

# The Protection Ranger

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The Newsletter of the National Park Rangers Lodge, Fraternal Order of Police



June • 2012

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## President's Message

George Durkee

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I have often thought about the early years of the Lodge and how our advocacy on behalf of LE rangers led to such successes: NPS-provided body armor; professional LE standards and training; auto-loading weapons; long guns in vehicles – all eventually became standard.

Although it took an unconscionable number of years, it did happen. Today's LE rangers are better for it and, along with many individuals throughout the NPS and LE of other organizations, the Lodge shares credit in that success.

It's not always, clear, though, what actions led to much improved training and equipment. How does an organization of field rangers effect change when there are no clear structures inviting or even encouraging discussion? What is the equivalent of body armor for today's ranger and what strategy will best achieve our goals?

In the last couple of weeks, we've gotten a small flurry of members writing with concerns. Our initial approach to finding solutions to the problems they bring up is to bring them to the attention of both field rangers and managers – mid-level and WASO. So, with education and the beginning of a serious dialogue as our ultimate goal, the Lodge has acted on a number of these critical issues:

- What will be the future of LE Rangers in the second century of the NPS?
- Steve Shackleton, Associate Director for Visitor and Resource Protection is retiring. How critical is it to the NPS LE program that his replacement also have a managerial-level LE background?
- LE is a complex and demanding job. How can the needs and concerns of field rangers be heard, ideas exchanged and solutions sought?

In this issue of *The Protection Ranger* are some letters recently sent to several levels of NPS management in an effort to start a serious discussion on important issues facing us.

Most of us are so overwhelmed by just our day to day jobs, worry about budget cuts, or being discouraged by the seemingly intractable problems we face that it's hard to find time or energy for much else. This is especially true when there's no clear path or encouragement for dialogue with the people who make decisions. The Lodge wants to make a concentrated effort to change this.

Last week, we sent out the letter below to NPS managers in the hope of starting a dialogue on the future of law enforcement rangers: Where will they come from? What training will they have? What will their duties be?

As a start for this discussion, we sent managers a copy of *Second Century Rangers: A Vision for Hiring, Training and Developing Commissioned Rangers in the Second 100 Years of the NPS*. This was developed independently by a WASO/FLETC level manager and circulated among a small but active group. As noted, the Lodge does not

agree with all of the suggestions proposed in this document but it's the first attempt we've seen at beginning a serious dialogue about these issues.

There have been no discussions either from the field or, more critically, from WASO or the Directorate on these issues. We badly need leadership and dialogue from upper level management, yet none is forthcoming.

### Letter to NPS Managers

*Editor's note: the first copy of this letter gave the erroneous impression that **Second Century Rangers** was an official NPS document. It is not and the wording here corrects that inadvertent error.*

Dear NPS Law Enforcement  
Supervisor/Manager:

The attached document, *Second Century Rangers: A Vision for Hiring, Training, and Developing Commissioned Rangers In The Second 100 Years of the NPS*, was circulated as a private proposal among some WASO and FLETC managers last year, but has not yet been introduced to the field. The US Park Rangers Lodge of the Fraternal Order of Police believes that a broader discussion of the future of the NPS law enforcement workforce is in order. A number of major decisions involving hiring, recruiting and basic training have been made at the WASO and Regional level absent discussion with or input from the field or the Lodge.

While the Lodge does not agree with several things in the attached document, the proposal does a good job of showing what the current direction of the NPS is in terms of



shortening basic training at FLETC. We certainly don't agree with that. The document, does, however, offer some solutions that we don't recall being proposed before: solutions that benefit the employee and the Service. Importantly, it has the potential of starting an actual conversation on these critical issues. Conversely, WASO's current direction is a recycling of failed ideas from the past, cutting training, continuing to place costs on seasonal employees, and not valuing them as returning employees and the primary source of permanent employees.

As many of you know, the most recent survey of *Best Places to Work in the Federal Government* ranked NPS at 163<sup>rd</sup> out of 240 agencies. Worse, NPS employees ranked the agency 170<sup>th</sup> on Effective Leadership Empowerment. This is a specific measurement of how satisfied they are with their involvement in decisions that affect their work. In short, a majority of NPS employees are not satisfied with how the agency provides a structure for ideas and innovation. NPS has ranked in the bottom of this survey for over a decade. It is imperative for management to recognize this as a serious problem and engage in dialogue with all levels of NPS employees to achieve solutions. The NPS has never made a meaningful step in this direction.

