection" to loyal managers who engage in misconduct. A clear record exists within the Agency of actually creating new positions for managers who screw up, and even promoting

the party loyal who find themselves compromised as a result of detected misconduct and criminal activity. Once again, these practices have recently been most evident within the Intermountain Region (e.g. Colorado State Director, Bandelier NM Asst. Supt., etc.). Even after retirement, many of these same individuals reap benefits and maintain influence over the Agency through receipt of lucrative contracts as paid agency consultants. Meanwhile, entirely separate standards and practices exist for those employees who do not enjoy a close relationship with park superintendents and members of the National Leadership Council.

As you may already know, a huge body of documentation exists and has been turned over to the Office of the Inspector General, validating the need for sweeping reforms to the NPS management structure, and particularly to the management of the Service's law enforcement program.

This documentation is referenced within the report, *A Disquieting State of Disorder*, and was the basis of many of the recommendations made by the Inspector General. We urge your staff to review those materials and utilize them as a starting point for a comprehensive public examination by the Judiciary Committee into a longstanding pattern of misconduct, obstruction of justice, and other unethical and even criminal conduct by senior NPS managers empowered to oversee what should be one of the nation's premier law enforcement programs. Included within the volumes of materials available for review at the Office of the Inspector General are reports and records documenting:

- ▶ A pattern of management obstruction of criminal investigations.
- ▶ A pattern of management obstruction and manipulation of internal investigations and program audits, including cases referred back to the NPS from the OIG for "self investigation."

- ▶ A pattern of management obstruction of investigations into NPS violation of environmental laws and standards.
- ▶ A pattern of management obstruction of law enforcement response to incidents of threatened workplace violence.
- ▶ A pattern of management misuse of government equipment and funds, including violation of the Anti-Deficiency Act.
- ▶ The illegal use of electronic eavesdropping equipment, scripted “white papers” and press releases, prohibited personnel practices, manipulation of background investigations and adjudications, and other tactics for political purposes.
- ▶ A pattern of resistance and non-support for national initiatives responding to the September 11 attacks and related Homeland Security Efforts.
- ▶ A pattern of retention (and promotion) of park and program managers suspected and/or convicted of criminal offenses such as child sexual abuse, voyeurism, falsification of official records and reports, illegal drug use, sexual harassment, public intoxication while on duty, etc.

This is only a partial list of the broad categories of issues and activities that fatally compromise the integrity of the NPS law enforcement program, and of the Service itself. The incidents that are documented span a period of nearly thirty years, wherein the senior management of the NPS has perfected this management style into an art form, and has remained immune to scrutiny or accountability, and absolutely no change in management practices and implementation of safeguards has occurred. Meanwhile, the vast majority of managers responsible for these practices and activities have never been held accountable. Many remain in power to this day in even more senior roles and positions than when their transgressions were detected, all the more successful and powerful because of the sheer audacity exhibited in their climb to power.

Senator Grassley, the National Park Service is blessed with a workforce that is remarkably ethical and dedicated to fulfilling their duties to the highest professional standards. This same workforce is also remarkably patient and resilient. However, there are limits to the patience and resilience that can be asked of any group of people, and the commissioned rangers and Special Agents of the National Park Service have very nearly reached their limit of endurance for the management structure under which they must work.

We urge you to intervene on their behalf, convene hearings into these issues, and help introduce a modicum of integrity back into the NPS by holding managers accountable for their actions. Also attached to this letter, for your information, is separate correspondence directed to NPS Director Fran Mainella, calling for investigation and appropriate disciplinary action in response to activities within the Intermountain Region.

Thank you for your time, support, and consideration.

Sincerely,

Randal Kendrick
 Executive Director
 U.S. Park Rangers Lodge
 Fraternal Order of Police

The New York Times
Interior Department
Struggles to Upgrade Its
Police Forces
 By Joel Brinkley

WASHINGTON, Nov. 3

The Statue of Liberty, the Washington Monument, the Hoover Dam and half of the Alaska pipeline are all protected against terrorist attack and other threats by police forces that auditors have long described as ill trained, poorly managed, dysfunctional and, in some instances, corrupt. These forces are in the Department of the Interior, which has the third-largest law enforcement contingent in the federal government.

