

The Protection Ranger



The Newsletter of the U.S. Park Rangers Lodge, Fraternal Order of Police

Vol. VII • No. 1 • 1996

Draft NPS-9 Released for Comment

by the Executive Board

The Ranger Lodge is pleased to see that a revised NPS-9 is being circulated for review. As many of you already know, we have obtained a copy and circulated it to some Chapters for comment. These Chapters have basically formed focus groups, involving Chief Rangers, Supervisors and Field Rangers (all members of the "user group"), critically reviewing the document for content. The Ranger Lodge applauds the efforts of the WASO-RAD staff for producing this draft document. Due to the shutdown, the comment period has been extended, probably into March.

We will be sending our specific comments by section(s) to WASO-RAD by the end of February. However the board would like to express its overall opinion of the document to the membership at this time. We fully support this attempt to professionalize the ranger force, and would be very disappointed if substantial changes in content are made which would weaken that effort.

The cover letter which went out with the document was of particular interest to us. We would like to commend Associate Director Maureen Finnerty for her well written and thoughtful memo. It clearly shows that she has an awareness of the problems that law enforcement rangers face and recognizes our unique role in the NPS mission. Further, she correctly places the

document and its comprehensive changes into the context of reinvention, streamlining and standardization. In addition, she makes reference to the need for clearly articulated rules pertaining to ethics, conduct and centralized oversight of our National law enforcement policies/directives. These are areas that all rangers can appreciate. For too long we have suffered from glaring discrepancies in policy interpretation or guideline implementation from one area to another.

It [NPS-9] is no longer a set of guidelines, open to interpretation and abuse. It clearly states that we are a national organization which must operate with one set of rules.

The draft NPS-9 has taken a giant leap forward in that it is now called *National Park Service, Law Enforcement Policies and Directives*. It is no longer a set of guidelines, open to interpretation and abuse. It clearly states that we are a national organization which must operate with one set of rules in the interest of continuity, officer safety and legal protection.

The document is set up in such a way that each section lists the relevant Public Law, Departmental Policy, Court Rulings and other regulations which govern its existence. This allows the user to be fully aware of the reasons behind the directives in that area. This will be particularly useful in administrative or court proceedings that may call into question that particular topic.

Throughout, one is struck by the attempt to

comprehensively delineate our responsibilities as they relate to our overall mission, while giving us the details on how we are to accomplish that.

The organizational structure is relatively streamlined and inclusive of all park areas in its flow with regard to law enforcement matters. At the same time, the system is set up to maximize the current emphasis on the Parks being more independent in meeting their overall goals.

The Superintendent rightfully retains authority over the law enforcement division in the same way as any other by virtue of selecting and supervising its head, the Chief Ranger. The day to day operation of the division is in the hands of the Chief Ranger who, if commissioned, is the park's Senior Law Enforcement Officer, responsible for directing the law enforcement operation. We see this as not unlike the situation in most local townships or cities. The Mayor is responsible for all departments but leaves the day to day operation of each to its senior professional officer. This frees the Mayor/Superintendent to concentrate on the large scale problems--program responsibilities, determination of needs, allocation of resources etc.

Where we differ from a city or township is that we are a national organization and our visitors have a right to expect that in certain functions there be continuity in service. Certainly law enforcement is one of these functions. In addition, we rangers expect to be held to the same standards, have access to the same training, equipment, and work practices no matter which park we work at.

The new NPS-9 accomplishes these goals by ensuring that in areas of legal liability, officer safety, ethics and work practices we all work under the same rules, while at the same time recognizing the need to tailor the

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law enforcement program at each park to its own set of unique requirements. We are being asked to be flexible while being assured that the tools we need will be there.

Superintendents have always known that their responsibility was the programs in the park, to provide needed services to our visitors. Reinvention hasn't changed that, it has changed the entire support process though. Superintendents have increased latitude to determine their own direction, forming alliances with other parks as needed. As the reinvention process continues and the theory gets put into practice, we would like to challenge the Field Areas to remember that they exist to gather resources for the parks, while the SSO's provide support as needed by the superintendents. Finally, remembering that we are the National Park Service, we believe it is WASO's responsibility to provide POLICY in those areas needing National continuity.

We would like to further challenge the Directorate to support NPS-9 as it is written: it embraces the concept of reinvention. While some areas need further refinement, WASO-RAD appears to have taken your direction and produced a document that brings us up to contemporary standards of professionalization. Due to its dynamic structure it will easily allow us to move into the 21st Century. It has a built-in process of revision that will allow for periodic review, a key component of Total Quality Management. We believe the process should be given a chance to work, implement the changes, review the results and adjust if necessary. In the spirit of reinvention and partnerships, we at the Ranger Lodge of the FOP would like to offer our expertise to the Directorate in this ongoing process so that together we can succeed in making NPS law enforcement the best in the country.

The Ranger Lodge advises all members to closely read the draft-- this document will have a very significant impact on the careers of all NPS law enforcement rangers. We suggest that you send in your comments AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. We also recommend that you make all comments by section(s) and make mention of those areas you like as well. It is all too easy to point out the things we don't like, but let's not forget to compliment what we do appreciate.

