

Subject: Monthly Report

Associate Director, Natural Resource Stewardship and Science
Monthly Report
February 2002

NATURAL RESOURCE CHALLENGE

Alien Plant Control Database Designed: The first Alien Plant Control and Management Data Base (APCAM) Workshop was held at NPS NRPC offices in Fort Collins, CO. The Workshop was co-hosted by Biological Resource Management Division-Exotic Plant Management Team (EPMT) and Integrated Pest Management programs and Inventory and Monitoring Program. Representatives from the operational EPMT's and IMR participated in a week long workshop to collaborate in finalizing design and use of an Access database for the purpose of inventorying and monitoring exotic plant management and restoration actions. The APCAM database was designed using the NPS Natural Resources Inventory & Monitoring Division's Database Template. Information gleaned from APCAM will provide parks with a description of the effectiveness of exotic plant management actions over time. As part of the meeting, participants reviewed the status of the prototype Invasive Species module for the Synthesis Information Management System and the Invasive Species Knowledge Center. The information in both these systems, as well as the presentation style, was reviewed and revised in preparation for presentation at the Weed Awareness Week meetings in Washington, D.C.

Implementation of FY02 Air Quality Action Plan: The Natural Resources Challenge includes a budget increase for the air quality program in FY02. Plans for allocating the new funding were outlined in a memo sent by Mike Soukup to Regional Directors. In addition to providing information on field-based positions and proposed increases in monitoring support to parks, the memo includes tables of proposed new monitoring to be conducted as part of the Challenge. Tables are also available listing all I&M parks and indicating where nearby monitoring data can be used to represent air quality in the parks (based on an analysis done by the University of Denver). The memo and tables can be viewed on ARD's intranet site at:
http://www2.nrintra.nps.gov/ard/gas/AD_Jan02_memo.htm.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS/SIGNIFICANT ACTIVITIES

New Guidance Will Streamline Air Quality Permit Review: The Air Resources Division has issued additional guidance to help streamline the review process for new sources of air pollution wishing to locate near parks. The new "deposition analysis thresholds" can be used to assess whether sulfur deposition resulting from proposed new air pollution emissions would adversely affect resources within Class I air quality areas. Similar guidance on nitrogen deposition was issued last year. If the additional amount of nitrogen or sulfur deposition is below these thresholds, the impact from a proposed new or modified source would be considered insignificant. This was a collaborative effort with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Air Quality Branch. The guidance can be viewed at: <http://www2.nature.nps.gov/ard/flagfree/index.htm>.

Power Plant Next to Denali NP Agrees to Lower Pollution Limits: The Healy Clean Coal Project (HCCP), a 50 megawatt coal-fired power plant located about 6 km from Denali, was built under the federal Clean Coal Technology Program, which allowed for higher emissions than what would normally be allowed using conventional pollution control technology. In 1993, DOI negotiated an agreement with the plant's owner, Golden Valley, requiring additional emission controls on an adjacent unit to mitigate the project's air quality impacts on Denali. Unfortunately, the new technology failed and the plant must now retrofit with conventional technology. Golden Valley proposed to keep its higher emission limits and effect this change without any public review. As a result of meetings with the Alaska Regional Office, Air Resources Division, Denali staff and State of Alaska environmental officials, Golden Valley agreed to lower the maximum emission level for nitrogen oxides, provide an engineering analysis demonstrating that good emission control technology will be used, and undergo a formal public comment period.

Proposed Power Plant Would Have Adverse Impact on Visibility at Mammoth Cave: The Acting Assistant Secretary for Fish and Wildlife and Parks concurred with an NPS determination that emissions from the proposed Thoroughbred Generating Station would have an adverse impact on visibility and could potentially affect federally listed threatened and endangered species at Mammoth Cave National Park. This 1500 megawatt coal-fired power plant would be located about 50 miles west of Mammoth Cave. Modeling predicted there would be perceptible impacts at the park on over 20 days per year. In a February 14, 2002, letter to the Kentucky Division of Air Quality, DOI asked the State not to issue a permit for construction unless additional efforts were made to mitigate impacts. The NPS is reviewing new modeling analyses submitted by the permit applicant shortly before the public hearing showing that there would be no impact on visibility.

