



THE THIN GREEN LINE

NEWSLETTER OF THE INTERNATIONAL RANGER FEDERATION

November, 2001

Volume 8

Number 4

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Many national associations sent messages of condolence to me or to the Association of National Park Rangers of the United States (ANPR) regarding the hijacking of the four planes and the loss of life at the World Trade Center in New York, the Pentagon in Washington, D.C. and in the downing of the airliner in Pennsylvania. I want you to know how much these gestures of solidarity meant to me and to my fellow members of ANPR. We appreciate your support and join you in praying for an end to these kinds of senseless acts of violence. The president of ANPR read the messages we received to ANPR's members during its 25th anniversary meeting, which was held from October 29th to November 2nd in Jackson, Wyoming. IRF's executive director, Gordon Miller, attended the meeting, as did Elaine Thomas, a member of Australia's congress organizing committee, and Barbara Mertin of the Austrian Ranger Association. We also extend our sympathies to the countries that lost countrymen in the attacks. At last count, 80 nations suffered the loss of their fellow citizens in New York.

Fourth World Congress of the IRF

I am happy to be able to share with you the latest information from our colleagues in Australia regarding the Fourth World Congress of the International Ranger Federation. The organizing committee has formulated the following goals for our March, 2003 meeting.

- 1) To provide an opportunity for rangers from around the world:
 - to come together to learn from each other by discussing common problems and working on their solutions;
 - to establish a network of contacts for support and assistance; and
 - to engage in fellowship, social activity and enhancement or renewal of motivation and spirit for the mission of protecting the world's special places.

- 2) To facilitate participation from all parts of the world, particularly the Asia/Pacific region, and to expose rangers, often from remote areas, to the work of other international conservation agencies.
- 3) To promote the development of universal skills in protected area management.
- 4) To provide the IRF an opportunity to determine how best to use its role and collective advocacy, and to establish priorities in its efforts to benefit the people who protect the world's special places.
- 5) To afford delegates the opportunity to experience the natural and cultural heritage of Victoria and Australia.
- 6) To provide delegates with the opportunity to participate in shadow assignments, expanded visits to protected areas, and/or other educational opportunities in Australia.

Second Annual Meeting, Argentine Ranger Association/First Continental Meeting of IRF

The Argentina Ranger Association (AGA) will be meeting at about the time that you will be reading this issue of *The Thin Green Line*. Delegates will be discussing a full range of issues related to protected area management during the Congress. In conjunction with this meeting, the IRF will hold its first Latin American group meeting. IRF's vice president, Juan Carlos Garmbarotta, will represent us during the meeting. We appreciate AGA's invitation to join with them in hosting this important regional meeting. We can expect a report from AGA's president as well as one from Juan Carlos regarding the activities of the Congress.

U.S. Establishes 385th Site Within Its National Park System

Minidoka Internment National Monument, established on January 17, 2001, became the 385th unit of the national park system on September 19th following the official transfer of the federal land from the Bureau of Reclamation to the National Park Service. Minidoka Internment NM will protect the historic structures within the monument's 72.75 acres and provide opportunities for public education and interpretation of an important chapter in American history – the internment of Japanese Americans during World War II. A management plan will be developed for the site that will allow visitors to reflect on this sad chapter in the nation's history.

IUCN Study On Tourism and Protection Of Biodiversity

I have received a copy of this study. It may be worth your attention. Please be warned that it is long and in English only. If you wish a copy, please contact me at rsmith0921@aol.com.

Closing Thoughts

As I watched the repeated replays of the planes striking the World Trade Center, I could not stop thinking about the values that protected areas play in modern life. Terrorism attempts to create instability and fear by separating humans from the basic principles that bind us together. Protected areas, on the other hand, represent stability and reaffirm these principles.

For centuries, philosophers have commented on the power of nature to give sustenance to the human soul. The world's protected areas preserve the most important and largest remaining examples of this wild country and without them, we would be less rich in spirit and have fewer places to go to seek solace. Our historical and cultural sites offer us the chance to read from human history (see the note about the US's 385th site) and to once again marvel at the genius of humankind to create beauty and foster the dignity of each individual. All this stands in stark contrast to the events of September 11.

I recognize that protecting these natural and cultural sites is often a thankless task. What sustains us, though, is that what we protect is fundamental to the continued appreciation of life on this planet and to the recognition that we have to learn to live together. This is a lesson easily taught at our protected areas. The American naturalist, John Muir, once observed that when you touch something in nature, you find that it is connected to everything else. Let us continue celebrating these connections and helping them survive in the complex world in which we live.

