



THE THIN GREEN LINE

NEWSLETTER OF THE INTERNATIONAL RANGER FEDERATION

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OFFICERS REPORTS

President's Report

Dear Friends and Colleagues

It is indeed an honor and a privilege to have been elected as the President of the International Ranger Federation. I thank you all most sincerely for the trust put in me – I will give my all to contribute meaningfully during my three year term. It is a great challenge which I take on only with the grace of God.

My gratitude to Rick Smith, who has carried the IRF for the past three years and has taken the IRF from strength to strength. To those who served on the International Executive Committee, and have stepped down to make way for new and equally enthusiastic members, also a very big thank you for all your hard work.

With such a responsibility, I am consoled that Juan Carlos Gambarotta has again been elected to (and accepted) the position of Vice President. A man with a big heart and boundless energy, and a pillar of support.

The elected International Officers for 2003 – 2006 are:

David Zeller	President	Juan Carlos Gambarotta	Vice President
Barbara Mertin	Secretary	Colin Dilcock	Treasurer

The elected Regional Representatives are;

Tim Snow	Africa	Chris Artiemiew	Australasia
Ronald Mora	Central America	Francisco Correia	Europe
Deanne Adams	North America	Marcello Ochoa	South America

The above all constitute the International Executive Committee of the IRF.

To those who offered themselves for election, but stood down in the interests of accord and unity, your contributions and continued dedication are equally appreciated, and I will still be pressing your button for the valued contribution you can make.

Also, my appreciation to the appointees of the IRF, who have worked hard for many years and have agreed to continue to carry the burdens which they have so ably done in past;

Gordon Miller	Executive Director
Bill Halainen	Editor
Robin Ackrel	Exchange Bureau

Please do not hesitate to contact any of the above at any time and with regard any matter. Contact details appear elsewhere in this newsletter.

Also, congratulations to Barbara, who has been elected as coordinator of the EUROPARC Junior Ranger Program.

Fourth International Ranger Federation Congress

The Fourth International Ranger Federation World Congress was held in Wilson's Promontory National Park, Victoria, Australia, in March and was a resounding success. The organizing committee, under the able leadership of Andy Nixon, deserves our very special thanks. The "volunteers" were a very special feature and I am sure all who were there will also pay tribute to the very hard work they put into making the congress a success. Simon Monk and ASN Events also deserve our gratitude for a job well done.

But what did it all mean? We know that rangers not only work hard and with heart (the outcomes of the congress attest to this) but can also play hard. The outings and social events were, to many, of more personal value than the formal sessions. This is where friendships are made, ideas exchanged, and the network expanded. The IRF congresses are not just about the growth and furthering of our profession, but also about personnel growth.

A lasting memory of the congress will be the memorial plaque, located at the quiet Tidal Overlook. On the day of departure, I took an early morning run up to Tidal Overlook (and nearly missed the bus out). It was a poignant and humbling experience to stand alone at the plaque erected in memory of those rangers who have fallen in service of that which they hold dear, our priceless natural heritage. It made me feel proud to be part of the brotherhood/sisterhood of rangers. May their memory, and deeds, live forever.

The next IRF Congress will be held in Loch Lomond, Scotland in 2006. I look forward to seeing you all there.

Build up to World Parks Congress

The IRF has an unprecedented opportunity to showcase the role, and indeed plight, of the ranger in front of the international community during the upcoming World Parks Congress to be held in Durban, South Africa, in September.

In collaboration with the IUCN, the resolution on "Protecting the Protectors", adopted in Australia, will feature strongly in the WPC deliberations.

The urgency, and seriousness, of this issue is underscored by the fact that, in the short time since the congress in Australia (only three months), we have learnt of the following ongoing violence against rangers;

- In India, two assistant conservators kidnapped by extremists while on duty, and are believed still to be held by their captors (21 June 2003).
- In Virunga National Park in the DRC, Ranger Safari Sulubika, a father of five children, was kidnapped by rebels and is believed KIA. Others on the patrol were able to escape (27 May 2003). A month later, Ranger Kambale Binikere, 25, was killed in Virunga NP while defending elephants during a field patrol (21 June 2003).
- In the on-going conflict in Côte d'Ivoire, two rangers have been missing for sometime, but there is word that they may be held in a small village in the west of the country (2 June 2003).
- In the Philippines, Sixto Atienza, a volunteer ranger from Balayan Bay, was assassinated in retribution for his team's enforcement activities in defending the last remaining mangrove forests and marine sanctuaries in the bay against "businessmen with plenty of money and no scruples" (3 May 2003).

Further, unconfirmed reports from Portugal are that the Minister for the Environment in that country intends doing away with the positions of rangers in parks and reserves. (I have sent an initial response to the Minister for the Environment of Portugal via the European Regional Representative.) The response of the Portuguese rangers to this situation is typically altruistic of rangers worldwide: "The Portuguese rangers shall fight for a solution in the interests of nature conservation, a calling to which these men and women have dedicated their lives. They will not sit back, as they have an important mission in protecting the natural and cultural heritage for following generations."