This document and its ideas are a good starting place for that dialogue. The Lodge asks that you discuss these issues with your field staff, including seasonals, and decide for yourself if the correct course for the NPS is to build our future on the training provided by seasonal academies, and not on FLETC -provided training. We ask that you then share your perspective with the upper level of law enforcement leadership in the NPS.

As always, the Lodge is eager to hear your comments and suggestions for improving the NPS law enforcement program.

/s/ Randall Kendrick, Ranger Lodge

Although the letter and document were sent out only a few days ago, it has already generated the hoped for beginnings of a discussion. From one Chief Ranger:

I do think it's a valid starting point. Where do we begin to define the future of the LE Ranger?

I have been involved in many issues lately that relate to ... LE.... Many of these are those classic modern versus traditional issues. What's a ranger look like ? Do they wear camo or a NPS uniform, flat hat or ball cap, leather or nylon, what do they do?

Do we get with the program and learn about using IAFIS [Integrated Automated Fingerprint Identification System] and keep up with technology or do we stop teaching fingerprinting to rangers at FLETC because we make the class shorter. Again, it goes back to what do we want the ranger of the future to look like, what are we trying to accomplish.

In my vision, I want the ranger of the future to use all the modern tools and techniques at their disposal to solve criminal resource cases. I do not like the status quo nor do I believe in it. However, I know that is an uncomfortable prospect to some of the traditionalists. So SOMEONE needs to step up and LEAD the agency. My personal feeling is that we are in an absolute crisis of leadership. Without solving that, and bringing some guidance and direction to this outfit, we will all just argue over what our personal visions are or should be. While that happens we will never get past the idea of how to move forward.

I love the idea of starting a dialog and generating some critical thinking. Please include me in this topic in the future.

Another Chief wrote:

Randall,  
Thanks for sharing. I am in the process of reading and formulating comments. I have asked my staff to do the same, one of which is a long

time seasonal whom we got into one of the last SCEP appointments possible before Pathways so it will be very interesting to hear his thoughts on this.

I will share my comments with you when I am done and do intend to run these ideas up the food chain. Now may be a good time to bring things up anew as the WASO office is undergoing personnel changes.

These and other comments received are incredibly encouraging. They show a deep concern over the future of the NPS, a need to address these issues and agreement that leadership is, so far, not forthcoming.

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### **National Park Service and Transnational Criminal Organizations – Is a Crisis Looming?**

Bob Martin

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#### **Background**

*Editor's Note: Bob Martin condensed this article from his Master's Thesis*  
**The National Park Service and Transnational Criminal Organizations – Is a Crisis Looming?** *You can read the original in the Reference Documents section on our website, rangerfop.com.*

Former NPS Ranger Division Security and Intelligence Manager Bob Martin recently completed his Master's Degree in Homeland Security and his research project focused on The National Park Service and Trans-Criminal Organizations (TCO).

#### **The Research**

The idea for this final research project came from Steve Shackelton, NPS National Chief Ranger and Associate Director, who asked Martin to delve into the issues and make recommendations to address Mexican Drug Cartels and marijuana cultivation on NPS and other public lands.



Early into the research, Martin realized that this issue, which he had dealt with ten years earlier when he was chief ranger at Redwood, had become a major issue in national parks in the west and that the issue and concerns were spreading rapidly to other parks. What was even more troubling to Martin was that the very same conditions that caused him frustration during his career - namely inadequate numbers of protection rangers, a lack of means by which to share intelligence rapidly from central offices to the field, and inadequate management support - still existed and he noted that things appeared to have actually gotten worse.

Martin's research discovered that the "full court" press by Border Patrol and other Federal entities on the US/Mexico border, had resulted in significant interdiction of cross border drug shipments. TCO's gravitated to less protected areas within the US where they began to take over certain areas of park and forest backcountry.

