



# Earth, Wind & Water

News from the NRPC—Section A

January, 2008

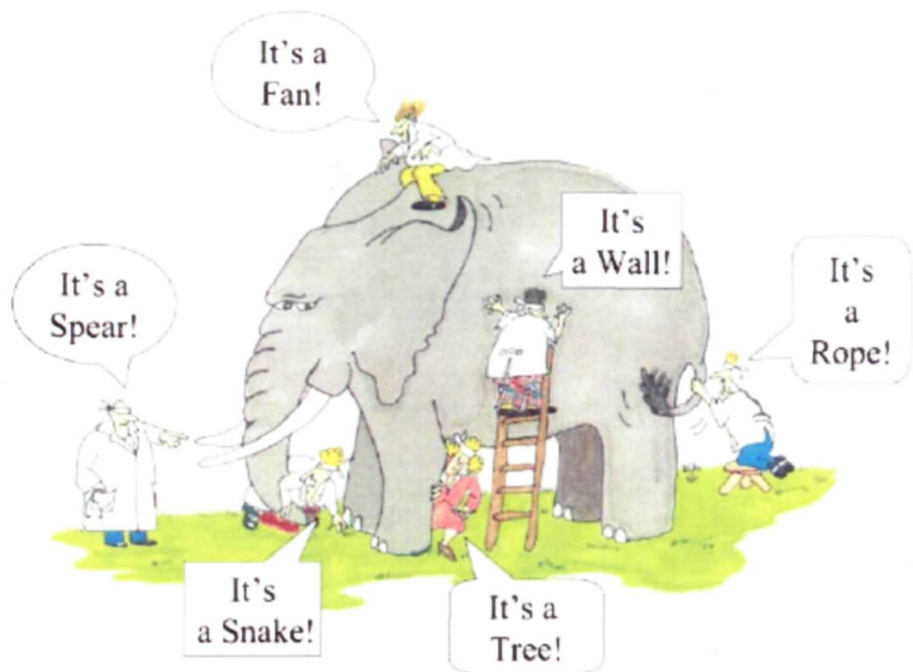
## They've got the money, if you've got the time

Need funding to realize a great idea you have that will save a species? Provide valuable information for the protection of park resources? Enhance visitor safety and experience? Even though you may feel strapped for cash, there are many project funding opportunities out there. Writing a good proposal is the key to unlocking the vault.

This summary of a two-day proposal writing workshop in November led by Kathy Jope, Pacific West Region, Natural Resources Program Lead, and coordinated by the Geologic Resources Division highlights the key elements of a good proposal. Materials from the workshop and a list of participants are available at NRPC Sharepoint>GRD>Sites>Proposal Writing and Evaluation Workshop.

### Elements of a good natural resource funding proposal:

**Introduction:** How many proposals have you written that start off convincing the reader that the problem your proposal will be addressing is so dire that unless action is taken immediately, natural resources are doomed? Although this seems like a good strategy, a better one is to use the introduction to connect the proposal reviewer to



We all see the world differently; carefully describe the resource and its value to the proposal reviewers. Cartoon from: Himmelfarb, Jonathan; Stenvinkel, Peter; Ikizler, T Alp; and Raymond M Hakim. (2002) *The elephant in uremia: Oxidant stress as a unifying concept of cardiovascular disease in uremia*. *Kidney International*, 62, 1524–1538. Cartoon originally copyrighted by the authors; G. Renee Guzlas, artist.

the resource and its value; set the stage in a way that captures the funder's interests and highlights the good work that you are capable of. Provide context and be positive. The funder must care about the resource before they will help you care for the resource.

**Problem Statement:** Now you are free to introduce the challenge. What problem do you propose to fix? What is not right with the resource value you just described? Your lack of staff (or funding or a plan) is not the problem. The problem is with the resource; i.e., the problem is not a lack of aspirin, but rather a headache. Build your

credibility as an accomplished and reliable problem-solver. Show that you have done your homework by providing evidence that this is a real and solvable problem. Use facts, figures, and quotes related to the significance and value of the resource. Avoid describing your methods. Focus on what you want to fix and show how this is also in the funder's interests.

**Objectives:** What outcomes do you want to achieve as a result of the project? This is different than describing the products that will be produced or the methods that will be used. A plan might be the product of a

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## Director's Corner

This issue contains a tribute to 8 employees from the NRPC who collectively represent over 270 years of federal experience. This is something we will see a lot of in the next few years, both within the NRPC and throughout the rest of the NPS. It is a real eye opener that over a third of NRPC staff are within five years of retirement eligibility. While this certainly doesn't mean that they will all be gone in 5 years, it does mean that we are in the midst of a rapidly changing organization. It is our collective challenge to ensure that our individual and program efforts are not lost in the shuffle and form a lasting contribution to institutional knowledge. This is an area we will be spending a great deal of thought and effort on in the near future and I look forward to your good ideas. Please join me in saying adieu to our friends and colleagues and wishing them the best in their future endeavors.