This exemplifies the bone, sinew, muscle, heart and determination of which rangers are made. We must show the world that we are above petty politics, dirty business, corruption, selfish gain and materialism. We must ensure that the ranger receives the recognition he/she deserves, for the continued future of our world's natural and cultural heritage, of which we are the worthy custodians.

I have asked Rick Smith, as the past president who has taken the IRF through the period of the build up to WPC, to lead the IRF delegation to the congress. Rick will also be the lead on capacity building issues, and Juan Carlos will lead the very important "Protecting the Protector" issue. These two issues, although each has a definite focus, are mutually supportive and complimentary. In addition we hope to highlight the issue of interpretation as a tool to sustainable development, as well as other IRF related issues such as the Europarc Junior Ranger program and IRFC contributions.

The IRF has celebrated its tenth anniversary, and it is fitting to take a commemorative edition of the IRF magazine, The Thin Green Line, to the World Parks Congress and the international community. In anticipation, thank you to Bill Halainen and Stewart Bonney. I would make a most urgent and serious plea to all Rangers to supply stories and photographs of Rangers at work to this newsletter.

General

Funding remains a perennial issue. The WPC will provide a measure of exposure for the IRF, which we hope we can hopefully take advantage of. However, it is each and everyone's responsibility to identify potential funding sources for the IRF.

There are a plethora of NGO's and multi-national corporations which could be approached for funding. All I ask for is the identification of a potential funder, and an introduction.

Rick Smith did wonders in obtaining a grant from the Turner Foundation, and in submitting the required report for the granting of the second half of the promised funds.

Bill Wade has submitted registration for tax exemption in the USA under section 501(c)(6) of that country's internal revenue code, but this is still not the ideal situation and Bill is still working on this. I would like to hear input from member associations with regard the possibility of registering the IRF for tax exempt status in other countries. This is important to donor organizations/companies, in terms of being able to write-off donations against tax.

One aspect of the IRF that I intend carrying through during my term is cementing proper organizational structure and procedures in place. There has been a lot of on-going work in this regard and in particular by small dedicated task groups working during IRF 2003. As the IRF grows, and its place in the international arena becomes recognized, this aspect, although administrative and functional of nature, becomes increasingly important.

In closing, I would like to emphasize that our strength lies not only in our individual passionate commitment to the sustainable conservation of our natural and cultural resources, but in our collective expertise and ability, and for this reason I would plead that COMMUNICATION amongst rangers becomes a priority, at every level, in every member association, between member associations and within the entire IRF structure.

“For it is not in the receiving, but in the giving ...”

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PS: Besides those people specifically named above, there are many others who have worked together on a project or issue, and many working behind the scenes on the quiet. That I choose not to name all those involved is merely that I fear that I will miss one or two names in the process. Be assured, your contribution IS recognized, and I thank you ALL

IRF Consultancy (IRFC) Report

Ecuador

The first training course for the rangers on the Awacachi Corridor Project in Ecuador has now been completed by Declan Keiley, Sean Prendergast and Daniel Paz. The second stage of the training will be undertaken at the end of June. Our client for this work is Fauna and Flora International based in Cambridge, England.

Countryside Management Association

Our contract with CMA to organize its annual Study Conference is well under way. Due to take place at the University of Wales in Aberystwyth from 8th to 11th September, some 80 delegates are expected to consider 'The Countryside Challenge for the 21st Century – training present and future professionals' with support and input from all of the major organizations with an interest in and a responsibility for the countryside and environment of England and Wales.

Scotland – 2006

Considerable thought has already been given to the organization of the IRF Fifth World Congress in Stirling, Scotland, in June 2006. Meetings and contacts took place throughout June and July to establish the basic needs and requirements for this major world event. A database of potential delegates will be set up over the next few weeks – so if you haven't already put your information on our list, please send personal contact details to me.

Junior Ranger Program

Following the success of the 2002 program in partnership with the Europarc Federation, an expanded program will take place in 2003. A special training event for the rangers who will guide the events of 2003 took place at Laufen in Germany in June with the financial support of the Jacobs Foundation [our sponsors for the European Ranger Project in 1999/2000].

TOPAS [Training Of Protected Area Staff]

It is difficult to believe, but it is three years since this project commenced in partnership with representatives from nine European countries funded by the European Union Leonardo da Vinci program. The final partners meeting was held at Losehill Hall, Peak District National Park, UK, in June. Under discussion was a possible bid for a TOPAS II project based on ranger training, although this may prove to be beyond our resources. A re-test of the Foundation Ranger training course which was developed in UK and tested in Iceland [see TOPAS web site www.topas.mtnforum.org for information on this and other results of the project] may be held in October in Austria for rangers from central and eastern Europe.

Concordat: Countryside Council For Wales

Our Draft report was considered by the Steering Group in early May and is now in the final stages of amendment prior to acceptance by our client. Further information in the next Newsletter.

