

Subject: April 1997 Monthly Report - Part I

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Natural Resource Stewardship and Science Report
April 1997

NEW DEVELOPMENTS

AWARDS FOR NATURAL RESOURCE STEWARDSHIP The following awards have been announced--presentations will be made at various times and places:

ZANDY-MARIE HILLIS-STARR, BUCK ISLAND REEF NATIONAL MONUMENT, the first Trish Patterson-Student Conservation Association Award for Resource Management in a Small Park; KENNETH J. CZARNOWSKI, ROCKY MOUNTAIN NATIONAL PARK, for Natural Resource Management; ALAN O'NEILL, LAKE MEAD NATIONAL RECREATION AREA, Superintendent of the Year for Natural Resource Stewardship; and GARY E. DAVIS, CHANNEL ISLANDS NATIONAL PARK, for Natural Resource Research.

SOUTHERN APPALACHIAN ASSESSMENT REPORT EARNS AWARD This ecological assessment of the Southern Appalachian region received the USDA-Forest Service's Ecosystem Management Award as a model of interagency coordination. Kathy Tonnessen, NPS-ARD, authored Chapter 5 of the Atmospheric Technical Report on "Acid Deposition". Supplies of the published copies of the five reports are limited. However, these reports are available via the Internet at <http://www.lib.utk.edu.samab>. Contact: Kathy Tonnessen, NPS-ARD, 303-969-2738.

NAS BRUCELLOSIS STUDY At the request of the Secretary of the Interior, a cooperative agreement between NPS+BRD+National Academy of Sciences has been signed to study the extent of bison infection with brucellosis in the Greater Yellowstone Area. The study will address the potential of developing a vaccine program; the transmission of Brucella among cattle, bison, elk and other wildlife species; the relationship, if any, between the bison population dynamics and brucellosis; the ability of serology testing to estimate true infectiousness; the efficacy and safety of existing vaccines for target and non-target species and the need for new (including bison-specific) vaccines; the nature, and likely successes or limitations, of a wild animal vaccination program; and the study will review key factors in reducing risk of transmission from wildlife to cattle and among wildlife. A final report to the Secretary of the Interior from the NAS/NRC - an independent scientific agency, is expected in November 1997.

WATER RIGHTS BILL The Water Resources Division reviewed and prepared NPS comments on the proposed "State Water Sovereignty Protection Act" (House Resolution 128). This legislation proposes to require the United States to submit to state law in acquiring or exercising any right with respect to a water right, and would eliminate the concept of federal reserved water rights. The bill also appears to allow states to pass laws that restrict or remove federal authority to regulate other aspects of water quantity and quality, including

portions of the Clean Water Act. The comments focused on the effects of losing these vital resource protection tools on NPS resources.

FEDERAL LAND MANAGER (FLM) AIR QUALITY RELATED VALUES (AQRVs) WORKSHOP
Representatives of the Air Resources Division (ARD), U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and U.S. Forest Service met April 22-24 to discuss the need for, and how to accomplish, better consistency among agencies on AQRV efforts. Participants agreed unanimously that the best way for us to respond to pressure from industry and regulators is to work together to identify sensitive AQRVs, determine critical loads and criteria for adverse impacts, and standardize our requests for the types of AQRV analyses that should be performed. The group approved an Action Plan for developing a consistent approach that includes establishing Work Teams to address various topics and developed a list of AQRV-related policy-specific issues that would benefit from a coordinated approach. Current AQRV procedures were grouped into three categories: 1) those that the agencies currently have in common, 2) those that are different but could be resolved relatively quickly, and 3) those that are so significantly different and/or complex that they will require a substantial amount of discussion to resolve. The group will meet again in late June or early July to provide comments on the draft April 22-24 Meeting Report and finalize and prioritize the tasks for the Work Teams. Contact Tonnie Maniero at (303) 969-2806 for further information.