Water Rights Agreement at Lake Mead NRA: The NPS and Bureau of Land Management reached agreement with Moapa Valley Water District (District) on February 1, concerning protests of the District's water right applications in the Lower Meadow Valley Wash groundwater basin. The agreement provides for the monitoring, management and mitigation of impacts associated with the development of groundwater to supply the proposed Meadow Valley Generating Project (PG&E National Energy Group) and protects water resources and rights at Lake Mead NRA. The Office of the Solicitor appeared at the scheduled February 5-8 to state that, because of the agreement, the Bureaus would not offer testimony nor oppose the issuance of permits for the applications.

National Parks Science Scholars Symposium: The 2001-2002 Canon National Parks Science Scholars Symposium was held in Washington, DC 2001 February. The 8 new 2001 Canon Scholars were recognized and joined by all 21 Canon Scholars from the previous four classes at an award ceremony and reception hosted by the American Association for the Advancement of Science. At the awards ceremony, Canon U.S.A., Inc. announced an additional contribution of 3 million dollars over 4 years to continue the program and expand it to the Americas. The 2001 Annual Report on the Canon National Parks Science Scholars Program is available from Brian Forist. The 2001 scholars, their universities, and the parks in which they will be conducting their research are listed below.

Elizabeth Brusati, University of California, Davis, Point Reyes National Seashore, Golden Gate National Recreation Area

Andrew Bunn, Montana State University, Sequoia National Park, Yosemite National Park, Yellowstone National Park

Emily Donald, Columbia University, Pecos National Historical Park, Western Archaeological and Conservation Center

Robert Hale, University of Oklahoma, Yellowstone National Park

Ruth Lambert, University of New Mexico, Wupatki National Monument

Wendy Palen, University of Washington, Olympic National Park

Susan Rupp, Texas Tech University, Bandelier National Monument

Blake Suttle, University of California, Berkeley, Redwood National Park

PROGRESS

Disturbed Lands Guidance: Servicewide guidance is the result of the Geologic Resources Division's Disturbed Lands Inventory and Assessment Workshop January 15 – 17, 2002. Experts from each region and many Parks met to develop this guidance on how to inventory and prioritize disturbed areas. The guidance is intended for both experienced and inexperienced Park natural resource personnel. The workshop participants drafted protocols that are currently undergoing comment and review. Division staff will present a poster on the workshop at the West-By-Northwest conference in March.

Air Quality Documents Available: The NPS currently operates 27 of the 79 monitoring sites of EPA's Clean Air Status and Trends Network. EPA has just published the 2000 Annual CASTNet Report, which now includes dry deposition estimates and interpolation maps for the NPS stations in the western U.S. A better discussion of ozone concentrations and trends at NPS stations is also included. Also, a joint quality assurance plan was recently published that documents the monitoring equipment and procedures used to collect and validate data properly. This required a thorough examination of all aspects of EPA's and NPS's gaseous pollutant and meteorological monitoring programs. Copies of the reports are available in hard copy or in PDF format at: <http://www.epa.gov/castnet/>.

Guidance on Use of Oral Rabies Vaccine in the NPS: The USDA Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service-Wildlife Services (APHIS-WS) and state health departments have requested that some units of the NPS participate in oral rabies vaccination to control rabies in wildlife. Raccoons in the eastern U. S. and coyote and gray fox in Texas are targeted for vaccination efforts (the vaccine is not effective in bats or skunks). WRMD staff provided information and recommendations to Director Mainella in providing guidance to parks that are requested to participate in oral rabies vaccination. Because of the public health threat from rabies and the belief by experts that these outbreaks would not have occurred without post-Columbian human intervention, Director Mainella has asked Regional Directors in affected areas to constructively engage in discussions with APHIS-WS and states regarding the potential use of oral rabies vaccination in NPS units. Prior to undertaking any actions within the parks environmental planning documents, including NEPA and Section 7 consultation, would need to be prepared.

PROFESSIONAL MEETING ATTENDANCE/PAPERS

Secondary Organic Aerosols Workshop: A variable, but often significant, fraction of visibility-reducing particulate aerosols are organic compounds; most are secondary compounds from the oxidation of the primary pollutants. John Reiter, air quality coordinator for the Intermountain Region, helped coordinate a workshop that brought NPS scientists and other experts in the field together at the Desert Research Institute. The group identified methods that could be used to better characterize the secondary organics and use them as tracers to determine the original sources, such as wildfires, mobile source combustion, or point sources. A research plan and some candidate sampling methods are being formulated based on the presentations and discussion at the workshop.

