

**CLEAR TEXT:
WASO Ranger Activities'
Electronic Newsletter**

November 23, 1994

CLEAR TEXT is the bi-weekly (more or less) electronic newsletter of the Ranger Activities Division in WASO. It is distributed via cc:Mail to all ranger training and operations centers (FLETC, HOAL, STMA, NIFC), regional office ranger divisions, park chief rangers, and other interested parties. Short submissions for the last three sections of the report - Field Notes; Park Exchange; and Vacancies, Register Openings and Details - are welcome and encouraged.

CLEAR TEXT TRANSMISSION DELAYS

Apologies for the delays in getting CLEAR TEXT out these days. Although the plan is to come out bi-weekly, the realities of downsizing, streamlining, and the great central office diaspora have made it somewhat difficult to keep up. Look for monthly editions for the near term.

RANGER ACTIVITIES PERSONNEL CHANGES

Ranger Activities continues to be affected by significant personnel changes. Here are the most current:

* Jim Brady is leaving his position as division chief to become the new superintendent of Glacier Bay. Current plans are for an EOD in January.

* Dick Martin, chief of the Branch of Resource and Visitor Protection, will also be heading out in January. Dick's the new superintendent of Death Valley.

* Rick Gale, now a fire prevention specialist in the Branch of Fire and Aviation Management in Boise, has been selected as the new branch chief. He will come on board some time after the holidays.

It's not clear at present how the office will be reorganized, but one option is to have a chief and deputy chief, eliminate the chief of Resource and Visitor Protection position, then divide the latter's duties between the former. This is not certain, however; stay tuned for developments.

REGULATIONS UPDATE - Dennis Burnett, RAD/WASO

* The period for making comments on Revised Statute 2477 was extended to November 15th. Comments are going directly to BLM.

* A final draft of the Service's climbing regulation is being reviewed by the office of the Assistant Secretary for Fish and Wildlife and Parks. The Department is moving forward with the regulation, and it should clear DOI later this fall. There are still some issues that need to be ironed out among the NPS, BLM and the Forest Service regarding climbing in wilderness areas.

* The work group revising 36 CFR Part 2 met in Denver from October 17th

to the 21st to incorporate all the comments received into a final draft for in-house review prior to going to the Federal Register as a proposed rulemaking. We hope it will appear in the FR soon after the first of the year.

* The final rule on solid waste management sites in NPS areas (36 CFR 6) has been signed by Assistant Secretary Frampton and has cleared the Office of Regulatory Affairs. We hope to have this out in the Federal Register shortly.

* A work group is being organized to update 36 CFR Part 3 regulations beginning this winter. A request for field recommendations and comments will be sent to all park areas once the work group is organized. Start thinking.

CIRS/NIBRS UPDATE - Bob Reid, MARO

As you know, the Service has been working on the development of the Case Incident Reporting System (CIRS) for a number of years. The status of CIRS (also known as National Incident Base Reporting System, or NIBRS) is probably a mystery to most regions other than the three that are currently testing it out - Mid-Atlantic, Western and Southeast.

The CIRS/NIBRS program is up and working well in a number of parks in those regions. As of this writing, the NPS has a total of 50 parks on line and working with the program. During this fiscal year, we will expand the system to the other regions, with a goal of implementing it Servicewide.

Thanks the NPS information management team, led by Helen Price, great progress has been made in the development and implementation of the program. Improvements in the current version provide field rangers with a program to input case incidents with a narrative and print out the incident forms. It is important that everyone realize that the CIRS program has been designed for three purposes - to electronically store all park case incident data, to provide rangers with the ability to access that data for use in the park, and to recover the data for the annual reports that have been manually compiled in the past.

We will be keeping you updated via CLEAR TEXT as we progress with the expansion of the program. If you have questions in the meanwhile, I can be reached by name on cc:Mail or by telephone at (215) 580-2123.

NPS-9 REVISIONS - Paul Berkowitz, RAD/WASO

The first draft of the recent NPS-9 revision/overhaul is now undergoing preliminary review in this office. It's anticipated that the first "hard copy" drafts will be shared with participants at the upcoming regional chief rangers' conference, which will be held in Alexandria, Virginia, during the first full week in December. Further distribution will follow thereafter.

FEE PROGRAM UPDATE - Tim Stone, RAD/WASO

* Fee legislation nearly passed this last session of Congress, but failed on the House floor during suspension of the rules. In order to pass, it required a two-thirds majority vote, but garnered only 238 yeas to 174 nays. The legislation contained amendments to the Land and Water Conservation Fund Act; although it was not the stand-alone legislation initially proposed by the NPS, it addressed most of the initial NPS proposals. The Service is gearing up to make another run at fee legislation in the 104th Congress, this time focusing on retention of some percentage of the recreation fee revenues

in parks. This arrangement appears to have bipartisan support. At present it is a priority issue for the NPS.