[Further information about IRFC Ltd is on our web site (www.ranger-irfc.com) or can be obtained from Mike Marshall, who can be reached at marshall.i.r.f@btinternet.com]

Mike Marshall
IRFC Ltd.

Regional Representatives Report

Regional Representatives and IRF Associations

As noted above in President David Zeller's comments, six regional representatives have been elected to serve as liaisons/coordinators of activities within the associations on their respective areas. Here is a summary of which associations are within which regions. The term "Individuals" refers to rangers in specific nations who are working to create national ranger associations.

Africa (Tim Snow)

Ivory Coast – Association Ivorienne des Rangers
South Africa – Game Rangers Association of Africa [umbrella body]
Individuals – Cameroon, Egypt (?), Kenya

Australasia (Chris Artiemiew)

Australia – Australian Ranger Federation [umbrella body]
Australia – Queensland Rangers Association
Australia – Tasmanian Ranger Association
Australia – Victorian Ranger Association
Australia – National Park Rangers Association of Western Australia
India – Assam Forest Rangers Association
India – Gujrat State Rangers Association
India – Madhay Pradesh State Forest Range Officers Association
India – Tamilnadu Forest Rangers Association
Nepal – Rangers Association of Nepal.
Individuals – Assam Forest Service (Class 1) Association, National Parks Authority - Republic of Korea, China, Fiji Islands, Papua New Guinea

Central America (Ronald Mora)

Costa Rica – Costa Rica Rangers Association
Individuals – Guatemala, Dominican Republic

Europe (Francisco Semodo Correia)

Austria – Verband der Österreichischen NationalparkbetreuerInnen
Czech Republic – Association of Protected Area Rangers of the Czech Republic
Denmark – Naturvejleder Foreningen I Denmark
England – Countryside Management Association
Finland – Suomen Luononsuojelualueiden Henkilö/Kunta
Germany – Bundesverband Naturwacht
Iceland – Iceland Warden Association
Ireland – Ranger Association of Ireland
Italy – Associazione Italiana Guardie dei Parchi e delle Aree Protette
Italy – Associazione Ligure Agenti di Vigilanza Ambientale
Northern Ireland – Northern Ireland Countryside Staff Association
Norway – Norwegian Rangers Association
Portugal – Associacao Portuguesa de Guardas e Vigilantes da Natureza
Romania – Romanian Rangers Association
Russia – Rangers Association of Russia
Scotland – Scottish Countryside Rangers Association
Slovakia – Slovak Rangers Association
Sweden – Naturgärna
Spain – Asociacion Espanola de Agentes Forestales y Mediambientales
Individuals – Slovenia, Poland, Malta.

North America (Deanne Adams)

Canada – National Park Wardens Association
USA (National) – Association of National Park Rangers
USA (California) – California State Park Rangers

South America (Marcello Ochoa)

Argentina – Asociacion de Guardaparques Argentinos

Bolivia – Asociacio Boliviana Agentes de Conservacion

Chile – Cuerpo de Guardaparques de Chile

Ecuador – Galapagos Ranger Association

Paraguay – Asociacion de Guardeparques del Sistema Nacional de Areas Protegidas del Paraguay

Uruguay – Asociacion De Guardeparques del Uruguay

Individuals – Venezuela

North America

The North American delegates to the Fourth World Congress included three Canadians and 27 from the USA. The majority of the delegates were from the U.S. Association of National Park Rangers (ANPR). No delegates attended from Mexico. Several delegates were forced to cancel their trips because of the continued uncertainty over the war in Iraq and because of an increased level of security at targeted national parks. Yvette Ruan, the outgoing North American representative, had to cancel just one day before her scheduled flight because of her job as chief ranger at Golden Gate National Recreation Area.

Delegates from North America met as a group during the Congress and agreed upon four main actions:

1. Research existing US and Canadian state park organizations and explore possibilities for new IRF memberships (Bill Supernaugh and Bob Krumenaker, ANPR; Shaun McKenzie and Maureen Lynch, Canada)
2. Develop regional fundraising strategies, especially focused on assisting delegates to the Fifth World Congress (Deanne Adams);
3. Support the Canadian wardens as they work to re-vitalize their association; and
4. Continue to work with rangers of Mexico to establish a ranger association (Yvette Ruan and Rick Smith, ANPR); work with parks in US border states to develop contacts

Two issues of concern for North American rangers were identified at the meeting, but have not been further discussed:

1. The role of law enforcement rangers with other assigned duties and
2. the major transition that Canadian wardens are going through regarding law enforcement responsibilities, especially the use of firearms.

Volunteers are needed to work with the North American representative in three positions:

1. The Thin Green Line coordinator (to solicit articles from all associations and coordinate with the editor);
2. membership coordinator (explore needs for assisting countries in developing new member associations); and
3. fundraising coordinator (develop funding strategies to support IRF and provide sponsorships for more field people to attend the Scotland IRF Congress in 2006).

