

Subject: NRSS Monthly Report

Associate Director for Natural Resource Stewardship and Science
Monthly Report
November, 2001

NATURAL RESOURCE CHALLENGE

CESU Proposals Reviewed: On 1 November, the Cooperative Ecosystem Studies Units Council held the review session to evaluate proposals for the fourth round of CESUs: Great Lakes-Northern Forest and the Gulf Coast. A total of ten proposals were received. Tentative winners were selected. Negotiations are currently underway with the potential host universities. For further information contact Dr. Gary Machlis, CESU Council Coordinator at 208.885.7129 or by email at <gmachlis@uidaho.edu>.

NRID Information Services Branch: There is much interest in the newly emerging NRID Information Services Branch. To help internal and external audiences know what this operation is all about, the Branch is formulating a mission statement which will incorporate a number of concepts. Initially the branch's mission is to communicate natural resource information and messages on resource issues and management activities with the public. Likewise, another summary of the branch's role is to promote, develop and provide education, interpretation, information and public outreach services, materials and programs related to natural resource management activities and concerns of the National Park Service. To get the word out, branch staff members will be providing overviews at training courses, meetings and conferences across the country throughout the fiscal year.

NEW DEVELOPMENTS

The BRMD completed a CESU agreement with the Carnivore Genetics Laboratory at the University of Montana. The laboratory will identify hair samples submitted by all NPS units to determine the presence of lynx. Hair snares have been set out by several national parks, following the national lynx detection protocol. Peter Dratch of BRMD visited the Montana lab to observe the mitochondrial DNA species identification procedures, and took part in the two day workshop on lynx in the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem. The Conservation Agreement on lynx between FWS and NPS, has been reviewed and revised by pertinent parks and regions, and is currently with the FWS for their review.

HEADS UP

Annual Call for Investigator's Annual Reports: The annual call for Investigator's Annual Reports was transmitted to Regional Directors on November 21, 2001. Regional offices are requested to ask park research coordinators to notify research permittees (those with an active research permit during calendar year 2001) to submit their accomplishment reports prior to March 1st, 2002. Instructions explaining how researchers should complete the CY 2001 IAR process should be distributed to park research coordinators by regional offices as part of the call. The Research Permit and Reporting System will be ready for input of 2001 reports starting December 14th, 2001. For more information contact Tim Goddard via email or phone 970-225-3543.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS/SIGNIFICANT ACTIVITIES

NPS Comprehensive Survey of the American Public: The technical report on the NPS Comprehensive Survey of the American Public has been widely distributed throughout the National Park System. The report is available from the Social Science Program website at <<http://www.nps.gov/socialscience/waso/products.htm>>. For more information or additional hard copies, contact Brian Forist at 202.208.6330 or by email at <bforist@uidaho.edu>.

Programmatic Approval for NPS-Sponsored Public Surveys: The Social Science Program has received final OMB

clearance for the "Programmatic Approval for NPS-Sponsored Public Surveys." This is a three-year extension of the existing program of approval for visitor surveys. Surveys of park visitors, potential park visitors, and residents of communities near parks are within the scope of the new program. Guidelines for submitting surveys under the program of approval will be available shortly. For additional information or electronic copies of the guidelines and submission form, contact Brian Forist at 202.208.6330 or by email at <bforist@uidaho.edu>.

Geologic Resources Division Biennial Report Available: Copies of the 1999-2000 report are complete and being mailed to park superintendents and geologic resource specialists. The 77-page report details the division's accomplishments during the past two years. It is readable and well illustrated with major topics including Disturbed Lands Restoration, Geologic Resources, Minerals Management, and Park Specific Assistance and Projects, with an Introduction by Mike Soukup. About 350 copies of the report will be mailed and an electronic version will soon be posted on the division's NatureNet webpage.

Sergo Zakariadze Grounding Emergency Restoration at SAJU: Emergency restoration activities at the El Morro Breakwater resulting from the grounding of the ship Sergo Zakariadze at San Juan National Historic Site (SAJU) proceeded. All field work was completed by the contract specified date (October 31, 2001) and final project inspection and project closeout procedures are underway. Project closeout is expected in January, 2002. The contractor (Marine Resources, Inc.) expects to have completed the job within budget.

