

CLEAR TEXT:
WASO Ranger Activities'
Electronic Newsletter

February 1, 1995

CLEAR TEXT is the MONTHLY 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.

Next issue: February 24, 1995
Submission deadline: February 22, 1995

RANGER ACTIVITIES OFFICE UPDATE

Although the office continues to truck along and is attending to all routine matters, it is more or less on hold on new or major projects until the new leadership can come on board. Pete Hart, superintendent of Theodore Roosevelt in North Dakota, is in town acting as division chief for 60 days. It's expected that Jim Brady's replacement will be hired before Pete's detail ends. Rick Gale, the new chief of the Branch of Fire and Aviation Management, will be moving in this spring.

Meanwhile, Ranger Activities has been taking the lead on one approach to reengineering Servicewide program management, which will increasingly have to be done by field employees because of the dramatic reduction in FTEs which has occurred and will continue to occur in WASO. Three of the division's programs - NIBRS, special park uses, and uniforms - are now managed by staff outside of Washington. Agreements have been developed whereby Ranger Activities partially funds the positions and the incumbents perform both Servicewide and park or region specific duties. This trend will likely continue.

Other than that, the division is still at sea; its final configuration will not be determined for some time yet to come.

RANGER CAREERS - Bill Sanders

Volume II of Ranger Careers is nearing completion. We have a few rough drafts out for review and hope to have a more complete draft version to circulate within a week or two.

In concept, Volume II will lay out the mechanics of a MANAGED career SYSTEM for the park ranger occupation, which is something we haven't had before. Members of the park ranger occupation will be in charge of determining what skills rangers need in order to protect parks and educate the public and visitors about parks. The park ranger occupation will establish its own competency-based career advancement system, which will extend from the educational foundation/base of the occupation through initial candidate selection; intake training and development; initial park assignment; and journeyman, senior, and master ranger levels, up to expert ranger levels.

Supervisors and managers of rangers will also be developed through competency building processes intended to select and groom those rangers with interest, talent, and dedication toward park leadership. Rather than a personnel-driven management system, we seek a management-driven personnel system for rangers.

With the support and assistance of personnelists at all levels of OPM, NPS, and the Department, and with the excellent counsel and advice of rangers and managers, we are moving rapidly to make the transition from Ranger Futures to Ranger Careers.

There have been several other developments of interest regarding Ranger Careers:

* Our proposed revision to the qualifications standards for the park ranger occupation has been sent to OPM and we anticipate hearing back from them by next week.

* The revised seasonal employment program is in the rough draft stage and should be ready to circulate with the draft Volume II in a couple of weeks.

* The basic competency system for the interpretation side of the house has been put together and the protection competencies are expected from our work group soon.

* We expect the 6(c) entry age issue to be formally addressed by the Department in the near future. Thanks to the hard work of many dedicated people, we think we have a resolution of this issue at hand.

REGULATIONS UPDATE - Dennis Burnett

On January 9th, the Regulatory Transition Act of 1995 (H.R. 450) was introduced in the House of Representatives. This proposed bill would establish a moratorium period for any federal agency rulemaking action from November 9, 1994 through June 30, 1995. The moratorium would apply to all rulemakings required under any federal statute, regulation or court order. This means that any final regulation published since November 9, 1994 would be nullified until at least July 1, 1995.

A hearing on the bill was held on January 19th by the House Subcommittee on National Economic Growth, Natural Resources and Regulatory Affairs. This is a "new" subcommittee of the full Committee on Government Reform and Oversight. As currently written, all aspects of the regulatory process will be covered, including advance notices, notices of rulemaking, and final rulemakings. Discussions during the hearing revealed that new processes for the development of regulations may be forthcoming. In all probability, this piece of legislation will be passed by the House and sent to the Senate with few, if any, changes. Should it pass, President Clinton may, of course, still veto it.

ALL the following regulations will be affected by this moratorium:

* **R.S. 2477:** The comment period for Revised Statute 2477 was extended a third time to August 1, 1995. This will make the comment period one full year. Comments are going directly to BLM. Secretary Babbitt and Assistant Secretary Frampton continue to support the concept of RS-2477.