President's Report

by Tim Woosley

Presidio Crisis

Once again the U.S. Park Police have very discreetly made a move to take control of law enforcement in another park. The Presidio Trust Bill was recently amended to include the following sections:

The Trust shall enter into a Memorandum of Agreement with the Secretary, acting through the Chief of the United States Park Police, for the conduct of law enforcement activities and services within those portions of the Presidio transferred to the administrative jurisdiction of the Trust. For each of the 14 fiscal years after fiscal year 1997, there are authorized to be appropriated to the Trust not more than the amounts specified in such plan. Such sums shall remain available until expended. Of such sums, not more than \$3 million shall be available through the trust for law enforcement activities and services to be provided by the United States Park Police at the Presidio.

A serious and disturbing trend is developing. Is it the Director's intent to continue these transfers?

There is a section in the bill which states, in essence, that no employees would be separated from the Service due to these changes at Presidio. On January 10th I spoke with Mr. Jim O'Toole and Mr. Donald Hodap, staffers for Sen. Murkowski and Congressman Hansen respectively. I outlined our concerns over the transfer of law enforcement to the Park Police at the Presidio. Both were very receptive. Unfortunately, I got the impression that the bill had been on auto-pilot for some time and no other substantive changes would be made to it.

On January 23rd I met with Mr. O'Toole and Mr. Hodap in Washington D.C.. I explained to them that even though some provisions have been made for employees we needed to go further. As we have seen at the Statue, the folks who want to leave there can't because of money and FTE (neither of which are being transferred with them). I explained that in order to increase the

chances that Presidio rangers would be able to transfer somewhere more suited to their family and personal needs, it is imperative that their salary and/or FTE must transfer with them. Mr. O'Toole was willing to enter into a "colloquy" stating that the FTE would transfer with the employee. He would not agree to the salary transferring with them. While a colloquy is not binding, as it would be if it was written directly into the bill, it was the best I could do. I also asked that he look into the Statue matter as well. He assured me that he and Mr. Hodap would be taking both of these matters up with the Director next week.

Obviously a serious and disturbing trend is developing. Is it the Director's intent to continue these transfers? If so, what can we do to ensure that Rangers are taken care of? Right now, not much. It is imperative that we have collective bargaining! I cannot stress this enough. I don't want to sound too harsh but we are all going to continue to come up on the short end of the stick if you folks don't sit down, right now, and send in the show of interest cards. There are quite a few politicians who would think nothing of moving the Park Police into such areas as Yosemite Valley, Lake Meade, etc. It is very apparent that we are not getting any support from the Director. We must take care of ourselves. The Board is in the process of requesting a meeting with both NPS Director Kennedy and Deputy Director Reynolds. We hope they will agree to meet with us to discuss these issues.

The Presidio crisis has also served as another reminder that we must get more involved with the issues on a political level. I made this one of my pledges to you for this year and I intend to continue to make the trip into D.C. to relay your concerns to our elected officials.

It is also very interesting to note that the Presidio and Golden Gate have a bargaining unit. However, the unit was created for, and is mostly made up of, WG employees. I received word that the bargaining unit came out in favor of the bill. This is a serious concern since Rangers are also part of the bargaining unit. Many of you in parks with these types of bargaining units can relate. They are not effective nor do they address our issues. A strong Ranger bargaining unit would have been able to stop this. Guaranteed! Those of you in parks with existing bargaining units also need to be sending in the show of interest cards. After our bargaining unit is established we will begin focusing our attention on getting you the representation you deserve.

I recently spoke with a member from Yosemite who still has some reservations about collective bargaining. He asked some very good questions and also suggested that I elaborate on a couple of points in the Protection Ranger. This was a member who, because of his reservations, took it upon himself to call me to try and get his questions answered. I am more than happy to talk to anyone, anytime. So for him and for anyone else who may still be unsure about the process of collective bargaining, please read the article on page 8.

6(c) Update

by Dan Kirschner

Thanks to Ranger Careers Manager Bill Sanders for his tireless efforts on behalf of protection rangers. Much of the information in this entry comes from him. Send him a note of thanks. It can be very tough working in WASO and hearing a word or two of thanks once in a while can really help the ol' attitude!

Ann Meroney Retires Just prior to the last government shut-down, USDI 6(c) Program manager Ann Meroney retired. This was a big surprise for us and Ms. Meroney will be missed. Mr. H. T. Leal is acting in her position. Mr. Leal and one NPS Clerk now staff the USDI 6(c) office. Bottom line here is two people can only do so much work!

CSRS 6(c) past Coverage Claims Some very good news! The USDI will review the 6(c) past coverage claims of CSRS rangers who have yet to file a 6(c) past coverage claim. So, for the forty or so rangers who sent us a letter explaining why you have yet to file, read on. When you are done reading, send in your claim as soon as possible. While there is no official due date, there will probably be a FERS 6(c) Past Coverage Claim Review Panel convened in March of this year and we are hoping the CSRS claims can be processed at the same time.