National Invasive Weed Awareness Week III (NIWAW III) Conference: Tony Pernas, liaison for the Florida Partnership EPMT provided a presentation on the NPS Exotic Plant Management Teams to the attendees of the conference on Feb. 25th 2002 in Washington DC. NIWAWIII was held to focus national attention on the severe problems created by invasive weeds. The NCI EPMT and Shenandoah EPMT staffed displays on NPS Exotic Plant Management Teams and activities at the U.S. Botanical Gardens on the mall throughout National Invasive Weed Awareness Week including a reception for policy makers interested in invasive weeds on Feb. 26th 2002.

STAFF NEWS

Gary Davis, most well known as the architect of the Channel Islands monitoring program and advisor to many monitoring programs (he's worn many hats in NPS and BRD), has begun a new assignment as a special assistant to Associate Director Mike Soukup. Gary is undertaking a two-year detail to work on Marine Protected Areas issues. He will not be relocating to Washington, but will spend time there, as well as at a NOAA office in California.

Publications Development Specialist hired: Carrie Garner joined the Natural Resource Information Division on February 25, as a Publications Development Specialist. While Carrie is new to the National Park Service, she has had an interesting career background with numerous parallels. Carrie previously served as a journalist, editor and copywriter, and specialized in investigative journalism for government, business, courts and municipal services. As a reporter, she was required to produce accurate, balanced and attention getting news articles on short deadlines. Carrie also has considerable experience as a photographer and photo archivist. She received a Bachelor of Arts degree in English and Journalism from Shepardstown College, and is currently working on a MBA in communications from Johns Hopkins University. Carrie will work out of the Washington Office as a member of the Information Services Branch. She will help with a number of projects in the Associate Director's office, including processing several NRSS reports as well as assembling and packaging information materials on NRSS topics, issues and functions.

Geologist Receives Award From Regional Director: Dr. Bill Hood, a semi-retired geologist who

volunteers at Colorado National Monument (COLM) was recently presented a Shoulder-to-Shoulder award by Intermountain Region Director Karen Wade. Along with his son, Dr. Hood created an electronic interactive geologic learning center for visitors to easily understand the geological significance of the park. The learning center is so popular that over 80% of visitors use it. Dr. Hood has also been planning other multi-park interpretive exhibits with the Division's GIP program manager on the extinct Morrison (dinosaur) ecosystem.

Yellowstone Hires Supervisory Geologist: Yellowstone National Park recently hired Dr. Henry Heasler, a Wyoming native, as its supervisory geologist. Dr. Heasler brings superb geoscience credentials to the NPS. He has been a professor at the University of Wyoming since 1986, where he co-founded both the Spatial Data and Visualization Center and the Institute for Energy Research. He created the award-winning Wyoming Internet Map Server website. He published numerous articles on Wyoming geothermal resources and served as an investigator on contracts or grants worth almost \$15 million. He also received the 1992 Cynthia Wedel Award for Distinguished Volunteer Service from the American Red Cross.

Thought you'd be interested in this excerpt of the Natural Resources section from the WASO Monthly Managers' (i.e. top management) report for December. It gives a good indication of things that are on their radar screen, and may give us a heads up on things coming our way:

NATURAL RESOURCES STEWARDSHIP AND SCIENCE

Natural Resource Challenge

The Natural Resource Bibliographic Database: On December 6, 2001, the Natural Resource Information Division, Inventory and Monitoring Program released the Internet-based version of the NPS bibliographic database. This database is primarily a tool for preparing bibliographic reports organized at the park level. Its advanced search engine allows for queries on every data entry field and can accommodate wildcards. With few exceptions, staff from every park that has natural resource information is populating the database. The bibliographic database is also currently integrated with the NPS species database, NPS species, and will be integrated with the online Dataset Catalog which is currently under development. Integration enables the addition and maintenance of bibliographic records from either database, and allows real-time dynamic data sharing for inter-database summaries. The bibliographic information is available to NPS staff and cooperators at one of three levels. Reader access is available for those only interested in report building and Author and Editor access allow the user to add or edit records respectively. A public access version under development will not require passwords, but restricts from public view the documents flagged as sensitive. For parks with unstable Internet access a desktop version is available with capabilities to upload and download records from the online version. For more information contact Wendy Schumacher, Bibliographic Coordinator, via email or by phone at (970) 225-3548.

