

## RESOURCE MANAGEMENT NEWSLETTER

Howdy!

Not much was sent to me last month so things will be short. Everyone must be busy with the summer season, not much time for jet-setting around the country on training courses. Don't let the no-seeums, blackflies, mosquitoes and other blood thirsty suckers get to you while in the field.

As everyone is aware by now we have been invited to the great state of West Virginia for a Grand Finale in August. There will be some formal training besides general howling at the moon. Everyone should of been contacted by Doug Morris about contributing some project that you feel is important enough to share with others in remote area management.

Bob Gartner asks that we not identify ourselves at the Bavarian Inn till the night of the banquet, he wants to make sure they will allow us in that night. I wonder if word about our midnight classes at other training sessions has gotten out.

I have included a handout on recommendations of the future Resource Training Group by the work group that met in April. I thought it might be of interest to everyone. Keep Sending in information when you can.

"For only when I know  
who I am  
Will I know what  
is possible"

### Training and Conferences:

Parks in the West and American Culture, a conference sponsored by the Institute of the American West and the Lincoln Institute of Land Policy. August 15-18, 1984 The Elkhorn Hotel, Sun Valley, Idaho. For more INFO. Contact Richard Hart or Marcia Jones at (208) 622-9371.

### Call for Papers:

Conference on Utah's water, a Biological Symposium. Topics will be on native plants and animals, obligated to an Aquatic habitat, either permanent water or ephemeral water sources. University of Utah September 21, 22, 1984. Please respond by June 15th. Contact Peter Houingh (801) 582-1565 for more INFO.

### Manual Off Press

The second edition of the Manual of Remote Sensing is off the press and available for purchase. This manual, with more than 2,700 pages (220 in full color), and 36 chapters, is a definitive work. Twenty-five per cent larger than originally anticipated, the manual treats in depth the technical aspects of remote sensing and has an abundance of illustrations which make it a valuable learning tool for people in any of the renewable resource disciplines and a valuable addition to any library.

The manual, published by the American Society of Photogrammetry, comes in two volumes and is the combined work of more than 300 distinguished scientists in the field of remote sensing. The second edition has been completely rewritten and covers the many recent developments affecting remote sensing technology, such as LANDSAT 4 and SPOT. For prices and information, contact ASP Publications Department, 210 Little Falls St., Falls Church, Va. 22046 or telephone (703) 534-6617.

## Recommendations Of The natural Resource Trainee Work Group

The Natural Resource Trainee Work Group met April 16-18 in the Washington Office to make recommendations on ways to improve and restructure the Natural Resource Trainee Program. Formation of the work group was in response to a request from the Associate Director, Natural Resources to examine the current program and correct identified problems. A list of work group members is attached (Attachment 1).

Problem areas were identified in a program review undertaken by the University of Michigan during the fall of 1983. Among the problems identified were: 1) an imbalance between park duties and training activities with the park workload occasionally hindering the training; 2) lack of WASO direction; 3) inconsistency in Regional and park support; 4) disparity in trainee grade levels; and 5) trainee placement.

The Natural Resource Trainee Program was developed to increase the number of professional Natural Resource Specialists to meet Servicewide needs in mitigating impacts upon park resources, and to provide park management with the thorough knowledge and skills required for managing natural processes and natural systems. The initial trainee program was a good idea that now needs to evolve to further accomplish the objectives of the National Park Service. The actual "nuts and bolts" planning of the program along with explanations of WASO/Regional/Park responsibilities are now more clearly defined which should remove many of the problems identified in the University of Michigan study. The resulting recommendations address the identified problems and, if adopted, will produce a more effective natural resource training program for the Service.

The Work Group unanimously adopted the following recommendations:

Recommendation #1. Training is a full-time job. Trainees will be sent to designated training parks for a two year period. At the completion of their program, the trainee will be sent to a destination park as the natural resource specialist. Regions will designate parks to serve as training parks and designate parks to receive the trainee upon completion of the two year training period.

The intent of the Natural Resource Trainee Program is to increase the number of natural resource specialists in the National Park Service and to provide them with the skills to carry out natural resource activities in a variety of parks and environments.

People are selected for this program with the understanding that they will spend two years in full-time, intensive, natural resources training. Job assignments in the training parks will be part of their training program but the trainee is not to be used for park assignments at the expense of foregoing identified training assignments or courses. If there is a conflict between park assignments or training assignments, the training assignments take priority.

In the current program, trainees were sent to parks with an identified need for a natural resources specialist. In many cases, the park considered the trainee to be a full-time natural resources specialist rather than a full-time trainee. Trainees were hard-pressed to complete their IDP and attend training courses while maintaining a full-time job.