USDI will review each individual reason(s), or circumstance(s), for not filing before the due date. While USDI has not published a list of acceptable "excuses," we provide you with the following items to help refresh your memory, since 1989 was a long time ago. Be sure to relate your own reason(s) or circumstance(s) for not submitting a claim in a timely manner.

Also, if you filed a letter of intent, be sure to note that the information you are now

providing is supplementary to your original claim, which was filed in a timely manner.

USDI will review the 6(c) past coverage claims of CSRS rangers who have yet to file.

Memory Joggers

Decided not to file because you received inaccurate or misleading information or instructions from an official of the Service or Department? Examples: 1) This is not for the type of law enforcement done by Rangers; 2) No Ranger ever got 6(c) coverage before; 3) You will simply be wasting your time and everyone else's time if you claim; 4) Rangers do "police" type law enforcement, which is not covered; 5) You can't mix your claim by including periods of law enforcement and fire fighting; 6) These "windows of opportunity" for claims close and open up all the time; 7) The Region's review team is rejecting everyone, don't bother to apply; 8) The only Ranger-claims which have ever gone to court have been denied, don't waste your time; 9) Rangers could never meet the, "investigate, apprehend, or detain" requirements of 6(c), although those exact words appeared on your law enforcement commission; and, 10) That as a "generalist" you could not meet the 50% rule of thumb?

Officially discouraged from claiming 6(c) by being led to believe your supervisors or personnel officials would not assist or support you? Examples: 1) You can't produce enough documentation on your own for this; 2) We don't have time to help you find these old records; 3) Unfortunately, we destroyed all those old records, so you can't prove anything; 4) Your old position descriptions don't contain the statements necessary for 6(c). 5) If you want to be a cop, get a job with another agency; 6) There won't ever be any 6(c) rangers working for me; and, 7) We don't know anything about 6(c), thus we can't help you file a claim.

Information simply wasn't provided: 1) Were you clearly informed that gaps in your

documentary records (like missing position descriptions, or already- destroyed records) could be filled by good affidavits from supervisors or peers? 2) Were you clearly informed that the "50% rule" did not apply to secondary administrative positions? 3) Did you understand that you merely needed to establish your claim to the "preponderance of the evidence" (civil) standard, not the "beyond a reasonable doubt" (criminal) standard? 4) Did you understand that the Agency would/could not controvert your evidence? 5) Did you understand that a citation is legally an "apprehension" (arrest) and that there is no mandatory minimum number of arrests in order to qualify?

Were you distracted or prevented from claiming by the press of official business at the time? 1) Fighting fires. 2) Busy with an official change of duty station. 3) Filling in for vacant positions or short staff or emergency situations, or off on training? 4) Unable to locate or contact former supervisors or to get timely copies of records? Remember, limited faxes and e-mail back in 1988/89.

Were you intimidated by an over-stated official explanation (or lack of explanation) of the potential financial implications? 1) Were you led to believe that if you submitted a claim and were denied some or all of your claim, you would face a large financial cost anyway? 2) That you would not be allowed to withdraw all or part of your claim? 3) Did anyone offer to help you calculate, even roughly, what your unpaid contribution might be? 4) Did any official help you understand that 1/2 of 1% of actual salary per year works out to a VERY small price to pay (typically less than \$100 per year) for the potential benefits involved? 5) Did any official inform you that a potential increase in your monthly retirement benefit check of as little as \$100 would easily add up to over \$100,000 in as little as 10 years of retirement? 6) Did any official inform you that small interest-free payroll deductions over 3 years were available for you to make up your missing contribution? 6) Were you ever able to obtain any benefits comparison between regular CSRS and 6(c) CSRS?

If you were a member of ANPR back then, were you ever informed that ANPR had submitted a claim on your behalf, or that the Service had granted listed ANPR members an additional time period in which to submit documentation?

Where to Submit Your Claim: Submit your CSRS 6(c) Past Coverage Claim to: Ann

Moving? Need Help?

Lodge Phone:
800-407-8295

10 AM to 10 PM Eastern
Time

Meroney or H. T. Leal; Secretary's Designee for Special Retirement Programs; US Department of the Interior; Mail Stop 5203 MIB; 1849 C Street, N.W.; Washington, D.C. 20240. The phone number for this office is 202/208-7160.

What to Submit: Your Claim should include a personal statement, summary of qualifying work, and supporting documentation. We have printed the list of these items before, but just so you don't have to scrounge again, here is another listing. If you want to follow the FERS format for filing a 6(c) past coverage claim, see your park personnelist for a copy of the forms that were given to the FERS rangers.

Statement from Claimant: A letter or statement from the claimant stating that s/he is requesting enhanced retirement coverage under 5, U.S.C. 8336(c) for specific periods of service. Your letter or statement must provide specific reason(s) showing that you were prevented, by circumstances beyond your control, from making this request within the time limit originally established (5 CFR 831.906(f)). Be sure to include your date of birth, social security number, current address, and current daytime telephone number in your cover letter.