Vital Signs Workshop Notes

The Water Resources Division hosted a twice-wide water quality vital signs monitoring

workshop, November 28-29, in Fort Collins. Representatives, presenters, instrumental in the workshop. The workshop was structured to facilitate communication among Networks involved in planning and design of the new Natural Resource Challenge Water Quality Monitoring Program, and facilitate feedback to WRD on detailed site-specific technical guidance being developed in the areas of protocols and parameter management. In addition, there were several invited technical presentations and monitoring design case studies. All five Networks presently receiving NRC-water quality monitoring funding are represented and provided reports on their planning approaches and progress towards design. Workshop notes are posted on the meeting intranet site (www.lnrintra.nps.gov/wrd). Also available from the meeting web site are draft proposed technical guidance documents, and copies of all presentation slides.

Approximately 70 people, including Network specialists and WRD staff participated in the workshop to facilitate communication among Networks involved in planning and design of the new Natural Resource Challenge Water Quality Monitoring Program, and facilitate feedback to WRD on detailed site-specific technical guidance being developed in the areas of protocols and parameter management. In addition, there were several invited technical presentations and monitoring design case studies. All five Networks presently receiving NRC-water quality monitoring funding are represented and provided reports on their planning approaches and progress towards design. Workshop notes are posted on the meeting intranet site (www.lnrintra.nps.gov/wrd). Also available from the meeting web site are draft proposed technical guidance documents, and copies of all presentation slides.

Accomplishments/Significant Activities

Hale Encroachment Case Settled

The Hale Encroachment case at Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area has been settled for \$8,000. The case involved removal of native vegetation inside the park boundary. The Park will oversee and monitor in-kind work (not easily valued) to be performed by the Hales.

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Forest Pest Management Funding Announced

All 12 NPS proposals for Forest Pest Management Funding were submitted to the Forest Service and funded at the full amounts requested. The total budget for the 12 projects is \$399,000. NPS has developed a very good working relationship with the Forest Service, returning \$160,000 in funds carried over from 2001.

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NRPC Briefs NLC on Coastal Park Opportunities

On December 13th, Gary Davis, Senior Scientist from Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area, and Jim Tilmant from the Water Resources Division briefed the National Leadership Council on deteriorating marine resources in parks. Identified opportunities to restore and sustain fishing in coastal parks. The National Park System Advisory Board's Report 2001 and growing scientific evidence indicate that stewardship has been lax in marine and aquatic parks, and that marine reserves are needed to prevent depletion of fisheries. Ecological consequences of overfishing in parks jeopardize fishing opportunities and impact parks. Several opportunities currently exist to collaborate with other federal agencies to better manage the nation's marine resources. Two recent Executive Orders (13158 (Protected Areas) and 13159 (Marine Protected Areas)) encourage and direct agencies to participate with others to restore and sustain marine resources. The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration is currently re-examining national ocean policies, providing an opportunity to be engaged by the National Park Service in marine conservation. The NLC acknowledged the need to increase NPS capacity for coastal conservation, so opportunities to fish and enjoy park resources can be restored and sustained. To begin, they suggested NPS convene a coalition of coastal park area managers to share experiences

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and search for common resolutions, and engage members of the fishing, scientific, conservation, and park communities.

International Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies

The National Park Service becomes a member of the International Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (IAFWA), an organization that represents the states on national and international wildlife issues. The Biological Resource Management Division represented NPS at the December meeting in Wichita, Kansas. NPS will be represented on several committees of the organization, including threatened and endangered species policy and Native American relations. IAFWA provides a forum for NPS to address issues with partners beyond park boundaries.

Amphibian and Reptile Conservation (ARC) Memorandum of Understanding

The Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) calls for federal agencies to cooperate in "the identification of species, communities, ecosystems, and other landscape features important to amphibian and reptile conservation". The MOU obligate NPS funds and was reviewed regionally, as well as in Washington. The Biological Resource Management Division represented the Service at the PARC federal steering committee meeting held at the International Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies meeting in December.

Water Rights at Zion National Park

The Department of Justice, representing NPS, attended a hearing in St. George, Utah on November 29, 2001 regarding the Utah Engineer's contested Motion for Entry of an Interlocutory Decree for Zion National Park in the Water Right Adjudication. The court granted the interlocutory decree, finalizing an approximately 10-year effort to secure federal reserved water rights protection for surface and groundwater resources at the park. The decree provides court approval for the 1996 negotiated settlement agreement between the State of Utah and the United States (Zion Water Right Settlement Agreement).