PROGRESS

National Fire Plan Performance Measures: An Interagency group worked for 2 days on the development of performance measures related to national fire plan activities that will likely be adopted as GPRA goals for the NPS. The Biological Resource Management Division participated in this workshop. A draft of the results of this meeting will be presented to stakeholders in Washington, DC in early December.

IT System Evaluation: An evaluation is in progress of existing and planned web-server infrastructure as part of ongoing requirements to effectively deploy and maintain internet-based technologies and anticipate related resource needs of the Natural Resource Program Center. The evaluation is being conducted by Systems Integration Group, Inc. and findings are expected in January, 2002.

Grounding of My Jo at Biscayne NP: On November 13, a decision was reached among Biscayne NP (BISC), the solicitor's office and the Assistant U.S. Attorney, Miami to dismiss the criminal charges without prejudice against defendants in the MY JO grounding. The NPS will pursue the damages (about \$1.5 million) in civil court.

PROFESSIONAL MEETING ATTENDANCE/PAPERS

NPS a Strong Presence at Geologic Society Meeting: The NPS was well represented at the Geological Society of America annual meeting, with staff from the Geologic Resources Division and several parks participating. NPS staff chaired two well attended sessions, including over 30 technical papers focused on park issues: "Geology in the Parks, Research, Mapping, and Education" and "Coastal Geology of the National Parks". The "Opportunities in the NPS" evening open house was a success, with many students and teachers particularly interested in the Geologist-in-Parks program. The NPS booth, shared by division and Bryce Canyon staff, was very busy and received many comments about geologic interpretation in the parks. The meeting, attended by over 4700 geoscientists, also provided an opportunity for a coastal science field trip to Cape Cod NS.

Sustainable Rangelands Roundtable: The Sustainable Rangelands Roundtable recently met to continue developing multidisciplinary indicators of rangeland condition. This public-private process is an outgrowth of the Rio summit on the Environment and is dedicated to developing multidisciplinary indicators of rangeland condition. Attendees were divided into groups by expertise to continue work (this will continue through 2002) on the selection of appropriate parameters that are measurable and provide information on a large (national) scale. NPS has been and will continue to be involved with 2 groups, Ecological Health and Capacity. Biological Resource Management Division staff attended the meeting and other NRPC divisions (WRD and GRD) were forwarded information on the Soil and Water Conservation Working Group. Issues currently include a lack of common understanding of "range" so that it can be spatially measured, lack of consensus of an appropriate spatial scale for ecological and

socio-economic indicators and the level of effort that may be required to provide relevant data.

International Workshop for Park Flight Grantees: The Park Flight Migratory Bird Program held its first grantee workshop at the Albright Training Center in Grand Canyon November 13-17, 2001. The workshop provided an opportunity for Park Flight grantees from U.S. and Central American national parks and protected areas to build relationships for collaboration on migratory bird conservation efforts. The workshop focused on techniques for interpretation, environmental education, and outreach for migratory bird conservation, and involved trainers from NPS, other U.S. partners, and Latin America. A reception was held for American Airlines to honor their financial support of the Park Flight projects. A second Park Flight grantee workshop, which will focus on monitoring, will be held next year in Mesoamerica.

STAFF NEWS (ESP. FOR NEW STAFF)

EQD Administrative Assistant: DaVon Moore left the Geologic Resources Division to join EQD-Denver as an Administrative Assistant on November 5, 2001. DaVon will be responsible for providing all administrative support, such as time and attendance, travel assistance, budget tracking, and small procurements, for all non-WASO EQD folks.

National Natural Landmarks and NPS Research Permit and Reporting System Contact: In a slight change of responsibilities, Bill Commins of the WASO National Natural Landmarks (NNL) program will provide telephone and email technical support for the NPS Research Permit and Reporting System (RPRS). Bill will also continue to support core aspects of the NNL program. Bill may be reached by phone at 202-208-4631. Tim Goddard will serve as a secondary technical support contact for RPRS. Tim can be reached at 970-225-3543.

