



THE THIN GREEN LINE

NEWSLETTER OF THE INTERNATIONAL RANGER FEDERATION

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FEDERATION NEWS AND NOTES

President's Report

Fourth World Congress

Elsewhere in this issue of The Thin Green Line, you will read a report from the organizing committee of our 2003 Australia Congress. Once again, I urge you to begin setting aside the necessary financial resources to allow you to attend the Congress. I have been lucky enough to attend all three IRF Congresses, and have found that there is absolutely nothing as inspiring and as motivating as being with colleagues from around the world and sharing ideas and points of view with them. It is an experience you will treasure forever.

IRF News

In August, the Federation will take a major step toward organizational maturity. Our former president, Gordon Miller, is retiring from his ranger job at Peak National Park, and will be assuming the position of IRF's executive director. In his new position, Gordon will be able to follow up on some of the initiatives he began while still our president, most notably those of increasing the numbers of national associations of rangers affiliated with the IRF and solidifying our position as a major player in international conservation. Gordon is a well-known figure in world conservation and his geographical location allows him to more fully participate in the meetings of the world organizations whose headquarters are in Europe. I am excited and pleased by Gordon's decision.

He will be working under the guidance of the Federation's International Executive Council (IEC), whose members are elected by the member associations of the Federation. One of the major issues we will have to deal with almost immediately is how to compensate Gordon for his work.

The IEC is working on several fund raising ideas, but I encourage all readers of this newsletter to think about the possibility of fund raising in the regions of the world in which they work. Gordon will be working for all of us. We will equally share the benefits of his endeavors and should also seek to equally share the responsibility of providing adequate compensation for his work. Please contact your continental representative with any fund raising ideas you might have.

Speaking of fund raising, you will read in this issue of The Thin Green Line a report from the IRF Consultancy, the profit-oriented section of the Federation. The Consultancy has agreed to help us finance the first period of Gordon's work. The Consultancy has completed a successful ranger training course in Albania and is pursuing several other training opportunities. If you know of any additional opportunities for the Consultancy in your countries, please contact Mike Marshall or Declan Keiley, our Consultancy working directors. Mike can be reached at Marshall.I.R.F@btinternet.com and Declan at keiley.irfc@dial.pipex.com.

Potential Member Associations

We have received notices that the rangers in Mexico and Cameroon are nearing completion of the task of organizing themselves into national associations. We expect that they will petition to affiliate with the IRF once the task of getting organized has been completed. These new organizations would certainly be welcome additions to the international ranger family.

New IRF Protocols

Several months ago, I asked a small committee to develop a process by which the IEC could deal with requests from national associations or from individual rangers for IRF assistance. We have had several such requests and each time we have struggled with the how to respond to them. The committee, composed of Sean Prendergast from England, David Zeller from South Africa, and Gary Moses from the United States, has developed a step-by-step process that the IEC can follow in determining whether future requests meet IRF standards for our assistance. As soon as the protocols are in final form, we will send a copy to each affiliated member so that they can be filed with other IRF documents.

Closing Thoughts

As many of you already know, game ranger Henry Oram was shot to death in the line of duty since our last newsletter. As president of the IRF, I sent messages of condolence to his widow and to his fellow game rangers. Our hearts go out to Henry's family and the colleagues with whom he worked in South Africa.

I've thought a lot about Henry Oram in the months since I wrote those letters. I've tried to think about how to give meaning to an event that could be otherwise forgotten as just another senseless act of violence. But we know that it's more than that, don't we? It's a ranger making the ultimate sacrifice for an ideal, a cause in which he believed. His sacrifice wasn't about money, status, prestige, fame or power. No, it was about protected area values and about the right of all species of this planet to continue to exist in harmony with others. It was about saving all the pieces of our world so that future generations can see what we see. It is in this context that I can understand Henry's death.

Henry is not the first ranger to die in the line of duty, nor will he be the last. When any ranger goes on patrol, he/she faces the same danger. One of our roles as a Federation is to assure that the public understands the importance of the jobs that rangers perform and the risks that these jobs entail.

In Zakopane, Poland, in our first Congress, we adopted the Zakopane Declaration. Please let me quote the preamble and last three principles included in that declaration:

“We, the delegates here assembled in Zakopane, Poland, at the first International Ranger Federation Congress, representing rangers from 35 nations on six continents, do hereby declare our commitment to the following principles...

