

**Associate Director  
Natural Resource Stewardship and Science  
Monthly Report--November 2006**

**New Developments**

Open Space Assessment Tool Developed for the Mississippi National River and Recreation Area  
: A central vision of the Comprehensive Management Plan (CMP) for the Mississippi National River and Recreation Area (MISS) is for “a continuous 72-mile trail and open space corridor along both sides of the Mississippi River in the Twin Cities metro area”. Unlike most units of the National Park System, less than 35 of the 54,000 acres that make up the MISS are owned by NPS. Therefore, resource protection, recreation, land use, and interpretive goals can only be achieved through partnership efforts. NPS can provide tools to help local governments achieve shared goals for the river corridor. Toward this end, NPS developed an assessment of Open Space Protection Opportunities (OSPO) in the MISS. The assessment includes maps, a guidebook, and spatial data for use in a geographic information system. The project summary and OSPO guidebook can be found on the park website at <http://www.nps.gov/miss/parkmgmt/ospo.htm> and <http://www.nps.gov/miss/parkmgmt/upload/OSPO%20Guidebook.pdf>, respectively. The complete suite of OPSO information is also available on CD-ROM. The project was funded with FY 2003-04 NRPP funds (and updated with MISS funds in 2006). For more information, contact

Susan Overson, MISS, at 651-290-3030, ext. 225.

Park Science Newly Designed Website: *Park Science* has a new website found at <http://www.nature.nps.gov/ParkScience>. It reflects the NPS graphic identity standards and functions much better than the previous site. The new site is "dynamic" (i.e. the content is loaded into a database and displayed as HTML upon demand through templates and with the use of style sheets). A new function of the site is found under the link "Subscriptions" and allows readers to sign up to receive e-mail notification when a new issue of *Park Science* is published online. Alternatively, readers can sign up to receive print copies, update their delivery address, or cancel a subscription. All back issues are posted on the website in dynamic HTML, PDF, ASCII text, or rich text format. The five most recent issues are available as dynamic HTML and have links to "printer friendly" versions of the articles. The archives section provides access to all back issues and allows readers to request printed copies, if available, of the older material. A search function is in the works for December, though search engines like Google return impressive search results for this site. For more information, contact Jeff Selleck at 303-969-2147.

Editorial Guide Available for NPS Natural Resource Authors: *An Editorial Style Guide for Park Science and Natural Resource Year in Review*, issued in PDF format, is available at the new *Park Science* website, author guidance section, at [http://www2.nature.nps.gov/ParkScience/archive/PDF/Editorial\\_Style\\_Guide\\_12-5-2006.pdf](http://www2.nature.nps.gov/ParkScience/archive/PDF/Editorial_Style_Guide_12-5-2006.pdf). This comprehensive 92-page guide addresses questions of grammar, word usage, spelling, punctuation, capitalization, numbers, documentation, and many other areas of style that plague writers (and editors) of natural resource-related manuscripts. Though intended for authors of *Park Science* and *Natural Resource Year in Review*, it may prove useful for other outlets. It is published as Natural Resource Report NPS/NRPC/NRR-2006/004 (D-1794, December 2006). For more information, contact Jeff Selleck at 303-969-2147.

Haleakala Air Tour Management Plan: The Notice of Intent to Prepare an Environmental Impact Statement for the Haleakala Air Tour Management Plan was published in the *Federal Register* and local newspapers on Maui on November 15. The FAA and NPS are now inviting the public, agencies, and other interested parties to provide written comments, suggestions, and input regarding identification and scope of significant issues to be addressed in the EIS. Since FAA is the lead agency, comments may be submitted through the FAA's Docket Management System at <http://dms.dot.gov> Docket Number FAA-2006-26113. Comments must be submitted by January 16, 2007. For further information contact Vicki McCusker, Natural Sounds Program, 970-267-2117.

Calls for Two New NPS Interagency Projects: Two project opportunities were distributed through the Cooperative Ecosystem Studies Unit (CESU) Research Coordinators this month: 1) cooperating on modeling NPS visitation trends and, 2) estimating air pollution "critical loads" in protected areas nationwide. The NPS Social Science Program requested short expressions of interest and qualifications for the first project, "Modeling of NPS Visitation Trends", with responses due to Jim Gramann (jgramann@tamu.edu) by January 15, 2007. The request for expressions of interest about air pollution critical loads, the second project, was requested by the

NPS Air Resources Division and the EPA, called the "National Atmospheric Deposition Program, Critical Loads Development Project." This project would consist of compiling and modeling existing air quality and effects data at two geographic locations to estimate critical loads of sulfur and nitrogen in atmospheric deposition, and to demonstrate approaches for applying critical loads as a tool for assessing policies, programs and managing natural resources. The statements of interest for both projects are due to Tamara Blett ([tamara\\_blett@nps.gov](mailto:tamara_blett@nps.gov)) by January 12, 2007. For more information contact one of the CESU Research Coordinators.