NATURAL RESOURCE ADVISORY GROUP

Minutes Minutes of the October meeting are appended to the full version of the monthly report sent to regional Natural Resource personnel and will be posted to the Natural Resource intranet.

Natural Resource Advisory Group Meeting
October 23-25, 2001
Arbor Day Farm/Lied Conference Center
Nebraska City, NB

An attendee list is appended to the end of the minutes.

Summary of Recommendations

1. Up to 10 percent of NRPP should continue to be used for Servicewide projects. They should not be selected using a formal call, but the Associate's office should develop and circulate a list of project topics to NRAG and to CESUs. This would allow proposals to be forwarded by CESUs and subgroups of NRAG, as well as by WASO offices.
2. To promote broader involvement of park resource managers in wilderness issues, NRAG recommends formal representation of NRAG and NRSS on the Wilderness Steering Committee and adopted a resolution to that effect for Dick Ring's consideration.
3. NRAG would like to meet in a joint partial session with the associate regional directors for operations to discuss issues that would benefit from more park and regional coordination.
4. NRSS, in consultation with NRAG, should develop a strategy for professional meeting sponsorship and attendance and should help to organize NPS caucuses at those meetings targeted in the strategy.
5. Formally try to find a new name for Learning Centers

Summary of Action Items

1. Skip Ladd to provide Dave Shaver with recommended wording for I&M Steering Committee role and function description.
2. A NRAG subgroup was established to look at available guidance on peer review from other agencies, the Midwest Region, Machlis, etc. and to draft guidance. Kirk Lohman, Carol Danials, Roy Irwin, Gary Willson, and John Karish volunteered or were volunteered to help John Dennis.
3. Abby Miller is to:
 - assure that the introduction to the framework for new performance management goals adequately addresses the tie to I&M
 - discuss possible ARD/NRAG meeting dates with Dick Ring
 - send old NR-MAP technical guidance to NRAG members to learn/refresh themselves about the types of information and level of guidance available. NRID and other NRSS offices will start to initiate actions to implement the target schedule (included in the discussion below) for R-MAP profile updates
 - send copies of the previously prepared status report on implementation of the Omnibus Park Management Act
4. NRAG members are to:
 - provide feedback on draft discipline-specific guidance on impairment judgements, suggestions about making experts available to help parks, and case study examples to Chris Shaver
 - comment ASAP on issues related to research and collecting permits/IARs (sent with 10/05 e-mail transmission) if they have not already
 - send ideas for renaming learning centers to Mike and/or Abby, keeping in mind that they are multi-disciplinary (including cultural resource disciplines)

Next Meeting

The target dates for the next meeting are sometime from the week of May 5 through the week of May 23. Locations suggested included Marsh-Billings-Rockefeller and Shepardsdown. Alaska continues to offer its hospitality, and Glacier Bay was suggested. Southeast also offered a willingness to host the meeting. The date will depend to some degree on whether we can schedule a meeting with Operations ARDs.

Field Trip

The field trip to Homestead was universally enjoyed and all were grateful and impressed by the efforts of the staff of the region and park to make the trip a success. Some of the group also enjoyed a visit to the regional office and to one of the first NNLs, Fontenelle Forest, on the way to the meeting. A mini-field trip on the grounds of the conference center was undertaken after the session on Tuesday, resulting in successfully finding an American Chestnut tree.

