



RANGER ACTIVITIES INFORMATION EXCHANGE



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Chief Ranger's Comments

The reorganization of the Washington Office, which has been the topic of much field discussion and rumor, is still in the works and has not yet been officially announced. Ranger Activities is still a branch of the Visitor Services Division, and we will post you on any changes in that arrangement as soon as we have an official written document. There has been one internal change, however. Linda Balatti, who has served as the uniform and campground reservation system coordinator in Ranger Activities for some time has decided to leave the Service. Linda will be on intermittent status for a while in order to assist Bill Halainen, who'll be the new uniform program coordinator with the assistance of Melissa Warner; the campground reservation system will temporarily be in the hands of Phil Ward of Western Region until Linda's position can be filled. Our sincerest thanks and warmest regards go to Linda for her outstanding efforts in both program areas over the years.

The emergency services coordinator announcement is out, and we hope to have a strong register for the position. Whoever comes in will be busy quickly. Aviation management, EMS and some aspects of search and rescue are currently front-burner concerns. Following the deaths of 14 Departmental employees and contractors this year in aircraft accidents, all agencies in the Department are reviewing their aviation programs and aviation safety efforts.

The NPS-9 work group, which was made up of Cliff Chetwin of Carlsbad Cavern, Tony Bonano of Cape Cod, Ed Drotos from NCR Ranger Activities and Major Robert Zarger from this office, met in Washington from January 26th to the 30th. They reviewed all comments from the field concerning needed changes in the guideline, and incorporated them as appropriate in their draft revision. This will now circulate through the directorate for approval. We hope to have the final version out in early summer.

The 025 work group is still busy. The draft supplemental guideline for the 025 standards is out for review. We think this to be a very positive tool for position management and promoting consistency in position classification Servicewide. We are maintaining close contact with other land management agencies - particularly BLM - to take advantage of any options they might come up with that would be relevant to us. There is a draft BLM law enforcement ranger position description being circulated to their field offices for comment (it went out on December 29th). The position is a mixture of resource management and law enforcement responsibilities. I will let you know of any actual developments that come from BLM or anyone else.

For the next few weeks (until late February), I'll be at the Stoneybrook University Hospital on Long Island for treatment of Lyme's Disease and will be out of touch. Although the treatment for the disease is relatively painless (lots of antibiotics via IV), it does require at least 14 days of immobility. During the interim, direct your calls to the acting chief in Ranger Activities or leave a message. Messages will be relayed to me daily.

Fees Program

The new fee program went into effect on February 1st, and early indications are that visitors may take the new or increased fees in stride. As of early afternoon on February 2nd, about one thousand visitors had paid the newly-instituted \$1.00 fee at the Statue of Liberty, and local TV reporters found that 9 out of ten of them supported it. On that same day, Yosemite entrance station rangers reported no complaints concerning the \$3.00 increase in that park's entrance fee (up from \$2.00 to \$5.00).

Although most of the 134 areas with entrance fees came on line early in February, there were several where Congressional opposition has caused the Service to delay implementation of the fee program pending a case-by-case review, including Valley Forge, Independence, Canaveral, the Statue of Liberty and several Hawaiian parks. The January 29th Associated Press story which claimed that fees at these parks would be "indefinitely suspended" was untrue.

Other recent actions:

- NPS-22 - The first draft of the revised guideline on fee collection was completed in early February. It will be distributed to the field for comment this month. Information has been added to it on how to start and run a fee program, methods for collecting fees, and so forth.
- Fee coordinator training - A training course for regional fee coordinators will be held in Harpers Ferry between the 18th and 20th of February. The objectives of the meeting will be to bring the regional coordinators up to speed on what's new in fees and to establish directions for the program over the coming year.
- Park-specific passes - The passes will be off the press on February 27th and should reach the parks by mid-March. A memo explaining their purpose and use will be out this month.

Rich Rambur extends his apologies to those people whose calls to him with fee questions have gone unanswered. Although he considers such responses important, he has had to spend all available time on briefings, Congressionals, press inquiries, planning sessions and details of program implementation. A detail person will be coming to Ranger Activities for four months beginning in mid-February, though, so his response time should improve in the near future.

Criminal Information Reporting System

Last September, Prosite, the contractor working on the development of CIRS at Marana, made a presentation on the proposed system to a number of Washington Office ADP and Operations staff members. The demonstration included a run-through of a program which generates 10-343 report forms and can save both the form and all entered information. The criminal information analysis aspects of the proposal, however, needed additional review before it could be considered for Servicewide use. Consequently, John Reed from Visitor Services, WASO, and Kevin Killeen from ADP, WASO, traveled to Marana in early February to make a determination on the disposition of NPS equipment and computer-related accessories that were acquired or developed as a result of the contract with

Prositate. John will also be making recommendations to the directorate concerning the possible application of these resources towards the development of a regional or Servicewide ADP law enforcement information system.

