

**Associate Director
Natural Resource Stewardship and Science**

Monthly Report--June 2006

New Developments/Heads Up

Ground Water Development Proposed Adjacent to Wind Cave NP -- The Southern Black Hills Water System (SBHWS) is planning to use ground water for a growing rural population in the southern portion of the Black Hills. NPS is concerned that withdrawal of large quantities of ground water will impact caves, streams, and springs in the park. The NPS Water Resources Division assisted Wind Cave NP by sending NPS concerns to the South Dakota Chief Engineer. Concurrent with the water rights permit process, the project will also undergo a NEPA Environmental Assessment because SBHWS is seeking a federal loan from the USDA Rural Utility Service to fund construction. Jeff Hughes, Water Resources Division (970-225-3527).

Court Rules in Favor of U.S. at Olympic NP's Shi Shi Beach -- On June 14, 2006, the 9th Circuit Court of Appeals affirmed the Federal District Court's ruling that the United States is vested with the right to sand and gravel at Shi Shi Beach in Olympic NP. Appeal to the Supreme Court is not anticipated. For nearly 13 years, the NPS and the Ruth Hammond Wyatt Trust have disputed sand and gravel ownership at Shi Shi Beach, a world class resource in NPS wilderness, along the remote northwestern coast of the Olympic Peninsula. The United States owns the property at Shi Shi Beach (approximately 160 acres) subject to the Trust's reservation of certain minerals. The Trust has expressed its desire to sell all of its mineral rights to the United States, but the parties needed first to establish "who owns what" before beginning the value determination process. With mineral ownership resolved, the NPS anticipates that the Trust will submit exploration plans to assess the value of its mineral rights. From Geological Resources Division.

NPS Develops First NPS Cooperative Agreement with National Association for Interpretation (NAI) -- The first NPS cooperative agreement with the National Association for Interpretation was signed by Mike Soukup on June 6. The NAI is the flagship professional organization for interpreters, both nationally and internationally. This agreement will allow for projects like a comprehensive survey of nature center program effectiveness and the development of mutual training opportunities. The first joint training presentation will be a continuation of the successful "media" workshop premiered last fall in Rhode Island. This year's offering will take place at the NAI national headquarters in Fort Collins, Colorado, on August 29-September 3. For more information contact Lynne Murdock (202-513-7195).

Black Canyon of the Gunnison NP Water Rights Hearing Held in Federal District Court -- On June 29, 2006, the Federal Colorado District Court, with Judge Clarence Brimmer presiding, heard oral arguments concerning the federal reserved water right for Black Canyon. The case

was brought to court by NGOs. Because of two existing agreements with the State of Colorado concerning the park's water right, these NGOs charged that the Secretary and the NPS Director were remiss in protecting park resources, in the disposal of federal property, and in compliance with the NEPA. While this case is addressing issues of federal law, the Colorado Water Court is waiting its outcome in order to continue determining the quantity of the water right. At the hearing, Judge Brimmer indicated he will issue his decision in about a month. Chuck Pettee, Water Resources Division (970-225-3505).

Nevada State Engineer Denies Some Water Use Applications by Southern Nevada Water Authority -- The Nevada State Engineer (NSE) issued Ruling No. 5621, June 15, 2006, approving some water use applications and denying others. The NSE ruled that changing some water diversion points would be detrimental to the public interest. For the denied applications, the NSE concluded that Southern Nevada Water Authority (SNWA) failed to provide the technical evidence needed to justify moving approved groundwater permits from outside to inside the Three Lakes Valley-South groundwater basin, an unprecedented approach proposed by SNWA to avoid access issues on a national wildlife refuge. NPS concerns about the proposed changes were incorporated in a November 2005 stipulated agreement that protects Devils Hole and Death Valley NP from effects of SNWA's proposed pumping. SNWA must now determine if it can move forward with its plans to develop the smaller amount of groundwater approved by the NSE. Dan McGlothlin, Water Resources Division (970-225-3536).

Bio-Quests in Appalachia -- The Appalachian Highlands Science Learning Center, with partner Discover Life in America, will host taxonomic bio-quests for beetles, ferns, and slime molds including surveys in karst areas, during June and July. Over 20 researchers participating in four separate All Taxa Biodiversity Inventory (ATBI) blitzes will work in the field with visiting teachers, volunteers, education groups and high school interns while staying at the Learning Center. Many researchers also visit park visitor centers and set up tables to highlight their research activities. For more information on dates, visit the Discover Life in America website at [www.dlia.org].

