



WATER RESOURCES DIVISION MONTHLY REPORT

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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SERVICEWIDE ACTIVITIES

Departmental Policy on Remediation of Water Quality Problems Due to Abandoned Mines

A December 27 letter to EPA's Carol Browner from Secretaries Babbitt and Espy outlines how the two Departments will deal with remediation of water quality problems from abandoned mine lands (AML). As part of the Administration's activities related to the reauthorization of the Clean Water Act, the Department worked with EPA, USDA, and other agencies to develop a set of measures to address water quality impacts from AML sites. The Babbitt/Espy letter embodies these measures and seeks EPA concurrence. Land management bureaus will be directed to develop programs to implement the Administration's AML policy. These programs will include: identification of water bodies within each state which do not meet applicable water quality standards due to AML discharges from Federal lands; a process to prioritize those waterbodies within each State; a remediation plan to bring impaired waterbodies up to applicable standards; estimates of annual budget requested needed to implement the AML remediation plans. Consistent with the Administration's AML policy, the letter seeks EPA's help in developing AML stormwater permits whereby each Federal land manager is to receive one permit for each state to allow for priority setting among watersheds and sites. (Kliwinski, Rosenlieb)

Draft Federal Land Manager's AML Stormwater Permit

Current statutory and regulatory framework requires a National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) stormwater permit for abandoned mine land (AML) sites. The rules requiring these permits went into effect over two years ago, and the Department, as well as other Federal land managers have been out of compliance since that time. Neither EPA nor the State regulatory authorities have chosen to enforce the rules and require NPDES permits because of the potentially enormous resource demands to implement the program. Although no complete inventory of AML sites exists in DOI or USDA, estimates range to 500,000 or more. NPS's inventory, the most complete of all the Federal land managers, shows about 2,500 sites on NPS lands of which several hundred may be causing water quality impacts. Disgruntled with EPA draft stormwater permits that embodied a site-by-site approach, a work group of Federal land managers including NPS, BLM, and the Forest Service, developed a draft permit that focuses on a watershed, risk-based approach to AML water quality problems. The draft permit is currently under review by EPA's Washington office and Region 8 in Denver. The work group will soon begin work with the State of Montana on utilization of the permit in that state. (Rosenlieb, Kliwinski)

WRD will continue to help facilitate coordination and cooperation between USGS NAWQA study unit project managers and affected parks within

the study units. WRD has a representative on the National Advisory Council for NAWQA, actively participates on several NAWQA study unit liaison committees, signed a Memorandum of Understanding with USGS for coordination with NAWQA, established an NPS-WRD coordination position at the USGS National Headquarters in Reston, Virginia, and will implement "pilot" collaborative efforts with individual NAWQA study units to foster this partnership. (Long)

REGIONAL ACTIVITIES

MID-ATLANTIC REGION

WRD staff uploaded water quality data collected at **ASSATEAGUE ISLAND NATIONAL SEASHORE (ASIS)** from nine sites in the Sinepuxent and Chincoteague Bays to the Environmental Protection Agency's STORET database. The uploaded data derives from a WRD-funded water quality project conducted by ASIS from 1987 to 1990 to assess the impacts of land use on estuarine water quality. (Tucker, Akerman)

NORTH ATLANTIC REGION

WRD staff traveled to **CAPE COD NATIONAL SEASHORE (CACO)** to meet with park staff and review several ongoing projects. A meeting was held with staff from Horsley & Witten, Inc., to discuss the status of a WRD-funded project to investigate the hydrogeology in the vicinity of two kettle ponds. A draft report is expected in April 1995. Results will be used to provide park management with a scientific basis for management actions to preserve pristine water quality of the ponds. WRD staff also attended a meeting of the Lower Cape Water Management Task Force. The task force is developing an aquifer management plan that will allow additional development of ground water drinking supplies while preserving the natural ecology of the lower cape. Potential well locations and computer modeling scenarios were discussed at the meeting. Final

resolution of modeling strategies is expected at the January meeting of the task force. (L. Martin)