Rick Smith
President, IRF

Nota Del Presidente

Muchas asociaciones nacionales mandaron mensajes de condolencia a la Asociación de Guardaparques Nacionales de Estados Unidos o a mí, relativas al incidente de los cuatro aviones y las muertes acontecidas en el World Trade Center de Nueva York, el Pentágono, Washington y la caída del avión en Pensilvania. Quiero que sepan lo que esos gestos de solidaridad representaron para mis compañeros de la ANPR y para mí. Apreciamos su apoyo y nos unimos a ustedes en su rezo para que finalice este tipo de ataque violento sin sentido.

El Presidente de la ANPR planea leer los mensajes que recibió ante los miembros de la Asociación, durante la celebración del 25 aniversario de la misma, planeado entre el 29 de octubre y el 2 de noviembre de 2001 en Jackson, Wyoming. Gordon Miller, el Director Ejecutivo de la FIG, asistirá al encuentro, como también lo harán Elaine Thomas, miembro del Comité Organizador del Próximo Congreso de la FIG en Australia, y Bárbara Martin de la Asociación de Guardaparques de Austria.

También queremos enviar nuestro pésame a los países que perdieron hijos durante los mencionados ataques. Según el último conteo, 80 naciones sufrieron pérdidas de ciudadanos en Nueva York.

Cuarto Congreso Mundial de la FIG.

Estoy feliz de poder compartir con Ustedes la última información de nuestros colegas de Australia relativa al 4to. Congreso Mundial de la FIG. El Comité Organizador ha formulado las siguientes metas para nuestra reunión de marzo de 2003.

- 1) Proveer una oportunidad para los guardaparques de todo el mundo:
 - de juntarse para aprender uno del otro, discutiendo problemas comunes y trabajar en sus soluciones
 - de establecer una red de contactos de apoyo y asistencia
 - de empeñarse en actividades sociales y de compañerismo y mejorar o renovar la motivación y el espíritu de la misión de proteger los lugares especiales del mundo.

- 2) Facilitar la participación de todas partes del mundo, particularmente Asia y la región del Pacífico y mostrar a los guardaparques, comúnmente de regiones remotas, el trabajo de otras agencias de conservación.
- 3) Promover el desarrollo de habilidades universales en el manejo de las áreas protegidas.
- 4) Darle a la FIG una oportunidad de determinar como ser usada de la mejor manera y en la defensa colectiva y establecer prioridades en su esfuerzo por beneficiar a la gente que protege los lugares especiales del mundo.
- 5) Dar a los delegados la oportunidad de experimentar el patrimonio natural y cultural de Victoria, Australia.
- 6) Dar a los delegados la oportunidad de participar en trabajos de voluntario asistido, hacer visitas prolongadas a las áreas protegidas y otras oportunidades educativas en Australia.

Segunda Reunión de la Asociación de Guardaparques Argentinos y Primer Congreso Regional de la FIG

La Asociación de Guardaparques Argentinos (AGA) se va a estar reuniendo mas o menos al tiempo que Ud. reciba este número de la Fina Línea Verde. Los delegados discutirán un amplio rango de temas relativos al manejo de la Áreas Protegidas. Conjuntamente, la FIG tendrá su primer Congreso Latinoamericano. El vice-presidente de la FIG, Juan Carlos Gambarotta, nos representará durante el Congreso. Apreciamos la invitación de la AGA de juntarnos en la presentación de este importante evento regional. Esperamos el reporte del Presidente de la AGA, así como el de Juan Carlos sobre las actividades del Congreso.

EE.UU establece su sitio No. 385 del Sistema de Parques Nacionales

El Monumento Nacional Minidoka Internment, establecido el 17 de enero de 2001, se convirtió en la unidad 385 del Sistema de Parques Nacionales el 19 de setiembre, siguiendo la transferencia oficial de la tierra federal desde el Buró de Reclamación al Sistema de Parques Nacionales.

Minidoka protegerá estructuras históricas en sus 72,75 acres y proveerá oportunidades para la educación pública e interpretación de este importante capítulo de la historia americana – la reclusión de americanos japoneses en campos de internamiento– durante la segunda guerra mundial. Se hará un plan de manejo para el sitio, que permitirá a los visitantes reflexionar sobre este triste capítulo de la historia nacional.

