

CLEAR TEXT:
WASO Ranger Activities'
Electronic Newsletter

August 13, 1993

*** SPECIAL UPDATE ON RANGER FUTURES ***

Following several months of intensive problem definition, consultation and policy development, the Ranger Futures personnel management reform initiative is poised for the next decisive step toward implementation.

Comments on the Ranger Futures report were due in on July 16th, and many replies have been received. The paper generated a great deal of comment - a total of 150 memos of varying length, which, reprinted on back-to-back pages, fill a three-inch thick binder.

Summary analysis to date shows that, overall, nearly 90% of respondents approved the concept as described. The balance of the comments (about 10%), many from key reviewers, largely showed a misunderstanding of the concept. Subsequent discussions have resolved a number of these issues, and more discussions are underway. Most commenters also offered some specific suggestions and concerns regarding the translation of the concept into action steps and their subsequent implementation. Examples include the following:

- * Provide a more defined role for the ranger generalist in providing secondary support to resource management.
- * Create a GS-11 journeyman grade.
- * Clarify the role of law enforcement in Ranger Futures.
- * Review and evaluate the impact of the paper on the seasonal work force.
- * Evaluate budgetary impacts.
- * Review and discuss overall career management issues.

The Ranger Futures working group will assemble shortly to review the comments, incorporate good suggestions, and clarify any points of misunderstanding. The work group will then prepare a paper in question and answer format for distribution to the field which will clarify issues and concerns raised in comments to the paper.

Once this step is completed, the Ranger Futures paper will be put into final form and forwarded to the Director for official approval and incorporation into the Service's policy issuance system as the definitive statement of policy and principles governing the ranger occupation.

Discussions are also being undertaken to coordinate Ranger Futures personnel changes with other Vail initiatives, such as the resource management initiative, and integrate actions with total NPS personnel system changes.

The restructured ranger personnel subsystem will be pilot tested in a select sample of park settings to assess impacts, staff out policy questions, and serve as a basis for developing instructions for Servicewide conversion to the new system. Conversion instructions will be prepared and issues, and the task of developing training modules to address the needs of various audiences - ranger, supervisors, managers, and personnel/administrative staff - will begin.

The plan for FY 94 contains several further steps:

- * The implementation plan for the Ranger Futures initiative will be announced.
- * Implementation of the restructured ranger occupation and personnel system will begin and continue throughout the fiscal year.
- * NPS staff, together with OPM's career entry group, will complete revisions to the GS-025 qualifications standard and the design of the new competitive examining vehicle for entry into the ranger occupation. Other staffing issues will also be addressed.
- * Development will begin on a career management program for the park ranger occupation to ensure that the entire work force is managed in a coherent way that promotes career growth and development and that ensures that we are all employing the best personnel management tools in order to make a maximum contribution to the accomplishment of the mission.

CLEAR TEXT is the bi-weekly electronic newsletter of the Ranger Activities Division in WASO. It is distributed via cc:Mail to all ranger training and operations centers (FLETC, HOAL, STMA, NIFC), regional office ranger divisions, park chief rangers, and other interested parties.

Short submissions for the last three sections of the report are welcome and encouraged. The deadline for submissions for the next issue is September 1, 1993.

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