Mine Safety Workshop in Idaho -- The USDA-Forest Service will offer its mine safety training course September 11-15, for the first time in 3 years. Geologic Resources Division staff will present sections on abandoned underground mine hazards and mine gases. An instructor meeting the week of June 19 reviewed and updated course material, and assessed the condition of the field site (Wallace Idaho). NPS participants in the September workshop include staff from New River Gorge NR, Joshua Tree NM, North Cascades NP, Whiskeytown Unit, Grand Canyon NP, and Lake Mead NRA. Some slots may remain open; if interested in attending, contact John Burghardt at (303-969-2099).

Progress

Water Resources Division Assists Solicitor's Office and Death Valley NP in Devils Hole Groundwater Use Hearing -- On June 12-14, a Nevada State Engineer water rights hearing was held to consider the protests of NPS and FWS on numerous pending groundwater use applications for the Amargosa Desert area, near Devils Hole. WRD, park staff, and NPS

consultants (including a USGS scientist) presented evidence that current water pumping in the Amargosa Desert area is affecting the water level at Devils Hole and additional proposed pumping will lower the pool level below the court-mandated minimum level. The NPS and FWS are seeking denial of these and other pending applications because the basin is over-appropriated and agency water rights would be adversely affected by the combined additional pumping. A ruling is not expected for several months. Dan McGlothlin, Water Resources Division (970-225-3536).

OEO Participates in "Interpretive Definitions" Project Hosted by EPA and NAI -- The National Association for Interpretation (NAI) hosted the second round of the EPA sponsored "interpretive definitions" project and invited staff from the NRPC Office of Education and Outreach (OEO) to participate. Mike Whatley and Lynne Murdock served as the NPS representatives. Many federal agencies attended (e.g., USFS, USFWS, BLM, EPA) as well as environmental interpretation organization NGOs. Goals of the project include a book that captures discussions about terminology/processes and a Web site. For more information, contact Lynne Murdock 202-513-7195.

Second Comprehensive Survey of the American Public -- The NPS Social Science Program selected the University of Wyoming to conduct its second Comprehensive Survey of the American Public in 2007. The co-principal investigators are Dr. Patricia Taylor, Department of Statistics and Sociology, and Dr. Bistra Anatchkova, manager of the Wyoming Survey and Analysis Center. Drs. Taylor and Anatchkova recently completed a nationwide household survey for the Department of the Interior to help determine a price for the new interagency recreation pass. For more information, contact Jim Gramann (202-513-7189).

Kenai Fjords Glacier Research Highlighted on Ocean Alaska Science and Learning Center (OASLC) Web Site -- A century of change in the glaciers of Kenai Fjords NP is highlighted in a series of Flash videos on the OASLC web site. The study is a cooperative effort between the OASLC and USGS researcher Dr. Bruce Molnia. The videos reveal changes in the glaciers in a format that is both dramatic and easily understandable. You can watch the glaciers change before your eyes at the following link:
[<http://www.oceanalaska.org/research/rptglacier-video.htm>]. For more information contact Jim_Pfeiffenberger@nps.gov.

EQD PEPC Training in Atlanta -- PEPC staff (NPS Environmental Quality Division) provided training for over 30 employees from the Southeast Region in Atlanta, June 21 and 22. PEPC also provided training for the Great Smoky Mountains NP staff on June 27. For more information, contact Debby Peck (202-513-7200).

Annual Meeting of Northeast Air Quality Committee -- On June 28-29, 2006, Kathy Tonnessen represented the RM-CESU at the annual meeting of the Northeast Regional Air Quality Committee, held at Schoodic Education and Research Center, Acadia NP. Kathy met with Canadian and University of Maine researchers to get information on Acadia's research needs, an initial step in putting together the "Research Opportunities" catalog for the park. This is a

collaboration among the several CESUs, the Schoodic Education and Research Center and Acadia NP. Kathy Tonnessen can be reached at (406-243-4449).

Accomplishments

BioBlitz of Potomac Gorge -- The Maryland/District of Columbia chapter of The Nature Conservancy and NPS teamed up to conduct a "BioBlitz" June 24-25 on national park land in the Potomac River Gorge, including parts of George Washington Memorial Parkway and Chesapeake & Ohio Canal NHP. The Potomac Gorge is a 15-mile river corridor stretching from Great Falls to Key Bridge and is one of the most biologically significant natural areas within the National Park System and in the Eastern United States. The 30-hour effort focused on under-surveyed groups, such as land snails, flatworms, flies, bees, wasps, beetles, spiders, fungi, algae and mosses. The weekend's species tally was over 1000 species, including a beetle (*Strongylium crenatum*) new to the state of Virginia, a fly (*Scatophila carinata*) previously undocumented east of Iowa, two rare land snails (*Punctum smithi*) and (*Potomapsis lapideria*), and two dragonflies never before recorded in the Potomac Gorge. For more information, contact Jim Sherald at (202-342-1443).