Summary of Discussions

Funding Issues

Mike and Abby discussed issues surrounding identification and funding of projects of Servicewide significance. Mike pointed out that there had been agreement years ago to WASO using 10% of NRPP—which then represented about \$600,000, for Servicewide issues. We have tried to keep the amount down to \$600,000 and supplement it with fee funds. However, Dick Ring has changed the way fee projects are selected and has ruled out projects that involve 80% parks. For example, the proposal to do water quality monitoring for PWCs was ruled ineligible because some of the parks were 80% parks. Mike wanted to discuss NRAG's feelings about whether, with the increase in NRPP funding, the share should be increased by up to 10% and what issues NRAG believes need to be addressed by such projects. He pointed out the need to get ahead of issues, rather than funding them reactively. Abby reviewed the breakdown of NRPP allocations for FY 2001 and for 2002 (Attachment 1; numbers changed slightly from what presented due to new information on ongoing projects). The allocations include the new regional "block" funding, which is generally for projects of up to \$25,000, as determined by regions. Because approval was given to new FY 02 projects assuming less than \$600,000 for Servicewide projects, and \$300,000 for brucellosis, 10% of NRPP is not available in FY 02 for Servicewide projects. For planning in FY 2003, however, we discussed issues of concern now and how to identify upcoming issues.

Issues of concern for Servicewide leadership include: developing a strategy for the next phase of exotics control, implementation of the advisory board report, habitat fragmentation, energy development, increasing water demands, tie-ins with other program areas, water quality, noise, toxics, data management and natural resource information user needs assessment, sea level rise and climate change. These were all issues mentioned—no formal vote was taken, but issues which were mentioned by several people or most often were energy, implementation of the advisory board report recommendation related to improved ties between natural resource management at the park level and landscape level activities, including RTCA and land acquisition, and improved ties to other program areas, especially education.

Regarding process, NRAG recommended developing a list and circulating it to NRAG and to CESUs. This would allow proposals to be forwarded by CESUs and subgroups of NRAG, as well as WASO. However, everyone agreed that it was not a good idea to institute another formal call. NRAG should be used to generate these types of issues and proposals.

NRAG had also been asked previously to review revised criteria language (passed out in a slightly revised form at the meeting) and procedures for the resource protection fund source. The criteria revisions were to clarify the intent of a couple of the criteria and to assure that they would be workable for the addition of studies, recommended at the last meeting. The Ranger Activities Council had already endorsed the procedures. There were no problems raised, although one region had editorial comments on the criteria to pass on. There was a request to review implementation of the criteria revisions; Abby committed to getting a request in the Servicewide call for comments when projects are submitted.

With respect to the 13 new park-based aquatic resource professionals funded by the NRC in FY02, it was agreed that funds to support these positions would be allocated based on a GS-11 salary (adjusted for locality pay) plus a fixed amount for travel and support. It was further agreed that Regions and/or Parks would be responsible for additional costs if these positions are filled at the GS-12 level, which may be the full performance level in many cases. In discussions with individuals familiar with Resource Careers subsequent to the NRAG meeting, it was learned that multi-park support responsibilities, as envisioned for these park-base aquatic resource positions, are included in classified Resource Career positions at both the GS-11 level and the GS-12 level. As such, depending on the duties of these positions and the specific supervisory arrangements, these positions could be filled at the GS-11 or GS-12 level.

National Park Service Advisory Report

Mike provided background on the new advisory board members and the effort to develop the report. He reviewed the 13 recommendations made by he, John Reynolds, and Bill Schenk in response to an NLC assignment (included here as Attachment 2, since they were hard for some to recognize in previously transmitted version). Additional time was spent discussing the “tie to the landscape” issue and how this could be pursued. Chris Brown (Rivers and Trails) has been given an assignment to develop an approach to “seamless parks” that would link local, State, and National Park Units, according to Dan Kimball. Dan has the impression that the objective is related largely to recreation. The NRAG supported trying to expand that effort to address broader, natural resource-related connectivity issues. Dan is meeting with Chris in the near future and will explore this issue. There was general NRAG support for finding ways to implement the report. There was discussion of possibly using I&M networks as organizing principles for landscapes was discussed, as was the possibility of using a network that has worked together for a while as a pilot to try to link protected lands within a landscape.

NNL Program

New program lead Margi Brooks gave a general presentation on NNLs and their benefits—a sort of pep talk about the good things the program is doing. She wanted to alert folks that after a long hiatus, the program is back in a more activist mode. A web site is being developed and a “happy stories” brochure, which was passed out, had also been developed. The role of NNLs in efforts to look more at a landscape level was discussed.