PACIFIC NORTHWEST REGION

WRD assisted the Denver Service Center (DSC) in review of the Wetland Delineation Report for the Quinault North Shore Road Repair area in **OLYMPIC NATIONAL PARK**. WRD also reviewed and provided recommendations for the mitigation site along the Queets River in the park, and assisted DSC in developing the required wetland Statement of Findings. (Krueger, Wagner)

Members of WRD traveled to Seattle, Washington, and to the Quinault District of **OLYMPIC NATIONAL PARK (OLYM)**. The purpose of the Seattle visit was to participate in a meeting of the Sediment Management Work Group of the Elwha River Restoration Project. The status of the ongoing efforts of this group was presented in the meeting. The trip to OLYM was made to provide advice to park planners regarding flood hazard at two locations being considered for new park housing. Comments and conclusions related to these activities can be found in a trip report. (Jackson, Smillie)

ROCKY MOUNTAIN REGION

A floodplain Statement of Findings for **WIND CAVE NATIONAL PARK** was reviewed and recommended for signature by the Regional Director, Rocky Mountain Region. (Kimball, Smillie)

WRD staff attended a meeting at **ROCKY MOUNTAIN NATIONAL PARK (ROMO)** for the leadership of the High Drive Water Association in which researchers from Colorado State University presented preliminary data and initial impressions from a study of the Beaver Meadow wetland. The study was, at least in part, the product of WRD funding sources, including those for water rights-related issues. The management of ROMO commissioned the study because park staff had concerns about the environmental effects of water diversions to the High Drive

residence area. The park has determined that the water deliveries, though longstanding, conflict with NPS policy and state water law and this study, though very preliminary, indicates the possibility of an adverse impact upon the wetland, at least under specific conditions of precipitation and antecedent aquifer recharge. The Park and Association are exploring avenues for replacement of the water system. (Williams)

WRD staff traveled to Salt Lake City, Utah, on December 2, 1994, to meet with the technical team from the State of Utah, to discuss proposed water resources development upstream and downstream of **ZION NATIONAL PARK** (ZION). The technical team provides hydrologic evaluations of potential projects and settlement alternatives as part of the negotiation team established to determine Federal reserved water rights for ZION in the Virgin River Adjudication. WRD staff also met with representatives from the Bureau of Land Management, U.S. Fish and Wildlife, and the Office of the Solicitor, to review the status of each agencies' knowledge regarding water resources development and to brief the BLM and USFWS about ongoing water rights negotiations for ZION. Discussions focused primarily on water development alternatives proposed by the Washington Water Conservancy District. (Williams, McGlothlin, Hansen).

SOUTHEAST REGION

WRD staff uploaded water quality data collected at **VIRGIN ISLANDS NATIONAL PARK** (VIIS) from 31 sites off St. Johns to the Environmental Protection Agency's STORET database. The uploaded data derives from a monitoring program that commenced at VIIS in 1988 to monitor the water quality impacts of island development. (Tucker, Akerman)

WRD staff downloaded water quality data for **BISCAYNE NATIONAL PARK** to provide background information for several water quality related issues at the park. A large quantity of data was retrieved. (Tucker, Akerman, Rosenlieb)

WRD staff provided a review to the Southeast Region on a report entitled "Use of In-situ Burning in RRT Region IV." From a water pollution standpoint, burning oil before it reaches shore is often a good idea. In a Newfoundland experiment in the summer of 1994, the efficiency of the burn was 99%, converting many compounds which would be hazardous as water or air (evaporation) pollution into carbon dioxide and water. Beyond 200 meters, all air pollutant compounds measured were below health concern levels. Although burning creates a visible smoke plume, it can prevent water and sediment pollution that can continue environmental degradation for years, and it can prevent the air pollution caused when up to 50% of an oil slick evaporates. (Irwin)

WRD provided information on CCA, PCP, and creosote treated wood to **MAMMOTH CAVE NATIONAL PARK** staff. (Irwin)