This summer, the department moved to address the problems after decades of damning reports. One of the most recent, a government audit published early this year, said that the department's police forces were so badly managed that it was unable to provide even “the number and location of law enforcement personnel that could assist” after the Sept. 11 attacks. The department has more than 4,300 officers in seven agencies, including the United States Park Police, the National Park Service and the Bureau of Land Management. They are responsible for protecting most of the nation's historic icons, like Mount Rushmore and the Washington Monument, some of which have been the target of terrorist threats in the last year. But few of the agencies have intelligence or terrorism offices, or the ability to gather crime and enforcement statistics. In July, Interior Secretary Gale A. Norton, a former Colorado state attorney general, directed an internal panel to assess the problems once again and proposed a list of law enforcement reforms. She also appointed Larry R. Parkinson, a former senior F.B.I. official, to a new position, director of law enforcement and security, to put the proposals into effect.

Mr. Parkinson's top priority, he said in an interview, is to ensure that the agencies take on domestic security responsibilities. His long-term goal is to see “that anyone with law enforcement authority is well trained, well supervised and understands law enforcement.” But Mr. Parkinson, who has been in office only three months, has a skeletal staff and meager resources, and his ability to clean up the problems remains uncertain – particularly in the face of internal resistance. Donald W. Murphy, deputy director of the Park Service, said that when he tried this year to appoint a manager in charge of law enforcement, “We were fought tooth and nail to prevent that from happening.” In a letter to Secretary Norton last month, Senator Charles E. Grassley, the Iowa Republican, said he had learned that “high-level managers” in the police forces were trying to “thwart your reform efforts” and in some cases were shirking their domestic security responsibilities.

Most of the territory the department must protect is uninhabited wilderness in national parks, preserves and other lands controlled by the federal government. But among the department's charges are nearly all of the major federal monuments, as well as the Hoover Dam in Nevada, the Grand Coulee Dam in Washington and almost 350 other dams. Officials view some of these sites as ideal targets for terrorists – particularly the dams. “Taking out a dam is not an insignificant act,” said Stephen Flynn, executive director of the panel that issued a report on domestic security, sponsored by the Council on Foreign Relations, last month. “But the destructive impact is tremendous, with cascading consequences on the energy side,” for hydroelectric dams and “of course for people downstream.”

The Interior Department's Bureau of Reclamation, responsible for dam security, has only 13 officers. Until last year they had no law enforcement authority. After Sept. 11, Congress gave the bureau that authority. Now, a spokesman said, it contracts dam security out to other Interior Department forces or local police.

The Park Police is the nation's oldest uniformed law enforcement agency. The force originated in George Washington's presidency, when he created park watchmen to patrol the Capitol grounds. Since the early 1970's, the Park Police and the department's other police agencies have been the subject of highly critical auditors' reports, describing the forces as unsupervised, underperforming and, until this year, recalcitrant in the face of decades of bitter criticism. In defense, the department notes that officers in some of the agencies have other responsibilities besides policing; Fish and Wildlife Service officers, for example, are also endangered species specialists.

Still, last year Congress ordered yet another study, by the National Academy of Public Administration, an independent organization chartered to work with government agencies to improve their efficiency. That report concluded that the police force “faces difficulties” in “management,

leadership, accountability and communications.” Its conclusion echoed others in reports by the International Association of Chiefs of Police in 2000 and the consulting firm Booz Allen Hamilton the same year. The police chiefs' 115-page report called “the total absence of field training” a “glaring deficiency” and noted that in recent years the Park Service had been able to solve only about 14 percent of crimes – about half the national average.

Donald W. Murphy, deputy director of the Park Service, said that when he tried this year to appoint a manager in charge of law enforcement, “We were fought tooth and nail to prevent that from happening.”

