



INTERNATIONAL RANGER FEDERATION NEWSLETTER

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Dear Colleague:

Greetings to you, friends and colleagues in parks and protected areas throughout the world, from the member associations of the International Ranger Federation (IRF). This is the first of a series of letters which we will be sending to you in our efforts to spread the word about the federation and to inform rangers in all lands about the first international ranger gathering, which will take place in Zakopane, Poland, in May of 1995. Since some of you may not yet have heard of IRF, however, it seems in order to begin with a brief history of the federation.

The federation was born when several members of England's Association of Countryside Rangers (ACR) began laying the groundwork for such an organization with their friends in the Scottish Countryside Ranger Association (SCRA) in the late 80s and early 90s. During a SCRA meeting near Loch Lomond in 1991, representatives from ACR, SCRA and the Association of National Park Rangers (ANPR) from the U.S. met and discussed the framework for IRF. A series of letters and faxes followed which culminated in an international accord which the presidents of the three associations signed at a meeting in Peak District National Park in England in July of 1992. Since that time, the IRF, under the chairmanship of England's Gordon Miller, has been working to bring other national ranger associations into IRF and planning the Zakopane conference. The statement of purpose found in the accord outlines the goals and intents of the federation:

"The ranger associations of the undersigned nations recognize that international unity is critical to the protection of the world's increasingly threatened and inter-linked natural and cultural resources. We have accordingly agreed to unite in an International Ranger Federation (IRF) in order to:

- further the professional standards of rangers throughout the world;
- advance the aims of IUCN's World Conservation Strategy in all our common efforts;
- share knowledge and resources;
- establish global communications among ranger organizations;
- foster professional exchanges among rangers;
- provide each other with advice and guidance on travel contacts in parks in our respective nations;
- arrange and conduct regular international meetings; and
- undertake joint activities to directly support each other's operations where necessary and feasible.

Membership as an affiliate association in IRF is open to all national associations of rangers or wardens who perform the services associated with ranger work, including protection and preservation of wild lands and their resident flora and fauna, protection and preservation of historical and cultural heritages, provision of recreational opportunities in natural settings, interpretation of natural, historical and cultural themes, and administration of public lands.

All member associations have an equal voice in IRF activities. Associations seeking membership must be endorsed by an association already affiliated with IRF. Provisional, non-voting membership in the IRF is also open to individual rangers from countries who do not yet have national ranger associations until such associations can be established.

Since the signing of the accord in 1992, several other ranger organizations have joined IRF, bringing the total number of member organizations to twelve:

- The Game Rangers Association of Africa
- Northern Ireland Countryside Staff Association
- Irish National Park Rangers Association
- Associazione Ligure Agenti Di Vigilanza Ambientale (Italian Ranger Association)
- La Asociacion de Gaurdaparques del Paraguay (Ranger Association of Paraguay)
- Naturvejleder Foreningen i Danmark (Danish Ranger Association)
- Fed-Ambiente de Honduras (Honduran Ranger Association)
- Confunto del Guardaparques de la Republic Dominica (Dominican Republic Ranger Association)
- Acorena CR (Costa Rican Ranger Association)

We have also received firm inquiries from and/or granted individual memberships to rangers in Finland, Kenya, Iceland, Mexico, Nepal, Australia, Peru, Venezuela, Botswana, New Zealand, Portugal, Jamaica, Russia and several other nations.

We have also begun arrangements for the first IRF World Congress, which will be held at the Hotel Kasprovy in Zakopane, Poland, from Sunday, May 21, 1995, to Saturday, May 27, 1995. The Kasprovy is a 600-bed hotel with a large conference hall. If the number of attendees exceeds 150, as seems probable, rooms will cost \$35 U.S. for a single, \$34 U.S. for a double, plus \$25 per day for full board. We are in the process at present of seeking sponsors to help provide funding to cover travel and room and board costs for rangers who could use some financial assistance.

The agenda for the meeting includes guest speakers; full day sessions on resource management, human management and balancing conflicts between the two; a raft trip in Pieniny National Park; and a banquet and dance.

The meeting has so far been endorsed by IUCN's Commission on National Parks and Protected Areas, the European Federation of National Parks, the United States' National Park Service, and Scotland's Scottish National Heritage; more endorsements are expected. Additional and more detailed information will appear in coming issues of this newsletter.

A full color brochure on the conference will also be sent to member associations and made available to interested parties later this summer (Note to member associations: Please contact Bob Reid at the IRF address and tell him how many brochures you will need).

If you have not yet formed a national, state, or territorial ranger association, we encourage you to do so, and stand ready to provide you with assistance. Please contact any of the people listed on the attached directory for further information on the International Ranger Federation and on how your association can become a member.

See you in Zakopane!

Gordon Miller
President.

Upcoming Ranger Association Events Worldwide

1994

- September 8 – 10 "A Living Landscape: Access Opportunities, Visitor Enjoyment, Partnership, Management", England. For information, contact Eugene Judge, 062-981-4321 (UK).
- September 12 – 16 28th Annual Conference of Countryside Management Association (formerly Association of Countryside Rangers), Winchester, England.
- September 26 – 30 "Green Tourism", European Ranger Seminar, Losehill Hall, Peak National Park, England.
- October 16 – 21 Ranger Rendezvous XVIII, Association of National Park Rangers, Tamarron Resort, Durango, Colorado, USA.

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- May 21 – 27 First World Conference, International Ranger Federation, Hotel Kasprovy, Zakopane, Poland.

If you have an event you would like to list, please write Bill Halainen, Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area, Bushkill, Pennsylvania 18324, USA.