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Subject: ADNRSS (Soukup/Miller) October 2001 Report

FYI. The latest monthly report from Abby Miller and Mike Soukup.

Note especially the last item re: the filling of the position of the new Interpretive Liaison in the WASO NR office to further the interpretive and education efforts in NPS NR.

The minutes and notes for the October NRAG meeting will be attached to the NEXT ADNRSS monthly report.

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**ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR, NATURAL RESOURCE
STEWARDSHIP AND SCIENCE
MONTHLY REPORT FOR OCTOBER 2001**

NEW DEVELOPMENTS

Meeting with American Chestnut Foundation - The American Chestnut Foundation (ACF) has worked to develop a hybrid chestnut resistant to the American chestnut blight fungus. Staffs from the Southeast Region, Mammoth Cave NP, Shenandoah NP, Great Smokey Mountains NP and the Biological Resources Management Division met with the leadership of the American Chestnut Foundation (ACF) at their research farm in Virginia. The group evaluated the work of the ACF and the potential role of NPS units in the introduction of this hybrid in the future.

Paleontology Bill Introduced – H.R. 2974, the Paleontological Resources Preservation Act, was introduced by Rep. James McGovern (D-3rd-MA) on October 2, 2001. There are five co-sponsors. Key provisions include a prohibition on commercial collecting of fossils from Federal lands, with substantial civil and criminal penalties for violators; use of funds from civil penalties for paleontological restoration, protection, monitoring, study, or public education; continued access to common invertebrate and plant fossils on multiple-use lands for amateur collectors; establishment of a permit system for all other fossil collecting on Federal lands; and protection of fossil-site location information. Many of the bill's provisions were derived from the Secretary's report *Fossils on Federal and Indian Lands*, submitted to Congress in May 2000. Agencies including the NPS, BLM, USFS, USGS, BIA, and the Smithsonian Institution cooperated to prepare the Secretary's report, and continue to work together on Federal paleontological issues.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND PROGRESS

Awards Presented Director's Awards for natural resource accomplishments for 2000 were presented in a ceremony and reception at the Natural Resources General Meeting on October 2 at Cape Canaveral, Florida. A new Natural Resource Award was initiated for 2000. The Director's Award for Professional Excellence in Natural Resources is given to an individual, professional or nonprofessional, in recognition of outstanding contributions to natural resource management by a National Park Service (NPS) employee. Tamara S. Naumann, botanist at Dinosaur National Monument, received the Award based on her design and implementation of the vegetation

management program at the Monument. The Excellence in Natural Resource Stewardship through Maintenance Award was presented to Chris V. Case, Facility Manager at Pictured Rocks National Lakeshore, Michigan. Chris has led the maintenance division and park staff in the application of "green" technologies at the park for several years. The Trish Patterson-Student Conservation Association Award for Resource Management in a Small Park was presented to Samantha E. Weber, Chief of Natural Resource Science at Cabrillo National Monument, San Diego, CA. Samantha initiated the Division of Natural Resource Science at the monument. Dr. Charles Roman, Research Scientist, Biological Resources Division, U. S. Geological Survey, received the Director's Award for Natural Resource Research. Dr. Roman has been involved in scientific research on the ecology of coastal ecosystems on behalf of the NPS Northeast Region's (NER) coastal parks for more than 15 years.

Two award recipients were not present. The Natural Resource Management awardee, Tim Tunnison, was unable to attend. Tim, the Resource Management Specialist at Hawaii Volcanoes National Park, was recognized for his work in restoring native ecosystems. The 2000 Director's Award for Superintendent of the Year for Natural Resource Stewardship went to Mike Finley, former Superintendent of Yellowstone National Park, who was also unable to attend the ceremony.

Settlement Reached in Two 19jj Cases - A tentative agreement was reached in a 1998 case at BISC involving the grounding of a tugboat and damage to coral. The company will pay the NPS \$1 million for restoration of the damaged site, repair of orphan sites, long-term monitoring and NPS response and assessment costs. At SAMO a case has been settled with an adjoining private landowner who removed native vegetation in the park. The park receives \$8,000 for restoration. The landowner agrees to grant the NPS access across the property for restoration, allow the use of water, and protect the site from further disturbance until restoration is completed.