The National Academy of Public Administration's report was the one that caught Secretary Norton's eye. She asked the department's inspector general to carry out his own study. When it was completed early this year, it found “a disquieting state of disorder in the structure and operation of law enforcement throughout the department.”

In May, 15 United States attorneys met with the inspector general and several Interior Department officials to say they were having trouble prosecuting cases brought by department officers because of deficiencies in management. The inspector general's report found that the police agencies were receiving little or no direction from the department. More than half of the agencies' supervisors had no law enforcement training or experience, the report said, and while the department offered training, there was little incentive to take it and no penalty for choosing not to. The report says special agents told of “countless instances in which they were precluded, by their non law enforcement managers, from pursuing potentially serious crimes,” indicating possible “cover-up of potential criminal conduct.”

It also spoke of cronyism in hiring. Several of the agencies have no intelligence, terrorism or domestic security offices, according to the report. Several have no internal affairs units. They have no capability to gather crime and enforcement statistics, and “therefore they cannot be held accountable for the crime rate, investigative clearance or response to calls for service.” Some of the services have set no “goals or measures for their law enforcement components whatsoever,” the report says.

Some officers reported that they never filed reports on their police work because, as one told the auditors, “nobody ever asked for them.” The National Park Service, the report concluded, “suffers from extreme organizational dysfunction.” With the appointment of Mr. Parkinson, the police forces do now at least have leadership at headquarters. Since taking office July 22, Mr. Parkinson said, his top priority has been to ensure that the agencies take on domestic security responsibilities. Training for that, he acknowledged, has been “fairly ad hoc.” But, he added, “They did step up and agree to take this on.”

Mr. Parkinson now has the authority to redeploy officers between agencies, something that could not be done before – but only if the secretary declares an emergency. His office, he said, remains “extraordinarily leanly staffed.” About 10 people work there now, up from six last year. In the coming year, he said, he has authority to hire two or three more and to bring officers in from the field. A central mission, Mr. Parkinson said, is to implement the changes recommended by the secretary's internal panel in July, which generally mirror the inspector general's findings. Most of the changes are still in the planning stages.

FLRA Offers Protection for FOP Activities

I am a member of a collective bargaining unit in my park, although not a dues paying member of the union. However, I am a dues paying member

of the Ranger FOP Lodge. Recently, I had occasion to be involved in an Unfair Labor Practice (ULP) charge filed with the Federal Labor Relations Authority (FLRA) against the NPS in connection with a grievance that had been filed under the collective bargaining agreement. While the FLRA investigator was interviewing me in connection with the ULP investigation, I mentioned I was a member of the Ranger FOP Lodge. I was advised by the investigator that my actions on behalf of the FOP Lodge were considered protected activities by the FLRA for the purposes of the ULP, even if the Lodge was not an official bargaining unit. Lodge members who are active on behalf of the Lodge and suffer discriminatory treatment by the agency management as a result of those activities should explore this avenue of redress.

The FLRA website (www.flra.gov) offers some good advice on how to file Unfair Labor Practice charges, along with links to prohibited practices enumerated in 5 USC 7116. As with any government agency, speaking with the agency personnel can sometimes be difficult. I was fortunate to get in touch with an excellent and extremely helpful attorney with the FLRA when I first contacted them. We experienced some difficulty with an office manager when we first filed the ULP charge, but once it got in the investigator's hands, we found the service excellent.

Money Flows Both Ways

There has been considerable controversy that the ranger division cannot afford the money it would take to place park rangers in the regional offices as the LE specialist replacing the park police. What the NPS has conveniently forgotten is that the money originally came from ONPS funds years ago: In other words, ranger money, or at least, ONPS money, has been funding the park police in these positions since it was transferred to their organization. The Ranger Lodge supports a transition to qualified park rangers into these positions. Our agreement with the USPP union of the FOP supports

rangers eventually moving into these jobs. Now that we all have been reminded where the funding originally came from, that barrier should be eliminated as a viable excuse. Money flows both ways.