Summary of Your Qualifying Work Experience: Submit the following for each period of service claimed: 1) Bureau (NPS); 2) Work Location (Park, District, Sub-District); 3) Position Title and Position Number; 4) Position Grade and Series; 5) Period(s) of Service in the Position (Start and End Dates); 6) Category of Coverage Claimed (Primary, Secondary Supervisory, Secondary Administrative); 7) Whether Position is Presently Covered (Designated); 8) Brief Statement of Duties Performed.

Supporting Documentation: For each position claimed, include a separate, tabbed section with the following information: 1) Personnel Actions [Copies of all SF 50's (Notification of Personnel Action) Especially important to include documentation of entry-into and exit-from position.] 2) Position Description [Copy of position description, with position number matching SF 50. (Copy of the Vacancy Announcement you applied to can be helpful, especially for Secondary Administrative positions.)] 3) Statement of Duties (If position description is no longer available or does not fully describe duties performed, a signed (by claimant) statement of duties should be included which describes major duties actually performed. Percentage of time spent in major duties should be

reflected.) 4) Supervisor's Statement [A statement signed by the supervisor of the position (or a supervisor's signature on the claimant's statement of duties) to substantiate the duties claimed. Supervisor's name, title, and organizational role in relation to the position should be included.] 5) Organization Charts and Functional Statements [A chart showing three levels above and below the position claimed, (if applicable), along with functional statements which clearly illustrate the law enforcement or fire fighting functions performed at each level.]

WHEN TO SUBMIT: As soon as possible!!!

Who Controls The Park Police?

By Greg Jackson, Santa Monica Mountains; Past President, FOP

Why an agency within our agency is out to take your job.

A year ago, an effort was made by the Park Police to replace protection rangers in five parks with US Park Police officers:

1. Statue of Liberty
2. Presidio
3. Gateway
4. Grand Canyon South Rim
5. Yosemite Valley

What started out as rumors, vigorously denied, turned into the announcement that the Park Police would take over the law enforcement program at the Statue of Liberty.

I asked Director Kennedy during his 1995 visit to Santa Monica Mountains about the change. He said, in front of all park employees, the Statue was a unique circumstance, and that no other parks would be changed.

Chances are that by the time you read this, President Clinton will have signed into law a bill to turn law enforcement at San Francisco's Presidio over to the Park Police.

Two down, three to go. If I were at Gateway, I'd start working on my 171. It's a question of "urban" law enforcement, a politically savvy police force, and an NPS leadership adrift. And after these parks, your job may be next.

Who's in charge here?

What happened after Director Kennedy's statement at Santa Monica Mountains? Did he flip-flop? My question to the director: Did you give the Chief of the Park Police approval to put the transition language into the Presidio Trust legislation? If not, who is responsible and who is running the agency?

A question for the rest of us: How has the Park Police developed such a strong political lobby? Where do Park Rangers stack up? And what do we do to change?

The Park Police maintains a strong lobbying position in Washington. The Park Police maintain their own Congressional Liaison, a captain. "Why?," you ask. "They're part of the same agency we are." I've heard that the Director has asked the same question. Why indeed.

The Park Police assign their most eloquent officers to duty as the bodyguard of the Secretary of the Interior. Why not a Park Ranger, BLM Ranger or other DOI officer? Why indeed. Being the police agency in Washington D.C. sure doesn't hurt when it comes to making friends.

A politically savvy police force, and an NPS leadership adrift. And after these parks, your job may be next.

Who is on the rangers' side?

Who in NPS management sticks up for park ranger law enforcement?

It's safe to say that most superintendents don't consider themselves primarily the supervisors of a law enforcement program. Certainly the Field Offices are not centered on law enforcement. So you can imagine that when it gets to the decision makers in the NPS Washington Office, very few top managers consider themselves law enforcement agency heads. Very few have any law enforcement experience. Some have even tried to curtail our law enforcement mission. Yet Park Rangers have relied on this power structure to protect the interests of law enforcement in the parks.

This isn't the safest footing to be on.

It's interesting to note what one superintendent said about why rangers should be replaced at the Statue, "Because

the Park Police has discipline."

This should be an embarrassing admission for a manager whose responsibility it is to maintain discipline in the ranger force. But again, many who are in a law enforcement management role don't have the discipline to take it seriously and blamed the field instead of themselves.

Long ago I said "professionalization" of the ranger work force was important, but what was really needed was professionalization of the Ranger management force, particularly top administration, in dealing with law enforcement matters. This is still true.

When the USPP Comes To Town

When the park police move in, they bring in more FTE, more money and, most importantly, a law enforcement chain of command. There are no seasonals. Everyone is trained to the same standard and expected to perform as such. There is a rank system and field training. There is a clear law enforcement mandate. That's the "discipline" some are looking for.

The USPP don't deeply involve themselves with EMS, SAR, fire and resource protection. In fact, when rangers are "replaced," some rangers end up staying in place to perform these non-USPP duties!

