

**CLEAR TEXT:**  
**WASO Ranger Activities'**  
**Electronic Newsletter**

**October 8, 1993**

RANGER FUTURES

Progress continues on the Ranger Futures initiative. Several activities are currently under way:

\* The Ranger Futures group is working on a paper which will answer many of the questions that have been raised about the original paper. Several people have reviewed the questions and answers, and their comments are now being incorporated into the document. It should be transmitted within one to two weeks

\* Pilot testing of the Ranger Futures plan is continuing. Model grade structures will be established and evaluated at another four to five parks between now and mid-November.

\* A policy statement on Ranger Futures is being formulated and will probably be issued under the Director's signature in late November.

SEMI-AUTOMATIC WEAPONS

After more than two years of intensive and dedicated effort, we are pleased to announce that acquisition of approved semi-automatic pistols for commissioned law enforcement rangers has begun. This massive effort was exhaustively conceptualized and researched, and was undertaken with several goals in mind:

\* To assist the field in replacing old and worn sidearms currently in use.

\* To uniformly modernize the armaments of our commissioned personnel in a manner that will assist them in safely performing their duties now and into the next century.

\* To accommodate the wide range of needs specific to the several hundred sites throughout the country where rangers are responsible for providing critical and hazardous law enforcement duties for the visiting public.

\* To accommodate the wide range of needs specific to the diverse commissioned workforce within the National Park Service.

A memo has been sent to the field which transmits an interim amendment to NPS-9 regarding the policies and guidelines necessary for the Servicewide transition to semi-automatic pistols. Highlights of that amendment are as follows:

\* The National Park Service has identified Sigarms Company as the standardized source of its primary approved semi-automatic sidearms. Approximately 1,600 handguns have been purchased at this time.

- \* Five different models of Sig-Sauer semi-automatic handguns are initially approved for Service use. All of these weapons function identically, and training is entirely interchangeable.
- \* Semi-automatics in 9mm, .40 S&W, and .45 A.C.P. calibers are all approved for general Service use.
- \* Employees will have the latitude to select the model/caliber weapon(s) they will carry.
- \* Existing .357 and .44 magnum revolvers - as well as Glock pistols currently in use - may remain in use until further notice.
- \* From this time forward, all purchases of firearms (other than personal) must be centrally shipped to the Service's firearms/commission program specialist at FLETC.
- \* Personally owned weapons meeting Service standards will be approved for duty use.
- \* Servicewide conversion to semi-automatic pistols will proceed as quickly as possible. Full conversion is expected to take between one and two years.
- \* Employees who reasonably anticipate retirement or transfer to non-law enforcement duties within five years will not be compelled to participate in this weapons transition program.
- \* Prescribed training standards must be met before personnel will be authorized to carry the new semi-automatic pistols.
- \* Along with FLETC, other federal, state and local training sources may be utilized (upon approval) for both "user" and "instructor" transition training and certification.
- \* Firearms qualifications will be required quarterly.
- \* During the first year of use, mandatory practice with the new semi-automatic handguns will be required not less than every other month.

Any questions which arise regarding the transitions will be clarified in the final version of NPS-9, as will many other defensive equipment issues. The revised guideline is currently scheduled for release in the spring of 1994. During the interim period, all inquiries concerning details of this conversion process should be directed to ASAC Paul Berkowitz at 703-787-1921.

#### LAW ENFORCEMENT GEAR

We are about to transfer all of the law enforcement equipment currently available through R&R Uniforms - all leather gear, law enforcement identification vests and badge patches - to Joe Johnson, who will be managing commissions, equipment and related LE gear at FLETC. Joe will provide those items to the parks once he's up and running. The procedures for acquiring those items will be as follows:

- \* Leather gear - Requisitions should be sent directly to Joe at FLETC. There will be no charge for any components transferred to FLETC from the existing inventory at R&R, but further procurements will be via benefitting accounts. These procedures do not apply to the semi-automatic holsters and

magazine cases, which will be provided along with weapons when the latter are issued to the field.

\* Badge patches - Requests for badge patches must be sent to Bill Halainen in WASO Ranger Activities. Approved requests will then be sent to Joe for fulfillment.

\* Identification vests - Up until now, park chief rangers have had to send requisitions for the LE identification vests to regional law enforcement specialists for approval. That procedure has now been changed to bring it into conformance with the above SOP regarding badge patches. Requests for the vests (procurements will not be needed until the existing inventory - which is substantial - is depleted) must now be sent to Bill Halainen. Approved requests will then be sent to Joe for fulfillment.