George Dickison,  
Center Director

## People in the News



George Dickison surprised Ron Kerbo with the DOI's Meritorious Service Award.

### Meritorious Service Award Recipient

On October 25, George Dickison joined GRD staff and others at a luncheon to celebrate Ron Kerbo's receipt of the DOI's Meritorious Service Award, the Department's second highest award to an employee. The award was a total surprise to him!! Ron earned this award for his

career-long dedication and leadership on sound stewardship of NPS cave and karst resources. He also has been and remains a major figure on the international cave and karst scene. Today, more than 3,900 caves are known to exist in 121 NPS units. Ron retired from GRD last April as the NPS cave and karst program coordinator. He is very much missed!

### Film Wins Award

The "Oregon Ecoregions" film, a collaborative effort coordinated by Nancy Brian (BRMD), received first place in the 2007 National Association for Interpretation National Workshop Interpretive Media Competition. The competition recognizes and promotes excellence in the delivery of natural, cultural, and historical non-personal interpretive services. Nancy obtained a grant from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation and worked with multiple partners to produce the DVD. The first

## Life Outside the NRPC

### Which NRPC employee has performed for 3 presidents?

The September 2007 Natural Resource Program Center newsletter posed a great mystery. Who among your colleagues sang for three presidents? This month I've been asked to tell you a bit about the how it came about. When I, Bill Commins (ONRIS), was an undergraduate music major I sang with a vocal group at the University of Maryland conducted by Paul Traver. We were asked to sing for a Christmas



Bill Commins sang with a group from the Washington National Opera for Bill Clinton.

Function hosted by President Ford at the White house. I recall driving down the 1968 riot corridor of H Street, which was still a mess in 1977, and arriving to a small and gloomy reception in a beautiful room in the White House. Gerald Ford had lost the election and was in the final days of his presidency. We chatted a bit with him and he seemed sad.

The gig for President Reagan was another Christmas function. A Washington Christmas television special was being filmed at the National Building Museum. I was singing with the Shrine Choir conducted by Leo Nestor. We were asked to provide background music and then join in the audience. I recall finishing the gig a bit late, running for my seat in the audience, and hearing "Ladies and Gentlemen, the President of the United States". I froze, not wanting to be shot by the Secret Service.

Finally, I sang with a group from Washington National Opera for Bill Clinton. Someone important from Italy was visiting the White house and opera seemed a good choice for entertainment. We sang at the dinner. Sophia Loren was in the house and my colleagues who saw her tell that she is very attractive. The President and First Lady were very cordial and we all got to dance to a fantastic Marine Band after dinner. It has been an honor to touch the fringes of history.

### Next Issue's Mystery Person:

Who recently played in a World Series?





segment of the DVD, "The Coast Range: Survivors in the Sand," tells the story of the Western Snowy Plover and how people have changed the coastal sand dunes with the introduction of European beachgrass. The second segment, "The Willamette Valley: A History of Change," investigates the Fendler's Blue Butterfly and its dependence on Kincaid's lupine, found only in a few places in Oregon.

### NRPC Geologist Visits China

**Andrea Croskrey**, member of the Geologic Resource Evaluation Team, will be traveling to China in January 2008 to explore and survey caves and teach Single Rope Technique (SRT - a type of climbing used while caving). The first part of the trip will be spent in Wulong Karst National Geological Park. The park is located in the Chongqing Municipality and was recently listed as a UNESCO World Natural Heritage site. The maps produced will aid in planning dye traces to delineate the recharge area of caves in Wulong Karst National Geological Park, which is important for the development of a management plan for the area's resources. Andrea will be joining fellow cavers in the Hong Meigui Cave Exploration Society (HMG) in this endeavor. For more information on HMG visit <http://www.hongmeigui.net/>.

During the second part of the trip Andrea will travel to Southwest University of China in the city of Beibei. There she will join a team from the Hoffman Environmental Research Institute (HERI) and for 5 days they will train Chinese students in SRT and cave survey methods for karst field studies. The group will then travel to Mengzi in Yunnan Province, near the Vietnam border. There the team will have a 10-day expedition where they will be looking for (and hopefully finding) a way into a cave system that was identified in a dye trace conducted 30 years ago. For more information on the Hoffman Environmental Research Institute visit <http://hoffman.wku.edu/>.