* **Climbing Regulations:** Nothing has changed on the status of this regulation. A final draft of the regulation is with the Assistant Secretary.

The Department still supports the regulation.

* **36 CFR Part 2:** The work group continues working on the final draft package. We hope to have a document out for review in the Federal Register as a proposed rule some time this winter.

* **43 CFR Part 7:** "Protection of Archaeological Resources - Uniform Regulations, Final Rule," is at the Federal Register and should be published before February 1st. This final rule revises the uniform regulations that implement the Archaeological Resources Protection Act (ARPA) of 1979 to incorporate the recent amendments. Principally, these changes amend the description of prohibited acts to include attempts to excavate, remove, damage or otherwise alter or deface archaeological resources; address the lower threshold for felony violations of ARPA; include public awareness programs; contain provisions for archaeological surveys and schedules; stipulate a report to Congress by the Secretary of the Interior on federal archeology; and provide guidance to Federal land managers about the disposition of Native American human remains and other "cultural items" as defined by the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA).

* **36 CFR Part 9, Subpart B - Non-Federal Oil and Gas Rights:** This proposed rule would strengthen the National Park Service's ability to protect the natural, cultural and historic resources of the National Park System from all non-federal oil and gas and geothermal operations within park units. It has been approved by Assistant Secretary Frampton and sent to OMB for review. The proposed rule would update existing regulations that were promulgated in 1978 to make them consistent with existing laws, policies, and practices and would improve their clarity and workability. The proposed rule also would implement Congressional mandates for park resource protection contained in the Big Cypress National Preserve Addition Act, enacted in 1988.

* **36 CFR Part 62:** This final rule revises the current regulations for the National Natural Landmarks (NNL) program and is ready to go to the Federal Register when it is released by Assistant Secretary Frampton. These revisions are intended to ensure that owners of sites under consideration for possible national natural landmark designation are fully notified in advance of such consideration and have the opportunity to comment on these proposals; that the National Park System Advisory Board will review all future national natural landmark nominations and provide recommendations to the Secretary as to their qualifications for designation; that sites are not designated by the Secretary where a majority of the private property owners involved have indicated their objection to such designation; and that the process for designating national natural landmarks more closely parallels that for national historic landmarks.

* **36 CFR Part 68:** "The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Historic Preservation Projects, Proposed Rule," was published in the Federal Register on January 18th. The comment period is 60 days. This proposed rule revises 36 CFR Part 68. Published in 1978, the standards apply to all proposed grant-in-aid projects assisted through the National Historic Preservation Fund, focusing primarily on development projects involving buildings.

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 forthcoming to all park areas once the work group is solidified. Start thinking. If you have any nominations for the work group, please cc:Mail them to me.

NIBRS/CIRS UPDATE - Bob Reid

Service-wide implementation of the NIBRS/CIRS program will make greater progress in the coming months due to upcoming training.

In January, National Capital Region and the U. S. Park Police (Washington) were introduced to the program. Training is scheduled for the Midwest Region in Omaha from February 6 - 10; at the Everglades from February 21 - 24; in Southwest Region (tentative) from March 20 - 24; at the Great Smokies from April 3 - 7; and in Tupelo, Mississippi, from April 17 - 21 (tentative). At the conclusion of this training period, all NPS regions will have been introduced to the NIBRS program and have the software for implementation at some of the parks in their region.

Just a reminder that, with the introduction of the district to headquarters upload capability, the ultimate goal is for the field rangers to be able to input their case incidents directly into the NIBRS program themselves and not have just one person or the park's dispatchers entering their incidents. With the rangers doing their own input, they can make entries from their field notes and not duplicate the process of generating a hand written report. The report can then be stored electronically until a copy is needed. This is a very user-friendly program, with the capability of generating good information to support park managers in their operations.

On another issue, a copy of the training officer program has been purchased by Ranger Activities for each of the ten regions so that they will be able to track the training of each of their rangers. If you haven't installed the program, please do so; if you have, let me know how things are working with it. Remember that you will have to get a password from Pacific Software once you have loaded the program. This will ensure that you get any updates that come out in the future. If you don't get the password, you won't be able to access the program after you have entered it 40 times.