SOUTHWEST REGION

WRD staff traveled to Phoenix, Arizona, to discuss aspects of the U.S. Geological Survey's National Water Quality Assessment (NAWQA) Program with Kathy Davis from the Southern Arizona Group. In addition, WRD staff traveled to Tucson, Arizona, to attend a meeting of the Central Arizona Basins NAWQA liaison committee. Gail Cordy from USGS is the study unit project manager. The purposes of the meeting were to exchange information with representatives from various Federal, State, and local agencies, identify water quality issues, discuss opportunities for program coordination and cooperation, and outline study unit activities for fiscal year 1995. The study unit's 1995 work plan focused on a retro-spective analysis of surface water, ground water and biological conditions, reconnaissance data collection, and preliminary study unit design for the 3-year intensive phase of monitoring beginning in fiscal year 1996. The retrospective analysis will compile and examine existing data to describe relations between observed conditions and land use and water use, and will include a topical report focusing on

a couple of high profile issues in the study unit. The principal constituents of concern are nutrients in effluent-dominated streams, trace elements, and pesticides. The purpose of the reconnaissance activities is to select sampling sites for the occurrence and distribution survey planned for fiscal years 1996 and 1997. (Long)

(THIS ITEM CONCERNS THE WESTERN REGION ALSO.) WRD personnel represented the NPS at a meeting of the DOI-sponsored Shared Water Resources Committee which has been established to identify, assess, and evaluate water-related environmental concerns along the US-Mexico Border. This committee will be producing a report by September 1996 which will (among other things) address the water-related management concerns and water-related inventory, monitoring, research and resource management needs of DOI-managed areas located within 100 km of the US-Mexico Border. A copy of the trip report including minutes of the committee meeting, report outline, and project schedule will be forwarded to the RDs, Regional Chief Scientists, Superintendents, and Resource Management Specialists of the affected NPS units. (Flora)

WRD staff traveled to Flagstaff, Arizona, on December 12-13, 1994, to meet with scientists from the Colorado Plateau Research Station (CPRS) to review a draft report titled "Historical Flow Regimes and Canyon Bottom Vegetation Dynamics at Walnut Canyon National Monument, Arizona", and to meet with WACA staff, the CPRS, a Northern Arizona University scientist, and attorneys from the Office of the Solicitor and Department of Justice, to discuss strategies for resuming negotiation discussions with the City of Flagstaff regarding NPS water rights claims for WACA in the Little Colorado River Adjudication. (Williams, McGlothlin, Hansen)

WESTERN REGION

WRD and CHANNEL ISLANDS NATIONAL SEASHORE staff met with a representative of the California

Central Coast Region Water Quality Control Board concerning alleged violations of the Clean Water Act on Santa Rosa Island. In a draft Clean-up and Abatement Order, the State alleges that the NPS is unlawfully discharging bacteria and sediment into waters of the State. The order further alleges that unrestricted cattle grazing causing degraded riparian conditions and to a lesser extent a poorly managed road network are the causes of the pollution. A formal response to the State will be developed after the Regional Solicitor has completed a review of the draft Order. (Rosenlieb)

WRD and Lake Mead National Recreation Area (LAME) staff are organizing an interagency meeting to identify opportunities to address water quality impacts to Lake Mead from wastewater and urban runoff in Las Vegas Wash. LAME suspects that human pathogens and toxic metal and organic contaminants are being delivered to the Las Vegas Bay that is located directly below the Las Vegas Bay Campground. Based on initial discussions with the USGS Nevada Basin and Range National Water Quality Assessment (NAWQA) Study Unit Chief, WRD has concluded that issues associated with Las Vegas Wash would form the basis for a pilot collaborative water quality project with the NAWQA program. A scoping meeting with the USGS has been scheduled at the park for January 18 and 19. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the Bureau of Reclamation are also expected to participate. (Rosenlieb)