According to the NPS Morning Report over the period of 2009-2010, marijuana interdicted on NPS lands alone was valued at over \$405 million dollars. More detailed law enforcement statistics were not provided by the NPS to the researcher. Martin found several articles that refer to as much as 70-80% of the marijuana distributed in the US today is grown on the nation's public lands and that most of the growers were "illegals" from Mexico.

As plants grow toward harvest, security personnel often come into the grows. Distribution of the NPS-grown cash crop is handled by yet another group of TCO's - the distributors - and proceeds not only line the pockets of the cartel leaders, but all those involved in all levels of the enterprise. The money funds such nefarious TCO activities including terrorism, gangs, gun running, human trafficking, and distribution of other forms of drugs (Farah, 2010).

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***If 70 to 80 % of the marijuana consumed in the US is generated on public lands, how can only .2% of the \$3.9 billion be considered a reasonable number for enforcement and interdiction efforts?***

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The 2011 National Drug Threat Assessment Report indicated that TCOs have infiltrated into 1,000 American cities (USDOJ, 2011) and cartels, gangs and terrorist are now interconnected (McCarter, 2011). TCO's associated with marijuana grows can be quite violent as evidenced by numerous gun battles in our nation's forests. Law enforcement personnel have on numerous occasions engaged TCOs in shootouts in recent years resulted in both U.S. law enforcement officials and criminals being shot (NPS Briefing, 2011). Horrifically violent incidents, once contained to Mexico, are now being experienced in Houston, Phoenix and even Chicago.

Martin reviewed numerous studies by IACP and several Department of the Interior Inspector General Reports which indicated NPS failed to address protection rangers staffing shortfalls which reports called for 500 to 1000. A recent IG Report indicated the numbers of NPS protection rangers dropped while the other Land Management agencies increased their LEO numbers. Martin found it particularly troubling that several studies confirmed that the NPS Ranger is the most assaulted of all FLEO's. It should be noted that Martin dedicated his research paper to Ranger Kris Eggle who was killed on duty attempting to interdict a Mexican National murder suspect on the US/Mexico border within Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument. As he was working on his research project, Mount Rainier Ranger Margaret Anderson was also gunned down on New Year's Day.

This growing problem is not just a law enforcement and public safety issue as

significant resource impacts are occurring. According to government reports and personal conversations Martin had with former peers; which included NPS national level managers, regional personnel and field level rangers; the growers are destroying these once pristine environments with their aggressive cultivating methods that include the heavy use of chemicals and result in toxic waste dumps, stream alteration, terracing of hillsides, poaching, and altering native vegetation in order to ensure their marijuana cash crops thrive. Large wildfires have also been initiated by these growers causing tens of thousands of acres of land to be destroyed during several large and destructive wildfires in 2011 alone (Kerlikowske, 2011).

A variety of chemicals used on these sites is making it into the food chain and now carnivores in that chain are dying from internal hemorrhaging caused by large volumes of rodenticide and herbicide found in their bodies (Shackelton, 2011). Based on several years of field work eradicating marijuana plantations and rehabilitating the areas, the NPS estimated that for every 1,500 marijuana plants seized NPS crews collected about one cubic yard of trash and other debris left by the TCOs onsite (NPS Briefing, 2011).

With funding always being the root of any possible solutions, Martin found it very interesting to note that the NPS receives only .2 % - that's a miniscule 2 tenths of ONE percent - of the National Drug Strategy's 2011 funds targeted for fighting domestic drug enforcement issues. If 70 to 80 % of the marijuana consumed in the US is generated on public lands, how can only .2% of the \$3.9 billion be considered a reasonable number for enforcement and interdiction efforts? This research demonstrated that the NPS is likely out manned and out gunned when confronted with TCOs which has the capacity of quickly generating the levels of violence seen in Mexico today (National Drug Control Strategy Budget, 2011).



Martin's research found a possible corollary between possible systemic NPS management issues and the research by Doctors Rovai and Rodrigue's Disaster by Management. In this study the investigators explored the NPS disconnects and sluggish response to TCO incursions into some of the most well-known parks in the west for the purposes of growing marijuana in large plantations. The cartel marijuana grow situation has the earmarks of "Disaster by Management" or DBM says Rovai and Rodrigue. They posit that failure of effective managerial response to the TCO marijuana grow issue at the Federal level, may have permitted this issue to blow up beyond the capabilities of those currently on the ground to mitigate it. Their DBM model explores a series of factors presented in their research including Geography; Legitimization, Risk, and Managerialism; Risk Perception Biases; Tension between Risk Assessment and Risk Management; and Normal Accident Theory.