Andrea at the entrance of Wan Ren Dong near Zhangjiajie, Hunan in 2005.

**Jay Rhoten (ONRIS)** graduated with honors from Regis University; he won the 2007 Charles Babbage Academic Award. Jay received a Master's of Science in Computer Information Technology with an emphasis in Information Assurance.

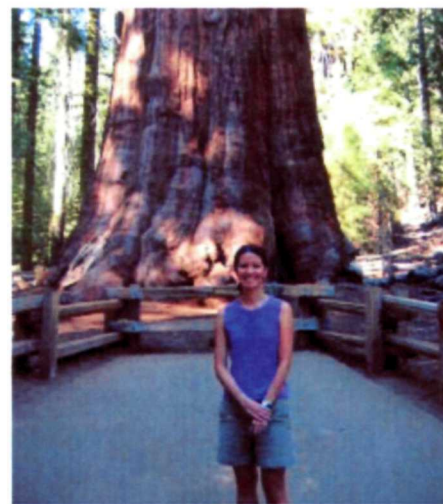
### Details, Details

**Chris Shaver (ARD Division Chief)** is in Washington D.C. for a two-month detail as the Deputy Associate Director for Natural Resource Stewardship and Science. Chris will return as Chief of the Air Resources Division in mid-January.

**Peter Dratch (BRMD)** was in Washington D.C. on a detail during November and December. He first worked in the Comptroller's Office on natural resource elements in the budget Scorecard. Then he was the NPS lead on Department framework for the conservation of North American bison. He expected his final assignment to be in the Policy Office, moving forward Director Orders that BRMD has pending. Two extensive details are requirements of the year-long USDA Executive Potential Program. Dratch is one of two NPS people in the program this year. During his absence from Fort Collins, Nancy Brian is managing the Endangered Species Program.

Coastal geologist **Rebecca Beavers** is serving a 120-detail as the Acting Chief of WRD's Ocean and Coastal Resources Branch, since Gary Davis' retirement in October. This assignment enables Rebecca to remain fully immersed in coastal related issues and to help assure a strong link between this new Branch, GRD's coastal function, and the NRPC's Coastal and Oceans Technical Advisory Group (CO-TAG) by emphasizing collaboration across divisions. In addition, Rebecca will be able to continue to advance a new marine inventory program in collaboration with the Geologic Resources Evaluation program.

**Madelyn Carpenter**, Environmental Protection Specialist with the Environmental Quality Division, completed a one month detail at Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Park in September. She backfilled for the park's planning and compliance specialist, juggling to keep three environmental assessments and various other park projects moving along while the park's compliance specialist completed her own detail. She enjoyed being back at a park, even for a short while, and on the weekends, took advantage of being in the Sierras by hiking within the two parks and venturing up to Yosemite (for her first time!).



Madelyn in front of the General Sherman tree, estimated to be 2300-2700 years old, about 275 feet tall, with a diameter of 36.5 feet at the base.



# Ch-ch-ch-ch-Changes

*This winter 8 people from the NRPC will be retiring after significant careers in the federal service. We will be losing a combined 270 years of experience. We wish them well in their future endeavors and will miss their friendships and considerable experience.*

After 31 years of working to ensure parks are “unimpaired for future generations,” **Dr. Michael A. Soukup**, chief scientist and associate director for natural resource stewardship and science, retired on November 3rd. Mike once said that he was “always amazed at the motivation and selflessness of those who work in National Parks to protect and restore them, and to facilitate public understanding and enjoyment of their nation’s natural and cultural heritage.” But it is he who has worked long and selflessly and we celebrate his achievements. Read more about Mike’s dedication to natural resource stewardship on Inside NPS. <http://inside.nps.gov/index.cfm?handler=viewcommunityarticle&type=PeopleNews&id=1719>



Mike Soukup, NRSS Associate Director

**Glenda Jackson** will be retiring December 31st after 34 years of federal service, eleven of those with the NPS. Glenda will be enjoying her retirement with her husband and their five Labrador retrievers, expanding

her therapy dog work, taking digital photography classes to improve her photos of all things canine, and pursuing activities such as knitting that require a new type of problem solving. Read more about her career with the Federal Reserve in Washington, D.C and with the NPS on InsideNPS at <http://inside.nps.gov/index.cfm?handler=viewcommunityarticle&type=PeopleNews&id=1762>.