Potential Administrative History of Interagency Grizzly Bear Committee: Rocky Mountain CESU Cultural Resource Specialist, Christine Whitacre, participated in a meeting of the Interagency Grizzly Bear Committee (IGBC), held in Missoula, Montana. As its 25th anniversary approaches, the IGBC is interested in preparing its administrative history, and Christine talked to the group about administrative histories in general, as well as the possibility of the CESUs assisting in that effort. Created in 1983, the IGBC is comprised of top-level federal, state, and Canadian representatives from agencies with grizzly bear population and habitat -management and research responsibilities. For more information, contact Christine Whitacre 406-243-2660.

White-tailed Deer Management Plan Comment Periods: The Catoctin Mountain Park Draft White-tailed Deer Management Plan was released for public review. The comment period will end February 2, 2007. A public meeting is scheduled for Saturday January 6, 2007 from 1-4 PM. Cuyahoga Valley NP held public scoping meetings October 11-12 on its White-tailed Deer Management Plan/EIS. The comment period closed November 13th. Rock Creek Park held public scoping meetings November 1-2 for its White-tailed Deer Management Plan/EIS. The comment period closes December 8th.

### **Accomplishments:**

Atlantic Coast National Park Educators Workshop: Educators representing Acadia NP, Fire Island NS, Gateway NRA, and Cape Hatteras NS met with educators, resource managers, scientists and partners of the Cape Cod NS (CACO), November 13-17. The workshop centered on successful efforts by the CACO's Atlantic Research Learning Center and the Parks as Classrooms' program to develop curriculum based programs for elementary, middle and high school students focused on on-going field studies and scientific research in the park. Local educators paired up with NPS field scientists to create *Sensing Cape Cod*, a series of interdisciplinary activities that combine sound scientific protocols with educational objectives. At the conclusion of the meeting, all participants wanted to create science-based programs to reach multiple audiences – schools, community, NPS and the general public. To do so, parks with Research Learning Centers will work more closely with their Center Director to reach high school audiences, engage teachers in the development process, and consider collaborating on grants. For more information, contact Barbara Dougan at [Barbara\\_Dougan@nps.gov](mailto:Barbara_Dougan@nps.gov).

NPS Midwest Region Science Meeting: The NPS Midwest Region hosted an interagency "Midwest Science Meeting," November 16-17, in Omaha. The meeting provided an opportunity for the bureaus to share resource needs and science priorities and was a forum for in-depth

discussions on common priority issues and potential collaborative activities. It was attended by 35 people from NPS Midwest Region, the Eastern and Central Regions of USGS, and USFWS Region. Prior to the meeting, subject matter work groups were convened to discuss one of three issues destined for later panel discussions: understanding karst features in the Ozarks, the impacts of emerging aquatic and terrestrial invasive species, and the implications of wind power development in the Midwest. As a result of the panel discussions, the four Regional Directors asked each group to prepare a proposal or white paper by early 2007 that suggests how to approach developing a coordinated agenda for research in support of NPS and FWS management. For more information, contact Jerrilyn Thompson, Great Lakes Northern Forest CESU at 612-624-3699.

Amphibian and Reptile Conservation Management Guidelines Published: NPS had a leadership role in Partners in Amphibian and Reptile Conservation (PARC) in 2006 with Peter Dratch, BRMD, chairing the Federal Agency Steering Committee. PARC representatives from six federal agencies (FWS, USFS, EPA, NRCS, NOAA and NPS) met at the NPS 12th & Eye Street offices on November 8, 2006. Among items addressed were the distribution of regional habitat management guidelines, development of the PARC strategic plan, and adding other signatory agencies to PARC. Habitat Management Guidelines for the US Southeast and the Northeast were recently published, with support from NPS, and copies will be sent to all natural resource parks in those regions. For more information, contact Peter Dratch at 970-225-3596.

Training in Surveying Birds for HPAI: The NPS Wildlife Health Program and Public Health Program, with assistance from the USGS National Wildlife Health Center, provided training on HPAI (Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza) surveillance in birds to staff representing ten NPS units in the NPS Pacific West Region. The training took place November 27-30 in San Francisco, California, and Port Angeles, Washington. For more information, contact Mark Graham at 970-267-2160.

