



The National Park Service

*Natural Resource Information Division
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Bibliographic Database (updated)

By Marilyn Ostergren

The Natural Resource Inventory and Monitoring (I&M) Program was established to help prevent the loss or impairment of significant natural resources in more than 250 of the 378 units of the National Park System. Many natural resources in the system are subjected to unfavorable influences from a variety of sources, for example, air and water pollution, urban encroachment, and excessive visitation. Left unchecked, such effects can threaten the very existence of many natural communities in the units.

The principal functions of the I&M Program are the gathering of information about the resources and the development of techniques for monitoring the ecological communities in the National Park System. Ultimately, the inventory and monitoring of natural resources will be integrated with park planning, operation and maintenance, visitor protection, and interpretation to

establish the preservation and protection of natural resources as an integral part of park management and improve the stewardship of natural resources by the National Park Service. The detection of changes and the quantification of trends in the conditions of natural resources are imperative for the identification of links between changes in resource conditions and the causes of changes and for the elimination or mitigation of such causes. Inventory and monitoring provide important feedback between natural resource conditions and management and trigger specific management and evaluation of managerial effectiveness. A basic requirement of documentation is a comprehensive bibliographic database.

Automated Natural Resource Bibliographic Database

The comprehensive inventory of parks with significant natural resources involved cataloging information from all the natural resource studies in parks. All historical scientific material including unpublished reports, journal articles, maps, photograph collections,

and other sources of natural resource information are incorporated into an automated database.

Program History

In 1994, compilation of the databases with the Pacific Northwest bibliography project as a prototype was initiated. The first three funded regions were the Southwest Region (under a cooperative agreement with the University of Idaho), the Rocky Mountain Region (under a cooperative agreements with the Northern Arizona University and Colorado State University) and the Alaska Region (under an agreement with the library of the Bureau of Land Management in Anchorage).

In 1995, the remaining six regions received funding and began to compile their information. The Western Region was funded under cooperative agreements with the Northern Arizona University, the University of Idaho, and the University of Hawaii. The Midwest and Southeast regions were funded under cooperative agreements with the University of Idaho. The Mid-At-

¹National parks and other entities of the National Park Service such as national monuments, national rivers, wild and scenic riverways, national scenic trails, and others are called *units* and collectively constitute the *National Park System*.

lantic and National Capital regions were funded under agreements with Penn State and the North Carolina State University. The North Atlantic Region was funded under an agreement with the University of Rhode Island. The general approach was to travel to parks, search their collections, and catalog appropriate documents on laptop computers.

Program Status and Future

As of October 1998, the preponderance of in-park work was completed and the project has been moving into a maintenance phase. To support this, the I&M Program has funded an *NRBIB Coordinator* position. The incumbent—stationed in the library of the NPS Columbia Cascades Support Office in Seattle — is responsible for

providing the support and guidance to keep the databases current, make them accessible online, address concerns about sensitive information in the databases, and provide assistance to users (data entry, searching, etc.).

For further information contact:

Marilyn Ostergren
NRBIB Coordinator
National Park Service
909 First Avenue
Seattle, Washington, 98104
Telephone: (206) 220-4153
e-mail: marilyn_ostergren@nps.gov

Dr. Gary Williams
Inventory & Monitoring Program
Manager
National Park Service
1201 Oak Ridge Drive, Suite 350
Fort Collins, Colorado 80525
Telephone: (970) 225-3539
e-mail: Gary_Williams@nps.gov