“That the majority of these rangers live in very difficult conditions, lack adequate institutional support and resources, receive meager salaries, and take significant personal and professional risks to protect these invaluable sites, which constitute core elements of the world’s natural and cultural heritage;

“That they all too often sacrifice their lives in their commitment to protection of this heritage;

“And that, for all these reasons, we are firmly committed to seeking greater recognition and attention to their work, to their well-being, and to the critical status of the heritage that they protect and defend, and will exert ourselves in a concerted effort to resolve these problems, enlisting in this effort the support of the people and the governments of this earth.”

We said that in 1995. I still believe it. I hope to God you do, too. Henry’s murder should reaffirm our commitment to the task we set out for ourselves.

Rick Smith
President, IRF
Association of National Park Rangers
United States

Nota Del Presidente

4to. Congreso Mundial de la FIG

En alguna parte de este número de “La angosta línea verde”, ustedes van a leer un reporte del comité organizador de nuestro Congreso en Australia en el año 2003. Una vez mas les solicito que comiencen a guardar los fondos necesarios que les permitirán asistir al congreso. He tenido la suerte de asistir a todos los tres congresos anteriores de la FIG. No hay nada tan inspirador y motivador como estar con colegas de todo el mundo y compartir ideas y puntos de vista con ellos. Se trata de una experiencia que van a atesorar para siempre.

Novedades de la FIG

En agosto, la FIG va a dar un gran paso hacia su madurez como organización. Nuestro anterior Presidente, Gordon Miller se retira de su trabajo como guardaparque en el Parque nacional Peak y va a asumir el puesto de Director Ejecutivo de la FIG.

En su nueva posición, Gordon estará en condiciones de darle seguimiento a algunas iniciativas que él comenzó siendo Presidente, entre las mas notables incrementar el número de asociaciones afiliadas a la FIG y solidificar nuestra posición como organización importante de la conservación a nivel mundial. Gordon es una figura bien conocida de la conservación en el mundo y su posición geográfica le permite participar mas fácilmente en las reuniones de las organizaciones mundiales que tienen sede en Europa. Tengo muchas expectativas y estoy muy contento con esta decisión de Gordon.

Él va a estar trabajando bajo la guía del Consejo Ejecutivo de la FIG (IEC), cuyos miembros son elegidos por las asociaciones miembros de la Federación.

Uno de los mayores temas con los que tendremos que tratar casi inmediatamente, es como compensar a Gordon por este trabajo. El IEC está trabajando sobre la idea de varias formas de buscar fondos pero les pido a todos los lectores que piensen en la posibilidad de contar con fondos en todas las regiones del mundo en las que trabajan.

Gordon va a estar trabajando para todos nosotros. Nosotros compartiremos equitativamente los beneficios de sus esfuerzos y deberíamos también compartir equitativamente la responsabilidad de proveerlo adecuadamente de una compensación por su trabajo. Por favor contáctese con su representante continental por cualquier idea que tenga sobre la búsqueda de fondos.

Hablando de búsqueda de fondos, ustedes van a leer en este número de “La angosta línea verde” un reporte de nuestra sección orientada a la generación de fondos, la Consultoría de la FIG. La consultoría ha aceptado ayudarnos a financiar el primer periodo del trabajo de Gordon. La consultoría ha completado satisfactoriamente un curso para formación de Guardaparques en Albania y está detrás de otras oportunidades de entrenamiento. Si usted sabe sobre otras oportunidades para la consultoría en otros países, por favor contáctese con Mike Marshall o Declan Keiley, los directores de nuestra consultoría. Mike puede ser contactado en Marshall.IRF@btinternet.com y Declan en Keiley@dial.pipex.com

Novedades Sobre Potenciales Nuevos Miembros de FIG

Hemos recibido noticias de que los guardaparques de México y Camerún están cerca de completar la tarea de organizarse en Asociaciones. Esperamos que una vez hechas las organizaciones estos colegas pidan su afiliación a la FIG. Estas nuevas asociaciones van a ser ciertamente bienvenidas adiciones a la familia internacional de los guardaparques.

