

Subject: March Monthly Report

ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR, NATURAL RESOURCES MONTHLY REPORT
MARCH 1999

NEW DEVELOPMENTS

AGREEMENT IN PRINCIPLE FOR WATER RIGHTS AT HOVENWEEP AND CEDAR BREAKS: NPS and the state of Utah agree in principle to settle water rights issues in Cedar Breaks NM and the Utah portion of Hovenweep NM. The agreements recognize federal reserved water rights for visitor and administrative activities and protection of small springs and streams in the parks. Furthermore, they establish ground water and wetland protection zones on lands surrounding the parks to ensure protection of park waters and resources. The Water Resources Division has been assisting parks with negotiations to resolve water rights issues in several ongoing adjudications in Utah. These agreements in principle follow the settlement of water rights in Zion NP that was finalized in 1996.

YELLOWSTONE DIVERSA AGREEMENT COURT DECISION..JUST IN The US District Court (Washington DC) ruled on Edmonds vs Babbitt that NPS must comply with NEPA with an EA or EIS on the Cooperative Research and Development Agreement (CRADA) for bioprospecting at Yellowstone. The decision has just been received and is being studied.

PROGRESS

NPS initiates fourth regional air quality review: The kick-off meeting for the review of air quality in California parks was held in Joshua Tree NP on March 11. The review focused on ambient air quality and effects in the nine Class-I parks in California. A regional overview will be relevant to other NPS units in the state. The final report will be a summary of information and an identification of air quality-related research and monitoring needs. It will be available in September 2000.

COMPLETION OF A WATER RESOURCE SCOPING REPORT FOR MOJAVE NATIONAL PRESERVE: Mojave National Preserve in cooperation with the NPS Water Resources Division and Colorado State University just completed a water resource scoping report. This report presents an overview of the preserve's water resources, watersheds, and principal water-related issues. The 1.6 million-acre preserves natural and cultural resources and provides outdoor recreation and appreciation of the California Desert. In addition, the mountains in the preserve are recharge areas for several regional major desert watersheds and are an integral part of park planning. Copies of the report may be requested from Mojave National Preserve or the Water Resources Division.

NATURAL RESOURCE INITIATIVE The Natural Resource Initiative Steering Committee met in Williamsburg on March 19 to review a draft synthesis of the 12 action plans completed earlier in the month by work groups. The Steering Committee is still completing final comments on the document, but was generally pleased with the synthesis budget, although wanted changes in its presentation. Those of the 24 work group co-chairs at the George Wright Society meeting met with some members of the Steering Committee on Tuesday night to get an update on the status. The Committee, working with Bob Krumenaker, Abby Miller, and Holly

Bundock, hope to have a document final shortly. The initiative was also the focus of a session at the George Wright Society meeting. Finally, Superintendents Doug Morris (SHEN) and Don Neubacher (PORE) accompanied Mike Soukup, Deny Galvin, Sue Masica and Bruce Sheaffer to brief Congressional appropriations staffs on the initiative.

UPCOMING EVENTS

EPA-EMAP to Sponsor Western Ecological Workshop: The EPA Office of Research and Development will be hosting a meeting titled EMAP Symposium on Western Ecological Systems: Status, Issues, and New Approaches in San Francisco, April 6-8. The focus of the symposium is ecological monitoring and assessment in the West, including coastal estuaries, mountains, forest, freshwaters and arid ecological systems. During the forest and mountain ecosystem session, the NPS/EPA PRIMENet program and the NPS Inventory and Monitoring Program will be showcased. For information, visit the symposium Webpage at <http://www.tpmcscituate.com/symposium>.

NATURAL RESOURCE ADVISORY GROUP will meet at Shepardstown, WV the week of April 19. Park natural resource management personnel should forward any concerns to their regional representatives. The Natural Resource Initiative and the integration of RMP and PMIS databases will be on the agenda, as well as other items raised by regional representatives.

Western Snow Conference: The annual meeting of the Western Snow Conference will be held in the Embassy Suites in South Lake Tahoe April 19-22. Snow and glacier studies in Grand Teton, Yellowstone, and Rocky Mountain national parks will be presented during this meeting. Questions about the meeting should be directed to Bob Swanson at rswanson@banff.net.

PROFESSIONAL MEETING ATTENDANCE/PAPERS

GEORGE WRIGHT SOCIETY Comments in hallways suggested that this year's George Wright Society conference in Asheville, NC was a success. Unofficial word placed attendees at over 600. Several speakers noted the presence of at least 39 superintendents, as well as the concurrent NLC meeting.

Mount Rainier 100th Anniversary Symposium: The Northwest Scientific Association convened the Mount Rainier 100th Anniversary Symposium convened on March 24-27 in Tacoma, Washington. Gary Larson (USGS-BRD) and Barbara Samora (MORA) put together a formal session on aquatic resources and effects of deposition and then led discussions on the future of air quality management and ecological effects in the Pacific Northwest. Air Resources Division staff attended.

Interagency UV Monitoring Program Featured in EOS: The March-9 issue of EOS: Transactions of the American Geophysical-Union, includes a feature article on the US Interagency UV Monitoring Program: Established and Operating. The EPA/NPS Network sites (PRIMENet) are discussed and located on a comprehensive map of all UV monitoring sites in the United States. Agencies who are currently operating ground-based UV monitors include: EPA, NPS, USDA, NOAA, NSF, DOE, and Smithsonian. This information can be accessed at a new Web Site (<http://www.arl.noaa.gov/research/programs/uv.html>).

NPS SCIENTIFIC MONOGRAPH: In collaboration with BRD of USGS and the U.S. National Forest, NRID published Scientific Monograph NPS/NRYSGS/NRSM-98/01 titled Biogeochemistry of a Mature Boreal Ecosystem: Isle Royale National Park, Michigan by Robert Stottlemeyer, David Toczydlowski, and Raymond Herrmann. Copies are being sent to the NPS directorate, regions, division chiefs, and various libraries. GPO will send copies to depository libraries. Copies may be requested from the principal author at USGS, 240 W. Prospect Road, Fort Collins, Colorado 80525.