Pacific Islands Exotic Plant Management Team

The Pacific Islands Exotic Plant Management Team (PIEPMT) has partnered with the Hawaii State Emergency Environmental Workforce (EEWF) to support ongoing efforts to control Miconia and other invasive species at Haleakala National Park. Eleven EEWF positions were assigned to the PIEPMT for the 3 month duration of the program. The EEWF is being administered by the Research Corporation of Hawaii (RCUH) through a recent state act and funding appropriation in the amount of \$250,000. The EEWF program employs individuals who were adversely affected by the events of September 11 or were otherwise unemployed. RCUH has encouraged these agencies to help the NPS to provide transportation, field gear and supplies so that most of the funding goes directly to paychecks. Park staff worked hard to provide this support in short order. Work to begin on December 15. Work by the PIEPMT/EEWF crew will help control incipient invasions of habitat modifying alien plants, thereby contributing to protection of natural resources at the park.

Performance Management

On December 6, the Natural Resource Group reviewed proposed revisions and additions to

natural resource-related goals to the Office of Strategic Planning. Past goal development has been hampered by the lack of capability to measure resource condition. However, the Natural Resource Challenge is providing this ability. To capitalize on the evolving nature of its capabilities, the goal group recommended a new goal framework that it can implement through the 2006 strategic plan, with interim goal changes that can be implemented in the 2003 plan. The new framework is more comprehensive and expressive of park performance outcomes directed at mission goal 1a than the previous goals and rests on a more scientifically sound, quantitative measurement of resource condition. Collectively, the goals answer the questions: Are resources in good condition? Do park ecosystems meet the standards or objectives for which we are managing them—are our management actions working? The proposed goals for the 2003 plan revision revise current threatened and endangered species, exotic plant, and inventory and monitoring goals; create a geologic features goal replacing very narrow cave and paleontologic goals; and create new goals for exotic animals and wildland fire regimes.

In the meantime, the Department initiated fast-track efforts to develop a Departmental performance management framework, with stakeholder meetings held immediately before and after the holiday season. Several advisory committees, including coordinators and other Natural Resource personnel, developed team meetings on short notice and/or stakeholder meetings, attempting to develop goals that would accommodate related NPS goals. It is not yet clear exactly how the Department's effort will impact bureau strategic planning, although the Department has indicated that bureau plans will still be required.

Heads Up

Air Resource Natural Resource Challenge Field Position
Vacancy announcements will soon appear for these positions. Most are for Regional Air Resources Program Managers that will be in identifying the specific air resource management issues affecting, or of interest to parks. These positions will serve as senior advisors to Regions, Support Offices, and parks on air quality issues. Positions will be filled in Philadelphia, Austin (TX), Minneapolis, Seattle, Northeast Region, Great Smoky Mountains, and Mammoth Cave (0.5 FTE). One FTE is for a Senior Scientist (G with EPA) responsible for overseeing ARD's air toxics monitoring efforts throughout the system.

New Contact for Research Permit and Reporting System Support
In a slight change of responsibilities, Bill VASO National Natural Landmarks (NNL) program will provide telephone and mail technical support for the NPS Research Permit and Reporting System (RPRS). Bill will continue to support core aspects of the NNL program. Bill may be reached by phone at 208-351-5311 or by email at bill.goddard@nps.gov. Tim Goddard will serve as a secondary technical support contact for RPRS. Tim can be reached at 970-225-3543.

National Park Service Featured in the Endangered Species Bulletin
The upcoming issue of the Endangered Species Bulletin will feature an overview of endangered species in the National Parks and regional studies and key issues. Diane Pavlek from National Capitol Region organized the issue. The bulletin is published in early February 2002. BRM is ordering additional copies, which will be available

from Loyal Mehrhoff (970-225-3521).

International Migratory Bird Day 2002

Through the Park Flight Migratory Bird Program, NPS is again supporting the Partners in Flight International Migratory Bird Day (IMBD). The 2002 theme, "Celebrating Special Places for Birds," examines the habitat needs of migratory birds with emphasis on special sites that have been designated Important Bird Areas. Forty-one NPS areas have been designated as Globally Important Bird Areas by the American Bird Conservancy. The NPS logo will be on 2002 IMBD materials, and a catalog of these materials will be sent to all parks in January to encourage and facilitate participate in IMBD activities.