Please keep in mind that badge patches and law enforcement identification vests are controlled items and are only to be used for previously specified purposes.

#### CISD NATIONAL TEAMS

The Service is in the process of developing two national critical incident stress debriefing (CISD) teams - an East team and a West team - for response to major disasters in which NPS members are involved or are victims, such as hurricanes, large fires, air crashes and earthquakes. The teams will augment any regional teams when so requested. Members will be selected from candidates who applied following the distribution of applications to the field last July. Each team will consist of a team leader selected by this office, seven or eight active members, and an equal number of reserve personnel. Each member will be expected to serve a two-year term. All CISD team member names will be listed in the Branch of Fire and Aviation's VAX computer system and available for call-up through that system. Team leaders will be charged with identification of those persons who will respond to particular incidents.

#### RESOURCE PROTECTION FUND

The National Park Ranger Resource Protection Fund, Inc. is a newly-formed non-profit organization incorporated in the Commonwealth of Virginia which has been established to assure the protection of national park resources nationwide by various means in order to ensure that these resources will remain virtually unimpaired for future generations. The Fund will strive to improve the safety, training and competence levels of rangers charged with protecting and managing national park resources.

Fundraising and membership drives have begun in West Virginia and will soon begin in Virginia, North Carolina and South Carolina. A professional fundraiser, under contract with the Fund, will be conducting telephone marketing and direct mail campaigns and will employ other techniques to raise funds and memberships to support the Fund's objectives. A memorandum of agreement and formal proposal between the Fund and the National Park Service is now under review in this office.

Please advise members of your staff about the Fund and its objectives so that they will be aware of it if they are queried about it by friends, family members, park neighbors, or others.

If you have any questions or comments or would like to know more about the Fund, please feel to contact Bob Martin, a subdistrict ranger at Shenandoah

who is also the Fund's president and executive director. His mailing address is Route 3, Box 314, Elkton, VA 22827; his phone numbers are (703)999-3201/2 at SHEN and (703)999-2008 at home.

FIELD NOTES

**Branch of Fire and Aviation, NIFC**

Bob Peterson, the current director of the Office of Aircraft Services, is retiring on December 3rd. Prior to his OAS assignment, Bob had a distinguished career in the National Park Service as a park ranger and manager. He began as a ranger in Mount Rainier in 1953 and served in Yosemite, Mount McKinley, Isle Royale, Grand Canyon, Zion, and Everglades. He also had a tour as deputy regional director in Alaska Region. A retirement dinner is scheduled at the Boise, Idaho Red Lion Downtowner at 7:00 p.m. December 2nd. Anyone wishing to attend needs to make arrangements with Bev Williams at OAS (P.O. Box 15428, Boise, ID 83715-5428; 208-389-2750) by November 30th. Anyone wishing to send Bob a letter or card or make a gift contribution should get them to Bev by November 26th.

PARK EXCHANGE

**Big Thicket**

The park is currently developing a policy for houseboats that are moored in the Neches River Corridor Units. The park's law enforcement specialist is interested in hearing from other parks that have current houseboat policies regarding the formulation and implementation of those policies. Big Thicket has never had a policy regarding houseboats, although they are very popular there. Historically, activities associated with houseboats have included poaching, dumping, drug and alcohol use, and health and safety violations. Any responses will be greatly appreciated. Replies should be sent to the attention of Kim Coast at Big Thicket through either cc:Mail or regular mail. [Kim Coast, LES, BITH]

PARK VACANCIES AND OPM REGISTER OPENINGS

**Branch of Resource and Visitor Protection, WASO**

Position: Park ranger (career management), GS-025-12/13  
Number: WPO-93-87  
Closes: 10/26/93  
Information: Dick Martin, Ranger Activities, 202-208-4874

The incumbent serves as the career program manager for employees in the park ranger series and represents the Ranger Activities and Interpretation Divisions on all matters pertaining to ranger careers. Among other duties, she or he will work closely with Personnel and Employee Development in the preparation of guidance to the field on improving performance and enhancing career progression, will develop and administer a ranger mentoring program, and will identify and respond to training needs.

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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 October 22, 1993.

If you would like to get CLEAR TEXT but don't currently receive it, please advise Ranger Activities via a short cc:Mail message. Any office may receive it, including districts and subdistricts within a park. PLEASE pass it along to others in your division and park.

Prepared by WASO Division of Ranger Activities

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