Field Incidents

Big Bend/Amistad: The Rio Grande has claimed four lives this winter in three separate incidents. On December 8th, Big Bend maintenance employee Fred Gallegos attempted to swim the river after a trip to visit friends in Mexico, and was swept down river; his body was recovered two days later. On January 3rd, two young hunters swam across the river from Texas to Mexico, but failed to make it across on the way back. A search was begun in the turbulent and murky waters two days later, but has yet to meet with any success. Three river rafters capsized in Santa Elena Canyon in Big Bend, also on January 3rd; two survived after several nights stranding in the canyon, but the third drowned.

Channel Islands: William Kent, a seasonal interpretive ranger who'd just been hired by Channel Islands and who'd worked as a seasonal in Alaska, was found dead of self-inflicted gunshot wounds in Ventura, California, on January 21st. A note was found nearby.

Big Bend: On February 2nd, Castolon Area Ranger Kathy Hambly observed a motor home stuck on the River Road to Rio Grande Village. She went to the assistance of the couple driving it, and helped them get unstuck. Her suspicions as to their activities in the area had been aroused, however, so she took down identifying information. After passing this on to the Border Patrol, she returned to the scene and traced the motor home's tracks back to the border, where she found that they intersected with three sets of horse tracks. Since it's a known practice of drug dealers in the area to rendezvous in such a fashion, she passed this on to Border Patrol, thereby giving them probable cause to stop the vehicle about 50 miles north of the park late in the morning. The vehicle was searched, and a little over 663 pounds of cocaine was found within. The couple was arrested and the vehicle and drugs impounded. DEA has appraised the street value of the latter as about \$148.5 million.

Retirement System Changes Under Consideration

Comments on the Office of Personnel Management's (OPM) proposed rulemaking (see Federal Register, Vol. 51, No. 244, December 19, 1986, pages 45471 - 45475) concerning revisions to its regulations implementing special retirement provisions for law enforcement officers and firefighters under the Civil Service Retirement System have been submitted by the Service to the Department for forwarding to OPM. WASO solicited ideas and comments from Ranger Activities, BIFC, the regions and others before preparing a response, which will be consolidated by the Department with other agency comments and then sent to OPM. Since those comments are still in draft and not yet approved, it's not possible to report on them at this time. A summary will, however, appear in the March or April issue. OPM will also accept comments from any group or individual up until February 17th. They should be sent directly to Reginald M. Jones, Jr., Assistant Director for Retirement and Insurance Policy, Retirement and Insurance Group, Office of Personnel Management, PO Box 57, Washington, D.C. 20044.

1987 Ranger Activities Reports Calendar

A number of people have suggested that it would be valuable to have this office compile a calendar of reports which are due for the coming year and publish it each January. Here's that listing:

<u>Report</u>	<u>Due Date</u>	<u>Reported by</u>
Illicit Drug Activity Report*	Monthly on 10th	Regions
Semi-Annual Regulatory Agenda	January 1st	Regions
Inventory of Evidence & Custody Property	January 20th	Parks/regions
Emergency SAR and L&O Reports - 1st Quarter*	January 20th	Regions
Annual Law Enforcement Statistical Report	April 3rd	Parks/regions
Annual Search and Rescue Incident Report	April 3rd	Parks/regions
Emergency SAR and L&O Reports - 2nd Quarter*	April 20th	Regions
Annual EMS Report**	June 1st	Parks/regions
Semi-Annual Regulatory Agenda	July 1st	Regions
Golden passes/brochures needed for CY88	July 15th	Regions
Emergency SAR and L&O Reports - 3rd Quarter*	July 20th	Regions
Annual User Fee Comparability Study	August 15th	Parks/regions
Emergency SAR and L&O Reports - 4th Quarter*	October 10th	Regions
Annual Recreation Fee Report	December 1st	Parks/regions

*Negative reports required

**Tentative due date

Briefly...

Because of the intensity of the work load in Ranger Activities early in the year, it was not possible to get out a January edition of the Exchange; hence the double issue. We'll try to do better in the future...Corrections from the last issue: On page four, you probably noticed that the article on the grizzly fatality at Yellowstone quoted the board of inquiry as recommending "management actions directed at behavior modifications resulting in mutual (short ranger) avoidance." That should have read "short range", and we meant to cast no aspersions on rangers less than six feet tall. Rick Gale was listed as the person heading up the review of SET procedures; Herb Gercke from Western Regional Office is actually the coordinator for that effort...The revised 36 CFR Part 4 is behind schedule as a result of extensive review by the Service and the Department. Tentative plans are to have it published in the Federal Register at the end of February, with an effective date of April 15th or thereabouts....