Repair and Restoration of Breakwater Completed at San Juan National Historic Site - Partnerships with federal, Commonwealth, and other agencies helped expedite the repair and restoration of the breakwater at SAJU. Mark Hargrove, Deputy Superintendent, stated that "this would...not have been possible without the efforts of our Superintendent, the Regional Office, and the Washington Office who funded this project out of the Directors Emergency Account. Special recognition also goes to the WASO Restoration Team [ERPA office] who have [sic] assisted us during the emergency response phase, ship removal phase, damage assessment phase, and emergency repair phases."

Earth Science Week in the Parks – The NPS participated in Earth Science Week, October 7th – 13th, to broaden public awareness about the importance of geoscience. Natural resources staff provided information to all NPS units, including copies of *Sustaining our Soils Society*, *Living with Karst: A Fragile Foundation*, and *Evolution and the Fossil Record*. Many parks offered special programs on geoscience. The NPS website featured Earth Science Week by providing information on NPS earth science programs, listings of earth science week events in parks, and earth science puzzles for kids (www.nature.nps.gov/grd/esw). The website experienced a tenfold increase in visitation. NPS participation in Earth Science Week was recognized in the October 2001 issue of *Geotimes* magazine.

Parks Develop Natural Resource Profiles - Regional Natural Resource Web Content

Coordinators assist parks with entering information into their park Natural Resource Profiles. Thirty-one parks have begun work on their NR Profiles and three park Profiles are already online. The Profiles for Acadia NP, Canyonlands NP, and Mojave NPr are available to the public from the park's main web page via a Nature & Science link. The target date to complete the Profiles is May 2002. However, as soon as a park profile has the minimum required information it can go on the web. For assistance, parks should contact their Regional Natural Resource Web Content Coordinator.

Water Right Claims for Crater Lake NP Move Forward - A hearing was scheduled for October 9, 2001, to hear contests to the NPS claim for consumptive use of 63.2 acre-feet of water annually at Crater Lake NP. In an unusual move, the hearing officer called for direct testimony to be submitted in advance of the hearing in writing, leaving only cross-examination and rebuttal for the hearing. However, since none of the contesting parties identified the need to cross-examine, the hearing officer canceled the hearing and will rule on the contests on the basis of the NPS written direct testimony with no contradicting testimony from the contesting parties.

Fire Ecologists Meet The Fire Management Program Center held a meeting of its National, Regional and Park Fire Ecologists to develop their role and vision for the next 5 -10 year period. FMPC graciously incorporated Natural Resource concerns by holding the meeting in Ft. Collins and inviting NRPC fire contacts to actively participate in the process. While the group presently plans to complete this process over a 3 - 4 month period, it has proposed in its draft mission statement to facilitate coordination between wildland fire and other resource programs, and to focus its scientific support for fire managers to "accomplish park resource management objectives."

Natural Resource Interpretation Mike Whatley, a new branch chief in the Natural Resource Information Division, attended the Intermountain Region's Interpretive Workshop October 15 through 18. The meeting provided one of the first opportunities to explore partnerships at the regional and national level to align natural resources and interpretation. The Intermountain Region's interpretive crew has done an excellent job in putting together a detailed procedure for accomplishing Comprehensive Interpretive Plans (CIPs), which is available on the web. They are interested in helping to use the CIP process to assist identifying natural resource issues and topics that will benefit from educational and interpretive treatments, and help in matching appropriate techniques with appropriate audiences. Mike also discussed coordination with training with Mather Training Center instructors and coordination of fire-related education with Fire Program personnel. Judy Visty of Rocky Mountain NP presented learning Center information. Information on state-of-the art electronic programs was also presented at the workshop, including an overview of the extremely successful "on-line" scientific/educational presentation recently given by the interpretive staff of Black Canyon of the Gunnison on "canyons" that attracted a live international audience (in three sessions) of 18 million.