Park Flight Offers International Technical Assistance Opportunities

The Park Flight Migratory Bird Program is seeking qualified NPS employees to provide technical assistance to park Flight projects in Mexico and Central America during March 2002. Seven positions are available for environmental educators, site planners, and a trail development specialist. Candidates must speak Spanish, and have International experience. Knowledge of birds is desirable. For more information, contact Jonathan Putnam at NPS Office of International Affairs.

Geology Interpretation Workshop

The Information Services Branch of the Natural Resource Information Division is working with Geologic Resources Division staff to develop a national "Geology Interpretation" workshop, to be offered later during the 2002 fiscal year. Several planning meetings were held in Denver, with input from GRD, NRID, and the Intermountain Region. The Branch is also assisting with the development of a new partnership with National Wildlife Federation, which overlaps with the ITC Park Natural Resource Profiles project. In addition a tentative agreement has been made with management at Harper's Ferry Center to investigate natural areas of interest and to combine forces related to natural resources information services and activities. The possibility of developing an interpretive plan for the natural resources program is being considered. A meeting between the Branch and HFC managers is proposed for early 2002.

Staffing News

New Bibliographic Coordinator

Wendy Schumacher has joined the Natural Resource Information Division staff in Fort Collins as the Bibliographic Coordinator. She has a master's degree in Library and Information Science from the University of Illinois and an undergraduate degree from the University of Michigan. Wendy recently returned from two years of Peace Corps service in Morocco, where she was an Information Resource Management Volunteer teaching library cataloging and website development and design to host country nationals. She has an Federal service with the Department of Justice in the Environment and Natural Resource Division (Washington D.C.) and spent ten years at the Environmental Protection Agency Region 5 office (Chicago) where she held positions including water quality planner and PRA officer.

ARD Hires Environmental Protection Specialist

Susan Johnson has been hired by ARD to perform cost-benefit and policy analyses of air quality regulations and programs. Susan currently provides policy analysis and technical assistance on air quality-related issues to the National Conference of State Legislatures in Denver, CO. She is a member of the Colorado Bar and is enrolled in graduate courses in the Doctorate of Public Affairs Program at the University of Colorado, Denver. Susan will begin working for NPS on February 11 and will be duty stationed in Denver.

EOD Damage Assessment Case Management Officer Dave Anderson has been hired by EQD as a Damage Assessment Case Management Officer. He is stationed in Atlanta, GA. Previously, Dave was the Hazardous Materials Program Manager at the Mojave National Preserve, CA. Dave is a Graduate from Ball State University, Majoring in Journalism, with a minor in Natural Resource Management. He also did graduate work in Natural Resource Management at Ball State. He has worked for EPA coordinator in the Superfund program.

NRID Database Administrator

Marianne Tucker has been hired by the NRID Systems and Management Branch to help NRSS design and maintain service wide databases. Marianne is a full-time Oracle Database Administrator with 10 years of experience in planning, developing, and maintaining enterprise-wide information systems. Previously, she worked for Johnson Controls where she contributed to the success of environmental-based information systems supporting operations within USGS, USFWS, and NPS. Marianne began working for NPS on December 29 and is stationed at the Natural Resource Program Center in Fort Collins.

ARD Advertises for Washington Liaison Position

A Vacancy Announcement for an Environmental Specialist (GS-0028-12/13) opened on January 17 and will close on February 6, 2001. The position is available on the OPM's USAJOBS website. The incumbent will be ARD's expert and liaison on air resources management issues affecting parks and will represent NPS concerns on air quality issues to senior management officials at NPS, DOI, other bureaus, Federal inter-agencies, Congress and the public.

Progress

Power Plant Application Remanded: On January 17, the Virginia State Corporation Commission (SCC) remanded an application to the Virginia State Corporation Commission for the construction of a 900 MW power plant 40 kilometers east of Shenandoah National Park. The SCC is currently conducting a re-evaluation of this project in the context of 30 new power plants currently proposed in the state of Virginia. The majority concluded that the cumulative impacts of all proposed new facilities would be addressed stating that "...our cumulative effects of numerous plants, each of which, when reviewed individually, are deemed insignificant." ARD has long advocated the use of cumulative impact analysis for all power plant applicants.