In the case of TCO's running pot plantations on NPS lands across California, Rovai and Rodrigue relay there appears to be resistance to the realization and that no one within the NPS hierarchy appears to be integrating the big picture that it is violent international drug cartels setting up these marijuana plantations. Rovai and Rodrigue hint that few are contemplating that this TCO grow phenomena may reach across the country. The prospect exists that if this occurs, visitors to a park may come into harm's way - be it with an armed TCO security element, suppliers, growers or possibly even booby traps. Rovai and Rodrigue indicate that some in an agency may deal with such incidents in this dismissive fashion. They posit that "... the anomaly of massive pot farms in the public commons and the potential disaster they represent are normalized away" (Rovai and Rodrigue, 2007, Pg. 27).

Lastly, Martin alludes to a critical mass that may be looming as TCO members poke and prod to assert their control over their favorite grow areas

in national parks as well as expand eastward into yet untapped natural resources of the public domain. There are several converging situations that may occur in the near future that should give the NPS pause and add a sense of urgency in the near future. This "coalescence of the unimaginable" may include:

1. The potential for violence on the US/Mexico border.
2. California closing its three decade old anti-marijuana campaign.
3. Budget driven austerity measures nationwide means that as of 2012 40,000 fewer law enforcement officers will be dedicated to this or any special emphasis program.
4. The California medicinal drug program continues to convolute the situation.
5. TCOs morphing their operations accordingly in consideration of Items 1 through 4 above.
6. TCO operational expansion increases the possibility of the TCO bumping up against other organized criminals, gangs and other TCOs with whom they will either partner with or go to war with.
7. As the once tight grip of law enforcement weakens, TCO's may become emboldened with their new found freedoms and become more violent.

#### **Recommendations Made**

National Chief Park Ranger Steve Shackelton said this, following the eradication of 7,438 mature marijuana plants in Yosemite National Park:

For years we've been seeing these people make millions of dollars in profit while they devastate the environment on private property and California's majestic public lands. They destroy habitat, pollute streams with poisons and nitrogen fertilizers, kill wildlife, and pose a fire threat. The only thing missing is public outrage (NPS, 2007).

The NPS stands at a crossroads as a crisis may be looming. There may not be five years to figure it out. The next few years could be telling. The following is

a list of recommendations Martin developed to begin to address this issue:

- To stabilize the diminishing protection capabilities of the NPS, reinstitute a No Net Loss (NNL) Policy for protection rangers and special agents.
- Under the aegis of the US Transnational Criminal Organization Strategy, the nation needs to dedicate more resources from all departments in the federal government and develop a unified approach to dealing with the rising threat of TCOs in the US.
- A significant study is needed that drills deep into the management of NPS Law Enforcement resources. Is "stovepiping" needed to ensure quality of program and quantity of personal resources. This study should also explore reasons why it has taken the NPS so long to address ranger staffing shortfalls, especially in light of burgeoning visitor use, many threats to resources, TCO threats and the unknowns of tourism and terrorism as mentioned earlier in this paper.
- Develop and implement a National Park Service Law Enforcement Risk Assessment Methodology.
- Conduct an immediate nation-wide risk assessment on the NPS's law enforcement program and ferret into why the NPS was the only land management agency to show a drop (12.55%) in law enforcement personnel.
- Increase the number of permanent protection ranger positions dedicated to special policing efforts including resource protection issues including marijuana grows. Special regionally based and managed resource protection teams to handle the growing threats to NPS resources should be considered.
- Develop a peer reviewed staffing/incident complexity link analysis program to justify the numbers identified in #5 above.
- Acknowledge the import of community-oriented policing (COPS) and intelligence-led



policing (ILP). The NPS should fully flesh out their law enforcement programs to allow adequate LE Program depth to not just triage through each day. Support for patrol, investigations, intelligence gathering, analysis, sharing information with other allied law enforcement agencies, special focus teams, etc. must be assured.