* The Servicewide fee program managers' meeting was held in Washington, D.C., last week. The meeting focused on alternative collection strategies, FY 95 cost of collection funding, implementation of collection programs at Lake Mead and Glen Canyon, commercial bus tour fees, and implementation of automated fee collection stations throughout the Service.

* The commercial tour fee issue is still alive and kicking in D.C. The debate is over flat rates vs. separate collection of commercial tour fees and individual entrance fees. Meetings between Congressional staff, the bus tour industry and NPS management are continuing. We hope for final resolution in the near future.

* FY 94 recreation fee revenues fell short of the goal of \$82 million. Since the cost of collection program funding is based on the current fiscal year collections, the FY 94 revenue of \$75 million left the program with a shortfall of approximately \$1 million that had already been allocated for collections. Many parks/regions felt the pinch to recoup the money. This year's revenue projections will be conservative/realistic, and park's will be expected to collect approximately what they project collections should be. FY 94 was a shakedown cruise, with monies getting allocated late in the season, lack of direction, lack of FTEs, and other problems. Monies were out and available on October 1st, but FTEs are still a problem. We currently see no solution for this problem, but will continue to lobby for more FTEs, tied to increasing recreation fee revenues. Collection during shoulder seasons, longer hours of operation, raising campground fees, and increased visitation should improve the total FY 95 revenues, subject, of course, to hurricanes, oil embargoes, and Congressional discretion.

DIVE PROGRAM UPDATE - Al Henry, MARO

The Department of Interior diving safety workshop was held on November 2nd in Wood's Hole, Massachusetts. The participants discussed the draft departmental manual, the safety and health handbook (485 DM), and other safety concerns.

The governmental scientific diving conference was held a day later to discuss various concerns common to the government agencies involved in scientific diving. Fourteen representatives from ten agencies attended, including the NPS, Department of Interior, Forest Service, NOAA, EPA, Fish and Wildlife Service, and others. The letter of agreement among various agencies regarding scientific diving operations was the main agenda item. I served as the NPS representative from the National Dive Control Board.

The National Dive Control Board will be meeting in San Francisco during the last week of January. We will have a report on that session after it takes place.

MOUNTAINEERING PROGRAM FEE - John Quinley, ARO

Beginning in 1995, climbers on Mount McKinley and Mount Foraker in Denali will be charged a mountaineering program fee. The fee -- \$150 per climber -- will offset mountaineering administrative costs such as prepositioning and maintaining the high-altitude ranger camp at 14,200-feet on the West Buttress route, mountaineering patrol salaries, education materials aimed at reducing the number of accidents, transportation, and supplies. In public meetings and in written comments, climbers and others expressed overwhelming

opposition to paying for actual rescues absent any nationwide policy discussion. The initial proposal for a \$200 fee included covering some costs associated with rescues; those expenses have been dropped and the fee lowered to \$150 per climber.

The cost of administering the international mountaineering program (climbers represented 23 countries in 1994) has increased over the past several years. Given the number of climbers, the program consumes a disproportionate amount of the park budget - an amount the park can no longer support without bringing harm to other programs aimed at protecting park resources and providing visitor services. Under this program, climbers on the two mountains will share a portion of the climbing program's costs, which will allow the park to provide climbers with better information in hopes of reducing the number of climbing accidents.

The program has three major components:

* **Sixty-Day Pre-Registration:** Climbers on McKinley and Foraker will be required to register a minimum of 60 days in advance of their climb. By requiring advance registration, the Denali staff will be able to provide information to prospective mountaineers on the dangers they may face, how to prepare and equip, and to discuss requirements concerning resource issues such as littering and human waste disposal. Currently, climbers are required to register, but may do so as late as the day they depart for the mountain. The National Park Service will revise federal regulations to implement this requirement.

* **Preventative SAR/Education:** Written and visual orientation materials will be improved to better prepare mountaineers for a sub-arctic mountaineering experience. Mountaineers from outside the United States account for a disproportionate number of rescues. With 20 to 30 countries represented each season, written and voice-mail materials eventually will be prepared in eight languages.

* **Climbing Special Use Permit Fee:** The \$150 per climber fee is expected to generate about \$180,000 per year (1,200 climbers x \$150). Program costs include ranger and support salaries while doing mountaineering-related work, improved educational presentations and materials, logistical support and patrol supplies (such as that used at the 14,200-foot camp on the West Buttress. The fee will not cover the lease of the high-altitude helicopter (about \$240,000 per year), nor will it be used to offset expenses incurred in rescues (anywhere from \$70,000 to \$200,000 per year).

