

U.S. National Park Service

International Programs



Quarterly Bulletin

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Welcome to the U.S. National Park Service (NPS) International Programs Quarterly Bulletin, issued by the NPS Office of International Affairs (OIA). Additional information on NPS international programs and activities can be found at the NPS OIA webpage: <http://www.nps.gov/oia>

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NPS Lends Firefighting Assistance to Australia

Ten National Park Service firefighters undertook a thirty-day detail to lend assistance to Australian firefighting authorities, as part of the U.S.-Australia Fire Agreement, which was established between the two nations in 2001. Each nation pledges to provide wildland firefighting assistance when the other side experiences a heavy fire season and formally requests help. Since Australia and the U.S. inhabit opposite hemispheres, their fire seasons rarely overlap, allowing for American (northern hemisphere) firefighters to travel during their winter off-season and Australian (southern hemisphere) firefighters to do the same. The basis of the agreement is that the requesting side pays for all travel costs of the firefighters. New Zealand and the U.S. established a similar wild land fire agreement, also in 2001. For more information, contact Roberta D'Amico, at roberta_d'amico@nps.gov, or http://www.nps.gov/fire/public/pub_fir07_fam_australia.cfm



Qatar Establishes 1st National Park, with NPS Help

Qatar has officially designated Khor Al Udaid as a national park, effectively establishing the country's first national park. Also known as the Inland Sea, the park is located in the southeastern area of the country. Small hills of scattered scrub vegetation, large sand dunes and an estuary characterize the site. Qatar's Supreme Council for the Environment and Natural Resources and QatarGas invited a National Park Service technical assistance team in 2000 to assess potential sites for the nation's first national parks. Once a site was selected by the Qatari Government, an NPS planning team returned to Qatar in 2002 to begin preliminary planning efforts. In 2006, two Qatari officials undertook a US study tour of selected NPS parks to observe how the NPS manages its sites. Qatar has extended an invitation for NPS specialists to return later in 2007 to assist with establishing the general management plan for Khor Al Udaid. For more information, contact David Krewson, at david_krewson@nps.gov or see: <http://www.nps.gov/oia/around/middleeast.htm>



Japan-US Interpreter Training Seminar

Japanese and American park interpretation rangers participated in the 12th Japan-U.S. Interpreter Training Seminar, held this year at **Yosemite National Park**. Jointly organized by the National Park Service and the Association for Interpretation-Japan, the seminar was supported by staff from the NPS Albright Training Center and Yosemite's interpretation and resource management staffs. While U.S. parks generally have separate research and interpretation staffs, Japanese park staff, many of whom work under contract from the national or local government, must perform both duties concurrently. "Integrating Research with Interpretation" was the Seminar's theme. Sessions focused on interpretation signage, bear management, visitor surveys, and ecosystem restoration. The next Japan-U.S. Seminar will be held in Washington, DC and **Assateague Island National Seashore** in mid-December. For more information, contact Rudy D'Alessandro, at rudy_dalessandro@nps.gov.



Mexico-US Cooperation on the Anza Trail

The 2007 Anza Society Conference, held annually and alternating between U.S. and Mexican sites in Oakland, California, Phoenix, Arizona, Sonora & Hermosillo, Mexico – brought together Mexican and American officials to learn about the status of the Anza Trail on both sides of the U.S.-Mexico border. The **Juan Bautista de Anza National Historic Trail** (JUBA), an NPS-administered component of the National Trails System of the U.S., commemorates the overland settlement of California by the De Anza Expedition in the 1770's. The U.S. portion of the Anza Trail extends 1,200 miles from Nogales, Arizona to San Francisco, California. The Mexican government has expressed a strong interest in continuing the Anza Trail into Mexico, especially for tourism promotion. At the meeting, Mexican government officials and the Sonora Historical Society indicated a readiness to partner with the National Park Service and JUBA, which will allow for development of standardized and bilingual signs, and better trail and site interpretation. For more information, contact Stanley Bond, at stanley_bond@nps.gov.



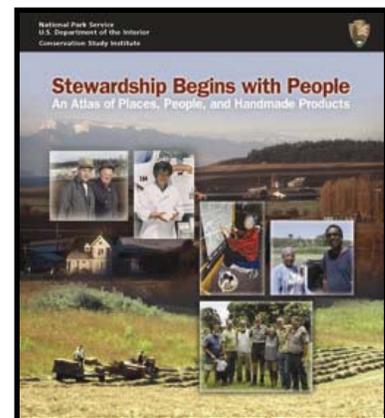
NPS Conducts Training Program for Normandy Cemetery Staff