Wilderness

A discussion paper with some questions had previously been passed out. Without specific reference to the paper or its specific questions there was considerable general discussion about wilderness management and the need for resource managers to be more engaged. No new ground was broken in discussing issues such as minimum tool requirement or short-term/long-term trade-offs, but there was a general agreement that the national fire plan is bring some of these issues to the forefront. Resource managers are also concerned that there should be more rigorous monitoring in wilderness areas that addresses impacts, not just visitor perception. All agreed that the Service in general needs to do more to

make sure that it is doing a good job with wilderness management, and that this includes paying attention to naturalness issues, not just perception issues. The NRAG would like to promote broader involvement of park resource managers in these issues and believes that formal representation of NRAG and NRSS on the Wilderness Steering Committee would assure more communication and involvement in these issues by field resource managers. The group developed and adopted the following resolution:

Be it resolved:

The Natural Resource Advisory Group recognizes that issues concerning management of wilderness in the National Park System are mounting. The National Fire Plan, for example, brings to the fore front issues surrounding minimum requirements, trade-offs between short-term impacts and long-term benefits and impacts, and the relationship between wilderness experience and naturalness. With the Natural Resource Challenge encouraging more use of parks for research and with increased inventory and monitoring efforts, management of research in wilderness is also of growing concern. The useful processes established in DO-14 need further guidance regarding natural resource and science decision-making and development of good wilderness plans to guide difficult management decisions. Inventory and monitoring and other natural resource programs can assist in addressing these needs. To increase involvement of natural resource personnel and to augment communication with field resource personnel, NRAG recommends that the natural resource program areas be formally represented on the Wilderness Steering Committee through appointment of an NRAG and an NRSS representative.

I&M Steering Committee

With the advent of full-time regional I&M coordinators, as well as network I&M coordinators, and with NRAG, the role of the I&M Steering Committee was discussed at the last I&M Steering Committee meeting and a proposal brought to NRAG to refine the roles of the respective advisors with respect to the I&M program. The proposal is to constitute the I&M steering committee with regional coordinators and another regional representative, along with program representatives, with a focus on technical implementation issues. Broad programmatic and funding issues would be referred to NRAG. Skip Ladd agreed to propose language that would better articulate the split in roles, which was generally agreed to after much discussion. Pacific West Region is particularly interested in keeping superintendents vested in the program through representation on an oversight group.

Peer Review

John Dennis explained a controversy surrounding peer review of NPS-sponsored research, as well as other science-related activities. After discussing the general framework, practices, and guidance, the group addressed questions about what needs to be done with respect to peer review, such as additional guidance, documentation, and role of regional science advisors. There was general agreement that additional guidance would be useful. Machlis' "9 box matrix" was mentioned and it was asserted at the meeting that it is similar in concept to criteria presented by John concerning how to determine the type of peer review needed. Both involve criteria such as complexity and potential effect should determine whether informal or formal, or internal versus external reviews. Gary Machlis later pointed out that his approach is significantly different and that he does not entirely support the approach presented by John, involving levels of complexity. The need to triage reviews was agreed to, since formal peer reviews can be costly. There was also general agreement that peer review needs to be applied to application of science information, not just research. However, there was discussion that the peer review of management decisions involving policy might be better accomplished by other government managers, rather than academic experts, while academic experts would be useful for reviewing information and its interpretation. There was considerable discussion of the need for peer review of projects that have the

potential for impact or controversy. John Karish noted the use of a peer review group at the proposal stage through the product can be useful. The potential for peer reviews was also discussed. The Midwest Region has already begun drafting some guidance. A subgroup was established to look at available guidance from other agencies, the Midwest, Machlis, etc. and draft guidance. Kirk Lohman, Carol Danials, Roy Irwin, Gary Willson, and John Karish volunteered or were volunteered to help John Dennis.