The move to a fee program does not change the park's existing rescue policy. The park plans to work closely with the public, including concerned organization representatives and mountaineers, and will seek public input on specific issues such as human waste management, carrying capacities, mountain safety, fixed anchors, and others.

FIELD NOTES

No notes.

PARK EXCHANGE

Harpers Ferry

The park currently purchases standby services via purchase order from a local volunteer fire company for \$4,000 per year, billed semi-annually in two,

\$2,000 installments. "Standby services" are defined in the purchase order as structural fire fighting equipment and trained personnel to operate them, and emergency medical equipment (an ambulance) and EMS personnel to respond with it. The fire company recently submitted a bill to the park for a quarterly amount of \$8,700 for "standby services", which works out to an annual total of about \$35,000. In addition to the purchase order for "standby services", we have an MOU with the company that primarily addresses ways in which to respond to a fire alarm and what to do at the scene. We are interested in hearing from any NPS area that is involved with any kind of payment (from operating funds) to either a volunteer or paid company for standby services (fire truck and ambulance available if needed) or services rendered (payment per callout). Please contact Harvey D. Sorenson at 304-535-6232 or by name on cc:Mail.

[Harvey D. Sorenson, HAFE].

Olympic

The park has a serious problem with juveniles under its judicial system. The U.S. magistrates in Seattle and Tacoma refuse to hear any juvenile cases, and the U.S. attorney can't convince them that they have authority to hear such cases. This results in a revolving door for juvenile offenders. When 16- or 17-year-old offenders appear in court for citations written by our rangers, the cases are automatically dismissed. We've approached the counties about taking our juvenile cases, and they want us to cite the authority for the State of Washington to try juveniles for offenses that occurred in an area of exclusive federal jurisdiction. 18 USC 5032 appears to give states the authority to take certain juvenile cases (except those that have a penalty of six months or less committed within the territorial jurisdiction of the United States), and such cases constitute the bulk of those we deal with. We would like to hear from anyone with any information on the authority that other parks with exclusive jurisdiction use to refer juvenile offenders to state courts. [Bill Frazier, OLYM]

Jefferson National Expansion

The park has an eight-year-old, 16+ hand, good-looking thoroughbred gelding needing a new park to patrol. He is a good patrol horse and works well around visitors, but he needs more miles to cover. Delivery can be arranged. For more information, contact chief ranger Deryl Stone or horse patrol ranger Keith Temple at (314) 425-4468 or contact us at JEFF Ranger Activities on cc:Mail. [Deryl Stone, JEFF]

VACANCIES, REGISTER OPENINGS AND DETAILS

Mojave

Anyone interested in a reassignment at the GS-13 level or a voluntary change to a lower grade at that level to the position of Chief Ranger at the newly established Mojave National Preserve is invited to submit a current resume or SF-171 to Lynn Guidry, Division of Human Resource Management, Western Region. The duty station will eventually be Barstow, California, a town of 18,000 approximately 100 miles from Los Angeles. Applicants should be prepared to enter on duty as soon as possible, and will be charged with developing a resource and visitor protection program and staff for a 1.3 million acre area with outstanding natural and cultural resources as well as a multitude of unusual challenges. No government housing is currently available. Applications should be submitted by cc:mail or regular mail to Lynn at the NPS Western Regional Office, 600 Harrison Street, Suite 600, San Francisco, CA 94107-1372, and must be received by no later than November 25. Central

office employees may also apply through Operation Opportunity. Questions about the area may be directed to Phil Ward in the WRO at 415-744-3921 or 3926.

DIVISIONAL TRAVEL

**** NOVEMBER ****

11/21 - 11/25	Burnett	A/L
11/21 - 11/30	Stone	A/L
11/29 - 12/1	DeLong	Presentation on the shared applications computer system, San Antonio, TX

**** DECEMBER ****

12/5 - 12/8	Broyles	Fire Program Management Steering Committee meeting, Seattle, WA
12/5 - 12/8	RAD Staff	Regional chief rangers conference, Alexandria, VA
12/12 - 12/16	Broyles	Safety and Health Working Team Meeting, Seattle, WA
12/12 - 12/16	Stone	Managerial grid training, Tucson, AZ
12/19 - 1/1	Burnett	A/L

If you would like to get CLEAR TEXT but don't currently receive it, please advise Ranger Activities via a short cc:Mail message. Any office may receive it, including districts and subdistricts within a park. PLEASE pass it along to others in your division and park.

Prepared by WASO Division of Ranger Activities

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