Protocolo de la FIG

Hace unos meses le pedí a un pequeño comité que desarrollara un proceso por el cual el IEC pudiera tratar los pedidos de asistencia por parte de la FIG provenientes de las asociaciones miembros o de guardaparques. Hemos tenido varios pedidos y cada vez nos hemos preguntado como responder. El comité compuesto por Sean Pendergast de Inglaterra, David Zeller de Sudáfrica y Gary Moses de los EEUU ha desarrollado un proceso que el IEC puede seguir paso a paso para determinar si los futuros pedidos caen dentro de los estándares desarrollados para la asistencia. Tan pronto como el protocolo esté totalmente finalizado le mandaremos una copia a cada asociación afiliada para que sea guardada con los demás documentos de la FIG.

Pensamiento de Cierre

Como muchos de ustedes ya saben, el guardaparque Henry Oram fue muerto de un tiro mientras estaba en servicio luego de la aparición de nuestro último número. Como Presidente de la FIG mandé mensajes de condolencia a su viuda y a sus compañeros guardaparques. Nuestros corazones están con la familia de Henry y con sus colegas con quienes trabajó en Sudáfrica.

He pensado mucho sobre Henry Oram desde que escribí las cartas arriba mencionadas. Estuve tratando de pensar en como resaltar un hecho que de otra manera sería simplemente olvidado como otro caso de violencia sin sentido. Pero nosotros sabemos que es mas que eso. ¿No? Se trata de un guardaparque haciendo el último sacrificio por su ideal, por una cosa en la que creía. Su sacrificio no fue por dinero, status, prestigio, fama o poder. No, fue por los valores de su área protegida y por el derecho de toda especie de este planeta por continuar existiendo en armonía con las demás. Fue por salvar a todas las especies de nuestro mundo para que las futuras generaciones puedan ver lo que nosotros vemos. Es en este contexto que veo su muerte.

Henry no fue el primer guardaparque que murió en el frente, ni será el último. Cuando cualquier guardaparque va a patrullar, él o ella corre el mismo peligro. Uno de nuestros roles como Federación es asegurar que el público entienda la importancia que representa el trabajo del guardaparque y los riesgos que ello trae consigo.

En Zakopane, Polonia, en nuestro Primer Congreso adoptamos la Declaración de Zakopane. Por favor déjenme recordar sus tres últimos puntos:

- Que la mayoría de los guardaparques vive en condiciones muy difíciles, carecen del adecuado apoyo institucional y de recursos, reciben salarios magros y corren riesgo personal y profesional al proteger los sitios invaluable que constituyen los elementos centrales del patrimonio natural y cultural mundial.
- Que con demasiada frecuencia sacrifican sus vidas en su compromiso con la protección de ese patrimonio
- Y que por todas estas razones nos comprometemos firmemente a buscar un mayor reconocimiento y atención a nuestro trabajo, a nuestro bienestar y a señalar la enorme importancia del patrimonio que protegemos y defendemos y nos comprometemos a esforzarnos en resolver esos problemas, buscando el apoyo de la gente y los gobiernos de este planeta.

Dijimos eso en 1995. Yo todavía creo en ello. Por dios, tengo la esperanza de que ustedes también. La muerte de Henry debería reafirmar nuestro compromiso con la tarea que nos hemos impuesto.

Rick Smith
Presidente
FIG

IRF Web Site

The IRF web site (www.int-ranger.org) should be up and running by August. Among the items that will appear on that site will be:

- Current issues of The Thin Green Line
- Information about the IRF Exchange Bureau, including a form that can be filled out by those of you who are interested in exchanges
- Proceedings from the first three IRF World Congresses

Gordon Miller
Executive Director, IRF

IRF Consultancy

IRFC Ltd, a company 'limited by guarantee' in the United Kingdom, is the trading arm of the International Ranger Federation and is wholly owned by IRF, which appoints three of the directors [currently Rick Smith, Gordon Miller, and Colin Dilcock]. Declan Keiley and Mike Marshall have been appointed as working directors/project managers. Sue Clark, secretary of IRF is also company secretary of IRFC Ltd.

IRFC provides professional services to protected area managers and those employing rangers. The aim of the organization is to improve the management of protected areas globally through support for the rangers on the ground. In order to achieve this end, IRFC will provide:

- A ranger team training audit
- Start-up and/or interim rangers and ranger service managers
- Rangers to assist in the establishing or development of ranger teams
- On-site ranger training
- Research and analysis
- Advice on ranger service management
- Production of tailored ranger manuals and training guides
- Presentations to conferences and meetings
- Arrangement of international study tour itineraries
- Organization of conferences and seminars

For further details on services, see the IRFC web site at www.ranger-irfc.com.