Another Reason for LE Chain of Command

The husband of Statue of Liberty superintendent Diane Dayson was known by Park Police officers to NOT possess a valid operator's permit. Park Police observed him driving with his wife as a passenger. He was then ordered to stop via emergency lights. The gentlemen refused to stop, continuing on his way until he reached his house, which is owned by the National Park Service. When approached by police, the driver was uncooperative and a struggle ensued in which the park policeman suffered minor injuries.

Other policemen were brought to the scene to control the violent behavior of the suspect. Superintendent Dayson was described as trying to interfere with the officer's apprehension of the suspect and made comments alluding to the fact that the officer "worked" for her and should obey her command to desist with the law enforcement action.

As commissioned park rangers, we want to make two points:

1. We entirely support our brother and sister officers of the US Park Police.
2. We know that if park rangers were involved in making the arrest, we would have been threatened with dismissal or termination because law enforcement park rangers are supervised by non-commissioned managers.

The US Park Police have a professional chain of command, with law enforcement officers from top to bottom. Park rangers, on the other hand – who are as fully trained and armed with legislative authority as the USPP – must ultimately report to managers who usually have no training or experience in law enforcement.

There is huge potential for conflict in such situations: non-law enforcement managers are able to curtail and derail law enforcement investigations – often for their own unethical and venal gains. We as an organization don't know how the arrest at the Statue of Liberty will play out. We do know this: the park police officers involved are free from managerial pressure because they, like virtually all other US law enforcement agencies, have professional line authority plus a separate budget. Park rangers, virtually alone, do not. If rangers had been involved in this incident there would be a likelihood of suspension, forced transfers or outright firing.

Park managers oppose line authority for ranger law enforcement so they can get away with intolerable behavior because they know they control the law enforcement officers in the national parks. This practice must be ended.

Two Letters to the Wall Street Journal

Mr. Fialka,

It is my understanding you are preparing an article for the Wall Street Journal. I would like to comment on "non-law enforcement" folks who are in command of law enforcement officers. I worked 14 years as a park ranger (law enforcement officer for the National Park Service). During this time I worked at Assateague Island National Seashore, Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area, and Big Bend National Park. My direct supervisors were law enforcement officers, but the person in charge was always a person without any law enforcement experience. I give you this information to show I have spent time in parks and feel I can give you an honest opinion.

At this time I work for an agency, the United States Forest Service, that has a chain of command with only law enforcement officers as supervisors. I am working as a Patrol Captain on the Tongass National Forest, for last 15

months, supervising only law enforcement officers. My supervisor and 2 levels above him are experienced law enforcement officers.

During the time I worked for the National Park Service I had people who were in charge tell me to not enforce laws. The Superintendent of Big Bend National Park said: "You will permit illegal immigrants to enter the United States." At this time I was a District Ranger supervising two law enforcement officers. I was watching illegal aliens enter freely into the United States and not permitted to do anything about it. While he did not directly supervise me, he controlled the budget, making it impossible to disregard his wishes.

I left the National Park Service and went to an agency with experienced law enforcement officers as supervisors. I watched the budgets for the law enforcement programs go down the drain to the point where there is not equipment and personnel to effectively protect the national parks.

Anyone can look at the number of assaults and murders occurring to these rangers trying to protect the resources and see it is not safe to work as a law enforcement officer in some of our National Parks.

In order for things to change the Director must take charge and get non-law enforcement personnel away from supervising, or controlling the budget of, the law enforcement programs within the National Park Service before more people are hurt or killed!

If you would like to discuss any issues concerning protecting your resources in the National Park Service or the US Forest Service feel free to contact me.

Richard R. Shreffler

###

Mr. Fialka,

I am writing at the request of Randall Kendrick. I have been a law enforcement ranger for a little over ten years. During that time I have

consistently seen the best and brightest leave the job due to the working conditions that are created by the anti-law enforcement culture of agency management. Throughout my career I have witnessed conditions that have suggested that law enforcement is bad and that the real problem is the rangers reporting the crimes rather than the crimes themselves. These conditions and attitudes would never be allowed by voters and constituents in a municipality. However, cultural and natural resources *do not vote*, therefore park management acts as if they are accountable to no one.