Estudio de la UICN sobre Turismo Y Protección de la Biodiversidad

He recibido una copia de este estudio. Podría serle provechoso. Por favor tenga en cuenta que es largo y solo está disponible en inglés. Si le interesa una copia contactese a rsmith0921@aol.com

Pensamientos de Cierre

Mientras miraba los repetidos replays de los aviones estrellándose sobre el World Trade Center no podía parar de pensar sobre los valores que las áreas protegidas ofrecen a la vida moderna. El terrorismo trata de crear inestabilidad y miedo, separando a los humanos de los principios que nos unen. Por el contrario, las áreas protegidas representan estabilidad y reafirman esos principios.

Por centurias los filósofos han comentado el poder de la naturaleza de dar sustento al alma humana. Las áreas protegidas del mundo preservan los más importantes y los más extensos sitios salvajes que aún se encuentran y sin ellos estaríamos mas pobres de espíritu y tendríamos menos lugares donde buscar nuestro solaz. Nuestros sitios de importancia cultural e histórica nos ofrecen el chance de leer la historia del hombre (ver nota sobre el sitio 385 de USA) y una vez mas maravillarnos con el genio del hombre para crear belleza y ampliar la dignidad de cada individuo. Todo esto contrasta fuertemente con los hechos del 11 de setiembre.

Reconozco que la protección de tales sitios naturales y culturales es con frecuencia una tarea ingrata. Los que nos mantiene es saber que lo que protegemos es fundamental para mantener la continuidad de la apreciación de la vida en este planeta y el reconocimiento de que tenemos que aprender a vivir juntos.

Esa es una lección fácil de aprender en nuestras áreas protegidas. El naturalista americano John Muir, una vez observó que cuando uno toca algo en la naturaleza se ve que está conectado a todo lo demás. Sigamos celebrando esas conexiones y ayudándolas a sobrevivir en el complejo mundo en que vivimos.

Rick Smith
Presidente, FIG

VICE PRESIDENT'S REPORT

We have made contacts with the Chilean park rangers and I sent them the last issue of *The Thin Green Line* so that they can begin to understand what IRF is. They want to become affiliated members and our conversations with them have already begun.

IRF Policies

I have asked the Executive Council to begin to think about modifying and expanding the requirements for affiliation with the IRF. Up to the present, it is necessary that rangers form a national, state or provincial association. I believe, however, that the governments of many countries do not look favorably on these kinds of associations of employees. If, on one hand, rangers are not permitted to organize themselves into these kinds of association, and on the other, the IRF does not permit affiliation except by these same associations, it's very likely that rangers will feel isolated. Is there some other way that groups of rangers could affiliate?

As I come to know colleagues from more countries, I realize that there are very few countries in which the rangers work in good conditions. The IRF was founded with the goal of increasing the professional level of park rangers. In our first declaration in Zakapane, the delegates recognized that park rangers in many places work under difficult circumstances. I believe that sooner or later, we are going to have to do something to help rangers when the conditions in their countries are far from normal. One example is Venezuela. We have a provisional representative there, José Melchor, who, like all the rest of the rangers in the country, has not been paid for many months. I went to the Venezuelan Embassy in Montevideo to try to find out more about the situation, but I now realize that I will have to wait until the Latin American Congress in Argentina in late October to find out what the situation really is.

I would like to know what the rest of the IRF affiliates think about these two issues. It doesn't matter whether your opinions arrive tomorrow or three months from now, but please let me know what you think. I can be reached at jgamaro@adinet.com.uy.

News from Bolivia

Ana Carola Vaca, who represented Bolivia at our last Congress, reports that her dream of founding an association of Bolivian park rangers, has been realized. The establishment of the association occurred during the first congress of Bolivian park rangers and Ana Carola was elected the association's first president. We thank the Scottish Countryside Ranger Association and the Countryside Management Association of the UK who financed Ana Carola's trip to South Africa where she was inspired to form the Bolivian Ranger Association.

My African Correspondence

I am maintaining interesting correspondence with rangers from various African countries. I am delighted to hear that the elephants and the antelopes are returning to the Democratic Republic of the Congo as armed hostilities decrease in the region. This kind of news raises my spirits and I hope it does yours also.

Closing Thoughts

As many of you already know, I sent a note to our President and to the President of the Association of National Park Rangers of the US regarding the attacks on sites in that country. A lot has been said, and a lot more will be said, about these acts, but I don't believe that anyone can say anything better than the message that Rick gave us in this issue of *The Thin Green Line*.