Brown Tree Snake Coordination and Management: BRMD staff conveyed the status of the brown tree snake and NPS concerns about the snake at the National Brown Tree Snake Coordination Committee meeting in Fort Collins, Colorado, November 14-16. The purpose of this meeting is for agency (DOD, DOI, and USDA), along with state and local participants, to assess current management actions and plan how to better control the brown tree snake. The National Invasive Species Act mandates coordination of management actions for brown tree snake. For more information, contact Linda Dress at 970-225-3595.

Grand Canyon NP Historical Acoustical Data: NPS acoustic staff recently developed (re-wrote) data conversion software that will fully automate processing a large range of historic acoustic data. As a result, almost 34,000 hours of Grand Canyon data was converted and graphed in one night. This software will save significant time and money and will be considerably more accurate. For more information, contact Vicki McCusker 970-267-2117.

More PEPC Training: On Dec 1, Madelyn Carpenter provided PEPC training in Lakewood, Colorado. It was for Natural Resource Program Center (NRPC) reviewers using PEPC to comment on internal documents, particularly GMPs, and other documents out for WASO policy

review. Another PEPC reviewer training will be scheduled for Fort Collins in the next month or so. If you are interested in attending, please contact Madelyn at 970-267-2137.

## **Progress**

Integration of NPS Resource Data Applications: One year ago at the Inventory and Monitoring Advisory Council meeting, NRPC staff were asked to evaluate three data applications from a user's perspective -- NatureBib, NPSpecies and NPSData Store -- and determine what changes should be made to eliminate redundancies. With the help of a contractor, an NRPC group was formed, and they offered recommendations to the Acting NRPC Director in June 2006. Recommendations included elimination of the current silo structure and transition to Service-Oriented Architecture (SOA). During October, the NRPC Center Director called for an immediate transition to SOA for these three web applications, and eventually for all NRPC applications. The project is called Integration of Resource Management Applications (IRMA), and a project website has been created at [http://www1.nrintra.nps.gov/nrpc\\_soa](http://www1.nrintra.nps.gov/nrpc_soa). The first phase of IRMA will involve development of a central NR Data Portal with single sign-on capability, and the hiring a SOA Project Manager. In the second phase, the SOA Project Manager will plan and implement the transition to SOA. IRMA plans to unveil initial products at the February 12-16 Inventory and Monitoring Data Management meeting. For more information, contact Margaret Beer at 970-267-2168.

National Parks Overflight Advisory Group Meeting, Zion NP, November 28-30: The National Parks Overflight Advisory Group's (NPOAG) charter is to provide continuing advice and council on commercial air tour operations over and near national parks. NPOAG membership consists of representatives from environmental groups, commercial air tour operators and general aviation, American Indian tribes, the FAA and NPS. Among the many important topics discussed during this November meeting included the application of Quiet Technology incentives to Air Tour Management Plans (ATMPs), the competitive bidding process for operating authority, Interim Operating Authority enforcement issues, an expedited ATMP and NEPA process, and FAA's proposed legislative amendments to the National Parks Air Tour Management Act. For more information, contact Karen Trevino at 970-225-3563

Chronic Wasting Disease EA: The initial scoping processes were started for Chronic Wasting Disease EAs at Antietam and Monocacy National Battlefields, and Shenandoah NP, during November 13-16. Those in attendance at the scoping sessions, held at Shenandoah NP, and the C&O Canal, included staff from EQD, BRMD, Northeast and National Capital Regional, and the respective parks. For more information, contact Michael Mayer at 303-987-6970.

Discussion with House Committee Staff on Park Visitation: Jim Gramann and Mike Soukup met with the House Committee on Appropriations staff on November 2 to discuss racial and ethnic patterns in national park visitation. They also discussed current social science research related to this topic. For additional information, contact Jim Gramann at 202-513-7189.

## **Professional Meetings and Papers**

Canada Lynx Paper Published in *Journal of Wildlife Diseases* : BRMD veterinarian, Margaret Wild, published a paper on plague as a mortality factor in Canada lynx. The paper, co-authored by partners at the Colorado Division of Wildlife and Colorado State University, appears in the most recent issue of the *Journal of Wildlife Diseases* (Wild, et al. 2006, *Journal of Wildlife Diseases*, 42:646-650). For more information, contact Dr. Margaret Wild at 970-225-3593.

First National Tribal Invasive Species Conference: The first national meeting of tribal representatives to discuss managing invasive species on tribal lands was held in Reno, Nevada, November 7-9. There were approximately 250 attendees at the meeting. NPS gave presentations on the NPS invasive species program and working across jurisdictions to form cooperative invasive species programs. NPS had a display booth highlighting some current cooperative efforts between tribes and NPS. Opportunities for future collaboration were explored. For more information, contact Rita Beard at 970-267-2165.