DOE RUN MINE Staff members of Water Resources (WRD) and the Geologic Resources (GRD) Divisions are assisting staff at Ozark National Scenic Riverways (OZAR) in evaluating impacts of potential lead mining on National Forest lands adjacent to the Riverways on park resources. The Doe Run mining company has applied for prospecting permits in the Fristoe Unit of the Mark Twain National Forest. The area is underlain by karstic limestone and is within the known recharge area of Big Spring, the largest spring in the U.S. Depending on whether, and where, a minable ore deposit is found, impacts could affect any of a number of large springs along the Riverways or the Eleven Point Wild and Scenic River. The Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management claim that mining is not a "reasonably foreseeable" outcome of prospecting and thus oppose preparation of an EIS at this stage. NPS believes that once the prospecting permits are issued there is little the Department can do, short of a buy-out, to prevent lead mining if the Company finds a valuable deposit. WRD and GRD are working to elevate these legal and policy issues within the Department to resolve this matter in a timely manner.

RESEARCH AND COLLECTING PERMIT TEAM A team of park and central office staff has been organized to examine the legal and functional requirements of the permit process and recommend improved Servicewide procedures pertaining to issuing and tracking park research and collecting permits. Team goals include the following: 1) ensure that the recommended permit process is legal; 2) ensure that the recommended permit process meets park needs; and 3). provide an efficient system for investigators and park staff to work with. The Research and Collecting Permit Team consists of : Jonathan Bayless (PGSO), John Dennis (WASO/NSMO), Tim Goddard (WASO/NRID), Ann Hitchcock (WASO/Curatorial), Glenda Jackson (WASO/NRID), Bob Krumenaker (SHEN), Bob Lindstrom (YELL), David Manski (ACAD), Lindsay McClelland (WASO/GRD), Sue Mills (AKSO), Rijk Morawe (EVER), Chuck Rafkind (COLO), Joe Van Horn (DENA), and Bob Winfree (GRCA). Please contact Tim Goddard if you have questions, special concerns, or recommendations pertaining to the permit process. Summaries of team activities will probably be periodically posted on several CC:Mail bulletin boards.

NEW WATER RIGHTS ATTORNEY POSITION The Office of the Regional Solicitor (SOL), Rocky Mountain Region, with funding support from WRD, established an attorney position to provide water rights legal support to the NPS water rights program. By working directly with WRD's Water Rights Branch, the position will enhance legal support in the protection of NPS water rights. Initially established on a two-year trial basis, a dedicated SOL attorney offers significant opportunities to increase efficiency and facilitate NPS water rights program activities. On February 16, 1997, Peter Fahmy, an experienced water rights attorney, joined the SOL as the NPS water rights attorney.

FORT UNION TRADING POST HEADS OFF MINING LEASE Noel Poe, Superintendent at Theodore Roosevelt/Fort Union/Knife River, learned through the North Dakota State Historic Preservation Office that the state land office planned to offer a lease tract IN the Missouri River adjacent to the restored fort at Fort Union. Unlike a previous situation at Theodore Roosevelt, where the Little Missouri River was ruled unnavigable, the state does own the land under the Missouri River. Noel, with the support of the SHPO and the state Tourism Office, prepared a letter to the head of the state lands office requesting the lease be withdrawn. The Geologic Resources Division provided additional comments, specifically that the NPS owns the land on both sides of the river and is under no obligation to provide access, directional drill pad locations, or any other accommodation, and also provided language addressing degradation of the visitor experience and other possible adverse impacts on the park. The park's efforts resulted in the state retracting the lease offering.

SOUKUP WITH PRESIDENT Mike Soukup visited Costa Rica the week of May 5 as a part of the President's Latin American trip. A focus of the Costa Rican portion of the trip was on Costa Rica's national parks.

HEADS UP

GIS TRAINING CANCELLED. Arcview 3 training course at SAMO cancelled from lack of funds. A replacement course will be offered at NCSU this summer, where there is no charge for facility use.