Glenda Jackson, Office of Natural Resource Information Systems, Systems Analyst, Software Engineer

Lyndon Johnson was in the White House, the National Park Service was celebrating its 50th anniversary and Herb Alpert & the Tijuana Brass were at the top of music charts when **Jim Tilmant**, WRD Fisheries Biologist Extraordinaire, began his federal career as Seasonal Interpreter at Shenandoah National Park (1966). Now after more



Jim Tilmant, WRD Fisheries Biologist

than 40 years of government service, Jim has announced his intention to retire effective December 31, 2007.

Jim’s NPS seasonal service included stints at Shenandoah National Park, Everglades National Park and White Sands National Monument National Park prior to joining the United States Coast Guard (USCG) in 1969. While in the Coast Guard, Jim had the opportunity to serve as a deck officer on the Coast Guard Icebreaker Mackinaw in the Great Lakes. After completing his military service and graduate degree (Humboldt State University), Jim initiated a permanent career with the National Park Service which has included serving in Biscayne National Park, Everglades National Park, Glacier National Park, and with the Water Resources Division. In 1990, Jim had a career development opportunity to serve as a legislative aid on the staff of Congressman Bill Richardson dealing with natural resource issues.



Bob Higgins, GRD Geologist

I wanted to let you know that the rumors are true: I will be one of the early ones in the Class of “o8” federal retirees. I am retiring from the National Park Service as of January 2, 2008. The timing is right: my wife, Marion, can also retire this year; my son, Brian, graduated from college last December; and I am the oldest one left in the Geologic Resources Division. It’s time to move on and start a new life.

I will have 38 years of federal service when I



retire. It started in 1969 with the U.S. Army, including a tour in Vietnam. After that, I traded in the uniform for Civil Service: the FERC, USGS, BLM, MMS and the last 24 years with the National Park Service in Energy Mining and Minerals, Land Resources, and Geologic Resources Divisions in the Natural Resource Program Center. It has been an interesting and enjoyable career and I saved the best for last with the NPS. I have truly enjoyed the fine and dedicated people I have met along the way, and highly respect the job you have done.

--Bob Higgins, GRD, Class of '08

This note is to let you know that after 39



Debby Peck, EQD, Program Analyst

years in the Federal Government, with NPS and the Fish and Wildlife Service, I am diving into my next life. Ray and I plan to stay in Washington for perhaps another year, for me to complete my schooling in Yoga Teacher Training. I also hope to get my certificate from the UDC Cooperative Extension Service as a Master Gardener.

My Federal Career (aka brilliant) began with the Fish and Wildlife Service's Denver Wildlife Research Center back in the 1970. I left Colorado in 1977, and worked in FWS in DC, until 1981, when I became enlightened and joined the NPS.

In the NPS, I started out in the Air Quality

(now Air Resources) Division, the halcyon days of John Christiano, and eventually became Natural Resources Program Coordinator, working for Abby Miller, and Mike Soukup. After being detailed to the Environmental Quality Division in 2001, I became Dan Hamson's program analyst for the Environmental Damage Assessment and Restoration Program.

I have valued my chances to work with so many folks over the years. And through my career, I believe that a sense of humor, and having a respect for the resource, (about which I care lots), have carried me through. Thank you all for the parts you have each played in my "brilliant career."

--Debby Peck, EQD, Class of '08

ARD celebrated the retirement of two people who have been with the NPS Air Resources Division for over two decades: **Dave Joseph**, who retired in September, after 24 years with the air quality program; and **Brian Mitchell**, who retired in early December (in time to enjoy free skiing at Crested Butte) after 26 years!

Gary Johnston, Washington Office liaison and biologist with the Biological Resource Management Division, completed a 38 year career in the federal government when he retired January 3rd. The last 28 of these years have been dedicated to the National Park Service. Read more at: <http://inside.nps.gov/index.cfm?handler=viewcommunityarticle&type=PeopleNews&id=1782>



Gary Johnston, BRMD, biologist

## New to the NRPC

**Randy Stanley** joined the NRPC in September as an acoustic specialist for the Natural Sounds Program. In the 6 years prior to his joining the park service, Randy worked for HEAD acoustics, Inc. in southeast Michigan and managed a wide range of consulting projects related to human perception of sound. Randy holds degrees in acoustics from Purdue and Penn State Universities, along with board certifications in acoustics and noise control. Randy is excited to apply his perceptual acoustics knowledge to park visitor experiences. As a youth, Randy spent many summer vacations hiking in the national parks and is pleased to be living near Horsetooth Mountain Park in the foothills. He is very happy to be working in the unique team environment of the Natural Sounds Program and to fulfill a lifelong dream to work for the NPS.