- Evaluate the use of seasonal protection rangers with the reality that they will not help the NPS reach their long term targets in community policing, intelligence gathering, in-depth investigation capabilities nor other significant issues related to a world riddled with new and evolving threats. Seasonal positions can be eliminated overnight and are the first to go in any budget shortfall.
- Explore the development of a nationwide, regional and park specific Marijuana Grow Interdiction Program (MGIP).
- Fund the MGIP to provide adequate resources to perform interdiction, participate in intelligence gathering, analysis and sharing by providing NPS protection rangers, agents or analysts at the appropriate levels in local, regional and national drug enforcement and intelligence community.
- Base fund and expand Cheto Olais' Special Border/Drug Operations training and make it required training for every law enforcement officer working areas where drug trafficking, marijuana grows and illegal alien issues are frequent.
- Base fund and expand the Northeast Region's Counterterrorism Academy and make that training required for every ranger serving at national icons.
- All link analysis should not just be focused solely on local growers, but also the suppliers, facilitators, TCOs and particularly any violent or terrorist related entities in the NPS threat picture.
- Develop a proactive interdisciplinary posture at parks

with current or suspected marijuana grows. Further develop and implement the Foster et al's Predictive Modeling. Research the utility of new technologies that could aid in a proactive anti-TCO Grow campaign to include infrared, spectral analysis, stream sampling, the use of unmanned aerial vehicles, marijuana grow hounds, thermal imaging, and public education and warning systems.

- Ranger organizations such as the Association of National Park Rangers and the FOP National Park Rangers Lodge should consider a campaign to make a national issue out of these matters, informing the public about possible closures to the backcountry such as the large section of Organ Pipe NM, which is closed due to TCO's smuggling activities.
- Once risk assessments, threat analysis and staffing plans are complete, mandate that all superintendents go through a mini-Law Enforcement (LE) for Managers at the next Superintendent's Conferences held regionally to jump start this new threat/risk based program.
- Maintain surge capacity to assist parks when marijuana is first suspected/detected.
- Train all employees in their park protection role. Superintendents, as well as all law enforcement personnel, should receive TCO and marijuana grow training at their next in-service law enforcement refresher. All resource management folks should be trained on how to conduct and document marijuana grow resource impact studies. Impacts will be fully quantified and forwarded to regional or national database managers. Also train them to perform testing in the course of their day to day activities to detect for TCO grow operations such as water testing.
- Get the NPS National Incident Management and Reporting System (IMARS) up and running ASAP.
- Explore with other land management agencies the creation of a US Resource Law Enforcement and Protection Corps that would work among the land management

agencies conducting the high end work (investigations, intelligence, overt and covert operations, etc.), that needs doing but rarely if ever gets done.

- Develop investigative programs that teach NPS law enforcement personnel to thoroughly process evidence at grow sites, and use advanced and evolving research technologies as mentioned above.
- With the realities that the NPS only receives a paltry \$7.3 million or .2% of the federal funds earmarked in the 2011 National Drug Control Strategy, the NPS needs to seriously begin to advocate for itself to obtain a larger portion of the available funds.
- Far more research needs to be done on the issues related to TCO grows and their sociological, psychological, physical, economical and operational impacts on the NPS. Congress needs to be briefed on all these needs in a timely manner.
- Set up a secure communications system utilizing secure cell, secure land line phones and faxes and where needed, secure satellite phones in all protection ranger offices at parks with known or suspected TCO activities.

### Closing

Martin wished he could somehow do more and has volunteered to provide open source intelligence information on behalf of the Ranger FOP Lodge. He has provided copies of his research paper to various NPS Law Enforcement leaders. For a full copy of Bob's research paper go to the Reference Library at *RangerFOP.com*. You may also download it directly at: <http://goo.gl/cqr5L>.

Bob would like to hear from others in the field who have had first-hand experience with TCO's and can be reached by emailing: [RIFS@zoominternet.net](mailto:RIFS@zoominternet.net).



## About the Author

Over Bob's 28 years of Federal service he worked in nearly every type of position and level of responsibility a National Park Ranger could perform including working as a campground ranger and later as Central District Supervisor at Shenandoah, patrol ranger Natchez Trace Parkway, Area Ranger at Mount Rainier, Staff Ranger at the 9.5 million acre Northwest Alaska Areas, Bullfrog Sub-district Ranger at Glen Canyon, Chief Ranger at Redwood National and State Parks and Northeast Regional Chief Ranger during the 9/11 era culminating in several years as the NPS Ranger Division's first ever National Security and Intelligence Manager.