So why replace rangers instead of replacing the management structure that caused the problem in the first place? Put in the law enforcement mandate and chain of command. Bring in the extra FTE and funding. Allow some rangers to focus more on law enforcement, while others specialize in other emergency services. Rank. Field training. It's not the people that need to be replaced, it's the command structure. Is this too obvious?

Are you next?

What exactly are the urban areas that some say the Park Police should patrol. Areas of high population and a significant incident load?

As America's urban sprawl continues, few parks will remain isolated. Lake Mead, Saguaro, Chattanooga, Cape Cod, Biscayne and many others all have urban centers continuing to encroach. What of Boston? What of your job? Your career ladder?

If you still don't think this will affect you, what about when all these displaced rangers come looking for work? What happens to the promotion you were looking for?

What can we do?

First, support the positive changes in NPS-9, and continue to work for a return to the traditional ranger chain of command. (I bet many of you don't realize that rangers once had a rank structure, with worn emblems and all.)

Second, encourage the service, DOI, and Congress to bring the hidden politics of these backroom changes into the open for all of us to play a part in.

And most importantly, don't throw your fellow rangers' jobs to the wolves: don't give up the fight. The job you save may be your own.

Seasonal/Term News

by Dan Malone, Fire Island

Bill Sanders of the Washington Office provided me with the latest WASO actions affecting seasonal and term appointments:

Term Position Status OPM has proposed that term employees be allowed access to the Merit Promotion System so they could apply for permanent positions that require status in order to apply. If this is approved by Congress, term employees could apply for these status-only positions before their term appointment runs out. The only problem is that this proposal is part of a larger Civil Service Reform Act package that was sent to Congress last summer by OPM. According to Sanders it has not been acted on and has no sponsor or bill number. Sanders feels it will not be acted on in the near future because it is primarily a Democratic party initiative. We are trying to get information on this package to review the specific language regarding term appointments.

Sanders also says they are working on another way to get into the permanent ranger ranks: a new Ranger Intake System. This is in the formative stages. Ranger applicants would apply through a national type register, get rated and ranked, and then be selected for trainee positions as needed. They would receive class training and on the job training through a field training officer program. Parks needing new hires would select from among the trainees to fill new positions. Bill said it would be similar to how the Border Patrol and other agencies handle recruitment, training and selection of new hires. How seasonals would get access based on prior experience is not clear at this

time. I would assume that their past park jobs would give them a higher rating.

Status of GS-7 and GS-9 Seasonal Upgrades

Good news. Sanders told me most of the paperwork is done. Benchmark PD's have been written but have not yet been classified. Full performance LE work would rate a GS-7 for experienced seasonal LE rangers. A seasonal ranger performing LE and resource education work should rate a GS-9. Seasonal rangers doing general visitor information and campground work would rate at a GS-5. A seasonal LE ranger just out of an LE academy would start as a GS-6. Now, all of this depends on how parks will classify these positions. Do they need lower or higher graded rangers? It will depend to a large degree on funds and budgets. So what else is new? It could result in fewer seasonal rangers being hired or hires at lower grades. If the position is upgraded, the seasonal would have to reapply for it in competition with other applicants according to Sanders.

Sig Transitions for Seasonals

Not a surprise: this will depend on park budgets and park needs and desires. There is no WASO money to purchase additional Sigs. Parks will have to spend their own funds or use weapons not utilized by others. Seasonals can now buy their own Sigs through the Ranger Lodge (call Tim or our 800 number) and work with the park you are in on to take the transition training.

Outlook for Seasonals for 1996 As usual, it appears to be grim, especially because of current federal budget situation. Congress has allowed funds for visitor services but no one is quite sure what this encompasses. Some take a narrow view, others a much broader view. Is it only for minimal maintenance and visitor information operations, or does it include funds to operate the parks as usual or normal? Seasonals are essential in many areas, but they are also the easiest positions to cut. If seasonals are cut, volunteers and permanent rangers will have to pick up the slack or services will be curtailed. The Lodge is starting to look into abuses of using volunteer positions. If you feel the volunteer program is being abused in your park by using a volunteer in a position that was formerly a paid ranger, call or write the Lodge.

That's the word for now on seasonal ranger issue. As usual let us hope for the best in 1996. The seasonal upgrades sounds somewhat promising, but it still has a ways

to go.

Dinosaurs

by Norm Simons, Golden Gate NRA

With the advent of Ranger Futures, 6(c) retirement and federal downsizing, most park law enforcement rangers (and interpreters) nationwide are assuming new roles which may permanently change our perceptions of ourselves as Rangers. I recently attended the retirement party for one of my "heroes," a highly regarded role model Ranger of many years. He sagely provided a profound statement, telling me the newer rangers coming in will never have the opportunity to experience the memories we had in the old Ranger Service. You older Rangers out there consider that. Consider how you used to patrol, the hours you put in, the problem bears you moved, those medical emergencies or rescues you handled. Or maybe those ski patrols and snow surveys, rappelling into eagle nests, collaring wolves, caribou calves or elk, dog sled or horse patrols. Do you still do those? Consider the past and what we have to look forward to in the new NPS future.