Thank you and let's go forward!!

Juan Carlos Gambarotta
Vice President, IRF

Se hicieron contactos con guardaparques chilenos y les mandé el último número de la "Fina Línea Verde" para que vieran como es la FIG. Quieren ser miembros y las conversaciones ya comenzaron.

He pedido al Consejo Ejecutivo Internacional que comience a pensar en una manera de ensanchar los requisitos de ingreso a la FIG. Hasta ahora es necesario que sea formada una Asociación, sea esta de carácter nacional o Estatal-Provincial, pero creo que las asociaciones civiles de funcionarios no son bien vistas por los gobiernos de muchos países. De esa forma, si por un lado, a los guardaparques de un país no se les está permitido formar una asociación y por el otro lado, la FIG no les permite el ingreso, creo que esos guardaparques deberán sentirse muy aislados.

Otra cosa que veo es que a medida que uno sigue conociendo colegas de mas paises , me queda claro que deben ser muy pocos los paises donde se trabaja en buenas condiciones. Con la fundación de la FIG, el ánimo fue ante todo incrementar el nivel profesional del guardaparque y en la Declaración de Zakopane, (la primera) con otras palabras se dice que los guardaparques con frecuencia sufren malas condiciones de trabajo.

Creo que tarde o temprano vamos a sentir la necesidad de ayudar de alguna manera a los guardaparques cuando la situación esté claramente fuera de lo normal para ese país. Un ejemplo es Venezuela. Allí tenemos a un representante individual : José Melchor, quien como todos los guardaparques de aquel país no ha recibido su salario durante muchos meses. Fui a la Embajada de Venezuela en Montevideo e intenté ver si podía averiguar mas sobre el tema, pero me parece que quizás solamente pueda enterarme de algo mas durante el Congreso Latinoamericano que se realizará en Mendoza, Argentina.

Me interesa saber que piensan sobre esto todos los demás miembros de la FIG, no importa si los comentarios llegan la semana que viene o dentro de tres meses, pero por favor envíenme sus opiniones.

Ana Carola Vaca, quien representó a Bolivia durante nuestro último congreso en Sudáfrica tuvo la gran alegría de ver realizada su idea de organizar a los guardaparques de su país. La fundación fue hecha durante la realización del primer Congreso Boliviano de Guardaparques y Ana Carola fue electa su Presidenta.

Agradecemos a las asociaciones de Guardaparques de Escocia y a la Asociación de manejo Rural de Inglaterra, quienes financiaron el viaje de Carola a Sudáfrica, ya que fue allí donde se inspiró en formar una asociación boliviana.

Estoy manteniendo una interesante correspondencia con guardaparques de varios países africanos y me alegró saber que los elefantes y antílopes están regresando a la República democrática del Congo al mermar los enfrentamientos armados. Este tipo de noticias me dan mucho ánimo y espero que también a ustedes.

Como ya saben muchos de ustedes mande una nota a nuestro Presidente y a la Presidenta de la Asociación de Guardaparques de EE.UU. Se ha dicho mucho y se dirá mucho más sobre el tema del ataque, pero creo que no se puede decir nada mejor que el mensaje que nos ha dado Rick en este mismo número de La Fina Línea Verde.

Gracias y sigan adelante!

Juan Carlos Gambarotta
Vicepresidente, FIG

REPORT ON THE FIRST LATIN AMERICAN CONGRESS OF PARK RANGERS

From October 25th through October 27th, we Latin Americans held our first Park Ranger Conference in the beautiful city of Malargue in the Province of Mendoza, Argentina. After spending two days in a bus traveling the breadth of Uruguay and Argentina, I arrived in Malargue. The trees of the city, made possible by irrigation using waters from the highest peaks of the Americas and very visible from everywhere in the city, marked this happy encounter of park rangers.

The congress attracted delegates from many parts of Argentina and representatives from Brazil, Cuba, Ecuador, Bolivia, Chile, Uruguay, and Venezuela. The grave economic crisis from which Argentina is suffering limited the number of participants to 170, less than expected. Also, many of the countries outside Argentina were represented by only one of two delegates. Nonetheless, we should thank UNESCO which financed the participation of Nestor Oña and the Secretary of Tourism of Argentina for having financed the trips of some of the foreign delegates to the congress.