New River Gorge NR Works With State to Reduce Impacts From Adjacent Coal Mine -- New River Gorge NR successfully worked to minimize park resource impacts from a proposed adjacent surface coal mine using West Virginia's regulatory authority in the Federal Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act of 1977. As originally proposed, the Eagle Ridge Mine, only 300 feet from the park's boundary, posed adverse impacts to the park's visual and archeological resources, and endangered species. The park, assisted by the NPS Geologic Resources Division, analyzed the mine's permit application and communicated NPS concerns to state planning authorities about mine design, operation, and reclamation. The park recommended design improvements to the mine's road, to its drainage structures and reclamation plan, and worked with FWS to prevent adverse impacts to two endangered bat species in the park and adjacent mine area. With a revised mine permit and monitoring and mitigation measures, the mine operator will avoid triggering the "adverse impact" stipulation in West Virginia's surface mining law. From Geological Resources Division.

Shared Marine Protected Area Monitoring Program -- The NPS is committed to creating a seamless network of ocean parks, refuges, sanctuaries, and reserves as part of the President's 2004 Ocean Action Plan. As a result, some recent positive events have occurred. For example, Acting Secretary Lynn Scarlett signed a declaration recognizing and promoting the concept of NPS and Mexican "Sister Parks," which includes Mexico's protected area agency (CONANP). Gary Davis (NPS's Ocean Programs Coordinator), then worked with Parks Canada, CONANP, and the North American Commission for Environmental Cooperation (CEC) at Pacific Rim NP, Vancouver Island, BC, June 7-9, to design a marine protected area monitoring program. The proposed U.S. side of the U.S./Mexican sister parks will include three national parks, five national wildlife refuges, a national marine sanctuary, and an estuarine research reserve in southern California, and four national parks, five national wildlife refuges, three national marine sanctuaries and two estuarine research reserves near Monterey and San Francisco, California. Gary Davis can be contacted at (202-513-7178) or (805-658-5707).

Midwest Region Natural Resources Strategy -- The "Midwest Region Natural Resource Science Strategy" was distributed to park superintendents June 30. Its development has been a year-long cooperative effort, involving Cooperative Ecosystem Studies Unit (CESU) Coordinators, park resource specialists, and regional subject matter experts. The Strategy focuses on three over-arching goals: 1) communicate science information among natural resource stewardship and science staff, park natural resource staff, and partners; 2) identify and address priority science information needs for effective management of natural resources; and, 3) develop infrastructure and procedures to support a strong science program. The Strategy also establishes a Regional Science Committee comprised of representatives from CESUs, Inventory & Monitoring Networks, Research Learning Centers, and the Midwest Regional Office. The Regional Science Committee met for the first time on June 20, 2006, to develop a work plan for fiscal years 2006 and 2007. For more information, contact Jerrilyn Thompson (612-624-3694) or Gary Willson (402-472-5047).

French Embassy Briefed -- Bruce Peacock, NPS Environmental Quality Division, briefed the French Embassy in Washington, D.C. on economic valuation techniques that could be used to address cultural resources. The Embassy contacted Peacock because of his experience in valuing natural and cultural resources for damage assessment, rulemaking, and other purposes. The French government is exploring ways to value monuments, museums, and other cultural resources in order to better capitalize on the intellectual property rights associated with those resources. Bruce explained the NPS experience with resource valuation and shared published valuation studies. Bruce Peacock can be reached at (970-267-2106).

Resource Advisor Workshop for Hurricane (All Risk) Response -- This workshop, held in Savannah, Georgia June 13-15, provided overviews of the hurricane Incident Command System, the NPS National Emergency Response Policies, the Burned Area Emergency Response (BAER) Program, in-depth information about hurricane dynamics and processes, and reviewed impacts to terrestrial, marine, and cultural resources. Participants were instructed in how to prepare for an assignment, were briefed on health issues, and were informed about protocol for interactions with an Incident Command Team. Most participants were Southeast Region staff, but representatives attended from several other NPS regions and from the NPS Geologic Resources Division, NPS Spill Response Program, NPS Environmental Health Program, NPS Environmental Protection Program, NPS Emergency Services, NPS Museum Resource Center, DOI National BAER Program, and the USGS Office of Emergency Operations. The workshop was supported by NRPP and Fee Demonstration funds. For more information, contact Rebecca Beavers at (303-987-6945).