James Woolsey, Director of Visitor Services for the Normandy American Cemetery in France, requested NPS training expertise to provide a two-week Interpretive Development Training program for newly hired visitor center staff. The Cemetery, one of 24 overseas cemeteries managed by the American Battle Monuments Commission, is the final resting place of 9,387 soldiers who died in World War II during D-Day and the follow up Normandy Campaign in France. The ABMC is building a visitor center so that the 1.2 million annual visitors to the Cemetery can learn about the story behind this site. The training program delivered by two NPS interpretive specialists was aimed at provide adequate training for the staff in anticipation of the visitor center's dedication and opening on June 6, 2007, the 62nd anniversary of D-Day. For more information, contact Tom Medema, at tom_medema@nps.gov, or see <http://inside.nps.gov/index.cfm?handler=viewnpsnewsarticle&type=Announcements&id=5265>



Italy-NPS Cooperation Inspires Stewardship Atlas

"*Stewardship Begins with People: An Atlas of Places, People, and Handmade Products*," was published by the National Park Service's Conservation Study Institute to highlight the growing number of U.S. national parks working with local communities to promote the handicrafts of local artisans. The concept for this atlas draws inspiration from a series of exchanges between the NPS, the Italian Nature Conservation Service and Lazio Regional Park Agency, under an international agreement to promote innovation and cooperation in the protection and management of national parks and protected areas. Through these exchanges, park managers on both sides of the Atlantic shared ideas and experiences and discussed ways to "promote and market local products that enhance park operations, community relations, local traditions and culture, and sustainable practices." Case studies of the work of friends and neighbors of two dozen U.S. national park units spanning a variety of authentic traditional cultures and significant cultural landscapes demonstrate only a representative sample of those areas exhibiting a commitment to sustainability and practicing a stewardship ethic. For more information, contact Rolf Diamant at rolf_diamant@nps.gov or visit www.nps.gov/mabi/.



Coral Reef Cooperation in the Samoa's

In preparation for the U.S. Coral Reef Task Force (CRTF) meeting to be held in American Samoa in August 2007, a marine biologist from the **National Park of American Samoa** (NPSA) traveled to the neighboring island of independent Samoa to meet with coral reef managers and scientists there to identify conservation issues of common interest, particularly regarding local impacts of global climate change to coral reefs and marine protected areas. These included: 1) learning about climate change programs from both SPREP (South Pacific Regional Environmental Program) and the Samoan Ministries of Environment, Fisheries and Natural Resources; 2) identification of potential speakers to discuss climate change at the CRTF meeting; and 3) discussion on approaches to protecting coral reefs by developing a Marine Protected Area network within the Samoan archipelago, which share a common ecosystem. NPSA believes it possible that fish and coral populations may at times provide or receive larvae transported between the islands, and thus, a scientific approach to a network of protected areas is needed between the two Samoa's (see photo). For more information, contact Peter Craig, at peter_craig@nps.gov, or see <http://inside.nps.gov/index.cfm?handler=viewnpsnewsarticle&type=Announcements&id=5296>



Chinese World Heritage Site Staff Train at Yosemite

Four staff from China's World Heritage site at Jiuzhaigou National Park recently completed a three month training program at **Yosemite National Park** as a part of the sister park relationship established between Yosemite and Jiuzhaigou in 2006. NPS and Jiuzhaigou had originally established ties in the late 1980's and through various channels were able to reestablish links over the past two years. Among the aspects of park management the four Chinese park staff studied were carrying capacity, visitor management, and relationships with local indigenous communities. For more information, contact Dr. Niki Nicholas, at niki_nicholas@nps.gov or see http://www.recordnet.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20070226/A_NEWS/702260314



Guatemalan-NPS Sister Parks Work Together On Fire Management

Big Cypress National Preserve and Guatemala's Laguna del Tigre National Park continue to make substantial progress in their efforts to strengthen their sister park relationship. These two parks share a diversity of common goals that drive their efforts to collaborate with each other in the sharing of experience and information. Laguna del Tigre's superintendent and deputy superintendent, together with two field supervisors, visited Big Cypress for a four week period in January 2007, in the first exchange program event to take place under their sister park Action Plan. The principal focus of their visit was fire management, although topics such as resource management and visitor and resource protection were also covered. While at Big Cypress, the visitors participated in classroom fire management training, actively engaged in several prescribed burn projects, and drafted a fire management plan for their park. Laguna del Tigre National Park has recently provided training to over 30 members of their staff based on what was learned during their visit to Big Cypress and the material they were able to take back with them. The Guatemala delegation also visited **Biscayne National Park** and **Everglades National Park** while in South Florida. For more information, contact Pedro Ramos, at pedro_ramos@nps.gov.



This newsletter is distributed quarterly to NPS staff, partners and other interested parties. If you wish to be removed from the distribution list, please contact Rudy D'Alessandro at rudy_dalessandro@nps.gov. OIA encourages NPS colleagues to submit brief summaries of international activities and accomplishments suitable for inclusion in this bulletin.