North American Representative Deanne Adams

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IRF NEWS AND ACTIONS

Fourth World Congress Report

The IRF Fourth World Congress was a resounding success. All delegates left with something – renewed vigor, new contacts, ideas and initiatives to try, new friends, and most importantly the knowledge that they were not alone in their endeavors in the sometime difficult and poorly resourced environments in which they worked. The organizing committee is immensely appreciative of the hundreds of hours that volunteers contributed to the event and the support of the many sponsor groups.

The final report on the congress is attached to this issue of [The Thin Green Line](#) and provides a summary of what occurred there.

Andrew Nixon
Congress Coordinator

Fifth World Congress

IRF's Fifth World Congress will be held in Scotland in June, 2006. If you would like to receive more information about the congress, please send your name and email address to me at marshall.i.r.f@btinternet.co. My fax number is 44 [0]1328 878951; my mailing address is South East Cottage, 34 The Street, Barney, Fakenham, Norfolk, UK, NR21 0NB. I already have contact information for those who put their names on the 'sign-up' sheet at the 4th World Congress in Australia.

Mike Marshall
IRFC Ltd.

Ford Foundation Scholarships at Schumacher College

The Ford Foundation has made a grant to Schumacher College [in England] to enable individuals from the Global South and from Eastern Europe to attend three-week courses at Schumacher College.

The college is a residential international center for ecological studies. Successful applicants will be grassroots activists, community leaders, or NGO workers who are operating in the frontline of development work. The scholarship award includes the full cost of the course and up to US \$750 to cover economy travel expenses.

For full information, go to www.schumachercollege.org.uk

From personal experience I know that the College runs high quality courses using leaders from all fields of environment and ecology and some of the leading thinkers on world situations. Some of the courses on offer will ideally suit rangers and environmental managers.

Mike Marshall
IRFC Ltd.

Study on Violence Against Rangers

Thanks to information and support provided by rangers from around the world, Juan Carlos Gambarotta has completed a paper entitled "Violence To Rangers: An International Approach." The text of that paper appears below.

Juan Carlos extends his sincere thanks and acknowledgement to the following people in helping him gather information: Augusto Atturo and Guido Baldi (Italy), Bill Halainen and Richard Smith (USA), Daniel Paz and Marcelo Ochoa (Argentina), Stewart Bonney and Tony Wilson (UK), Francisco Semedo (Portugal), Inés Possari (Brasil), J.Pierre J. Mirindi (DR Congo), Rod Braby (Namibia), Hector Caimaris (Uruguay), Carola Vaca and Lila Sainz (Bolivia), Arrie Schreiber (South Africa), Joachim Kouame (Ivory Coast), Francisco Tejedor, Roberto Naveiras and Isidro Jimenez (Spain), José Melchor (Venezuela), Michal Skalka (Czech Rep.) and Susana Valverde (Ecuador).

Overview

All we have hear about is the death of rangers who are killed by poachers, mostly in tropical countries, particularly in Africa. But what is the real picture?

Rangers have been killed since the beginning of our profession. Lawrence Lees was shot to death in 1931 in Riding Mountains National Park, Canada, and during the nineteen century half of the 800 forest rangers of Spain were killed while on duty.

The International Ranger Federation is very concerned with the problem of violence against the park ranger, and we, the rangers, must have a very clear view of how the violence hits us worldwide, for as with anything else, the problem must be well known to find the proper solutions.

In the United States of America, it has been reported that attacks and menaces to rangers increased from 10 to 104 cases (940% increase) in the period between 2000 and 2002. The present study is centered on cases that occurred from 1998 to February 2003, but some cases that occurred before are also mentioned.

Violence can be performed in many ways, so to avoid misinterpretations I only considered the following:

- Physical attacks to rangers.
- Clear attempts to attack rangers.
- Deliberate damage to protected area property and equipment.

The goals of the study were:

- To determine the distribution of the problem and see if it exists in developed and undeveloped countries.
- To see what conditions existed at the moment of the attack.
- To see if the results would have been different if the ranger had been accompanied, armed, and with good communications.

Because of the lack of available information on the third point, the study focused on the first two goals. The sources of information were the colleagues mentioned above, ranger association web sites and magazines (NPIB and IGR), and information that was submitted following a request for information that appeared in this newsletter. I first want to take note of some of the attacks suffered by colleagues before the period of time studied:

- Democratic Republic of Congo (1995/96) – Jean Pierre Mirindi Jobogo, shot in a foot during an ambush; Gerard Kipasula, seriously injured and kidnapped by rebels; and the following killed: Mburanumwe Bangushaka, Kamondo Mayele, Munyarurembo Idembe, Bakinahe Hakizimana, Suhuko Ndebo, Bigororande Nkiriye, Kalisya Muyenzi, Mashami Gashumba, Nzayaha Maniragaba, Salumu Majoro, Semuhanya Bizimungu, Bananie Ndorimana, Kagano Mbarabukeye, Habimana Serusingi, Muzindutsi Ntungungira, Kambale Idembe, Paluku Kiriyebera and Kambale Kapulu.
- Ecuador (1997) – Julio López, shot in the stomach.
- Spain (1980) – Manuel Lago, killed.