If you have any questions, give me a call at (404) 331-3527 or contact me via cc:Mail.

SPECIAL PARK USES - Dick Young

Many managers look on special park uses as they would a trip to the dentist - something to be gotten over with quickly. In their rush, they sometimes ignore fees and charges, and therefore lose money. There are a lot of very sharp people out there, and many of them are turning to the parks to do things (sometimes inappropriate) because it's the cheap way to go. After all, why spend all that money hiring a hall when you can do it free, or almost free, in the park - and the scenery is better too!

Why spend ONPS funding, money you had to fight and beg for and could better use elsewhere, when you can recover every cent a special use costs you, and keep it for the benefitting account? If that's not incentive enough, remember that it's also no-year money, so you can roll it over if you so desire. Even though we're not talking about a great fortune here, it will at least recover everything you spend, and that, surely, is worth the time.

The law regarding recovery of costs (31 USC 9701) is very plain: "... each service or thing of value provided...to a person...is to be self-sustaining..." The administrative language section of the 1994 NPS appropriation bill established continuing authorization for the NPS to "recover all costs of providing necessary services associated with special use permits, such as reimbursements to be credited to the appropriations current

at that time."

This language has actually been around for a while. As early as 1991, WASO put out a memo referring to the budget bill and quoting part of OMB Circular A-25. It stated in part that the appropriation bill language covered both budgeted and unbudgeted costs, so "...a charge should be imposed to recover the full cost to the Federal Government of rendering (these) services. Permittees should have always been charged for all costs incurred by the Service."

You can also recover other costs. Another reg, 16 USC 1a2(g), allows the Service to "sell at fair market value...products and services, produced in the conduct of living exhibits and interpretive demonstrations...and to credit the proceeds therefrom to the appropriation bearing cost of such exhibits and demonstrations."

The message is clear. Those persons wanting to use park property or services over and above that granted to the normal park visitor - that is, those people to whom you have to issue a special use or other type of special permit - should be made to bear the cost of such services.

If you have any questions on such charges, please call me at 804-898-7846 or contact me via cc:Mail.

FIELD NOTES

No notes.

PARK EXCHANGE

Gettysburg

The park has been working to get the District Court for the Middle District of Pennsylvania to enter into an agreement with the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation for the purpose of permitting PennDOT to accept and enter convictions in federal court of certain violations of motor vehicle code into the defendant's operator's license history file, such as DUI, reckless driving, and manslaughter by vehicle. The park is seeking information on or copies of any similar agreements in effect either between the NPS and a state or between the federal court system and a state. If you can help, please contact Peter Walzer via cc:Mail at GETT Protection.

VACANCIES, REGISTER OPENINGS AND DETAILS

Mojave

Three vacancies have been posted on AVADS for NPS members to an interagency team which will be developing a management plan for the 11.5 million acre Northern and Eastern Mojave Ecosystem. This ecosystem includes Mojave National Preserve, the expanded Death Valley National Park and part of Lake Mead National Recreation Area, and straddles the California - Nevada border. The three vacancies are: GS-13 team manager, GS-11/12 natural resource specialist, and GS-11/12 community planner. The ecosystem plan will be produced as part of a National Performance Review Management Innovation Laboratory to guide implementation of the California Desert Protection Act of 1994. This planning effort will be unprecedented, complex, politically sensitive, challenging, and highly visible. The vacancies will be filled on a permanent or term basis for four years. As the plan is completed some team members will be reassigned and some will transition into the Mojave National

Preserve management team. Headquarters for the team and the preserve will be in Barstow, California. If you are interested, or know of someone who would be, contact Ray Murray at (415) 744-3968 or Mary Martin or Jerry McHugh at (702) 293-8930.

Devils Tower

The park has issued two special recruitment bulletins for summer seasonal positions - one for a GS-025-4 or GS-025-5 park ranger (law enforcement), the other for a GS-404-4 biological science technician. More than one position may be filled from each register. Positions may run for up to six months. Applications must be postmarked by February 3rd. For more info, contact, the park at 307-467-5283.

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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