Vessel Groundings in Dry Tortugas National Park: Between December 17th and January 17th, EQD, the US Coast Guard, NPS, and the Florida Marine Patrol responded to four vessel groundings, which involved four vessels, are some of the most significant coral reef and submerged Civil War resources in the park. To date, the Coast Guard has

expended over \$200,000 on spill containment equipment up to vessel salvage. The NOAA Sanctuary Team is conducting injury assessments for all spill incidents

Golden Spike and Rainbow Bridge Water Rights

Water rights agreements for Golden Spike National Historic Park (GOSP) and Rainbow Bridge National Monument in Utah were signed by the Department of Justice on January 16, 2002. The agreements confirm state appropriate water rights for GOSP and federal reserved water rights at RABR. The agreements will be included in the final decrees prepared by Utah and decreed at some future date.

Hearings on Impacts of Groundwater Pumping in Lake Mead and NRA

A hearing on a water right change application was cancelled after the Nevada State Engineer was notified that the applicant would not be attending. The applicant is taking testimony regarding the potential impacts of groundwater pumping in the California Wash basin on water resources in Lake Mead. NPS is preparing for a February 5-8 hearing on groundwater appropriations in the California Wash District in Meadow Valley Wash and the Bureau of Land Management are negotiating with the applicant to withdraw the application.

Department of Interior Performance Management

Development of Department-wide performance goals continued with a meeting of the workgroups dealing with restoration and management. The workgroups have been instructed to combine management goals for these two areas. Draft goals will be resubmitted to the Department by January 29th.

Soundscape Monitoring Technical Issues

A report prepared for NPS by a panel of experts is being reviewed. The report addresses issues associated with monitoring park sound levels. Ambient sound levels in large parks remain below the 20dB detection limit of conventional sound monitoring equipment. With the receipt of the report, NPS is again moving ahead with the development of the soundscape monitoring procedure section of Reference Manual 47.

Workgroup Develops Protocols for Disturbed Area

A workshop to develop service wide protocols for conducting disturbed area inventory and assessment was hosted by the Resource Management Division on January 9th - 17th, 2002. The workshop brought together a multi-disciplinary team of experts from all division experts to design protocols that could be easily adapted to various spatial scales. Once approved by the workgroup, a draft of the protocols will be submitted for service wide review and comment. To receive copies, contact Deanna Greco, (202) 219-3400 or via NPS e-mail.

Natural Resources Law & Policy Course

The course, originally scheduled for September, has been moved to April 9th - 11th at the Main Interior Building in Washington, D.C. Main Center staff are organizing

the course for the Albright Employee Development Center with a solid understanding of the Organizational Management course is currently full, there is a waiting list. If interested, contact Sharon Kliwinski, Water Resources Division, (202) 219-1234 or via NPS e-mail.

International Partners in Flight Conference
Through the Park Flight Migratory Bird Partners in Flight Conference: A Workshop on "Integration". The workshop will take place in Monterey, California, March 20-24, 2002. If you have passed, poster abstracts will be accepted. Registration information is available at: <http://www.nps.gov/pis>

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Meetings – Held / Attended

Ballistics Workshop Held

A workshop on the remote delivery of bison vaccine was held at Fort Collins, January 23rd - 24th. The workshop focused on vaccine delivery, veterinary medicine, and the development of specifications for a new remote delivery system. Participants included Yellowstone, Olympic, and Gettysburg National Parks. While the immediate need for vaccine is to bison at Yellowstone National Park, the workshop also discussed the use of drugs to meet wildlife management objectives.

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Wildlife was hosted by BRMD in Fort Collins. The workshop focused on ballistics, polymer science, and the development of specifications for a new remote delivery system. Participants included Yellowstone, Olympic, and Gettysburg National Parks. While the immediate need for vaccine is to bison at Yellowstone National Park, the workshop also discussed the use of drugs to meet wildlife management objectives.

Sustainable Forest Management

NPS participated in a Pinchot Institute lecture series prepared by two United Nations sponsors for the Intergovernmental Forum on Forests. The series focused on the potential contributions of forests in protecting biodiversity. The discussion was intended to help the U.S. prepare a report for the Intergovernmental Forum on Forests. Preparation focused on the sustainable use of forests, the contribution of forests to sustainable forest management, and the involvement in sustainable forest management of all economic and social sectors.

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