Strategic Plan

Abby reviewed the Goal Group's progress in developing a new strategic planning framework aimed at the next strategic plan plus one—changes for the next strategic plan would be aimed at moving us toward a vision of a comprehensive set of condition goals that capture the most significant efforts in parks' performance to improve resource condition. There was considerable discussion about the importance of linking strategic plan goals with inventory and monitoring. The goals will go to the Strategic Planning Office in November for review and will be circulated formally to regional goal contacts for review. Abby was missing one of her overheads with the schedule, so she committed to checking and providing a more detailed schedule (see Attachment 3). Abby also committed to checking to assure that the introduction to the framework adequately addresses the tie to I&M. Finally, the need to build evaluation into the system was raised.

Coordination with Operations

The WASO division chiefs discussed planned attempts to further coordination with Operations. A list of the issues that WASO NR programs would like to discuss with WASO Operations programs (Attachment 4) was discussed. The group strongly agreed on the need for more coordination—environmental audits and resource protection were two areas most mentioned. Given the inability to get all of the Operations divisions to focus on preparations for a single meeting, the NR divisions intend to follow up with individual divisions. Judy Gottlieb suggested that regional contacts may be a more productive avenue and strongly recommended a joint meeting of NRAG and regional operations ARDs. Other members agreed. After considerable discussion, it was agreed that a general meeting to discuss areas of concern for closer coordination would be more productive than focusing discussion ahead of time on a few issues. Abby agreed to discuss a joint meeting with Dick Ring and determine if there is a spring meeting scheduled where a joint meeting would be possible.

R-MAP

The progress in revising R-MAP algorithms to address parks with limited fee-simple acreage and Alaskan parks was discussed. Todd Seuss from JECA is leading the effort with help from Pacific West Region. Procedures and timing for updating profile information were discussed and a general strategy agreed to the following targets (to have new allocations for use in 11/02 project call):

--by mid-February, send paper copies of old profiles, and new profile sheets to parks. Hold training for coordinators first—if enough are experienced, may not need to be done through a meeting. Abby will send old technical guidance to the regions for a heads up on the level and complexity of guidance available.

--Regions will QAQC revised paper profiles and send to NRID for data entry

--Some data available from other sources will be input through the ITC/web park profiles process

--There will be a July 1 due date for profiles from regions—with regions setting park deadlines.

--Tim Goddard and Gary Mason will work with Pacific Region et al. to detail these procedures and make sure they are realistic.

There was considerable discussion about the extent to which the resource management job has changed and our capabilities have changed and it is probably time to relook at all the algorithms—in the FY 2003/2004 timeframe.

Meeting Strategies

Abby discussed the annual natural resource meeting, especially the poor attendance this year, and whether this meeting is important. One regional representative said that it is not important for support office personnel, since they are kept in the loop via minutes from the NRAG meeting and other WASO efforts. Another region indicated that its SO people were out of the loop. Others mentioned the value of mid-level managers getting a chance to get together. The means to link with professional societies was mentioned. Some felt a larger venue for presentation of the awards would be better. After considerable discussion, the group agreed to a benefit of a more strategic use of several meetings. It was suggested that we develop a two or three year schedule of important meetings (some may not be scheduled more than one-year out), targeting NPS involvement, involving “host” regions more, and making certain there are NPS caucuses at the meetings, but not trying to get all the WASO and regional representatives to all of them. We should pick one meeting every year or every other year to focus on for a larger meeting, and don’t try to limit participation. We should attempt a meeting on the Monday of George Wright Society meetings, since that is such a venue for NPS people. WASO and others should be encouraged to make full use of plenary sessions at the various society meetings as well. Abby will try to put together a list and draft strategy for comment and we should address this further at the next meeting.

Impairment

Chris Shaver presented information on the status of Servicewide and Natural Resource guidance on impairment. A work group is finally meeting at the end of November. Natural Resource divisions have been working on discipline-specific guidance on making judgements about levels of impact to aid in impairment decisions. Issues that need to be addressed, discussed by the group, are:

--staging of analyses—e.g., should the environmental screening form be used to flag potential impairment early on before budget requests are submitted or resources are dedicated to more comprehensive NEPA analysis? should impairment findings be made for each impact topic (e.g., resource-specific, as directed by NEPA Handbook) or for each alternative so cumulative effects and trade-offs can be examined?, etc.