While highly beneficial to the Service in the long run, many fear the new era of specialization and technology (computers, high tech equipment, etc) may be detrimental to the Service and NPS family in the short term. I have heard it oft repeated the last two years that we are losing our skills and our ability to be rangers: to RANGE. If that is the case, I guess I am one of those dinosaurs. I still believe in the old Ranger skills (in spite of working in an urban park) and ethos, including public service, firefighting, EMS, rescues, resource protection, and hiking, climbing and skiing skills. A number of my colleagues of many years consider me to be a "law enforcement type", but I won't ever forget those magic moments above that made me feel special.

I **DO** still like catching bad guys ("bandits" we called 'em in the "Great Land"), making that good arrest, especially after a hard, often lengthy investigation. But even those days seem to be waning, with the designation of criminal investigators and numerous law enforcement specialists that effectively remove many of us from performing total law enforcement duties. After moving from Alaska in 1990, I traded my skis and dog team in for a patrol car,

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A Portion Of All Proceeds Will Be Donated To Help Conservation Efforts

traded my old .357 Smith for a 9mm Sig. and become a family man, essentially working an 8 hour job in an urban park. I often feel obsolete, unneeded, and non-essential these days. But every now and then, it happens. I get a spark.

Recently, a jogger reported he had observed a mountain lion at close quarters while running in the scenic rolling hills of Tennessee Valley in the Marin Headlands on the North Side of the Golden Gate Bridge. Now, cats are not rare around Golden Gate. We have numerous domestic cats (*feline housecatus feralus*), not to mention our semi-tame bobcat, (*Lynx rufus*). But a real live Mountain Lion (*Felis concolor*), though fairly common in forested areas of the Bay and state park to our north, are pretty uncommon in the grassy open space of GGNRA. So I drove my trusty new steed (a 1995 Chevy Caprice patrol car) up into the "backcounty" (former grazing land) to the Fox "Trail" (fire road). Fortunately, the incident occurred on a dirt road, possibly leaving tracks, so I had an opportunity to investigate the possibilities: house cat, bobcat, or MOUNTAIN LION.

Now, having grown up hunting, hiking, climbing, and skiing in much of the west and Alaska, I have seen my share of critter tracks and I generally know what animals make what tracks. And if there is a questionable track (such as comparing dog, fox, coyotes), you often have to consider animal behavior and evaluate the entire

scene, much like a crime scene, in order to accurately confirm or deny the presence of (unusual) predators.

Now, if you are from a wilderness park, most of this may seem pretty boring. However, as a ranger in an urban park, having come from (dare I say it, "real") wilderness parks and losing the "old" ranger lifestyle, these things suddenly become important. Have you retained the old Ranger knowledge and skills, maintained that old curiosity--that drive--to learn? Is it important to get excited about a lowly coyote? To go out there and do a job? Unequivocally YES!

For at least three reasons. Maybe four. First, regardless, these urban parks are "real" parks, with real wildlife, often including threatened or endangered species, unique features or important cultural aspects, or any combination thereof. In the Bay Area (and California) we have a large population of Cougars. Unfortunately, Cougars attacked and killed two people in California in the recent past, so any sightings in an urban area can and do engender fear in an urban populace that has little experience or understanding of these special cats.

Point number two is that we not only have to protect these animals, we have a duty to educate the public about the cats (and their habitat requirements) in order to dispel unneeded fears and allow the public to live in relative harmony with them (not unlike

grizzly bears and wolves for those of you in Wilderness Parks).

Point number three is that in order to properly investigate wildlife poaching and interpret wildlife, you need to know something about wildlife including history, behavior, and wildlife management principles. Many of us "dinosaur" rangers have grown up with these skills. However, many new -era rangers have little experience with hunting, wildlife and may not have the same values as in the "old days." This too is a matter of educating our own staff--crucial in a time when political moves are being made to reduce park budgets, declassify parks, and reduce environmental protection laws.

A fourth point is that having been spoiled by Alaskan wildlife, I took many things for granted. Now it becomes particularly appealing to see a rarely seen animal, or its track, because you know something wild, something special, is out there. It rekindles that spirit of wilderness within you. It is the reason many of us became Rangers.

Recently, I marveled at seeing my first coyote (*Canis latrans*) in GGNRA. Having grown up with them it shouldn't be a big deal, but it was. They, like mountain lion, are rare here and to see a predator stalk and catch prey (as I did that day) was rejuvenating.

To make a short story longer, I did find the mountain lion tracks where the jogger reported them, picking them out from fox, bobcat, illegal dog tracks (running with a person) and horse tracks all in the same small area. So, I was able to apply old skills to establish and pass on new information to both our resource management staff and the public. This was a wake-up call to remind myself of the importance of resource values, whether in an urban or wilderness park and regardless of being a modern urban law enforcement ranger or a dinosaur resource ranger.

So, this dinosaur is trying to keep the old techniques alive, while learning new technology that will better enable me to protect the resource, catch the bandits and enlisting the public to assist us in our endeavor to save our public lands. Maybe there is room for evolution!