WASO (D.C.) ADDRESS - The mail room for the Washington Office is being relocated from North Capitol Street to Main Interior this weekend. As part of the consolidation, the NPS will be gradually phasing out its current post office box address; that is, Box 37127, Washington, DC, 20013. It will continue to be used as long as necessary to accommodate offices that require it, but all employees should begin using the new address: National Park Service, 1849 C Street N.W., Washington, D.C. 20240.

ARCINFO FEES If you have not yet paid your NOS ArcInfo Right-to-Use fees (UNIX only), they are now overdue. Contact Leslie Armstrong (303) 969-2964 for GS II license and contract information.

PROFESSIONALIZATION A report on progress to date in increasing the extent and level of professional expertise in natural resource disciplines is posted on the Natural Resources bulletin board. Mike Soukup presented the findings at the April NLC meeting. Abby Miller and Mike prepared the report.

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PROGRESS

UTAH WATER RIGHTS WRD staff met with individuals from the Utah Attorney General and State Engineer Offices, and an attorney from the Office of the Solicitor, to discuss the potential for conducting negotiations on state appropriative and federal reserved water rights at NPS park units in Utah. These discussions were spurred by the successful completion of a water rights settlement for Zion National Park (ZION). The parties agreed to use the process established during the Zion negotiations. NPS and the State will scope out legal and technical issues associated with Arches National Park (ARCH), Bryce Canyon National Park (BRCA), Cedar Breaks National Monument (CEBR), Dinosaur National Monument (DINO), Golden Spike National Historical Site (GOSP), Hovenweep National Monument (HOVE), Natural Bridges National Monument (NABR), Rainbow Bridge National Monument (RABR), and Timpanogos Cave National Monument (TICA), by May 1, 1997. A meeting will be scheduled in May to begin discussions about individual park units.

STATUS OF PROJECT FUNDING DISTRIBUTION. All FY97 GIS funds distributed to field. Funding has been transferred to regions--or will be by the end of the week of May 12) for all Water Resource and NRPP projects with approved projects plans. This will leave only two Water Resources project and four NRPP projects where funding has not yet been transferred--in these cases, we are waiting for completion of project plans.

SOFTWARE FOR SERVICEWIDE DATABASES Tim Goddard has been making presentations on Servicewide software application goals and demonstrating applications which may be used to allow park staff to use the Internet to store and retrieve information, i.e., IPM. You may contact Tim via cc:MAIL if you have Internet access and wish to view a demo of a centralized IPM application designed to run through the Internet.

COLORADO VISIBILITY LONG-TERM STRATEGY REVIEW The Colorado Air Quality Control Commission approved with minor revisions implementation plan revisions to its long-term strategy to protect visibility in Colorado's 12 Class I parks and wilderness areas. John Chapman, Assistant Superintendent of Rocky Mountain NP, delivered an NPS statement in support of the State's proposal at the April 18 public hearing. The Commission was interested in learning more about visibility in Rocky Mountain NP and about the park's fire and smoke management programs at future Commission meetings. The Commission was also receptive to the park's invitation to host the Commission's annual retreat/field trip in association with its regular monthly meeting this June. For more information on this topic, contact either Brian Mitchell of the ARD (303-969-2819) or Jeff Connor, Resource Management, at ROMO (970-586-1296).

WATER RESOURCES SCOPING REPORTS AND MANAGEMENT PLAN The Water Resources Division recently released two scoping reports as technical reports,

both prepared in cooperation with park staff and through the support of the WRD's Hydrological Affiliates Program. The Canyonlands National Park (CANY), Arches National Park (ARCH), Natural Bridges National Monument (NABR) Water Resources Scoping Report (Technical Report 97/94) was prepared by Kevin Berghoff (GLCA) and David Vana-Miller (WRD) with assistance from other WRD staff. This scoping report, identifies and assesses numerous issues relating to water resources including water quantity, water quality, and threatened and endangered species management associated with the southeastern Utah parks. Because of the complexity of the issues involved, the scoping report recommends further assessment through the completion of a Water Resources Management Plan. Copies of this scoping report are available from Bruce Rodgers (CANY) or David Vana-Miller (WRD).