The agenda of the congress was extremely busy and as always happens, it was impossible to attend all the interesting sessions, but, as we know, time is a tyrant. All the presentations were very good, but some of the presenters needed more time to fully express their ideas. I thought the level of professionalism of the delegates from Mendoza was excellent. I think this province is doing better in protected area management than some of the surrounding countries, much better, for instance, than Uruguay. The Province took advantage of the congress to inaugurate a new visitor center relative to its system of protected areas.

Participants made the following presentations:

- Park ranger training at Argentina's Olog Institute
- International financing: the case of Bolivia's Noel Kempff National Park as a carbon sequestration site.
- Cuba's protected area system. This presentation left listeners with goose bumps and proves that the lack of finances is not a reason to do a very good job in conservation.
- The Biosphere Reserve Sumaco in the Ecuadorian Amazon.
- The administration of protected areas in the Province of Mendoza.
- The wetlands of Mendoza.
- The role of the park ranger in Latin America.

The following work groups met:

- Indigenous communities and the Argentina System of Parks.
- Public use in the Argentine System of Parks.
- Exotic species management.
- Design of the Argentine System of Parks.
- Alpine activities in the Argentine System of Parks.
- Decision making in the Argentine System of Parks.
- Fire management strategies in the Argentine System of Parks.

There was a very interesting round table discussion on ranger training during which participants expressed the desire for the IRF to be more actively involved in arriving at agreements to facilitate more ranger training.

Marcelo Ochoa, the South American representative, and I presented a very well attended session on the history of IRF and its future during which we tried to stimulate the affiliation of more countries. I noted that our hosts, the Argentine Ranger Association (AGA), had been motivated to form an association by the IRF and that his congress could be considered as a joint effort of IRF and AGA. I also noted that although some countries had not yet joined IRF, we were, nevertheless, working together.

Delegates wrote a declaration that has already been sent to the IRF. They also petitioned the IRF Executive Committee for a change in the standing rules to permit a group of rangers to affiliate with the IRF, even if they were not an association, as long as they had some kind of legal recognition from their country's government

The field trip, unfortunately, had to be cancelled due to lack of funds.

Juan Carlos Gambarotta
Vice President, IRF

Entre los dias 25 y 27 de octubre los latinoamericanos tuvimos nuestro Primer Congreso de Guardaparques en la bella ciudad de Malargue, Provincia de Mendoza, Argentina. Tras dos dias de andar en bus, atravesando a lo ancho Uruguay y Argentina llegue a la ciudad de Malargue. Esta ciudad poblada por arboles que solamente pueden crecer gracias a los canales de riego que llevan agua desde las mas altas cumbres de las Americas, muy visibles desde todos lados, facilito el feliz encuentro de los guardaparques.

El congreso atrajo delegados de muchas partes de Argentina, y representantes de Brasil, Cuba, Ecuador, Bolivia, Chile, Uruguay y Venezuela. Sin duda la gran crisis económica que se vive en estos momentos redujo el número de participantes, pues en total fuimos unos 170, o sea menos de lo esperado. También fue notoria la escasez de guardaparques de los países representados, tratándose en general de uno o dos por país. Debemos agradecer a la UNESCO el financiamiento del guardaparque Nestor Oña y a la Secretaría de Turismo de la Rep. Argentina por haber financiado el pasaje de varios participantes extranjeros.

La agenda del congreso fue muy apretada y como siempre sucede, fue imposible asistir a todas las disertaciones y talleres de interés, pero todos sabemos que el tiempo es tirano. Todas las disertaciones de los representantes de los países de Latinoamérica fueron muy buenas, pero a menudo faltó un poco más de tiempo para que terminaran de expresarse. Personalmente me pareció excelente el nivel profesional de los representantes de la Provincia de Mendoza. Creo que esta provincia está a un nivel superior al de algunos países de la región, sin duda es muy superior al de Uruguay. Durante el congreso La Dirección de Áreas protegidas de Mendoza aprovechó para inaugurar un centro de visitantes relativo a su sistema de áreas protegidas.

Las conferencias fueron las siguientes:

- Capacitación de guardaparques en el Instituto C. Olrog de Argentina.
- El financiamiento internacional. El caso de Bolivia relativo al PN Noel Kempff Mercado como sumidero de carbono.
- El sistema de áreas protegidas de Cuba. Esta exposición dejó boquiabiertos a todos los asistentes y nos demostró que la falta de ingresos no es pretexto para no hacer un muy buen papel en la conservación.
- La reserva de biosfera Sumaco que funciona perfectamente en la Amazonia ecuatoriana.
- Administración de las áreas protegidas de la Provincia de Mendoza.
- Los humedales de Mendoza.
- El rol del guardaparque en América Latina.