IRFC competes for contracts [for example, in Albania], works through partnerships [TOPAS in Europe], and directly through existing contacts [study tours and meetings].

The current contract to provide initial training for a new team of rangers in the Butrint National Park in southern Albania is now two-thirds complete, the final course being scheduled for September. Declan and Mike worked as trainers on the first two sections of this contract, but in future other colleagues from our data base will be called upon to provide their expertise to enable IRFC to fulfil contracts.

TOPAS [Training of Protected Area Staff] is a European Union-funded project with partners in nine countries which has largely developed from the experimental European Ranger Project in which IRF was a lead partner. Our role is the development and dissemination of information leaflets about the project and the organization of events to promote awareness of the training opportunities being developed. TOPAS should lead to the establishment of a pan-European vocational training standard, validated and certified by the University of London.

IRFC is currently involved in preparing a short study tour for a group from Russia to consider various aspects of national park management, forestry and recreation management, and environmental education. This tour should be for eight days in September and includes work in two national parks in England.

IRFC Ltd is actively seeking work and contracts. For further information, please contact either Declan Keiley (keiley.irfc@dial.pipex.com) or Mike Marshall (marshall.i.r.f@btinternet.com).

Mike Marshall
Director, IRFC Ltd.

Address Changes

Please note the following mail and email changes of address for IRF representatives:

- Heike Flemming of Bundesverband Naturwacht, the German Ranger Association, has a new email address: h.flemming@debitel.net
- Arrie Schreiber of the Game Rangers Association of Africa has moved. His new address is H.A. Schreiber, Private Bag X1013, Phalaborwa 1390, Republic of South Africa. His email address has not yet changed; it is till arries@parks-sa.co.za

Fourth IRF World Congress

[Editor's Note: A warning to those of you who don't have English as a first language: Andy speaks "Australian" now and then. If you have problems with the meaning of words – there's no known translation for 'fair dinkum,' for instance – contact him at ANIXON@Parks.vic.gov.au)

G'day coppers, and greetings from Australia.

Planning for the next IRF World Congress continues. Our last few months have been spent looking at finishing the program outline, developing budget and business plan, developing the brief and liaising with prospective congress facilitators. As in Kruger, we have decided to employ a professional congress organiser. They will undertake all the 'nuts and bolts' planning. The congress organising committee will be doing the 'design'.

I must say that I find each meeting is different to many of the work meetings that I have to attend as a part of my normal job. The congress organising meetings always end with a buzz and excitement amongst the committee. What a great omen !

We particularly enjoyed the last meeting when a number of different draft logos were displayed. Out of six, we believe we have now chosen a really good one. You should see it fairly soon, once the Congress website is up (within the next three months). An information brochure should also be out soon.

Our May meeting was a two-day workshop at the congress venue – Wilsons Promontory National Park. Fifteen of us met, eight from the VRA organising committee and a representative each from the ARA national committee. Each state was there, including the Northern Territory (Kristen Appel). We had a bonza time, a good chin-wag was had, some thoughtful discussion and creative ideas shared. A walk to the top of a coastal mountain looking out over the southern ocean and the park was something inspirational. You will also be able to follow the same track, too, when you visit down-under with us in 2003.

Fair dinkum folks, it's looking like its going to be a terrific event. Start saving those dollars (Thought I would pop in a bit of the local lingo. You'll need to get your ear in training). Oo-roo for now.

Andy Nixon
Chairperson, IRF Fourth World Congress Organising Committee.

NEWS ABOUT IRF ASSOCIATIONS

Cameroon Rangers Association (Cameroon)

The process of establishing the Cameroon Rangers Association is now moving ahead. Two organizational meetings have been held prior to officially launching the organization. It has taken some time to get started, but we have to follow national procedures in constituting such an organization. I hope that the association will be formally established soon.

Samson Essam, Cameroon

AGUA (Costa Rica)

AGUA has a new president. He is the Fredy Morales, who previously was the treasurer in AGUA’s executive council. Rafael Gutierrez, the former president, is the new director of the Central Pacific Conservation Area, which includes Carara National Park and Manuel Antonio National Park, among others.