Editor's note: Lodge dues entitle each member to initial legal counsel from our attorneys in the event of a Service related problem. Continued Lodge support is

determined according to the specifics of the case, how the outcome might affect all rangers (e.g. where the action can set a useful precedent for rangers in similar situations) and, of course, the resources available to the Lodge. The FOP Legal Defense Plan described below is a group insurance plan provided via the Grand Lodge for all Service related legal costs.

Hello Fellow Rangers:

I'm taking this opportunity to make every one aware of the Fraternal Order of Police Legal Defense Plan. The plan provides legal representation for Administrative actions, Civil and Criminal. I realize that many of you may work in remote areas or areas where you do very little law enforcement and you may feel that you do not need legal help. However, do you want to depend on the Assistant United States Attorney's Office to defend you?

We need to get at least fifty members of the National Park Rangers Lodge to join for the group rate of \$132.00 per person, per year. Here is a short description of the plan:

Coverage A - Administrative

Any Administrative action or proceeding involving:

- Salary, dismissal, change of assignment, demotion, promotion, leave of absence, resignation or other professional rights, duties or responsibilities and arising within the scope of the Participant's employment.
- The issuance, suspension, cancellation, or revocation of any credential, certification or license issued by Federal, State or local authorities, which credential is required for law enforcement personnel.
- Administrative sanctions against a Participant by any law enforcement authority related to or arising from a Participant's employment as a peace officer.
- Includes immediate legal response for critical incidents.

Coverage B - Civil

- Any civil action or proceeding against a Participant arising out of the activities of that Participant in

the course and scope of employment as a peace officer.

Coverage C - Criminal

- Any criminal action or proceeding against a Participant arising out of the activities of that Participant in the course and scope of employment, as a peace officer.

The phrase "in the course and scope of employment, as a peace officer" includes activities of a Participant while on duty or technically off duty.

In this day and age when there are more attorneys than Police Officers we owe to ourselves to get legal protection. Do you want someone that you arrested to win a civil case against you? I hope the answer is no.

Again the group rate is \$132.00 per person, per year for the plan, that's about what a private attorney would charge per hour. For more information about the plan, Contact Becky at 1-800-341-6038. The plan is through Hylant-Maclean Inc., P.O. Box 1687, Toledo, Ohio 43603-1687.

Thank you and be safe out there.

Wes Houk

Editorial Policy of *The Protection Ranger*

Occasionally something we print generates controversy and disagreement among our members. That's part of our job. Unless an article or letter is signed by a Lodge Board member, it's not necessarily Lodge policy or opinion. All other contributions are, of course, the opinion of the writer.

We want *The Protection Ranger* to serve as a voice for **all** field law enforcement rangers. As such, we encourage all members to contribute their thoughts, ideas and comments as either articles or a letter to the editor.

Call or write any member of the Board with article ideas or contact me directly. George Durkee, 23807 Quaker Ln., Twain Harte, CA 95383, 209-586-1652
gdurkee@sonnet.com

Collective Bargaining: Us Versus Them?

By Tim W. Woosley

Many folks are still unsure what it means to collectively bargain. Contrary to its title, actual *bargaining*, for the most part, occurs in only two settings. The first is during the contract development stage. The union representatives sit down with NPS management and develop what is referred to as a Labor-Management (or Bargaining) Contract. By law there are certain things that are "bargainable." These are known as "Rights and Obligations of the Officers and the Union". These things must be included in the contract regardless of whether NPS likes it or not. Think of these as our baseline rights as employees as set by law. A good example of one of these baseline rights is: "The union shall be given the opportunity to be represented at any formal discussion between one or more representatives of the Employer concerning any personnel policy or other general conditions of employment." You can see how this would benefit us. The Park Service, or any other entity, would not be able to spring any surprises on us as they have done in the past. A contract would have allowed us to voice our concerns at the Statue and Presidio before everything was set in stone.

We can also include specifics that may be important to us. These things must tie into the baseline rights of what is "bargainable." One example might be: "Every X years the Park Service must sit down with the union and renegotiate the uniform allowance." We could tie this into the statute section which states: "...any agency and labor organization can negotiate... on the technology, methods, and means of performing work." Our uniforms allow us to perform our jobs more effectively. If the Park Service agrees to this during the development stage it would then become part of our bargaining contract. Now, lets say that X years have come up and the Park Service says "well, we really didn't mean that, we're not going to renegotiate the uniform allowance."

At that point they would be in violation of our contract and subject to very specific actions. The beauty of bargaining is this: Taking the same scenario, there is nothing that says we cannot say to the Park Service, "all right, we did get hammered on the budget and R&R only raised prices 2 cents, we won't make this an issue." But, IF the

Board of Directors Meeting March 15-17

The Board of Directors, including Chapter Presidents or their representatives, and any other interested Lodge members will be meeting March 15-17 in Charlottesville, Virginia. We expect to have as featured speakers either Bob Marriot (WASO-RAD), or Paul Berkowitz (Grand Canyon), and possibly Rick Gale (WASO-RAD). For an agenda or Hotel/Meeting place arrangements, contact Randall Kendrick at the 800 number.

budget was good and IF R&R raised prices on everything \$4.00 we CAN force the issue if we so desire.