Los grupos de trabajo fueron:

- Comunidades indígenas y las ASP.
- Manejo de especies exóticas.
- Diseño de ASP.
- Uso público en las ASP.
- Actividades de montaña en las ASP.
- Estrategia Argentina de manejo del fuego.
- Toma de decisiones en las ASP.

Hubo también una interesante mesa redonda sobre capacitación de los guardaparques de donde surgió la inquietud de los presentes de que la FIG tuviera un rol más activo en la concreción de convenios para facilitar la capacitación.

La FIG hizo un foro muy concurrido donde Marcelo Ochoa y yo explicamos la historia de la Federación y conversamos sobre el futuro que le vemos, incentivando la inclusión de más países. Yo comenté que este mismo congreso era también un logro de la FIG, porque esta fue quien incentivó la nueva creación de la AGA. También recalqué que aunque varios de los países asistentes no eran aún miembros de la FIG, ya estábamos trabajando juntos.

Se hizo una declaración (que ya ha sido enviada a todos) y una petición a la FIG de que cambie los estatutos a fin de que se permita a los guardaparques de un país o estado ingresar a la FIG con todos los derechos sin la necesidad de formar una asociación, siempre y cuando tengan algún otro reconocimiento legal.

La salida de campo desafortunadamente no pudo realizarse porque no se pudieron cubrir todos los costos del congreso.

Juan Carlos Gambarotta
Vicepresidente, FIG

IRF CONSULTANCY

International Ranger Federation Consultancy, Limited – or IRFC Ltd. – is the trading arm of the International Ranger Federation and is wholly owned by IRF. Declan Keiley and Mike Marshall have been appointed as the consultancy's working directors/project managers; Sue Clark, secretary of IRF, is also the company secretary for IRFC Ltd. IRFC provides professional services to protected area managers and those employing rangers. The aim of the organization is to improve the management of protected areas globally through support for the rangers on the ground.

The consultancy has been very busy lately. Here are some of the highlights:

Albania – Declan Keiley returned to Albania at the end of October for the third and final week of ranger training for the new ranger service in the Butrint National Park. Additional information on the visit can be found on the web site noted below.

Russia – We have completed an eight-day study tour of three UK national parks for 15 people from Russian national parks, zapovedniks, the Ministry of Natural Resources and the Biodiversity Conservation Centre. The tour went to North York Moors National Park, Yorkshire Dales National Park and the Peak District National Park and visited the National Forest and Forest Enterprise sites at Rockingham Forest and Dalby Forest. We are indebted to the national park officers and chief executives of each of these organizations for their support and the unlimited enthusiasm of their staff teams. Study subjects included national park designation, establishment, planning and development; marketing and eco-tourism; environmental education; forest resource management; recreation and wildlife management; and socio-economic development. Accommodation included hotels, youth hostels, a specialist management centre, outdoor activity centres and a national park study centre. There's lots more information on the web site – plus pictures.

TOPAS – The Training of Protected Area Staff project team from across Europe met in Iceland at the end of June to develop ideas and to work out details on training modules to be developed and tested over the next two years. The first course has been designed and developed by Losehill Hall from the UK and was successfully tested by the Icelandic Nature Conservation Agency in August. Planning for the future – beyond the initial three years of the European Leonardo grant – is already underway. The next meeting of the partners will be in Portugal in January 2002 – if you have any thoughts, comments or questions, please check out the TOPAS web site at www.topas.mtnforum.org and send your comments to the email address which you will find on that site.

House of Lords – IRF's reception to launch both the TOPAS Project and "The Jacobs Model for Youth Links with Rangers" was held on October 23rd in the Strangers' Dining Room in the Houses of Parliament, Westminster, London. The Jacobs Model is the extension of the successful youth/ranger pilot scheme tested under the now-completed European Ranger Project. We hope to make this model a permanent feature of the European ranger scene if we can find supporters and sponsors. Again, more details will be on our web site.

