



Fact Sheet

U.S. Department of the Interior National Park Service Natural Resource Information Division



Natural Resource Publication Program

November 1996

The Natural Resource Information Division is one of five divisions under the Associate Director of Natural Resource Stewardship and Science. It was created in 1995 as a result of a major reorganization of the National Park Service. The division is responsible for formulating, guiding, and evaluating the inventory and monitoring of natural resources throughout the National Park Service; managing the natural resource publication program; developing guidelines and technical procedures for using and managing GIS, remote sensing, and other natural resource data in parks, field directorate offices, and program offices; maintaining a searchable database on natural resource experts in the National Park Service; maintaining and providing analyses of servicewide databases for the crossreferencing of natural resource and programmatic data; developing and updating procedures for the assessment and reporting of natural resource conditions in parks; and facilitating the distribution of natural resource information on a global basis by using a variety of information-distribution technologies, including the Internet.

Since a major reorganization of the National Park Service in 1995, the natural resource publication program has not been fully resumed. The division publishes *Park Science*, prepares annual reports on the Inventory and Monitoring Program

and on the status of natural resources in the parks, and distributes fact sheets about the functions of and progress in various programs.

Park Science

Type of Publication

Park Science is a quarterly research and resource-management bulletin of the National Park Service. Its hard-copy circulation is around 5,000 copies. It was designed to strengthen the links between research and park management by reporting recent and ongoing research in the natural and social sciences, the implications of research for park planning and management, and the application of findings in resource management. The content of the bulletin receives an editorial review for completeness, clarity, usefulness, basic scientific soundness, and policy considerations but does not undergo an anonymous peer review. Although technical, *Park Science* is written for the lay reader, principally for the superintendents, resource managers, natural and social science researchers, interpreters, maintenance staff, visitors, resource-protection rangers, and other technical and nontechnical personnel of the National Park System. Other common readers are from other federal agencies; state departments of fish and game, parks and recreation, and natural resources; international parks; private conservation organizations; the academic community; and the public.

Park Science appears under *Publications* on the World Wide Web pages of the National Park Service (<http://www.aqd.nps.gov/natnet>).



Contributors

Most articles are contributed by federal and nonfederal scientists who conduct research on national park lands and by park managers who use science-based resource-management techniques. The editor encourages article submissions from all readers on research and resource management that are relevant to the preservation of natural resources on national park lands.

Funding

Park Science is funded through the office of the Associate Director for Natural Resource Stewardship and Science of the National Park Service, by combined support of the field areas, and with donations from readers outside the National Park Service.

Natural Resource Year in Review

Type of Publication

The *Natural Resource Year in Review* is a comprehensive annual magazine that features summaries and analyses of the most significant events of the year in natural resource stewardship in the National Park System, popularized stories, and factoids. The report targets the Congress, partners of the National Park Service, and the American people to increase interest, understanding, and support for the service's stewardship of natural resources in the national parks.

Some articles, for example, are about milestones or about events that set precedents. Others are about new threats to parks or about declining fiscal resources. Articles about the preservation of national or regional resources may provide park personnel with suggestions for solutions of problems elsewhere. Descriptions and explanations of trends in natural resources and outcomes of management in national parks are valuable information for all park personnel, their colleagues in other agencies, and the public.

Contributors

The 1996 *Natural Resource Year in Review* will feature a foreword by the Director of the National Park Service and an introduction by the Associate Director for Natural Resource Stewardship and Science. Most of the articles and stories will be by staff of the National Park Service and its partners and associates.

Annual Report of the Inventory and Monitoring Program

In 1997, the division will release the first comprehensive annual report about its Inventory and Monitoring Program. The report will be about the monitoring and the status of a wide variety of natural resources in seven parks that were selected prototypes for inventories and monitoring of natural resources in national parks. Tried protocols will ultimately be used nationwide in national parks with significant natural resources.

The report is being designed to raise the visibility of the Inventory and Monitoring Program and to provide an account of activities in Fiscal Year 1996. Its organization will be by resource, and it will feature reproductions of photographs, line drawings of natural resources, tables, and graphs. The report is intended for congressional staff, members of other governmental and nongovernmental natural resource agencies, and the general public.

Fact Sheets

In July 1996, the Natural Resource Information Division began to distribute its series of fact sheets. The sheets provide information about various activities and programs of the National Park Service. The contents of the fact sheets are technical but written for a general audience.

Many fact sheets in 1996 were about functions in the Inventory and Monitoring Program of the division, namely, about cartographic data, water quality status and trends in national parks, the bibliographic database, geologic mapping, data management, ecological monitoring, soil mapping, and vegetation mapping. One of the fact sheets was about the National Water Quality Assessment Program in National Parks, and other fact sheets

provided instructions for contributors and an index of the sheets. Fact sheets about the natural resource publication program, servicewide databases, air resources, geologic resources, and other topics are in preparation and may appear soon.

Since October 1996, the fact sheets have been regularly posted on the electronic Natural Resource Bulletin Board of the National Park Service. Several staff members voiced their interest in the sheets and their approval of having them posted on the bulletin board.

In November 1996, the fact sheets began to appear under *Publications* on the World Wide Web pages of the National Park Service (<http://www.aqd.nps.gov/natnet>). A text-only version and a version with illustrations and with division or program logos are available. Fact sheets remain posted on the Internet no longer than 3 months. Fact sheets may be contributed by any staff of the National Park Service and its associates.

Future Publications

The appearance and types of future publications depend on the needs of National Park Service personnel, the users of the national park units, and funding. Tentatively envisioned are the resumption of the monograph series for the occasional comprehensive work on a resource, a new technical report series, and a new scientific report series.

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