After retirement in 2006 Bob became heavily involved in his new post-NPS life and became the Law Enforcement and Homeland Security Coordinator at Westmoreland County Community College about 30 miles southeast of Pittsburgh, PA. Drawing on his diverse background years of public safety, homeland security and emergency management experiences, he helped craft an Associate Degree in Applied Science in Homeland Security in which he now teaches.

Bob counts as one of his greatest accomplishments being the Ranger FOP Lodge's Vice President when he worked with WASO Chief Ranger Jim Brady to generate the driving force which led to the Ranger Careers program.

For those of you too young to remember, the journeyman level for the field ranger once was GS-5. Ranger Careers resulted in upgrading ranger grades to the GS-9, ensured 6(c) retirement for the benchmark positions and generally professionalized the Protection Ranger profession with Sig Sauer autoloaders and ballistic vests. The other proud accomplishment for Martin was helping to create the Northeast Regional Counterterrorism Academy where Army Special Forces personnel and experienced ranger instructors provided rangers, park police and

agents with new skills and abilities following the new realities that came with 9/11/2001 and global terrorism.

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## In Other News

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At the suggestion of a member, the Lodge is currently working with *ProMotive.com* to arrange Pro deals for all Lodge members. ProMotive consolidates discounts for a number of equipment supply companies in law enforcement, medical and outdoor gear. As this is being written, ProMotive has set up our web portal for discounts from such suppliers as 5.11, DeLorme, Mountainsmith and over 100 others.

As soon as we receive sign up information, I'll post it on the Lodge website and send it out via an electronic newsletter.

As readers will note, we had a sudden flurry of member involvement which we're following up on. Keep those cards and letters coming – especially if you're willing to help pursue whatever issue you think needs attention.

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***It's summer. Everyone work extra safely! None of this Lone Ranger stuff: call for backup early and often, watch out for each other.***

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Members should also note that there will be a slight delay in processing renewals and new memberships in August and part of September. If you have questions, though, Randall will be available by email or the 800 number. Thanks for your understanding and patience!

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## More Letters

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*Members have recently written us with several critical issues. The Lodge has followed up with letters expressing those concerns and asking for clarification.*

### NPS Honor Guard Threatened?

Dear Director Jarvis:

The National Park Rangers Lodge of the Fraternal Order of Police is concerned with changes being contemplated for the NPS Ranger Honor Guard.

We understand you are overseeing the revision of the NPS Line of Duty Death handbook. This has the potential to be of significant benefit to the field. Currently, the handbook lacks official standing as a policy document. Staff created and implemented the document because high level officials couldn't come up with a policy recognizing the specific needs of the ranger law enforcement community. The NPS Ranger Honor Guard was a product of this effort.

One issue that came up in the past and is sure to come up again is that of changing the Ranger Honor Guard to include non-commissioned personnel. This would be a tremendous mistake, and we caution you to avoid it. Your predecessors considered the same thing and, once word reached the field, they quickly reversed themselves.

We are well aware of – and support – management efforts to ensure a team spirit in the workplace. Changing the Ranger Honor Guard, though, is not the way to do it. Predictable consequences for doing so include the resignation of the entire current Honor Guard and deep resentment from field LE rangers: that the final honor traditionally given by law enforcement for law enforcement sacrifice is to be denied them.



Those familiar with the Honor Guard can explain to you the importance of its mission to the LE community. You saw this demonstrated at the memorial of Park Ranger Margaret Anderson. Changing a successful program, for whatever reason, would be a major mistake.

If you wish to create a national color guard to emulate that of the National Capitol Region, then please do so. The fire community has worked to implement an honor guard of its own. We support their effort.

It is right that each professional service community determine how best to honor their fallen. We urge you to grant this basic decency and respect to the ranger law enforcement professionals.

Any effort to dismantle the successful Ranger Honor Guard team will have a profoundly negative effect on the law enforcement community and its unique role in the National Park Service.