Appalachian Science Teacher Institute -- The Appalachian Highlands Science Learning Center, along with partners Discover Life in America, Great Smoky Mountains Institute at Tremont, Friends of the Smokies and the North Carolina GlaxoSmithKline Foundation, hosted the fourth annual, week-long "Science Teacher Institute". Twenty-five teachers from North Carolina spent a week in the field with 9 different researchers collecting data and working through the scientific method. Each day was designed to highlight activities that can be replicated in the classroom. Topics of investigation included algae, tardigrades, beetles, bees, the All Taxa Biodiversity

Inventory (ATBI), snails and the effects of air pollution on plants and water systems. For more information contact Paul_Super@nps.gov.

Montana Governor's Forum – Staff from the Biological Resources Management Division (BRMD), was invited to participate in the Governor's Forum on Restoration in Billings, Montana, June 8-9. The forum laid the groundwork for the development of restoration-oriented sectors of the state's economy. BRMD advised organizers from the Governor's office that it will work with the NPS Intermountain Region and the Federal Plant Conservation Alliance Partners to coordinate federal agency participation in this effort. For more information contact Greg Eckert (970-225-3594).

Canadian Biologist Assists Park Flight at Cuyahoga Valley NP and Point Pelee NP, Ontario -- Christina Carter from Canada is participating in a three-month international internship for the Park Flight Migratory Bird Program, shared between Cuyahoga Valley NP, Ohio, and Point Pelee NP, Ontario. Point Pelee, lying at the southernmost tip of mainland Canada on Lake Erie, shares many migratory species with Cuyahoga Valley, and both have been identified as "Important Bird Areas." Cuyahoga Valley and Point Pelee have been developing a relationship and discussing shared species and similar issues since 2004. Christina will participate in ongoing ecological monitoring (primarily for birds and butterflies) in both areas, and will evaluate the potential for coordination and standardization of monitoring. The Cuyahoga Valley portion of the internship is being handled through the NPS Office of International Affairs' International Volunteers in Parks program; the Point Pelee portion is being handled by the Parks Canada volunteer program.

Grenada National Parks Receives NPS Technical Assistance through Park Flight -- Lisa Andrews, Education Specialist, Big Cypress NP, provided curriculum development expertise to Grenada National Parks in June. Lisa's task was to help develop environmental teaching material that will be integrated into the school curriculum, specifically a teacher training booklet and workshop plan. The materials focus on the importance of the Grenada forest and its diverse species, including migratory birds shared with the U.S. This technical assistance effort was implemented with in-country partner Grenada Forestry and National Parks Department and international partner Rare, as part of a Park Flight project with Grenada. Travel costs were covered by Park Flight partner American Airlines facilitated by the National Park Foundation.

Building Better Parks Workshop -- Dr. Jim Gramann, NPS Visiting Chief Social Scientist, gave a presentation on heritage tourism and the NPS Social Science Program at the "Building Better Parks" workshop in Arlington, VA, June 27-28. Sponsored by the National Park Foundation's African American Experience Fund (AAEF), the workshop brought together the superintendents of 20 AAEF parks to develop strategies for better serving current and potential visitors with an interest in African American heritage tourism. Jim Gramann can be reached at (202-513-7189).

Professional Meetings/Papers

7th Federal Fossil Conference Proceedings Posted on GRD Website -- The proceedings from the 7th Federal Fossil Conference, sponsored by the New Mexico Museum of Nature and Science and held in Albuquerque, NM on May 22-24, 2006, are now available on the GRD website at

<http://www2.nature.nps.gov/geology/paleontology/publications.cfm>. The proceedings include 18 abstracts and articles about paleontological resource stewardship and science in U.S. National Park System units. The conference theme was "America's Antiquities: 100 Years of Managing Fossils on Federal Lands." The next Federal Fossil Conference is tentatively scheduled for April 2008 in St. George, Utah.