**Lelaina Marin**, joined the NRPC in November as an outdoor recreation planner with the Natural Sounds Program. Before arriving at NRPC, Lelaina worked with the US Fish and Wildlife Service as a SCEP biologist for 2 years and a natural resource planner in their Division of Comprehensive Conservation Planning and Policy for 2 and a half years. She holds a BS from Cornell University in natural resources and hopes to someday pursue a MS in human dimensions of wildlife management. Having lived in the northeast her whole life, Lelaina is very excited about the opportunity to experience a new area (especially the mountains) as well as a new agency.

**Leigh Welling** began working for NRPC as the NRSS Climate Change Coordinator in October and relocated to Fort Collins in December. Her role will include working with national, regional, and park programs and staff to develop and implement strategies for effectively responding to the challenges that climate

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## They've got the money, (continued)

Continued from page 1

proposal, but the outcomes are what you could do as a result of having a plan. Focus on the benefits to be achieved from the project proposal and what difference it will make.

**Methods:** This is your opportunity to show that you have carefully considered how you will meet your objectives; it is your chance to build credibility in your abilities to solve this problem. Consider what, why, how, where, when, and who? Are there approaches available to solve your issue; is it a standard technique or typical protocol? If you are adopting a new methodology, why? Will it be successful in obtaining information related to the project's objectives? Why did you select the protocol? Are the elements in the protocol well coordinated? What are the specific study areas? What time of year? Who is the project manager or principal investigator and why is he or she qualified? Provide enough detail to demonstrate that you have thought through

the process and know why/how you are going to carry out your plans. In this section you can include the tangible products that will be developed as a result. The goal is to clarify how you will solve the problem and show credibility in your ability and approach.

**Evaluation:** After the project, how will you evaluate your measure of success? How will you show that you met your objectives?

**Staffing:** Who will be filling key roles in the project and what qualifies them? Show that you have developed partnerships to address this problem—that you are not the only one who thinks this is a problem.

**Budget:** The budget must be directly tied to the proposed project. Show that you have researched costs—not just your best guess. Usual line items include: salaries, benefits, travel, equipment, and supplies. Be specific, if you need a vehicle, how long will you need it for? Budget requests for overhead and miscellany might raise concerns. Explain the source of the overhead. Miscellaneous items could indicate bad planning, unless you specify what items might be included. Don't overlook costs for publication of reports, curation of specimens, or other costs.

Finally, remember your audience. Be compassionate and understanding. They may not have the same technical background as you or readily understand your technical language or your alphabet of acronyms. Consider that, although they carefully read all proposals, they may be getting to yours on a Friday afternoon after they have already read 200 others. What makes yours stand out? Appeal to their interests and be concise, organized, and credible.

If you have more questions about how to write a winning funding proposal, 17 of your fellow NRPC staff attended a two-day proposal writing workshop

in November led by Kathy Jope, Pacific West Region, Natural Resources Program Lead, and coordinated by the Geologic Resources Division. Materials and a list of participants are available at NRPC Sharepoint>GRD>Sites>Proposal Writing and Evaluation Workshop.

## New to the NRPC

Continued from page 5

change presents to resources management and park operations. Previously, she was Director of the Crown of the Continent Research Learning Center at Glacier National Park for 4.5 years, serving as the Research Learning Center National Coordinator for the last two years. She earned a PhD and MS in oceanography from Oregon State University and a BA in geology from the University of Colorado, Boulder. Her research focused on using marine microfossils to interpret past climatic variability. Prior to joining the NPS, Leigh was at the University of North Dakota where she helped establish the Northern Great Plains Center for People and the Environment and served as co-chair of the Northern Great Plains sector for the National Assessment on the Impacts of Climate Variability and Change. Leigh is looking forward to working with others in NRPC on this important issue and is excited about being back in northern Colorado.



Leigh Welling at Glacier National Park.

Earth, Wind and Water is the quarterly newsletter of the Natural Resource Program Center