Thank you. I look forward to your reply.

/s/ Randall Kendrick

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*Two months ago, several members asked the Lodge to pursue better support of retired LE rangers for concealed carry. This letter was originally sent to Steve Shackleton, then in the process of retiring. With no answer, a reply was sent to Louis Rowe, Deputy Associate Director, Visitor and Resource Protection. He called back and we're currently playing phone tag to connect.*

Dear Steve:

The Ranger Lodge of the Fraternal Order of Police has received several inquiries on how to go about qualifying for concealed carry under the provisions of 18 U.S.C. § 926C : US Code - Section 926C: Carrying of concealed firearms by qualified retired law enforcement officers.

As you know, that Act allows certain retired federal officers to carry concealed weapons. As I understand it, the NPS has two disparate practices in place for its officers. The policy for the US Park Police makes several allowances to accommodate their retired officers, such as issuing special photo identification in addition to retirement credentials, and allows for retired officers to obtain training and qualification from NPS/USPP employees and at their facilities (USPP policy attached). The policy for NPS rangers is absent. Apparently, someone in VRP years ago asked permission from the solicitor to extend these privileges to rangers and agents, and of course the solicitor took the path of least resistance and recommended against it.

While in theory the USPP policy may increase liability for the agency, it does the right thing for its employees and retirees, and treats them with the dignity that retired employees deserve. It is also parallel to policies by other Federal agencies.

We ask you to adopt the USPP policy for NPS rangers and agents immediately via a memo, and add it to future versions of RM-9.

This is a simple show of support that will mean a lot, not only to our current retirees, but to those who plan on remaining loyal to the NPS through retirement.

/s/ George Durkee

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Dear Director Jarvis:

The US Park Rangers Lodge of the Fraternal Order of Police was an early and strong advocate of studies about the NPS's law enforcement program. As a result of that advocacy, studies were carried out by both the International Association of Chiefs of Police and then Inspector General Earl Devaney.

These studies, and their associated recommendations for a professionally managed NPS law enforcement program, led to the creation of the position of Associate Director, Visitor and Resource Protection. The past

occupants of this position have had a background in NPS law enforcement. This background was deemed essential in dealing with such critical challenges as icon security, and other high risk, high liability issues affecting law enforcement.

You often cite your own history as a commissioned ranger as a key component of your qualifications as a ranger and Director. For the AD/VRP, this background is even more essential.

We ask that in your search for the next AD/VRP you ensure the person selected has a strong background in law enforcement program management. We understand the multiple disciplines that this position oversees, but none have the critical needs and limited resources of law enforcement. For example, the Fire program has multiple program managers and resources far in excess of the law enforcement program to deal with a workload that is quite seasonal in nature.

The law enforcement program, on the other hand, is currently populated by four levels of managers with "acting" in their titles. As you're well aware, LE incidents occur every hour of every day throughout the NPS. Decades of experience of ranger-involved shootings, terrorist threats and the tragic loss of LE rangers has shown the critical need for a strong LE presence and guidance at the AD/VRP level. There must be no compromise on behalf of officer or visitor safety.

With cuts in budget and staffing, this is not the time to experiment by eliminating an effective law enforcement presence at that high level in the NPS. We urge you to ensure that the next AD/VRP has a great deal of recent managerial-level law enforcement experience.

Thank you. I look forward to your thoughts on this matter.

/s/ Randall Kendrick



### Lodge Website

The Lodge website is 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. Our address is [www.rangerfop.com](http://www.rangerfop.com).

### Application for Membership

You may also join, renew and pay your dues online with PayPal: [rangerfop.com](http://rangerfop.com) and choose **Join the Lodge**.

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: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

DOB: \_\_\_\_\_ E-Mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Permanent Rangers: \$60/year

Seasonals and Retired Active Members: \$40/year

Associate (non-Commissioned) Membership (Newsletter only): \$40/year

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

Make Check Payable to: National Park Rangers Lodge.

Agency and Work Unit: \_\_\_\_\_

Mail to: National Park Rangers Lodge, POB 1481, Twain Harte, CA 95383

Phone: 1-800-407-8295 10am-8pm Eastern Time or email:

[rangerfop@sonic.net](mailto:rangerfop@sonic.net).



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