Web site – Our web site (www.ranger-irfc.com) should be checked every week, as it keeps changing due to the huge efforts of Declan Keiley. This is the main site for International Ranger Federation Consultancy Ltd. The consultancy was set up earlier this year to raise funds through commercial trading, mainly training, to give IRF a solid financial base from which to operate. To date, all enterprises are operating with a surplus; 50% of this surplus goes to IRF and 50% is used to strengthen the business. We are actively seeking more work, so please look at our web site and see what we offer. IRFC Ltd., through its international connections, is able to tender for contracts almost anywhere in the world, not just in Europe. Please help for the benefit of your Federation. The site also now has links to other ranger web sites – please email any additions to either Declan at keiley.irfc@dial.pipex.com or Mike at marshall.i.r.f@btinternet.com

Executive Director – Effective September 3, 2001, IRFC Ltd. has been employing Gordon Miller for two days a week and seconding him to IRF as executive director. This employment will continue initially until February 28, 2002, as we have enough funding for this period. Beyond that depends on successful fund raising by IRF and a successful expansion of the IRFC Ltd. business. Although Gordon is employed by IRFC, he is directly responsible for his work to IRF President Rick Smith and the IRF Executive.

Mike Marshall
Director, IRFC Ltd.

CONTRIBUTING TO IRF NEWSLETTER

The publication of our newsletter, The Thin Green Line, is an important part of our attempts to accomplish one of the goals of the IRF, that of establishing a communications network for rangers around the world. To be effective, however, we need your cooperation. National associations must send the editor news of their activities so that we can share these news items with our readers. Please send news items to the editor when he requests them.

Thanks for your cooperation.

Rick Smith
President
International Ranger Federation

La publicación de nuestro boletín, La Fina Línea Verde, es una parte importante de nuestro intento de llevar a cabo una de las metas de la FIG, la de establecer una red de comunicación entre guardaparques de los diversos países. Para que seamos efectivos, sin embargo, necesitamos su cooperación. Las asociaciones nacionales deben mandar al redactor noticias de sus actividades para que podamos compartirlas con nuestros lectores. Por favor, envíen al redactor las noticias cuando las pida.

Gracias por su cooperación.

RickSmith
Presidente
Federación Internacional de Guardaparque

NEWS ABOUT IRF ASSOCIATIONS

Scottish Countryside Ranger Association (Scotland)

The Scottish Countryside Rangers Association (SCRA) and Iceland's Landvarðafélag Íslands have been strengthening their twinning arrangement over the last few weeks. The beginning of October saw the 25th anniversary of our Icelandic partners. The close nature of our links led to SCRA being invited to participate in the celebrations. The trip also provided a further opportunity to share expertise – in this case, a workshop on urban rangering for our Icelandic colleagues. The rangers in Iceland are thinking of setting up a service in Reykjavík and asked us to outline how we run city-based services in Scotland.

A group of five Scottish rangers traveled to Reykjavík to renew old acquaintances and to participate in the weekend's events. The visit began with members of the Landvarðafélag Íslands group leading a walk through the green spaces around Reykjavík to highlight their importance to a group of politicians and civil servants, including the environment minister. This was followed by a reception at which the 25th anniversary was toasted and the new Landvarðafélag Íslands website was unveiled.

On the following day, there was a workshop led by the Scottish rangers that explored the role of the urban ranger. Examples of our city services working practices, aims and objectives were described and discussed, along with examples of worksheets, leaflets and project packs from specific initiatives. Areas such as community involvement, education and conservation areas were all subject to discussion.

As part of a final tour, three of us went on a trip to the Snæfellsnes peninsula, where we were the first official visitors to the new Snæfellsjökull National Park. Those of you who have read Jules Verne will recognize it as the location from which the journey to the center of the earth began. The discussion again centered on community issues and conservation.

The whole trip was a huge success from our point of view and will likely strengthen the ties between our two associations. Our exchange program looks like it will run again next year.

Tony Wilson, Fife Ranger Service, Scotland

National Park Warden Association (Canada)

It's been a very difficult season for park wardens in Canada's national parks. As many of you know, a Canada Labour Code direction was given to Parks Canada in February regarding the safety of park wardens performing law enforcement duties. The decision centered around the issue that side arms are an industry standard and that wardens are in danger while doing their jobs without them. Unfortunately, the CEO of Parks Canada disagreed and appealed the decision. The government and Parks Canada opted to instead pay the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) \$43 million over two years to replace wardens and do the law enforcement in national parks.

Park wardens are eager to get back to the job, using whatever tools are deemed appropriate for their law enforcement duties. We have the support of the opposition, many environmental groups, the IRF, American state and federal wildlife officers and most importantly the majority of Canadians. Hopefully, the government will listen to the many voices that are raised in support of Canada's national park wardens. We would like to thank all those groups and individuals that have supported us through this difficult time.