### Sara Melena

Interpretive Specialist  
Office of Education & Outreach

### Comments, Suggestions, Submissions?

**Post to:**  
NRPC Sharepoint>TAGs>OTAG>  
NRPC Newsletter

### Or write to:

Sara Melena  
NPS Natural Resource Program Center  
Sara\_Melena@nps.gov





# Earth, Wind & Water

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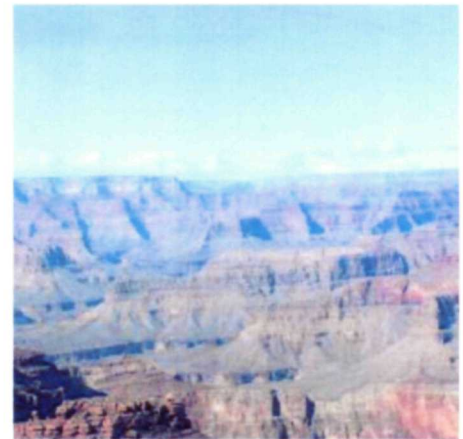
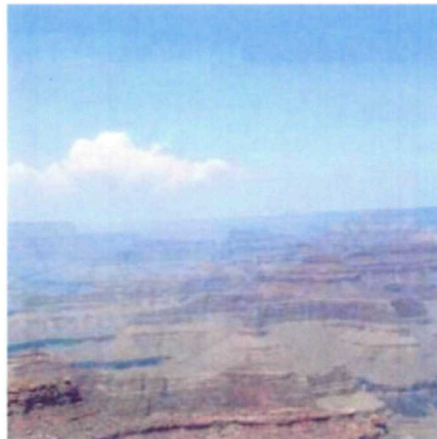
## Life in the Fast Lane—NRPC News in Brief

### Air Resources Division

#### *Air Quality Condition and Trend Scorecard*

The Air Resources Division (ARD) accessed data from all air monitoring stations around the country, including data from park monitors. These data enabled us to develop information on air quality condition and trends for all parks with significant natural resources. For 140 areas (up from 52 in past years), we believe the nearby monitors are reasonably representative of the park's air quality. Data can be used to report to the NPS air quality goal under the Government Performance and Results Act. That goal is based on the percentage of reporting parks with stable or improving air quality. The goal for 2006 was 66 percent of parks with stable or improving air quality, but when the new parks are added, we far exceed that goal with 86 percent.

This year, for the first time, in addition to the trend data, the ARD has also developed a method for characterizing current air quality conditions in parks as good, moderate, or of significant concern (see Table 1). Not so coincidentally, the ARD has been focusing resources on the nitrogen issue



Webcams monitor visibility at Yavapai Point, Grand Canyon National Park, Left, August 4, 2007, visibility 44 miles; Right, January 13, 2007, visibility 118 miles. (NPS Photo)

for the past few years, and major strides are being made – both in the science and policy solutions. The ARD, through the Acting Associate Director, Natural Resource Stewardship and Science, recently distributed the air quality data and scorecard to the Regional Directors. The Air Quality Conditions and Trends Report is available on Sharepoint: NRPC Sharepoint>Shared Documents>AQ Conditions and Trend Report 3 Oct 2007 final DRAFT.doc

### *Air Resource Planning Meeting*

The Air Resources Division hosted a meeting on November 6 – 8 for air quality specialists from parks and regional offices. At the meeting a variety of air resource and natural sound issues currently facing the National Park Service were discussed. Everybody participating in the meeting was well-engaged in the discussions and consensus on priority issues and science needs were reached. The meeting agenda is posted on the ARD Sharepoint website.

### Biological Resource Management Division

In January, the Wildlife Health Team will be capturing 120 elk at Rocky Mountain National Park to evaluate new live animal tests for chronic wasting disease (CWD) and effectiveness of an experimental multi-year fertility control agent. The study will contribute information that may assist the

Table 1. Air Quality Condition Trends

<i>Air Quality Condition</i>	<i>% of parks in good or moderate condition, or have an improving condition</i>
Visibility	65
Ozone	59
Sulfur Deposition	60
Nitrogen Deposition	18*

\* none have an improving trend





Over abundant elk are a popular attraction at Rocky Mountain National Park. (NPS Photo)

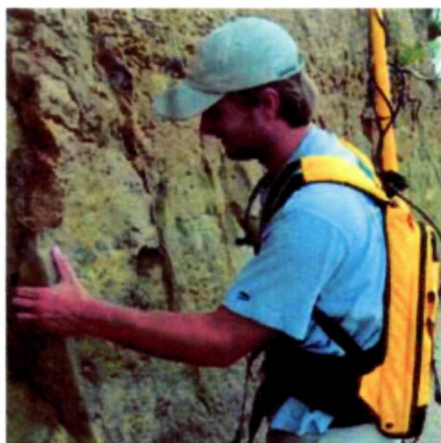
park in implementing its elk management plan, which was released in December. Elk will be anesthetized, radio-collared, sampled for CWD, tested for pregnancy, and injected with either a contraceptive or placebo. Elk that test positive for CWD will be euthanized and the remainder will be monitored for up to 3 years before they are collected for testing when they are culled as part of the park's elk management actions.