The Saguaro National Park (SAGU) Water Resources Scoping Report (Technical Report 97/95) was prepared by David Mott (BUFF), with assistance from WRD. This report assesses numerous water resources issues relating to water table declines, water quality, erosion, water quantity, and water supply within the vicinity of SAGU, updates water resources-related project statements, and recommends technical assistance needs. Copies of this scoping report are available from Meg Weesner (SAGU) or Mark Flora (WRD).

Saint Croix National Scenic Riverway (SACR) completed a Water Resources Management Plan, with WRD project funding, using a cooperative agreement with the University of Minnesota. Kerry Holmberg and Jim Perry were the primary authors, and Randy Ferrin, the park's Chief of Resource Management, providing considerable support. The Plan provides an extensive compilation of available information about the riverway and its aquatic and water-related resources and presents a program for managing water resources which are grouped in six program areas: Baseline Resource Information, Data Management, Assessment of Threats and Resource Impairment, Mitigation and Avoidance of Impairment, and Staff and Support Needs. Valuable spin-offs from the planning process are an increased level of cooperation with several agencies, the development of an interagency mussel management strategy, and obtaining external funding for a Risk Assessment Workshop.

DISPRO The first meeting of the DISPro Oversight Committee took place on March 12-13 at Pensacola, FL. Decisions were made concerning the air monitoring and research to be funded in FY 97 under DISPro. On April 15, 1997 the EPA convened a workshop in Shenandoah National Park (SHEN) to come up with protocols for performing amphibian deformities surveys. During this meeting representatives of the two DISPro (Demonstration Intensive Sites Project) agencies made an official announcement of the long-term research and monitoring program. Mike Soukup, NPS-ADNRSS, and Joe Alexander, EPA-ORD, met and discussed the commitment of the agencies to this effort. The EPA/NPS issued a press advisory about the event and press from Minnesota Public Radio and the Minneapolis Star-Tribune were at the meeting. Since that time the Gannett newspaper chain has covered DISPro and the connection of environmental stressors to amphibian health and populations in a number of their outlets nationally. There was a short article on DISPro in "People, Land, and Water", April 1997 edition. DISPro was also publicized during the Environmental Monitoring and Assessment Symposium held in Albany, N.Y. on April 10-11. Kevin Summers and Kathy Tonnessen authored a paper on DISPro that was presented at this EMAP meeting. Contact: Kathy Tonnessen, NPS-ARD, 303-969-2738.

CLASSIFIED DATA FOR GIS. The National Imagery and Mapping Agency (NIMA) has approved the use of classified satellite imagery for USGS production of DOQs for the State of Alaska; a request is in for

Glacier Bay. We hope to get similar approval for Hawaii DOQs soon.

COOKE CITY AREA MINERAL WITHDRAWAL DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENT A WINNER - Natural Resources Program Center comments on the Cooke City Area Mineral Withdrawal draft environmental statement reflected full support of the efforts put forth by document authors from the Bureau of Land Management and the U.S. Forest Service, Northern Region. The draft analyzes the withdrawal of federal locatable minerals on up to 22,000 acres near Cooke City, Montana. This withdrawal extends the temporary, two year withdrawal announced by President Clinton in 1995.

The President originally announced the temporary withdrawal in an effort to protect Yellowstone National Park and the Greater Yellowstone Area from the threat of extensive mining in the historic New World mining district. Additional mining in the area may have resulted from significant ore body finds by Crown Butte Mining, Inc., at the proposed New World mine. Our comments, forwarded to Yellowstone National Park for signature, supported Alternative B-2, which addresses the environmental advantages of the proposed 22,000 acre mineral withdrawal in conjunction with implementation of the New World mine agreement. Under the New World mine agreement, the Federal government will acquire all lands and interests in lands in the New World mining district held by Crown Butte Mining, Inc. Unless the mineral withdrawal is implemented by August 31, 1997, the area will reopen to filing of new mining claims and the potential exists for mineral development.