***At one time the park that I
work at had an average of
more than 12 law
enforcement rangers
assigned to a day tour
during summer weekends.
Now the entire staff to cover
24/7 is less than 11.***

The attitude of management regarding the field ranger is "you can be replaced" since there are more applicants then funded positions. This is a stark contrast to the experience of a friend of mine who left the NPS after 13 years. During his orientation to his new agency the management there stressed how valuable the newly hired officers are and how seriously the agency viewed the financial commitment it had made in the hiring and processing of the new officers.

The NPS does not share this view, despite spending tens of thousands of dollars on hiring and training new rangers, after the background investigation, medical, basic training, in-service training, etc. In fact the NPS is not even concerned with retaining mid-career rangers who have the training and experience and are the best to protect the public and the park system resources. The NPS consistently tries to downplay the need for law enforcement, the seriousness of the crimes that occur in the national park system, and the ranger as a law enforcement professional. The agencies continued this even though three rangers were murdered since 1990.

I invite you to check the following website: The Officer Down Memorial Page, where you will be able to find details regarding NPS line of duty deaths. These murders were preventable, the information has been available to the NPS since at least the 1970s, when the IACP did its first study of NPS law enforcement.

I have personally experienced resources being cut year after year, having fewer rangers each year with visitation increasing every year as management has found ways to bring more people into parks (remember most of these people pay fees to enter or use parks), and expand park operations increasing operating facilities and hours. Fewer rangers are available to patrol or to answer calls for service, much less be proactive. At one time the park that I work at had an average of more than 12 law enforcement rangers assigned to a day tour during summer weekends. Now the **entire staff** to cover 24/7 is less than 11.

During the highwater mark rangers conducted marine patrol, mounted patrol, and plain clothes operations, in addition to regular road patrol, thereby being accessible to the public and having the ability to patrol areas of the park that road patrols cannot. This has been lost and now the on-duty rangers are tied to the car in order to answer calls for service leaving many areas of the park without any attention by law enforcement personnel. Especially alarming is that many of the areas that we are no longer able to routinely patrol are among those identified as having potential for terrorist activity, either as a target or as launch site for a strike against adjacent targets.

The law enforcement positions have been raided, often being removed from law enforcement ranks by non-law enforcement managers and placed in management, maintenance, and professional services positions by park superintendents. These position often have little or no public contact and are office jobs. Raiding such as this is routine among non-law enforcement management types who view law enforcement funds as a slush fund to pursue pet projects, including funding

their own travel accounts. Concerned professionals who try to do the right thing are labeled as troublemakers and are denied training and promotion. Management obstruction of investigations and law enforcement action is rampant. Despite the overwhelming evidence in the studies of NPS law enforcement such as the OIG report, the IACP report the NPS is fighting reform tooth and nail like a spoiled child. The basis of this fight is despot managers who are afraid to lose some of their power and autonomy, and who may now have to face being accountable for their actions.

Thank you for your interest, the national park system and the public need attention brought to this system of mismanagement, abuse and obstruction. The NPS has demonstrated that it will not reform itself, therefore external forces must be made aware of the dangers that exist to the employees, the public and the nation's resources so that the NPS is made to reform.

Pete Tortorell
President
FOP US Park Rangers Lodge

Lodge to Director: Pay Attention

November 12, 2002
Dear Director Mainella:

On behalf of the members of the U.S. Park Rangers Lodge of the Fraternal Order of Police (FOP) I am obliged to bring to your attention, and request an immediate investigation, to a series of troubling incidents and actions occurring at the direction of senior managers within the National Park Service's Intermountain Region.

The recent efforts at Yellowstone National Park to silence and punish whistleblower Robert Jackson violate both the spirit of open and honest government, as well as a settlement previously negotiated by the Park Service to resolve the complaint Jackson filed with the Office of Special Counsel. As you know, Ranger Jackson

first exposed himself to reprisal when he attempted to alert park managers about the baiting of federally listed species and related poaching problems in backcountry areas. The controversy and public attention this revelation subsequently drew resulted in serious embarrassment for park managers, who did not want to confront the issue or support an appropriate law enforcement response. As a consequence, Ranger Jackson was issued a "gag order," and was subsequently released from the seasonal position he had held for more than 30 years.