Although this study is surely very incomplete, we see that rangers were killed in South America, North America, Europe and Africa, so casualties happen in countries of very different cultures, riches, and levels of protected area development.

In the US National Park Service, rangers are the most assaulted of all federal law enforcement officers, according to the Department of Justice. During the year 2000, there were 99 assaults on National Park service rangers and officers, compared with 55 on customs agents, 55 on drug enforcement agents, and 25 on FBI agents.

According to the National Park Rangers Lodge of the Fraternal Order of Police in the USA, which produces a list of the ten most dangerous national parks in the country, ranger work wouldn't be so dangerous if it wasn't for the fact that the National Park Service "allows amateurs to manage the law enforcement program."

While there is a trend in all protected areas in the increasing number of visitors, it seems that some parks have fewer rangers than in the past (Big Bend and Yosemite in the USA), lack reliable radio communications (Shenandoah, USA), and even suffer from lack of leadership (Grand Canyon, USA).

Results of Survey

How was the violence performed? The survey showed that violence occurs in many different settings. Rangers have been injured or killed in many ways and places:

- At home watching TV
- Ambushed
- Kidnapped
- Attacked by a tourist leader
- Inspecting an illegal building
- Inspecting farm encroachment
- Cleaning a restroom
- With his own sidearm
- Run over by car

Who were the attackers? They include poachers, fishermen, illegal farmers, loggers, rebels, a tour leader, thieves, drivers, hunters, a dog owner, foreign smugglers and drug criminals.

What were the results? During the period reviewed:

- 31 rangers were killed
- 32 rangers were injured
- 11 rangers were kidnapped
- 35 rangers suffered different sorts of physical violence or were attacked
- 5 rangers stations were damaged
- 4 vehicles and boats were damaged

This table summarizes the findings:

	Killed	Injured	Other	Ranger Stations	Vehicles
South America	4	1	14	4	3
North America	4	4			
Africa	8	4	11		1
Europe	3	22	10	1	
Asia	12	1			
Total	31	32	35	5	4

While the deaths of a very few rangers had plenty of coverage, with many articles written, we do not even know the names of many others, as in the case of the seven Ugandan rangers killed in Murchison Falls National Park.

I understand that there have been many more cases of violence around the world in the last five years. This study contains data from only 17 countries, and even in these countries it is very likely many more cases occurred. Because of this, I do not consider that we yet have a good sense of the problem.

Conclusions

The sources of violence are so different that it would be impossible to stop it. But common sense says that at least the probability of new cases would be reduced if all rangers had adequate training in tactics, worked with companions, had good communications, and were armed.

We have seen that the possession of a weapon is not always a solution, because many of the rangers who were killed were armed at the moment of their deaths. One ranger was killed with his own sidearm. Even the use of a bullet-proof vest was not enough in one case – and that ranger also had backup.

So, what can we do to stop the problem?

Probably we must ask our employers to hire the proper number of rangers for every protected area, and to work with good equipment – a problem that is not new. Many rangers evidently died while working in quite good conditions, but it's certain that some common problems – lack of proper equipment, equipment that sometimes fails, working in solitude and without the possibility to respond to a shot – act together against the ranger.

We also must ask for justice. If the attackers are not properly punished, the news spreads and more violence is likely to happen. If we fail to improve our working conditions, if we lose more ground, many more rangers will be attacked and killed. Our job is dangerous, a fact that too many employers do not recognize, and we need to have life insurance. Life can not be bought again, but at least many more rangers would find a relief to their thoughts.

Juan Carlos Gambarotta
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NEWS ABOUT IRF ASSOCIATIONS

Chile

Chile's rangers: who are they? As an introduction, it is important to know the history of these dedicated men and women, who now number 367 persons, began at the beginning of the last century, when Malleco Forest Reserve was created (1907) in the Araucanía region. During those times, and for several decades, they were called "Guardabosques" (forest wardens), for their goal was to protect forests against fires and mainly stop illegal timber extractions. People hired to be forest wardens were countrymen, and they were chosen for their knowledge of the land.

Thanks to the tenacity of some visionaries, Chile becomes one of the first countries in Latin America to officially create a national park 18 years later – Beniamin Vicuña Mackenna National Park in the Cautin Province on June 21, 1925. But this first Chilean national park did not last long; due to interest in dedicating its lands to settlements, it was deauthorized just four years later. But the seed planted by some Chilean citizens with vision developed quickly – only a year later (July 17, 1926), Vicente Perez Rosales National Park was created, with an initial size of 135,000 hectares in the Andes Mountains of the Llanquihue province. This park is still in existence.