### Geologic Resources Division

#### *Critical Geoscience Needs in Parks Filled through the Geoscientists-in-the-Parks Program*

The Geoscientists-in-the-Parks Program (GIP) created by the Geologic Resources Division (GRD) in 1996 places geoscientists in parks on a short-term basis to provide much needed geoscience research, resource management, and interpretation/education assistance. Each year, most of the GIP positions are filled in conjunction with the Geological Society of America's GeoCorps America Program. Additional GIPs are placed in parks in partnership with the Association for Women Geoscientists, National Association of Geoscience Teachers, and others. Last year, 26 GIPs completed geoscience projects in 17 parks.

Supplemental funding for next year's program has allowed GRD to more than double the number of GIPs and to offer scholarships to 15 parks to cover a portion of their program's costs. In 2008, 46 GIPs will provide geoscience expertise to the NPS, of which four will assist GRD staff in addressing mineral development in and around parks, coastal and geothermal issues, developing websites, and other tasks. For more information, contact Lisa Norby, GIP Coordinator at (303) 969-2318.



During his stay at George Washington Birthplace NM in 2004, Heath Bush worked as a geologist and GIS specialist for the monument as part of the Geoscientists-in-the-Parks Program. (NPS Photo)

### Water Resources Division

#### *New NPS Wild and Scenic Rivers Program*

Following a recommendation by the Wild and Scenic Rivers (WSR) Task Force, the National Leadership Council approved the creation of a NPS WSR Program on May 17, 2007. Implementation of the Program will include the establishment of a new National WSR Coordinator position and the creation of a Steering Committee. The new program will improve the NPS' consistency, coordination, and compliance with the 1968 Wild and Scenic Rivers Act (Act); enhance inter-divisional, inter-regional and external communication; improve resource protection; and reduce litigation risk.

The Steering Committee has been formed and is holding their first meeting on December 11-13, 2007, in Fort Collins, CO, to develop an action plan to implement the new Program. The action plan will identify priority tasks to be completed by the Steering Committee, develop funding strategies, and identify a permanent home for the Program.

Contacts: Bill Hansen, Water Resources, (970) 225-3532, [bill\\_hansen@nps.gov](mailto:bill_hansen@nps.gov); Joan Harn, Conservation and Outdoor Recreation Programs, (202) 354-6929, [joan\\_harn@nps.gov](mailto:joan_harn@nps.gov)

#### *USGS 2007 National Water-Quality Workshop*

Barry Long and Glenn Patterson of Water Resources Division attended a USGS water-quality workshop in Galveston, TX, on November 4-9, 2007. The meeting, sponsored by the USGS Office of Water Quality, was attended by approximately 300 water quality, aquatic, and laboratory scientists from various USGS Water Science Centers and the National Water Quality Laboratory. Several of the talks presented data and results from collaborative projects with NPS, and the NPS-USGS water quality partnership program was highlighted in a plenary presentation.



### Office of Education & Outreach

The Office of Education and Outreach (OEO) is focusing on three major areas of emphasis: ocean stewardship, climate change, and web development innovations and upgrades. OEO will be assisting in developing strategic communications plans for climate change and ocean stewardship. Leigh Welling will be on board in January and has been working with OEO to move forward on climate change communication efforts. Likewise, Cliff McCreedy is working with Lynne Murdock and Jana Friesen to advance ocean stewardship communications opportunities. Back on the home front, Jeff Selleck is upgrading Park Science to a full color publication along with other advancements that readers will find interesting. The Views team continues to develop a new Chesapeake Bay module. Sara Melena is making additional improvements to the NRPC quarterly newsletter, assisting with the NRPC web upgrade project, and a whole host of other related activities. Speaking of which, Jeff Gohering can be thanked for producing the new and enhanced design for Earth Wind and Water!

### Office of Natural Resource Information Systems

The Office of Natural Resource Information Systems (ONRIS) is completing IT infrastructure build out activities to support NRPC service oriented architecture requirements. Changes include migrations to blade server technologies, our first foray into virtual servers (multiple server instances on individual physical devices), expansion of storage array networks, and a new enterprise level backup solution enabling robust disk-disk-to-tape capabilities. ONRIS is also working closely with the NPS OCIO and Verizon to plan a new Wide Area Network (WAN) connection for Fort Collins and increased bandwidth for Academy Place. These changes are essential to meet existing as well as forecasted NRPC information management needs.