Ranger Jackson lodged a formal complaint of "whistleblower reprisal" with the Office of Special Counsel, and succeeded in securing a settlement, promising reinstatement of his position and cancellation of the gag order. It seems to us that neither Park Superintendent Suzanne Lewis, nor Regional Director Karen Wade has abided by this settlement. This apparent pattern of intimidation and harassment, as well as the failure of senior managers to respect and abide by the terms of a binding settlement demonstrates an apparent lack of integrity as well as lack of understanding and appreciation for basic citizen and employee rights.

In a similar vein, the preparation and public release of the August 2001 "Management Assistance Review - Final Report" on the Grand Canyon National Park (GRCA) Protection Program, undertaken in concert by Superintendent Joe Alston and [former] Deputy Regional Director [now Colorado State Director] Ron Everhart, is a prime example of the type of tactics too often employed within the Service to obstruct oversight, advance the management agenda, impede and diminish the Service's capacity to conduct fair and impartial criminal and internal investigations, and simultaneously target and persecute employees who attempt to speak up and report management misconduct. We believe that ethical breaches and corrupt tactics have been employed in preparing this Review and Report as revealed in another document, "The Reynolds Response" (August 13, 2002), now just beginning to quietly circulate throughout the Service. In that document, Death Valley National Park Superintendent

(and former GRCA Deputy Superintendent) J.T. Reynolds courageously exposes the ruthless political practices and tactics employed by Mr. Alston and Mr. Everhart in their efforts to orchestrate their "review" and craft a document that could be used to advance a pre-scripted agenda, and attack whistleblowers and "troublemakers."

Most disturbing among the revelations made within the Reynolds Response is the complete absence of safe channels within the Intermountain Region for the reporting of management misconduct, and the appearance of abuse of power exercised by Regional Director Karen Wade, [then] Deputy Regional Director Everhart, and Superintendent Alston. Also revealed, in a manner similar to that which is occurring at Yellowstone National Park, is management's complete failure to abide by the terms of negotiated settlements previously reached in response to employee grievances and complaints. A copy of the Reynolds Response is attached for your review. We believe you should find its revelations extremely troubling, yet symptomatic of practices employed by managers throughout the Service - the very managers you and your deputies are supposed to supervise.

Adding insult to injury, and directly related to the two incidents cited above, is the September 16, 2002 release by Intermountain Regional Director Karen Wade of her 19 rules governing "Employee Ethical Responsibilities and Conduct." Contained within that document, as "Rule #1," is an outright prohibition against off-duty, non-official, non-compensatory private speech and expression about topics relating to the National Park Service, without prior agency approval; a "Gag Order" policy, plain and simple. While we understand that preparation of an official retraction and "clarification" order is in the works (claiming that the original policy was only intended to remind employees about the prohibition against using government time, equipment, or titles when engaging in private expression), it is abundantly clear that this order was an attempt to muzzle employees and create a tool for managers to target and punish

whistleblowers and other employees who speak out about corrupt management practices and supervisory conduct.

Finally, we must bring to your attention the tragic series of failures both within the Intermountain Regional Office, as well as with the Office of Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument (ORPI) Superintendent Bill Wellman's apparent lack of concern for ranger safety.

Evidence of the degree of negligence exhibited by these managers is the recent murder of Ranger Kris Eggle, while on duty August 9, 2002. The Lodge is aware of an internal study conducted over three years ago, that formally recommended the placement of vehicle barricades along the ORPI border with Mexico to both protect park resources and reduce the incidence of violence within the park by preventing vehicular smuggling of people, drugs, and money through the remote regions of the park. Long ignored, that recommendation is only now being implemented, as a direct consequence of the recent murder of a ranger.