Since that important historic event, the conservationist movement developed in our country with the creation of new national parks, forest reserves, national reserves and natural monuments. Staff also began to increase steadily with the creation of jobs and definition of functions, moving from the mission of just protecting the forests to the conservation of biodiversity and service to society.

Today the Corps of Rangers (Cuerpo de Guardaparques), officially created in 1999, works from the northern plateaus to the austral Patagonia, including the important Easter Island. The Corps of Rangers is the direct link between CONAF and the community. Rangers perform many functions – conservation of biodiversity, controls, education and support to visitors, interpretation, support of scientific research, monitoring, surveys, and maintenance of equipment and property of the protected area system of the state. Rangers have become fundamental to environmental conservation through the protected area system. Rangers have also performed a very important role, following the new policy of the corporation of dealing with communities near parks in economic, ecologic and social themes. In doing this, rangers have broken the island-like management of protected areas of the past and are contributing more to effective development. The ranger's role as educator is growing in a society more and more avid to approach and learn about the nation's natural and cultural heritage.

New challenges have been planned, inspired by the institutional commitment and the constant search on how to improve the work. One of them has been the big stride of incorporation into IRF, for Chilean rangers understand that being a member of that organization will let them join efforts to reach the goals of the world conservation strategy, defined by IUCN, and link with other ranger associations to foster the profession and increase their knowledge.

For all these reason, The National Forest Corporation is proud of its rangers, not only for their high ethic, but also for their hard and endless work to transform our country into a national leader in environmental conservation.

As a technician of the Corporation who works closely with rangers and is conscious of their dreams and nightmares about making the institution grow, I can't end without honoring three rangers who have made a difference in pioneering the organization, unification and the materialization of the Corps of Rangers: Julio César Vergara, Fernando Porras and Guillermo Bravo, current managers of Rio de los Cipreses National Reserve, Rodal Siete Tazas National Reserve and El Morado National Monument respectively. To them my admiration.

Angel Lazo Alvarez
Technical Counterpart of the Corps of Rangers

Guardaparques, quienes son? A partir de esta edición de Chile Forestal, se da inicio a un espacio de difusión del Cuerpo de Guardaparques de CONAF hacia la comunidad, con la finalidad de dar a conocer aspectos relevantes de la labor que realizan en las unidades que conforman el Sistema Nacional de Áreas Silvestres Protegidas del Estado (SNASPE), en pro de la conservación de la diversidad biológica del país, para beneficio de las actuales y futuras generaciones.

A modo de presentación, es importante conocer la historia de estos abnegados hombres y mujeres, la cual empieza en nuestro país a principios del siglo pasado con la creación de la Reserva Forestal Malleco, en el año 1907, en la Región de la Araucanía. En ese entonces y durante varias décadas se les denominó guardabosques, dado que la principal preocupación era proteger los bosques contra siniestros y fundamentalmente para impedir la extracción ilegal de madera.

Las personas que eran contratadas como guardabosques correspondían a colonos y lugareños, esencialmente por razones prácticas como de conocimiento de las zonas donde se localizaban las Reservas Forestales.

Dieciocho años después de la creación de la Reserva Forestal Malleco, gracias a la perseverancia de algunos visionarios, Chile se convierte en uno de los primeros países de América Latina en establecer oficialmente un Parque Nacional. Es así como nace, un 21 de junio de 1925, el Parque Nacional Benjamín Vicuña Mackenna, en la provincia de Cautín⁽¹⁾.

Sin embargo, este primer Parque Nacional chileno tuvo corta duración, puesto que por razones de intereses para destinar tierras a la colonización, se desafectó cuatro años más tarde, pero la “semilla sembrada” por esos ciudadanos chilenos con visión de futuro tuvo un rápido establecimiento, ya que solo un año más tarde, el 17 de julio de 1926, se instauró el Parque Nacional Vicente Pérez Rosales, con una superficie inicial de 135.000 hectáreas, en la cordillera andina de la provincia de Llanquihue, parque que actualmente sigue vigente ⁽¹⁾.

A partir de este importante hito histórico se desarrolla progresivamente el movimiento conservacionista en nuestro territorio con la creación de nuevos parques nacionales, reservas forestales, reservas nacionales y monumentos naturales⁽¹⁾. Así también, en el ámbito del personal de terreno, se produce un perfeccionamiento paulatino y sostenido respecto a la definición de cargos y funciones, pasando desde la única preocupación de proteger bosques al interés de protección integral, orientada a la conservación de la diversidad biológica y al servicio de la sociedad.

Hoy, el Cuerpo de Guardaparques creado oficialmente el año 1999 e integrado por alrededor de 400 funcionarios se desempeñan desde el norte altiplánico hasta la austral patagonia, incluyendo la importante Isla de Pascua; ellos tienen una actividad permanente de servicio y de nexo directo entre CONAF y la comunidad, cumpliendo diversas funciones, como la protección y conservación de la biodiversidad, vigilancia y control de visitantes, educación e interpretación ambiental, apoyo a la investigación aplicada, prospecciones básicas (censo, inventario y monitoreo) y, mantenimiento y control de los bienes muebles e inmuebles que contienen las unidades del SNASPE.