MEETINGS - UPCOMING

Vital Signs Monitoring Workshop - A Servicewide water quality vital signs monitoring workshop will be held November 28-29, 2001, in Fort Collins, CO. The Water Resources Division is hosting the workshop. The purposes of the workshop are to: (1) discuss Servicewide program structure and guidance; and (2) facilitate interaction and coordination among those involved in (or expecting to be involved in) planning and designing Network water quality monitoring programs. Additional information is available on the intranet at <http://www1.nrintra.nps.gov/wrd/index.htm>

U.S. Coral Reef Task Force Meeting - The next meeting of the U.S. Coral Reef Task Force is scheduled for Wednesday December 5, 2001, in Washington D.C.. Primary purposes of the meeting are to discuss a draft Task Force Charter, a draft Oversight Policy, and a proposed National Action Strategy to implement the National Action Plan to Conserve Coral Reefs. Workshops for the working groups will both precede and follow the meeting. On December 6, the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary and EPA host a symposium on research and monitoring in the Florida Keys at NOAA's main auditorium in Silver Springs.

MEETINGS – HELD/ATTENDED

Interagency Fossil Resource Conference - About 100 people attended the 6th Fossil Resource Conference, sponsored by the NPS, BLM, USGS, and paleontological organizations. Talks and poster sessions addressed current fossil research and fossil management concerns facing land managers. Twenty-three NPS staff representing 11 parks, the Geologic Resources Division, and Intermountain Region attended the NPS breakout session, which focussed on ways parks can manage fossil resources. Proceedings of the Conference have been published.

NRAG The Natural Resource Advisory Group met in Nebraska City, NE October 23-25. Minutes of the meeting will be attached to next month's report.

Canaveral Natural Resources Meeting A general natural resource meeting was held at Cape Canaveral, in conjunction with the Natural Areas Association, and attended by two or three representatives from most regions. The meeting was largely informational, with presentations on the status of several Challenge related programs, especially inventory and monitoring. Input was also sought on guidance needs related to impairment determinations. Award presentations were made to recipients of the Director's Awards for accomplishments related to natural resource stewardship (see item above). Attendees were enthusiastic about presentations made by the award winners.

International Geoindicator Conference – NPS staff participated in an "International Workshop on Geoindicators for Ecosystem Monitoring in Parks and Protected Areas" at Gros Morne National Park in Western Newfoundland, Canada. The conference was an excellent forum for Parks Canada, the Geologic Survey of Canada (GSC), and several Canadian universities to meet with the NPS and USGS regarding integrating biotic and abiotic communities. Geoindicators are measurable, quantifiable tools for monitoring rapid change in abiotic systems to help determine ecosystem health and stability. The implementation of geoindicators is not as far along in Canada as in the U.S., and Canada is looking to the NPS for guidance.

STAFF NEWS

Staff Hired for Damage Assessment - The Environmental Quality Division welcomed Karen Battle to Natural Resources on October 21. She will be duty stationed in Atlanta, assisting parks in developing claims for damages to park resources under the Park System Resources Protection Act (PSRPA), CERCLA, the Clean Water Act, and the Oil Pollution Act. Karen has a Masters Degree in Marine Science from Moss Landing Marine Laboratories in Moss Landing, California. She comes from the Vessel Grounding (19jj) program at Biscayne National Park.

Liaison to Interpretation and Education Lynne Murdock, presently Acting Chief of Interpretation at Glacier National Park, will be coming on board as the new Natural Resources Interpretive Liaison. Lynne will enter on duty with the Natural Resources Information Division's Information Services Branch on November 18, and will complete her move from Glacier to Washington DC in early January. Lynn will have an office in Corky Mayo's shop, and will be taking on a number of interesting and dynamic responsibilities that will benefit both natural resources and interpretation. Lynne comes with a wealth of professional and academic skills, with 20 years of field experience, including assignments at Walnut Canyon, Katmai, Montezuma Castle, Walnut Canyon, Point Reyes and Glacier. Lynne holds a master's degree in earth science from Northern Arizona. She has been a long term active member of the National Association for Interpretation, is an interpretive competencies certifier, has experience as a public information officer, and has been involved in partnership and cooperative activities with the National Tour Association, Parks Canada, and the Blackfoot Tribe. Lynne has extensive experience as an interpretive supervisor and is also familiar with a variety of natural history scientific research initiatives, including a number for which she was the principal investigator.