At the request of GREAT BASIN NATIONAL PARK (GRBA) and Northern Arizona University (NAU), WRD staff retrieved water quality data from the Environmental Protection Agency's STORET system for an approximate 5-mile buffer surrounding GRBA. The purpose of the retrieval was to support the WRD-funded monitoring project being undertaken by NAU. The results revealed very little STORET data exist for GRBA. NAU was strongly encouraged to upload whatever data they collect to STORET for archiving and summary in GRBA's Baseline Water Quality Data Inventory and Analysis Report. (Tucker, Akerman)

WRD staff performed a data retrieval from the Environmental Protection Agency's STORET system for **CHANNEL ISLANDS NATIONAL PARK (CHIS)** to provide input into the grazing issue at CHIS. The retrieval revealed that no water quality data exist in STORET for CHIS. The park has indicated that, with WRD assistance, they will make sure the results from their current monitoring program are uploaded to STORET. (Tucker, Akerman, Rosenlieb)

WRD staff performed a data retrieval from the Environmental Protection Agency's STORET system for **JOSHUA TREE NATIONAL PARK (JOTR)** in support of a WRD-funded water resources inventory and monitoring project. The results revealed that there isn't very much STORET data for JOTR. The contractors for this project will be strongly encouraged to upload whatever data they collect to STORET. (Tucker, Akerman, Inglis)

A floodplain Statement of Findings for the Willow Beach area of **LAKE MEAD NATIONAL RECREATION AREA** was reviewed and recommended for signature by the Regional Director, Western Region. (Kimball, Smillie)

WRD staff traveled to **SANTA MONICA MOUNTAINS NATIONAL RECREATION AREA** to advise park staff on probable hydrologic impacts of dewatering during construction of a subway tunnel beneath Runyon Canyon. After reviewing available data and a thorough search of the canyon, it was determined that the water table is probably never close enough to land surface to support riparian vegetation. Thus, there should be no impact if the water table is lowered during construction of the tunnel. The Los Angeles Metropolitan Transport Authority will conduct monthly hydrologic and biologic monitoring in the canyon to identify any possible impacts. (L. Martin)

On December 6-7, 1994, Western Regional Office, **DEATH VALLEY NATIONAL PARK, GREAT BASIN NATIONAL PARK, LAKE MEAD NATIONAL RECREATION AREA**, and WRD staff met with representatives of the BIA, BLM, FWS, (bureaus) and SOL, DOJ, and USGS in Reno, Nevada. The meeting was part

of the continuing efforts of the bureaus to prepare for hearings regarding the applications of the Las Vegas Valley Water District to withdraw ground water in east-central and southern Nevada. The meeting was called to discuss the ground water modeling report and supporting documentation submitted by their hydrologic consultants. The bureaus will meet with the consultants in the near future to discuss the details of the reports. (Williams, Johns, Christensen)

WRD staff traveled to the Hawaiian Islands on December 13-16, 1994, in response to project needs at **KALAUPAPA NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK (KALA)** and **KALOKO-HONOKOHAU NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK (KAHO)**. First, WRD staff met with U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) staff to discuss potential funding for a USGS ground water modeling study to be initiated at KAHO; WRB staff then traveled to KALA where they met with KALA and Pacific Area Office staff to discuss reviewing a project proposal by the Hawaii Department of Agriculture to pump more ground water from the Waikolo Valley, and to maintain electronic stage recording equipment installed at KALA. (Hughes, Hautzinger)

COMINGS AND GOINGS

Ken Akerman, a graduate student in Civil Engineering at Colorado State University, began working part time with the Water Operations Branch as a student-hourly employee. Ken takes Rebecca Smith's position who accepted a geologist position at Redwoods National Park. Ken is rapidly becoming the WRD expert in STORET in order to upload water quality data to STORET before production of a park's Baseline Water Quality Inventory and Analysis Report. Ken will also be assisting on water quality dataset analyses and other tasks.

Scott Hermsen, a graduate student finishing up Masters Degrees in Chemistry and Civil Engineering at Colorado State University, began working part time with the Water Operations Branch as a student-hourly

employee. Scott will be working with Julie Mattick preparing Baseline Water Quality Data Inventory and Analysis Reports for parks based on data retrievals from STORET.