Following the big fire, started by poachers, that destroyed “La Casona” in Santa Rosa National Park in the northern part of Costa Rica, the government began an effort to sell one million papers at the cost of 100 colones each (one dollar equals 330 colones) to obtain the money needed to restore the monument.

Ronald Mora

AGUA tiene nuevo presidente, se trata del Ingeniero Fredy Morales, el cual fungía como fiscal en la anterior Junta Directiva. Además del cambio anterior se informa que el anterior presidente el señor Rafael Gutierrez es el nuevo Director del Área de Conservación Pacífico Central, la cual administra, entre otros, los Parques Nacionales de Carara y Manuel Antonio.

Después de ocurrir el serio incendio -provocado por cazadores furtivos, que destruyó totalmente la casona del Parque Nacional Santa Rosa (en el norte del país), el Gobierno de Costa Rica ha lanzado a la venta en el mercado nacional un millón de bonos de 100 colones cada uno, para recaudar fondos para la restauración del viejo monumento (\$1 = 330 colones).

Ronald Mora

Association of National Park Rangers (United States)

ANPR will celebrate its 25th anniversary at its fall Ranger Rendezvous to be held in Jackson, Wyoming, this coming October. In 1977, at the same site, a group of rangers meeting for social purposes decided to form an association of rangers. From this humble beginning, ANPR has grown to an association with 1,100 members and is widely regarded as an influential voice in determining policy directions for the U.S. National Park Service.

The agenda for this 25th anniversary meeting will focus on the four disciplines that most national park rangers pursue in their careers: cultural resources management, park protection, natural resources management, and park interpretation. In each case, we will trace the evolution of a ranger's responsibilities in these disciplines, from the time ANPR was established to the present. We will also try to look into the future, predicting what skills and abilities rangers will have to possess to adequately carry out their responsibilities in the next five to ten years. It should be an exciting program.

ANPR's website (www.anpr.org) now contains IRF news, including the text of the Federation's newsletter, The Thin Green Line. Click on the heading "Associated Organizations" to find the links.

We in ANPR would like to salute our sister organization, Brandenburg Germany's Ranger Association, Naturwacht Brandenburg. They recently celebrated their 10th year of existence. We would also mention that 2002 is the 10th birthday of the International Ranger Federation. Happy birthday to us all.

We in ANPR have extended our congratulations to the National Park Service's newest director, Fran Mainella. Ms. Mainella is the National Park Service's first female director, having most recently been the director of the Florida state park system. Her appointment was recently confirmed by the U.S. Senate and she was sworn in by Department of the Interior Secretary Gale Norton. Ms. Norton is the first female Secretary of the Interior.

Rick Smith, United States

Countryside Management Association (England)

Much of the United Kingdom's countryside – and therefore its countryside ranger staff – is still dealing with on-going cases of foot and mouth disease and/or its after effects, and writing strategies for recovery, making bids for funding, reassessing management options, etc. It has been an exhausting, frustrating and difficult time for many people and will not be over for some months to come.

However, life goes on. On a more positive note, we are currently arranging the first joint conference among all the United Kingdom and Ireland countryside management associations. It will be held in the northwest of England in September. It will be entitled "Europe and Us" and will look at regionalization, cooperation and funding opportunities. We hope that it will be the first of many joint conferences, including a European-wide conference planned for 2002.

There has also been progress with our information technology. CMA now has its own website: <http://www.countrysidemanagement.org.uk>.

Vicky Thomas, Grand Western Canal Country Park, England

Scottish Countryside Ranger Association (Scotland)

Following publication of the last issue of Thin Green Line, in which I mentioned the work we are doing regarding the changes in access law in Scotland, editor Bill Halainen asked me to write a summary of the history, changes and future of Scottish access legislation and the role of the ranger therein. He's going to owe me big time for this.

For the last 37 years, access to the Scottish countryside has been a complicated and badly understood subject. Many people held the view that there was no law of trespass in this country, while others thought that there was. The reality lay somewhere in between. Apart from rights of way (ROWs) and buildings and their immediately surrounding lands, the presumption was that there was a right to roam anywhere one wanted, as long as no other laws were broken. Landowners had the right to ask a walker to leave, however, at which point he or she had to do so by the quickest route. The landowner had the right to use minimum force and recourse to the civil courts, but there was no criminal law to prevent access.