--is there a way to make certain the right people are at the table and how do we assure that professional judgements are made by those qualified to do so? Do floodplain statements of findings offer a model?

NRAG members were asked to provide feedback on draft discipline-specific guidance and suggestions about making experts available to help parks. They are also asked to monitor how impairment-related determinations are being made in their regions/parks and provide case studies.

Misc. Issues

Questions and requests for updated information were put forward on several issues. Some wanted to

know the progress being made on RAMS and revision of RMP guidance (DO-2.x). Abby said that the RAMS implementation was delayed until April due to delays in PMIS software, with which it needs to be compatible, but that she believed that DO-2.x revision was on track to meet the schedule discussed at the last meeting. However, she promised to provide a schedule.

Learning Centers were discussed. Abby said she expected the next round to be selected sometime in November, but the panel has not been set up yet. It was requested that there be a formal attempt to find a new generic title for learning centers. All agreed this was a good idea.

Tim Goddard pointed out that most regions had not provided comments on IAR software-related issues—in response to a paper and information sent with the 10/05/01 e-mail in advance of the meeting. Comments were due 10/17 and have a bearing on whether there will be web accessible integration between the research and collection permit software and requests for IARs.

Skip Ladd requested a formal status report on implementation of the Omnibus Park Management Act (Thomas bill). Abby indicated that much of Title II had been institutionalized and that the status hadn't changed since the last discussion. The group pointed out, however, that there are opportunities presented by the Act that are not being seized. Abby requested that these be articulated for follow up. No lead was established, but several asked for previously drafted (and transmitted?) status report.

Issues Needing to be Addressed/Consider for Discussion at Next Meeting

- Business plans (presentation by BADL?)
- Progress in describing desired future conditions and resource information in planning
- Hunting and gathering in parks
- Natural resource career tracks and succession planning
- Management and other training for resource managers (Sue Masica?)
- Relationships with professional societies (following on meeting strategy discussion)
- Omnibus bill program
- Natural resource information strategy – user needs assessment

Attendees at the meeting included:

Regions

Alaska : Dave Mills for Steve Martin, Judy Gottlieb

Intermountain: Skip Ladd, Steve Petersburg,

Midwest: Gary Vequist, Brian Kenner, Jim LaRock

National Capital: Pat Toops, Mel Poole

Northeast: Bob McIntosh, John Karish for Doug Morris

Pacific West: Jim Shevock, Kathy Jope, Chuck Lundy

Southeast: John Yancy

WASO

NRSS: Mike Soukup, Abby Miller, Margi Brooks, John Dennis

ARD: Chris Shaver

BRMD: Craig Axtell

GRD: Dave Shaver

NRID: Tim Goddard

WRD: Dan Kimball

NRPC: Diana Maxwell

Midwest Observers

Steve Cinnamon

Mike Gallagher

Daren Carlisle

Phyllis Adams

Sandra Washington

FY 2001 NRPP Allocation (not expenditure—still working on that)

NRPP Total, after across-the-board reduction	\$8,289,000	
Regular NRPP	\$4,818,800	
Small Park NRPP	\$1,000,000	
Disturbed Land Restoration	\$ 850,000	
Threatened and Endangered Species	\$ 500,000	
USGS/BRD Tech Ass't Projects (3rd of 5-yr agreement)	\$ 255,000	
USGS/Brucellosis Research (multi-yr former AS commitment)	\$ 300,000	
(\$150,000 reprogrammed to noise research)		
Servicewide Projects		\$ 565,200

Projected FY 2002 Distribution

NRPP Total, after increase	\$12,289,000
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Set Amounts or Continuing Approved Projects

Regional Block Allocations new		\$1,400,000
Small Park NRPP	\$1,000,000	
Disturbed Land Restoration		\$ 850,000
Threatened and Endangered Species	\$ 500,000	
Regular NRPP – Continuing Projects	\$3,265,000	
USGS/BRD Tech Ass't Projects (4th of 5-yr agreement)	\$ 255,000	
Subtotal	\$7,270,000	