The work group recommends establishing training parks. A training park is defined as a park with: 1) an approved Resource Management Plan; 2) a diversity of ongoing resource management projects such as projects dealing with air quality, water resources, aquatic resources, fire management, mineral management, wildlife resources, exotic species, visitor impacts on natural resources, vegetation management etc.; 3) a qualified natural resources staff to serve as the trainee's mentor and training guide; and 4) the availability of housing quarters either inside (park provided) or outside (private) of the park.

Trainees would be assigned to work under the direction of the training park's natural resource specialist for the two year period. At the end of the training period, the trainee will be assigned to a park with an identified need for a natural resources specialist. Interested Regions should designate training parks and final destination parks.

Recommendation #2. The Natural Resources Trainee Program will be managed by the Biological Resources Division of the Washington Office.

The Natural Resources Trainee Work Group has identified the need for centralized management in order to maintain uniformity in program formulation, execution, and evaluation for this highly visible Servicewide program. The Work Group has endorsed the Division of Biological Resources as the program office that should assume this overall responsibility. Funding for the trainee program will also be administered by this Division.

The Division of Biological Resources with the input of appropriate professional and and Regional representation, will provide natural resource/scientific expertise in program design and content involving core-curriculum, formal out-of-park training courses, and Individual Development Plan needs.

The WASO Division of Training will administer the logistics of the program which will include counseling, formal training, and evaluation. Training will also assist in the preparation of course coordination and management schedules, course design and preparation, program content evaluation, vendor/contractor coordination/evaluation and counselor training. Both divisions will work closely together for this Servicewide effort.

Recommendation #3. At the start of each two year program, the Regions will "obligate" FTEs and funds for the program graduates in their destination parks.

WASO will provide the funds and FTEs for the program during the two year training period. The park receiving the trainee should request a base increase and FTE to provide for the addition of a natural resource specialist to park staff. Expenses will include the move of the trainee from the training park to the destination park.

Recommendation #4. Each region should identify the required need for natural resource specialists. To insure the placement of trainees, the program will only operate at the number corresponding to regional needs.

A basic problem with training programs is placement at the completion of the program. By identifying the regional need for natural resource specialists, the Service will train only enough people as needed. In FY 85-86, OMB has allotted 23 FTEs to this program. If the regional needs are for less than 23, the program will operate at the lesser number rather than train a person who cannot be placed in a permanent position at program completion. The identified regional needs for natural resource specialists will help WASO determine the longevity of this program.

Recommendation #5. A candidate's training park and final destination park are both made known to the candidate when the job offer is made.

At the time of candidate selection, the Regions will have designated both the training parks and the destination parks. When selections are made, the candidate is notified that he/she has been selected for the program. At that time, they are also told where they will train for two years and where they will be placed as the natural resource specialist at the end of two years.

Recommendation #6. A person trained at a training park in one region may be placed in a destination park in another region.

A program objective is to train natural resource specialists to deal with natural resource issues/problems in any unit of the National Park System. Some regions may determine that they do not have a training park capability but they have a need for a trained natural resource specialist. Another region may have several potential training parks but no need of a natural resource specialist at the completion of the program. Because WASO provides program funds, the movement of trainees between regions should not be a problem.

Recommendation #7. Candidates will be accepted only from the National Park Service.

The work group consensus is that considerable talent and ability exists in present National Park Service employees. The limiting of candidates to NPS only will provide a morale boost to NPS employees by offering them an opportunity to participate in this career advancement training. Limiting the candidates to NPS will also provide a reading of the number of potential candidates within the Service. If it is found that NPS cannot provide enough qualified candidates, the program will be opened to Department-wide candidates.

Recommendation #8. The Natural Resources Trainee Program will be conducted only within the professional 401 series.

Trainees in the existing program are classified as GS-025 Park Rangers, or GS-401 Biologists. The Trainee program beginning in FY 1985 however, will be developed as a high intensity training program that will cover only specific resource management concerns rather than general park management. The series therefore will be GS-401. Selected candidates applying for this program however, may be presently classified as 025, 026, 401, or other categories. OPM standards of classification must be met for qualification. At the completion of the program their classification will be determined by their job placement/classification in their destination park.



Recommendation #9. Trainees will start at either the GS-5 or GS-7 levels. All trainees will be promoted to GS-9 journeyman levels at program completion.