Sin lugar a dudas, se han constituido en un pilar fundamental no solo para la conservación ambiental a través del referido Sistema, sino que también por su contribución al cumplimiento de las nuevas directrices que se han establecido para la Corporación, especialmente al logro de la triple vinculación del SNASPE con las comunidades vecinas a éste, primordialmente en el ámbito ecológico, económico y social; rompiendo de esta manera el otrora paradigma de manejo aislacionista de las áreas silvestres protegidas a cambio de su aporte efectivo para el desarrollo de cada comunidad. Y, por cierto, cada vez adquiere mayor valor su papel como agentes educadores de una sociedad cada día más ávida de acercamiento y conocimiento del patrimonio natural y cultural del país.

Inspirados por su compromiso institucional y por la búsqueda constante de perfeccionamiento de su labor, se han planteado con el decidido apoyo del actual nivel directivo de CONAF nuevos desafíos, como el gran paso que han dado recientemente al incorporarse a la Federación Internacional de Guardaparques, dado que han comprendido que insertos en esta organización podrán aunar esfuerzos para la consecución de las metas de la estrategia mundial de conservación definidas por la Unión Internacional de Conservación de la Naturaleza (UICN), así como establecer comunicaciones mundiales entre las organizaciones de guardaparques, tendientes a profesionalizar y mejorar sus conocimientos.

En este contexto, los guardaparques son motivo de orgullo para la Corporación Nacional Forestal puesto que aparte de representar los más altos valores éticos que orientan el quehacer institucional, contribuyen activamente, con su trabajo arduo y perseverante, a transformar a nuestro país en una nación líder en materias de conservación ambiental.

Como técnico de la Corporación cercano a la labor de los guardaparques y con conocimiento de sus desvelos para ayudar al engrandecimiento de la Corporación, no puedo dejar de rendir un homenaje sentido para enaltecer a tres guardaparques que dejaron su huella como pioneros en la materialización, organización y unificación del actual Cuerpo de Guardaparques, me refiero a los Sres. Julio César Vergara, Fernando Porras y Guillermo Bravo, actuales administradores de la Reserva Nacional Río de los Cipreses, Reserva Nacional Radal Siete Tazas y Monumento Natural El Morado, respectivamente; vaya para ellos mi admiración.

Angel Lazo Alvarez
Contraparte Técnica Cuerpo de Guardaparques

Fuente : ⁽¹⁾ Medio Ambiente en Chile (CIPMA)1985 “Áreas Silvestres Protegidas”, Carlos Weber y Alejandro Gutierrez.

Scotland

This has been a busy time for SCRA, because our country's new access laws are now on the statute books and the mechanisms and staff to make them work are being decided. Throughout the documents, rangers are named as among the lead agents in opening up the countryside to greater public access and acting as intermediaries in disputes. We are trying to ensure this leads to an increase in staffing levels and appropriate training for rangers dealing with these new laws. We have some hopes that it may lead to a raising of awareness within the government that we exist and already do much of the work expected in this new era. If only the funding and political wills are there. Does this sound familiar to anyone?

Our twinning with Iceland has again resulted in an exchange of personnel. This summer will see the third such exchange when Martin Hinds, from Highland Ranger Service, heads for the land of fire and ice. We are still the only associations to enter into such an arrangement and would be delighted to help any others to set one up.

Our second national park is at present being created and as part of the process has had its first board of directors elected. We are delighted to report that three members of the board are either past or current ranger staff. In fact the deputy convenor is one of our members working within the park. We hope to form a close and mutually beneficial relationship with them. There has also been talk in the press about a possible third park being formed off the west coast, including several of our islands. As yet, this is an unofficial campaign by pressure groups, but it might lead to another park.

Having returned from the last Congress in Australia, we are now engaged in the daunting task of hosting the Fifth Congress here in Scotland in 2006. The venue has now been decided as the University of Stirling and the topics are currently being finalized by the IRF executive. Details of how to contact the organizers and where to find the Congress website will be available soon. We also hope to run pre and post congress tours and work shadowing; again, details will appear soon.

Links with our colleagues in England and Wales are currently being strengthened through their help in organizing the Fifth Congress and through attendance at each other's conferences. We also hope to begin exchanging articles in each other's magazines and promoting each other's training courses.

Tony Wilson, Chairperson, SCRA

South Africa/Africa

The Fourth World Congress was attended by five GRAA members from South Africa namely Arrie Schreiber, David Zeller, Tim Snow, Albert Sibuyi and Rob Markham.

Other African delegates included John Makombo from Ghana, Ali Jama from Kenya and Bernard Inyatshi from the DRC. Due to visa problems, Jobogo Mirindi from the DRC could not make it to the Congress.