Equally damning are revelations about the law enforcement staffing levels tolerated at ORPI, after repeated warnings, contained within internal and interagency reports, urging Regional and Park managers to increase staffing to provide for adequate law enforcement response and backup within the park. Again, action to increase ORPI's ranger force was taken only after Ranger Eggle's murder; an inexcusable catalyst for such an increase. We have also recently learned that funds that had already been authorized and provided to the park to increase the number of NPS law enforcement personnel assigned to ORPI were diverted from their intended purpose, and used to staff positions and projects elsewhere in the park.

Director Mainella, we hope that you find these incidents as outrageous and disturbing as we do. We call upon you to immediately secure the Secretary's assistance in conducting a completely independent and open investigation into every one of these issues. We call upon you to immediately intervene on behalf

of whistleblowers at both Yellowstone National Park and Grand Canyon National Park. Finally, we call upon you to hold the managers who are responsible for these acts and issues accountable through effective disciplinary measures, up to and including removal.

Please let me know if you require any additional information or assistance to proceed with a comprehensive response and investigation into these matters.

Sincerely,

Randall Kendrick
Executive Director
US Park Rangers Lodge

NYPD Memorial Bands to Benefit the Families of Slain Officers of 9-11

Tony Macri has about 20 NYPD 9-11 Memorial bracelets left. They are \$5 each and all proceeds go directly to the 9-11 survivors fund for slain NYPD officers. You get a blue metal bracelet with a missing NYPD officer's name on it.

Please help your fellow officers and buy a bracelet through Tony:
Tony Macri
PO Box 531
Sandy Hook, NJ 07732

Thanks,
Tony

Members: If you need an extra FOP car decal, call or write the Lodge.
RandallFOP@ls.net
800-407-8295

FOP Legal Defense Plan: Important Changes

Effective January 1, 2003, the premium for the FOP Legal Defense Plan will go up to \$197 for Lodge members. *For those who have money deducted from your payroll and sent to the lodge we urge you to cancel this deduction and pay for the policy yourself.* It has been a big hassle to have Hylant McLean notifying us when your premium is due. Now, with a new premium structure, it'll be impossible to keep the money straight. The Lodge will no longer be able to advance you your premium as we have in the past and catch up with the outlay, pay period by pay period. In essence, you are responsible for your insurance. Sorry, but Hylant Maclean has forced this on the Lodge. Make sure you tell the FOP Legal Defense Plan you are a member of VA60; that way you pay \$197 not \$215. Questions? contact the Lodge at randallfop@ls.net

Project Blue Light

OPS has sponsored – and officers of state, local and federal departments have picked up – the tradition of placing one blue candle in the window to remember fallen officers and to show support for officers still on the job. If you have a COPS decal, display it at work or in your home. Let's show our fellow officers they have our support and let's remember our fallen brothers and sisters by displaying the single blue candle this holiday season.

Lodge Website

Brother Duane Buck has built and maintains the Lodge website. We keep it updated with notices and links to other sites that we think are interesting and/or helpful to resource based law enforcement officers. Visit it often between issues of the Protection Ranger to keep current on things that affect you and your job. The address is www.rangerfop.com

Application for Membership

I, the undersigned, a full-time regularly employed law enforcement officer, do hereby make application for active membership in the U.S. Park Rangers Lodge, FOP. If my membership should be revoked or discontinued for any cause other than retirement while in good standing, I do hereby agree to return to the lodge my membership card and other material bearing the FOP emblem.

Name: _____

Signature: _____

Address: _____

City: _____

State: _____ Zip: _____

DOB: _____

Permanent Rangers: \$52/year

Seasonals and Retired Active Members: \$35/year
Associate (non-Commissioned) Membership (Newsletter only): \$35/year

Renewals: You do not need to send in this form to renew. Enclose a copy of your Commission (new members only).

Agency and Work Unit: _____

Mail to: FOP Lodge, POB 151, Fancy Gap, VA 24328
Phone: 1-800-407-8295 10am-10pm Eastern Time or email randallfop@jls.net



U.S. Park Rangers Lodge
Fraternal Order of Police
POB 151
Fancy Gap, VA 24328