The essence of the entire collective bargaining process is that the parties involved have all sat down ahead of time and agreed to the terms and conditions of the contract. Each side gives and little and takes a little. In the end what you come up with is a document that ensures everyone wins. Everything is out in the open, with no surprises. This also includes any surprises by us. We, as a bargaining unit, are also bound by specific rules of "engagement."

Third party arbitration is the last resort in negotiations. This occurs when the bargaining unit and the NPS cannot come to an agreement over an issue. A third party arbitrator (usually the FLRA) would then step in and mediate an agreement.

I have also been asked about how the bargaining unit will be administered. Basically, it will be run in pretty much the same way as the Lodge. The voting members of the bargaining unit elect a board and provide input into how they feel the unit should be run. There are very specific guidelines as to how elections are to be held, reporting procedures, how meetings are conducted, etc. It will still be your bargaining unit. You, as a voting member, will control its direction.

Once again we have been seriously hurt by

events that *could have been prevented*. A bargaining unit is our best defense and, for that matter, offense. Even if you do not necessarily agree with collective bargaining please send in the show of interest card anyway. The card does not bind you to join the bargaining unit in any way. We are only asking that you vote to allow others the opportunity to join the unit when it is established. I will continue to try and answer everyone's questions to the best of my ability. Please feel free to contact me via phone, e-mail or otherwise.

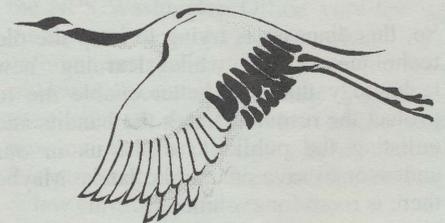
Member's Request for Help

The Lodge has received a request from a member asking for information from anyone who has had a problem with possible discriminatory behavior at FLETC. This includes any statements made by instructors or problems with staff physicians.

Please call or write the Lodge if you have information that can help!

The Protection Ranger

Published bi-monthly by
The U.S. Park Rangers Lodge of
The Fraternal Order of Police
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Lodge Dues and E-Z Pay Plan

Lodge dues are \$52/year (just \$2/pay period using Direct Deposit). To make it easier for you to pay and the Lodge to collect, we hope you'll fill out a Form 1199: the **Direct Deposit Sign-Up Form**, available from your park's fiscal office.

You are only allowed 2 such allotments from your paycheck, so if you have that many already, you'll have to send us a check for the full amount. Otherwise fill out the Form 1199 as follows:

Section 1:

Block C: Write in your Social Security number.

Block D: Check the **Checking** box.

Block E:

Block F: Check **Other** FOP Dues

Block G: Type: New **Amount:** \$2.00

Section 2:

Agency Name USDI-National Park Service

Agency Address Your Park's Address or just NPS

Section 3:

Name and Address of Financial Institution:

Patrick Henry National Bank
POB 1776
Bassett, VA 24055

Routing Number

0514-0395-7

Sign with your name and Date (Section 1) then send to the Lodge at POB 151, Fancy Gap, VA 24328. We'll have our bank sign it and then we will send it to NPS payroll. We realize this is, initially, a little more complicated. Ultimately though, it makes your dues paying a little more painless and our cash flow a lot steadier. We hope you'll choose this option.

Your dues cover a legal assistance fund available to all members. Members of the Lodge will automatically be entitled to initial and free legal advice from Passman and Kaplan for Service related problems. The Lodge may cover additional legal services for a member. Your dues are used extensively to cover legal expenses involved in questions or challenges to LE retirement cases of national importance, LE Backpay claims, FLSA coverage and overtime disputes, as well as individual assistance to members in need. Thank you for maintaining your membership in the US Park Rangers Lodge.

U.S. Park Rangers Lodge
Fraternal Order of Police
POB 151
Fancy Gap, VA 24328

Lodge Members: Please check the Renewal Date on your address sticker and renew if necessary. Get Form 1199, Direct Deposit, from your Fiscal Office and pay your dues in easy installments of only \$2/pay period. Thank You!

Application for Membership

I, the undersigned, a full-time regularly employed law enforcement officer, do hereby make application for active membership in the U.S. Park Rangers Lodge, FOP. If my membership should be revoked or discontinued for any cause other than retirement while in good standing, I do hereby agree to return to the Lodge my membership card and other material bearing the FOP emblem.

Name: _____

Signature: _____

Address: _____

City: _____

State: _____ ZIP: _____

DOB (required): _____

Permanent Rangers: \$52/year (or \$2/pay period using Form 1199 Payroll Deduction).

Seasonals: \$35/year.

Both seasonal and permanent members are entitled to coverage from our Legal Assistance Fund for Service related problems.

Associate (non-Commissioned) Membership (newsletter only): \$35/year.

Renewal

Enclose a copy of your Commission (new members only).

NPS Area: _____

Mail To: FOP Lodge, POB 151, Fancy Gap, VA 24328.