New Starts/Flexible Allocations

Regular NRPP New Projects – 02 started approved	\$4,112,000
Available for USGS/Brucellosis Research and all other (Servicewide projects, brucellosis research—less than allocated in 01)	\$907,000

(Reynolds/Soukup/Schenck Recommendations to NLC on Implementation of Natural Resource Portion of National Park Service Advisory Board Report)

Protecting Nature – Progress Report/Implementation Plan

Steps in Progress

- I. Full funding of Natural Resource Challenge
- II. Peer reviewed monograph by Robin Winks about congressional expectation of NPS role in natural diversity protection and education.
- V. Increase work to implement Marine Protected Area and Coral Reef Executive Orders. Partner with USGS to develop a research plan to evaluate performance of existing and enhanced Marine protection efforts.
- VI. Establish a cooperative “Fishing Forever” program of educational and life-cycle marine and terrestrial protected areas to ensure sustainable recreational and economic fishing.
- IX. Recruit within existing resources a visiting Chief Natural Scientist.

Next Steps

- III. Create a cadre of NPS and academic partner scientists to assemble, synthesize and apply research accomplished by USGS and academe into a useable, predictive understanding of natural systems operations in parks.
 - IV,VII,XI. Working with federal, state academic and NGO partners develop a detailed vision of an optimal array of protected areas of national significance linked with state and local areas that ensures perpetuation of nationally significant biodiversity and contributes to the recreational and open space needs of our people.
 - Increase the outreach levels, nationally or internationally, or scientific, education, and resource management programs to serve the larger vision of smart growth, sustainable neighborhoods, regions, and planet.
- VIII. Create training curricula for new employees, superintendents and mid-level managers to ensure understanding of natural systems, biodiversity, conservation biology, alternative protection methods and partners (governmental, private and NGO) including air and water resources.
- X. Create a strategic approach to connections between parks and US and international protected areas that share in the conservation of park species.
- XIII. Create formal, on-going permanent partnership with a variety of “programmatic NGO’s, such as TNC, WWF and CI. Develops functional relationships with natural history museums and botanical gardens
- XII. Build a Corps of 50 NPS systematic Biologists that develop, manage, interpret and document NPS natural science collections that represent the nations biodiversity.

FY 2004 Strategic Plan – New/Revised Goal Development Timeframe

- 12/01 - Draft goal revisions to SPO
- 1/02 - Draft technical guidance to SPO- Dir/PMC review
- 3/02 - NLC approval
- 4/02 - Final technical guidance to SPO
- 5-9/02 - Park/office strategic plans revised using new goals10/02-1/03 Annual performance targets for new plan in PMDS & published in Annual Plan
- 2-3/03 - New strategic plan finalized
- 4/03 - New strategic plan submitted to DOI
- 5/03-9/03 - plan approved by DOI, prepared for printing & sent to Congress

OPS/NR Coordination
Issues Previously Identified
(most input from Natural Resource chiefs)

Highest Priority Topics (based mostly on Natural Resources input)

Ranger Activity-Related Issues

1. Building relationships with Rangers/Investigators on NR theft, damage, prevention.
2. Internal and external spill response and clean-up SOP.
3. Status of regulation development and coordination (ie. snow machines)
4. Integrating NR concerns with interp/education
5. National Fire Plan and the Federal Wildland Fire Policy review
6. NR interests in new case incident system.
7. Wilderness
8. Public health issues such as vector diseases, swimming beaches, IPM, etc.

Medium Priority Issues:

Facility Management-Related Issues

9. Facilitating better resource management practices in park/facilities maintenance activities (ie. extractions, construction, etc.)
10. Status of environmental audit program; access to information
11. Coordination of ELI initiatives (ie. park water conservation plans, 4-stroke engines, etc)
12. Housing—how can NRC support and housing of visiting researchers [priority order may change]