All the Congress aims have been achieved. The GRAA and African delegates all participated in one way or another and in this way made a positive contribution:

- David Zeller championed the work group on the Standing Rules.
- Tim Snow was part of a work group that visited the Vision, Mission and Objectives of the IRF.
- Arrie Schreiber was part of a work group to draw up a draft financial plan for the next three years.
- All members together with other African delegates met with the Aboriginal representatives sharing ideas and experience in integrated management of PAM's.
- These members presented four talks ranging from managing the masses to responsible problem animal control.
- The GRAA nominated David Zeller as the next IRF President and it was unanimously accepted.
- Tim Snow was nominated and accepted as the African Representative.
- Barbara Mertins from Austria was nominated by GRAA as the new IRF Secretary and it was also unanimously accepted.
- The GRAA also led all African delegates during the Social Evening in singing Shosaloza and it can be accepted as fact that most, if not all, delegates has a workable knowledge how to sing this song!

The Congress was very well organized and the organizing committee can feel proud of their achievements. A pleasant team spirit existed throughout the Congress and old acquaintances were renewed and new ones were made. To attend these Congresses is indeed an experience that can be recommended.

Apart from the IRF Congress, not much has happened with the GRAA. However, we are steaming ahead to establish our Secretariat, possibly with some Dutch funding helping us along. It is our objective to have this office up and running before the end of this year! Unless something goes wrong, we hope to achieve this dream.

Arrie Schreiber, GRAA

LETTERS

Friends:

I want to spread the word that while I was visiting the protected areas in Australia and New Zealand after the congress, all the rangers I met and their relatives made a mistake...

They thought I was the son of Queen Elizabeth and invited me to share their houses and food, paid for tickets (including two flight tickets of nearly 2,000 Km each to Alice Springs), and so on.

Just to afford to do something, I cooked in response to so much kindness.

Well Ausies and Kiwis: I hope one day I can do something for you like you did for me.

Best regards from the Urugayan marshes,

Juan Carlos Gambarotta

Quiero hacer saber que mientras estuve visitando areas protegidas en Australia y Nueva Zelandia luego del congreso,todos los guardaparques y sus parientes cometieron un error...

Pensaron que yo era un hijo de la Reina Elizabeth y me invitaron a compartir sus casas, comidas, me pagaron tickets, incluyendo dos de casi dos mil Km hasta y desde Alice Springs, y cosas asi. Para hecer algo en respuesta a tanta amabilidad yo cocine unas cuantas veces.

Bueno Australianos y Kiwis: Espero que alguna vez pueda hacer algo por ustedes, tal como ustedes lo hicieron por mi.

Los mayores saludos desde los bañados de Uruguay,

Juan Carlos Gambarotta

Dear IRF Members:

The Ontario Conservation Officers' Association (OCA) is holding its 2003 Annual Convention and General Meeting in Thunder Bay from August 14 to August 16, 2003. Dedicated Conservation Officers and their families gather from all across the province during their vacation time to promote the objectives of the OCA. These include working with the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources to ensure natural resource protection is conducted in a professional, effective manner and furthering education and training of Conservation Officers.

During the three-day Convention, various draws are held to promote officer attendance and add fun to business discussions. Warden games will be held Friday afternoon and prizes are awarded to teams in various categories. This session includes spouses and children of all ages and is a fun event. After the Saturday night banquet meal, there are draws for a variety of prizes as well as silent auctions and raffles.

While attending officers pay a registration fee, we are seeking sponsors to offset the cost of this annual event. Any additional proceeds from donated items are contributed to other natural resource causes. If you are able to contribute in any manner, such as items, gift certificates or a monetary contribution, our members would be most appreciative.

Please visit our website at www.oca.ca for more insight into the Ontario Conservation Officers' Association and the valuable contributions that our members make.

We would like to acknowledge the donation you make to help make this 2003 Convention a success. Please include a business card with your website and we will be happy to establish a link to all sponsors of the 2003 Convention in our members' forum of the Conservation Officers' Association web site.

Please feel free to contact me at any time if you have any questions.

Yours truly,

Mark Halley
2003 Convention Chairman
Cell: 519-596-1631
Home: 807-577-6893

Dear Friend:

I'm Mihály Havranek and I work for department of game and fish of the Hungarian Ministry of Agriculture and Regional Policy's county office of County Somogy. I'm a fisheries officer of County Somogy. My hobby is collecting shoulder patches of department of game, fish and wildlife organizations and natural resource agencies.

Please, if it's possible, send me your patch. My address: FM. Hivatal, Havranek Mihály, KAPOSVÁR, H-7400, Csokonai str. 3. Pf: 250, Hungary. vadhal.somogy@axelero.hu

Best regards,

Havranek Mihály
halászati felügyelő

UPCOMING IRF AND MEMBER EVENTS AND TRAINING

September 8 - 18, 2003 World Parks Congress, Durban, South Africa. For details, go to the Congress web site at <http://wcpa.iucn.org/wpc/wpc.html>

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