Because this was a very informal arrangement, and because it relied on legal precedent and was overseen by local governments, which had little time, money or interest in dealing with access issues, the whole system was virtually unworkable. Landowners thought there was a law of trespass, walkers thought there wasn't, and – depending on your lawyer – you could prove either point of view! Add to this the totally unworkable legislation about ROWs, which, if challenged, required a very complex and costly court case to ratify, and the whole system was ripe for reform.

By the late 1990s, when it became clear that some of the United Kingdom's central government powers were going to be given to a new Scottish parliament, it was seen as an opportunity to tidy up access legislation. The idea was to make a simple, user friendly set of rules, agreed to by all sides, which would allow public access without harming the rights of landowners and without imposing too much of a burden on local governments when they had to implement them.

In order to get a balanced set of viewpoints, the government invited representatives from all sides of the debates to form the Access Forum. Their job was to make a set of recommendations to the new parliament, which all sides could agree to. After three years of hard debate, the Forum submitted its work to the parliament, which, together with opinions sent in by other interested groups and individuals, was used as the basis for the Draft Access Bill. SCRA has just submitted its comments on this bill.

Unfortunately, the draft bill seems to have completely ignored the work of the Access Forum, and decided to ignore the current ROW legislation as well. It has been greeted with unanimous condemnation by walkers and landowners, both of whom see it as eroding their rights. From the point of view of local governments, the new legislation will, it seems, make the legal problems worse. More time and money will end up being spent on resolving legal battles than on providing staff and infrastructure on the ground (one council recently spent eight years and £30,000, not including staff time, fighting a single court case).

New funding has been promised, but, if current rules are followed, local authorities will not have to spend this on access. They can use it on any of their other areas of work, if they see an overriding need. The money, for example, could be spent on schools. Also, if the money is allocated by population size, Glasgow will get 20% of the money to spend on less than 1% of Scotland, while Highland Council will get about 5% to spend on nearly a third of our land mass! The bill simply does not address the implementation problems.

Rangers are specifically mentioned in the bill, as all sides see them as key providers of access. Many rangers currently have a role as mediators and educators, trying to improve the public's access to our landscape, while minimizing any problems they might cause. The new bill talks about giving rangers new powers over people breaking the law on private land. This is something we are worried about. No provision has been made for the increased training and legal backup we would need to fulfil this role. If we are to get police-like powers, they will have to come with police-style training, backup from the police and legal services, proper risk assessments, and a clarification of where these powers are vested. There has been a verbal commitment to 168 new ranger posts in Scotland to deal with the requirements of the new bill. Of these, 119 will be in the private sector. Landowners will get grant aid to employ staff to interact with walkers and provide them with their access needs. We are concerned that this may vest legal powers in private hands. Who will audit this system? Currently private landowners do employ rangers, but they have no legal powers and are more poorly paid than local government rangers. Is this a way of getting cheap staff? Does the increase in access-related work mean other areas, such as conservation management and education, are to be cut back?

Legal powers will surely have to be vested in the existing framework of local government. If so, and if rangers do get new legal powers, either the new posts have to be with local government or the privately employed rangers will not get the same powers. If this happens, how does the public tell the difference between the two types of rangers?

The new bill could fundamentally change the focus of Scotland's rangers and sway the balance towards privately employed ranger staff. We would become more adversarial. At present, we are seen as impartial mediators in dispute by both sides. New powers have the potential to make rangers less accessible to everyone – we would be seen as enforcers rather than problem solvers.

The bill recently had its first consultation and now has to be redrafted with those views taken on board. In the past, this has not resulted in much change to the final drafts of legislation. This time, however, there has been such a complete outcry from all sides against the draft that there may be a chance for significant changes. One way or another, it may be a year or two before any of this reaches the statute books – plenty of time for change. Anyone wanting more details can find most things relating to the draft bill and the related debate on the Scottish Countryside Access Networks (SCAN) web site: www.scottishcountrynet.org . Details of our response to the bill are on our web site: www.scotranger.freeserve.co.uk .

Tony Wilson, Fife Ranger Service, Scotland

Game Rangers Association of Africa (South Africa)

South African National Parks have gone through a very difficult transformation process called Operation Prevail. Herewith is the outcome for Kruger National Park, which so many of you now know...