View of the Missouri National Recreation River. Parts of the river were designated as a Wild and Scenic River in 1978 and 1991. (NPS Photo)

### Office of Inventory, Monitoring & Evaluation

Steve Fancy from the OIME staff, and five other NPS and USGS scientists served on an interagency panel during the week of November 26-30 to review the initial progress of the North Coast and Cascades I&M Network. The review was held at the North Cascades Environmental Learning Center and was attended by 52 people, including 6 of the 7 park superintendents and all of the natural resource chiefs. This was the first of twelve '3-year start-up reviews' to be held during FY 2008, and provided park and network staff with an opportunity to step back and evaluate their initial progress, and to discuss how they can improve operational aspects of the network such as decision-making and communication, science communication and the development of 'compelling stories', and data analysis and reporting procedures. During the next 3 months, similar reviews are scheduled for the Northern Colorado Plateau, Central Alaska, San Francisco Bay Area, and National Capital Region networks.

## Technical Advisory Group News

### Outreach Technical Advisory Group

OTAG has been implementing portions of the NRPC communication plan. For example, Don Zimmerman, CSU Professor in the Department of Journalism and Technical Communication, ran four card-sorting exercises in early December with representatives from each division and office for the intranet evaluation project. He will be running similar exercises at Rocky Mountain National Park in January. In late December or early January Bert Frost will be sending a letter to the Regional Directors requesting the field to take the communication needs assessment survey. Results from this survey will guide further communication and outreach efforts to improve our ability to serve the field. The communication plan can be reviewed and is open for comment on OTAG's Sharepoint site: NRPC Sharepoint >TAGs>OTAG>Communications Project.

### Planning Technical Advisory Group

The PTAG recently met to recommend divisional responsibilities on planning-related technical assistance requests sub-



mitted under the 2008 call. Some of these requests represent ideal opportunities for multi-division participation. For the first time, several parks will see a center-based approach in providing assistance on such planning efforts as Foundation Documents and Resource Stewardship Strategies.

### Policy Advisory Group

The Policy Advisory Group (PAG) has been discussing policy issues and needs with respect to climate change and the NPS. Park managers are already struggling with how to respond to current and future impacts on natural (and other) resources due to climate change; specifically, how to adapt yet uphold the Organic Act's mandate of unimpaired preservation.

The PAG is reviewing legal authorities and management policies for any guidance on addressing climate change impacts, and whether managers are required to take or are prohibited from taking certain ac-

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#### Sara Melena

Interpretive Specialist  
Office of Education & Outreach

#### Comments, Suggestions, Submissions?

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#### Or write to:

Sara Melena  
NPS Natural Resource Program Center  
Sara\_Melena@nps.gov



Channel incision severely degraded wetland hydrology, soil, and vegetation functions at Halstead Meadow. (NPS Photo)

tions that may be appropriate to cope with climate change. The group then plans to explore some fundamental policy issues that may need to be resolved before NPS can move forward with a comprehensive climate change adaptation program. For example, to what extent should the NPS “intervene” to save species (e.g., relocation)? How can managers meet the statutory mandate of preserving resources unimpaired when significant changes have and will continue to occur due to climate change? How should requirements regarding threatened and endangered species be addressed? Can and do we need to distinguish natural evolution of ecosystems from anthropogenic climate change impacts? The PAG will develop white papers on some or all of these issues to initiate discussions and policy options for resolution.

### Restoration Technical Advisory Group

*Construction completed for the Upper Halstead Meadow pilot wetland restoration project at Sequoia National Park.*

Halstead Meadow in Sequoia National Park is a 25-acre montane wet meadow crossed by the Generals Highway. This rare and highly visible wetland habitat has developed severe erosion gullies 12-15 feet

deep, resulting in a lowered water table, drying of wetland soils, dieback of native wet meadow plants, and export of tremendous amounts of sediment downstream. Heavy grazing early in the 20th century and routing of meadow sheetflow through a single pair of culverts under the road fill are the primary causes of the gulying and drainage. In September, a pilot restoration project was implemented in the portion of the meadow north of the highway. Contractors placed 8000 cubic yards of fill into the incised gully to restore the original contours and remove the drainage impacts. Biodegradable erosion control fabric was installed on the compacted fill material to hold it in place until wetland plantings can develop enough biomass to spread the water over the surface as sheetflow and prevent flow concentration. Taking a hint from nearby unimpacted meadows, we had the contractors drop large trees across the site, perpendicular to flow, to spread surface water and minimize channelization. Monitoring is now underway to evaluate project success and determine if these methods should be applied to Lower Halstead Meadow and similarly degraded wet meadows in other parks. Please contact Joel Wagner (Water Resources Division) at 303-969-2955 for additional information.