This program is designed so that qualified candidates may apply in accordance to OPM Regulations, for the GS-5 or GS-7 Natural Resources Trainee entry levels. If entry is at the GS-5 level, a candidate can be promoted to GS-7 trainee level after OPM time-in-grade requirements and trainee program requirements are met. If entry is at the GS-7 level, a candidate can be promoted to GS-9 trainee level after the similar OPM and program requirements are met. All trainees will exit the program at the GS-9 journeyman level.

Recommendation #10. Vacancy announcements will be prepared by WASO. Regions and WASO will work cooperatively to develop position descriptions and KSAs. The Biological Resources Division will complete the initial evaluation of applicants to produce a list of highly qualified candidates. The Regions and/or Park will make the final selections of the trainees.

WASO will prepare one vacancy announcement for all 23 training positions. Listed in the announcement will be the list of the destination parks and the explanation that the trainee is expected to spend the first two years in a training park before going to the destination park. To help in the trainee selection, candidates will be asked to list their placement preferences and the parks they would not accept.

Information regarding position descriptions will be assembled from Natural Resources Trainee Task Group members, Regional offices, and Biological Services Division for the development of position descriptions and KSAs for the GS 5, and GS-7 entry levels, and the GS-9 targeted position in a client park at the successful completion of the program. WASO Personnel and Classification will provide guidance in this process, will finalize PDs, and prepare a single announcement to advertise all selected trainee positions.

Job Vacancy Announcements will include a list of all parks that will be slated to receive a trainee at the successful completion of the program.

WASO Personnel will review all trainee applications to insure compliance with OPM Policies and Regulations. Upon completion of this review, WASO Personnel will provide the Biological Services Division with a list of all qualified candidates. A screening panel made up of subject specialists in natural resources will review these applications on the basis of established and previously agreed upon criteria, including an inventory of required knowledge, skills, and abilities. A list of highly qualified candidates will be developed from this review and will constitute the pool from which candidates will be selected to fill the 23 trainee positions for the FY 85-86 program.

Upon receipt of the list of highly qualified candidates, the Regions and/or the superintendents of the destination parks receiving the trainees after the two year training program, will select the trainees. The selections will be made at a meeting of the Regional Directors or their representatives. Similar to the SRP process, each region will make selections in priority order. Destination parks rather than training parks should participate in the selection process.

Recommendation #11. Individual Development Plans (IDPs) are prepared by park, region, and WASO teams.

IDPs start with the trainee identifying specific training needs in relation to the guidelines for this program. The trainee has the initial responsibility for writing the document under the guidance of his/her supervisor. The plan is further developed through collaborative efforts involving the Regional Coordinator and Regional Training Officer, with final approval residing in the Washington office.

Recommendation #12. Periodic program evaluation of program will be a collaborative effort involving parks, regions, and WASO.

The overall responsibility of program evaluation will reside in the Biological Services Division. Mid-course assessments as well as on site evaluations will be a formal part of the training agenda. Program and training component critiques will be conducted by all three program levels. Evaluation will be an ongoing process.

The purpose of the evaluation process is to insure that the training and developmental experiences identified in the IDP are completed and the program criteria are met. The Trainee Program evaluation system includes:

1. The trainee's critique of the on-the-job experience and of formal training courses attended.
2. Supervisor/Counselor's evaluation of the trainee's performance on-the-job;
3. Evaluation of counselor's performance by trainee and counselor's supervisor;
4. Overall program review by Service management at all levels. Field managers are encouraged to participate in this review by way of memorandum to the regional and WASO Program offices.

Recommendation #13. Waso will pay the trainees move to the training park and provide \$2,500 per trainee to the park for vehicle support costs, as well as paying the trainee salary and benefits and providing the FTE for the two year training period. Training parks will be expected to provide additional trainee support such as office space and supplies, or housing (if available). The destination parks are expected to pay the moving expenses of the trainee from the training park to the destination park.

## Attachment 1

### Natural Resource Trainee Work Group

Dave Cherry	Associate Director, Western Region
Jack Morehead	Superintendent, Everglades NP
Bob Haraden	Superintendent, Glacier NP
Hank Jones	Superintendent, Wupatki-Sunset Crater NM
Dr. Gary Larson	Chief Scientist, Midwest Region
Chris Baumann	Natural Resource Trainee, C&O Canal NHP
Stan Lock	Trainee Coordinator, National Capital Region
Doug Morris	Albright Training Center
Flip Hagood	Chief, Training Division, WASO
Dr. Richard Briceland	Associate Director, Natural Resources
Linda Kazinetz	Personnel Division, WASO
Norm Harvey	Personnel Division, WASO
John Reed	Chief, Biological Resources Division, WASO
Bob Gartner	Biological Resources Division, WASO