There were 22 sections in the park, including four regional rangers and two head rangers (one north and one south). All of these posts were declared redundant, and we all received our letters in this regard in May. Most of us then went through the process of applying for the reduced number of 12 sections, as well as other vacancies throughout the organization. Some lost their jobs, some took early retirement, some went on to other positions.

The remaining ten posts have been reserved as development posts from the previously disadvantaged community and have been filled by persons already studying for the national diploma in nature conservation – or are already qualified. Kruger NP embarked on a program some time ago to qualify capable field rangers and other staff from Conservation Services through the Technikon Pretoria, and this program is already in its second year. In certain cases, we also have persons employed as field rangers studying for their degrees. These positions will be known as assistant section rangers and will be supervised by the section rangers and the district rangers.

There will be many new challenges under this arrangement, particularly for the core of rangers remaining in Kruger NP. There may be dips here and there, but the park's director has already spelled out in no unclear terms that low productivity will not be tolerated. Every person in the management levels will receive performance agreements in due course which will be revised and assessed every six months. Kruger NP must reach a turnaround in the next six months.

To those who lost their jobs, I simply say “vasbyt” and may God be with you.

Arrie Schreiber, Kruger NP, RSA

Asociace Strazcu Prirody CR (Czech Ranger Association)

The Czech Ranger Association (CRA) held its annual meeting at the end of April in Podyji-Thayatal National Park in southern Moravia. Colleagues from other IRF organizations attended, including Mike Marshal from IRF, rangers Liviu Dumbrava and Arthur Hebel from Romania, Alastair MacAlister from Clyde-Muirishiel Regional Park, Scotland, and four colleagues from the Slovak Rangers Association with Zdeno Pochop.

CRA arranged for presentations by two lawyer from the Ministry of the Environment of the Czech Republic and the subsequent discussion was managed with them. The topic of their lecture was: "Public Guards." The Ministry of the Environment of the CR and the Ministry of the Agriculture of the CR have prepared a proposed new law about public guards, who would be professional or voluntary guards with significant legal power. They would substitute for the current mix of forest, water, fisherman, hunting and nature guards, and would be paid and managed by regional authorities with the agreement of local authorities, the administration of national parks, etc. Professional guards would be equipped with uniforms, mobile phones, and revolvers, and could apprehend lawbreakers and bring them to CR police. Environmental education is not addressed in this proposal.

Michal Skalka, Sprava NP Krkonose, Czech Republic

RANGERS AROUND THE WORLD

United States

In 1996, Randy Morgenson, a veteran, 54-year-old seasonal ranger at Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks in California, disappeared while on a backcountry patrol. On Sunday, July 15, 2001, four off-duty trail crew members found what are very likely his remains in a stream drainage in a very remote section of the park. Among other items found at the scene were his radio and a uniform shirt with a badge and his name tag on it. It appears that he died due to an accidental fall while attempting to cross the stream. The area had been checked several times during the massive 1996 search for Morgenson, but his body was evidently not seen because it was beside a stream that was in full flood that summer. The search in 1996 was a difficult one for the park's staff – both emotionally and physically. This discovery, although not yet confirmed by dental records, has helped bring closure and comfort to those who knew and worked with him. The National Park Service has a cadre of trained counselors who help out in crisis situations. They were brought in to provide counseling and support to park staff.

UPCOMING EVENTS

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| September 3-6, 2001 | Joint Conference: Rangers Association of Ireland, Northern Ireland Countryside Staff Association, Scottish Countryside Ranger Association, and Countryside Management Association, Lancashire, England. |
| October 11-14, 2001 | Second National Congress of the Argentine Ranger Association and First Latin American Ranger Congress, Malargüe, Mendoza, Argentina. Contact: Laura Chazarreta at guardaparques@latinmail.com or Marcelo Ochoa at Olrog@arnet.com.ar . |
| October 29 –
November 2, 2001 | 25 th Anniversary Rendezvous, Association of National Park Rangers (U.S.), Snow King Resort, Jackson Hole, Wyoming, USA. |
| July 31, 2002 | 10 th anniversary of the founding of International Ranger Federation, which took place at Loosehill Hall, Peak District National Park, England. |
| March, 2003 | IRF Fourth World Congress, Victoria, Australia |
| September 17-18, 2003 | World Parks Congress, Durban, South Africa |

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