The appeal process wraps up in January, but your support is still appreciated and useful. You can write comments on a National Geographic survey website, write Sheila Copps, Minister of Canadian Heritage, or visit the NPWA website for more info, links and contacts.

The National Park Warden Association is pleased to be working with the Association of National Park Rangers on the ranger relief program. This program will send its pilot donation of ranger uniforms and equipment to be used in the Ivory Coast anti-poaching project. The International Fund for Animal Welfare will be handling all shipping and customs costs. This is a great initiative that can really make a difference in the operations of Third World ranger groups. The items donated will include things like uniforms, backpacks, tents and boots.

Please visit our website at www.npwa.ca, visit the Canadian Geographic site at www.canadiangeographic/surveys/wardens, or write to our Minister at min_copps@pch.gc.ca.

Jeanine Elliott, NPWA, Canada

Czech Rangers Association (Czech Republic)

The organizational committee of the Czech Rangers Association (CRA) met this fall due to great changes that have come about due to a new law about rangers. This new law will be presented to the Czech Parliament this month. Discussions about this law have not yet been held with CRA and other similar organizations (foresters, fishermen, hunters) as had been promised, and CRA is asking for an explanation.

During the meeting, rangers from the committee and 19 other members of CRA repaired a foot path across peat land in the Jeseniky Protected Landscape Area. This project was done as part of CRA's fund-raising.

Michal Skalka of CRA participated in the Europarc Federation seminar on public relations in protected areas, which was held in August and September in Nizke Tatry NP in Slovakia. A report from the seminar was submitted to the CRA committee and will be included in the CRA Reporter.

Michal Ulrych, CRA, Czech Republic

Game Rangers Association of Africa (South Africa)

Here are some of the recent developments in South Africa:

New African Ranger Associations – It's been a bit quiet on this front, although certain countries are already in the process of getting started. The creation of a South African association will be addressed at the annual general meeting (AGM) that will be held in February next year in Golden Gate National Park in South Africa.

Rangers/Grass Cutters Killed in Fire – A wild fire killed 23 people in the south of Kruger National Park in the Republic of South Africa on September 4th. Most of these victims were buried in a mass grave at the Kruger Gate Cemetery on the September 15th. The same fire also destroyed a wilderness trails camp. At the time the fire was detected, it was driven by a hot northwesterly wind, with humidity at 13%. The fire changed direction, burning in a southeasterly direction as a cold front entered the area driven by a very strong wind. The area is also known for its long grass and there was just no way that this fire could be stopped. Unfortunately, as it approached the camp of the grass cutters, some of them panicked and tried to run away from the fire and were overwhelmed by it. Those who stayed in the camp survived. The three rangers who died were killed in their effort to stop the fire. A magisterial court will investigate the incident.

Trans-Frontier Conservation Area (TFCA) – A project, initiated by world-renowned conservationist Dr. Anton Rupert, took shape on October 1st with the relocation of seven elephants into Coutada 16 on the Mozambican side of the much-vaunted Gaza-Kruger-Gonarezhou (GKG) Transfrontier Park in Southern Africa. A thousand elephants will eventually be released into the GKG, with 300 annually earmarked for Gaza. Personnel to man the area on the Mozambican side – including rangers – are already under training. Their uniforms, donated by the Australians, will be handed over to the Peace Parks Foundation in due course for this purpose. In fact, the first ten rangers will be dressed in these uniforms at the official release of the first elephants. Dignitaries from all three countries – including Prince Bernard of the Netherlands and ex-President Mandela of South Africa – attended this historical event. This trans-frontier park is bigger than the countries of Taiwan, Switzerland and Belgium and the famous Yellowstone National Park in the US.

Arrie Schreiber, Kruger NP, RSA

UPCOMING EVENTS

- | | |
|------------------------|---|
| July 31, 2002 | 10 th anniversary of the founding of International Ranger Federation, which took place at Loosehill Hall, Peak District National Park, England. |
| September 9 – 13, 2002 | “Interpretation As A Tool In Promoting Sustainable Development,” Elsinore, Denmark. Cosponsored by IRF, the Danish Ministry of the Environment and Heritage Interpretation International. For more information, go to their web site (www.interpretation2002.dk) or email the organization at conf2002@friluftsraadet.dk . |
| March, 2003 | IRF Fourth World Congress, Victoria, Australia |
| September 17-18, 2003 | World Parks Congress, Durban, South Africa |

--- ### ---