NPS Plays Role in Annual Association of American State Geologists Convention -- The Geologic Resources Division (GRD), and Bandelier and Pecos NMs, contributed to an Association of American State Geologists (AASG) Convention in Santa Fe, NM, June 4-7. The parks provided a variety of interpretive information, including a ranger for AASG field trips. GRD helped fund field trip transportation and conducted a breakout session about partnership opportunities with the NPS, including cost sharing of geologic mapping in park units, public outreach and interpretation opportunities, and state involvement in the GRD-administered Geoscientists in the Parks program. Response was overwhelmingly positive, with follow-up discussions on new mapping at Organ Pipe Cactus NM, Buffalo NR, and every NPS park unit in Massachusetts. Of particular interest was the opportunity to work with the California Survey on submerged geologic mapping around Channel Islands and Point Reyes. State survey publications on the geology of the national parks in Arizona and New Mexico attracted significant interest, with other Surveys considering similar publications on park units in their states. From Geological Resources Division.

North American Benthological Society Annual Meeting -- The 54th annual meeting of the North American Benthological Society (NABS) was held in Anchorage, Alaska, June 4-9, 2006. Congaree NP staff member Theresa Thom gave a talk on how the Congaree NP's Old-Growth Bottomland Forest Research and Education Center can link natural resource management with applied scientific data. Her talk specifically addressed water quality monitoring within the Southeastern United States. NABS is an international scientific organization whose purpose is to promote better understanding of the biological communities of lakes and streams and their role in aquatic ecosystems. The Education Center and Congaree NP will co-host the upcoming international NABA symposium in June 2007. Conference proceedings from this year's meeting can be viewed at: <http://www.benthos.org/Meeting/index.htm>

Staff News

Rich Gregory Retires -- Rich Gregory, Acting Director of the Natural Resource Program Center (NRPC), retired June 23, 2006. Rich began his career with the National Park Service in 1995 as Chief of the Natural Resources Information Division. In that position he oversaw establishment of the Servicewide natural resources inventory and monitoring program, and was responsible for formulating IT solutions for natural resource program administration and information management. As Acting Director of the Natural Resource Program Center, Rich oversaw the restructuring of the Center to provide for supervision of the natural resource Divisions, establish administrative efficiencies, and improve cross-program coordination. Prior to joining the National Park Service Rich served as Unit Leader for Cooperative Fishery Research Units at several universities including University of Maine, Montana State University, and the University of Florida. Rich then joined the US Fish and Wildlife Service's Office of Information Transfer

and served as Chief of the Office of Information Transfer from 1989-1995. Rich and his wife, Beverly, are looking forward to more time for hiking, biking, traveling, and family. Rich plans to help out parks as a VIP, continue coaching girls' basketball, teach an occasional course, and donate time to charitable organizations.

New NRPC Director -- George Dickison was named Director of the Natural Resource Program Center (NRPC) on June 27, 2006. The NRPC provides leadership, expertise, and scientific information to ensure the natural resources of the National Park System remain unimpaired for future generations. It includes Divisions for Air Resources, Biological Resource Management, Environmental Quality, Geological Resources, and Water Resources as well as offices for Inventory, Monitoring, and Evaluation, Natural Resource Information Systems, and Education and Outreach.

George has a wide breadth of experience in science, information management, and natural resource management. He has served the Alaska region as team manager for GIS and Information Resources, and has previously acted as the regional inventory and monitoring coordinator, as regional chief of natural resources, and as the chair of the regional natural resources advisory council. He has played a national leadership role in both the GIS and the inventory and monitoring programs. George and his team have won many awards including the NPS Director's Award for professional excellence in natural resources and the ESRI special achievement award that recognized the Alaska GIS program as one of the outstanding GIS sites in the world. He holds an M.S. in forest ecology from Duke University and has experience managing a wide variety of state, federal, and local government natural resource programs. Prior to joining the Park Service in 1992 George had positions with the Alaska Department of Natural Resources, the North Slope Borough, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and in a private consulting firm. He has a reputation for being thoughtful and creative, and for building positive relationships within NPS and across agency and non-government lines. He has successful experience in fostering partnerships with positive outcomes with a wide range of constituencies. George can be reached at 970-225-3557.

Mark VanMouwerik Receives Project Management Award from Cuyahoga Valley NP -- On June 6, Cuyahoga Valley NP presented Mark VanMouwerik (NPS Environmental Quality Division's Environmental Response, Damage Assessment and Restoration Branch) an "Excellence in Project Management" award for demolishing and removing the 100 year-old, 180,000-square-foot Jaite Paper Mill. This is the first phase in returning the site to a natural forested area. The funds for this project represent compensation for natural resource damage at the park's Krejci Dump.

Steve Venable Joins EQD's PEPC -- Steve Venable came on board June 1 as a developer for the PEPC team, NPS Environmental Quality Division. Steve was the original author of the NPS Research, Permit and Reporting System.