

CLEAR TEXT:
WASO Ranger Activities'
Electronic Newsletter

December 13, 1993

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 four sections of the report - Field Notes; Park Exchange; Vacancies, Register Openings and Details; and Calendar - are welcome and encouraged.

Next issue: December 30, 1993
Submission deadline: December 28, 1993

RANGER FUTURES

The Ranger Futures express is both on track and accelerating under an increasing head of steam. The June 1st target date for implementation is still our goal, and I believe we'll reach it.

One reason is the very good news we received last week. Our \$18 million proposal for a base funding increase for Ranger Futures in FY 95 and following years has been approved by OMB and is now formally part of the Department's FY 95 budget proposal. Although we can't yet be certain that all the funds will be forthcoming, OMB clearance was the major and perhaps most significant hurdle the proposal had to clear.

We've just completed pilot tests of the Ranger Futures concept in Golden Gate, Yosemite and NCP Central, and are happy to report that it worked well in all three areas. We will continue pilot tests until mid-January, then determine if any more tests will be needed.

The next step will be to formally begin the process of putting Ranger Futures into effect. We are now drafting a policy statement for Director Kennedy's signature in early January which will move Ranger Futures from planning stage to the implementation stage.

A training session will then be convened, probably in March or April, in which three-person teams from each regional office - the regional chief ranger, the regional chief of interpretation, and a regional personnel specialist - will be trained on the concept. These regional teams will be available to provide guidance on the conversion when it begins on June 1st.

In that light, we are very pleased to announce that Bill Sanders, currently the chief ranger for the Appalachian Trail, has been selected to fill the new ranger career management position here in Ranger Activities. Bill will be instrumental in the implementation of Ranger Futures and will serve as the career program manager for the Divisions of Ranger Activities and Interpretation. His primary responsibilities will be to:

- * determine ranger career program needs;
- * develop potential ranger career ladders;
- * develop guidance for field supervisors on training courses which will help their employees improve their performance and their career prospects;
- * provide advice on planning career assignments;
- * help set up rating panels and special work groups; and
- * respond to questions and problems raised by regional and field personnel.

In the short term, however, Bill will have one overriding responsibility - to work on completing the instructions for converting positions and implementing Ranger Futures before the June changeover date. Bill will be coming on board in early January. We'll let you know how to get in touch with him as soon as we find him a place to sit, a telephone and a cc:Mail terminal.

Jim Brady
RAD/WASO

TWENTY-YEAR RETIREMENT

OPM has formally delegated authority for adjudication of all pending claims for past 6(c) coverage to the Department of Interior. It's still not clear, however, whether we'll be able to review cases that have already been denied or are currently headed for MSPB appeal.

The decision on past claims will be made at the Departmental level, but with our close involvement and support. On December 9th, we signed an agreement with DOI Personnel and Budget to transfer \$100,000 and two FTEs to the Department to accelerate the processing of those claims.

Any of you with cases currently before MSPB should pursue them unless you hear otherwise from this office. If you need our assistance in pursuing your claim, please give us a call.

Dick Martin
RAD/WASO

RECOVERING COSTS OF SPECIAL PARK USES

The Department of the Interior appropriations bill for Fiscal Year 1994 retained the authority regarding special use permit cost recovery, with some positive changes. The language of Public Law 103-138 (11/11/93) for special uses reads as follows:

"[N]otwithstanding any other provision of law, the National Park Service may hereafter recover all costs of providing necessary services associated with special use permits, such reimbursements to be credited to the appropriation current at that time."

By the addition of the word "hereafter", we are no longer in the situation of having to wonder every year whether or not this authority will be retained. It is now "permanent".

We will shortly be preparing a memorandum or special directive discussing the authorities to recover costs in greater depth. This memorandum will address, among other topics, the question of what is meant by "special use permit" in the bill's language (e.g., the permit form itself, or any special use "permission"). In the mean time, if you have questions or are thinking about embarking on a significant cost recovery program, please call me at 202-208-

4874.

Tony Sisto
RAD/WASO

446 DM 1, NPS-9 AND 36 CFR

Revisions to the Department of Interior's Law Enforcement Handbook, 446 DM 1, have been completed, and the revised handbook has been printed and released. Ranger Activities will be getting 200 copies of the handbook - the most permitted under current printing restrictions - and will soon be distributing them to the regions for dissemination to the field. Some local photocopying will be required because of our inability to get enough to cover all areas and offices needing copies. With the completion of 446 DM 1 and the weapons procurement, it will now be possible to move forward with revisions to NPS-9. Capt. Ron DeAngelo from MARO will be on detail to our office through December to coordinate the development of the FINAL version of NPS-9.

Meanwhile, we've learned that parks and regions will probably have to procure their own copies of 36 CFR this year, as central funding is no longer available from Administrative Services. We'll pass on particulars as soon as we receive them.

Dale Dickerhoof
RAD/WASO

WILDERNESS TASK FORCE MEETING

On September 23rd, Director Kennedy transmitted an approved wilderness task directive to all regions. The directive contained a request for nominations to an interdisciplinary Servicewide task force. A total of 24 people from all regions with wilderness were subsequently selected and met at the Department of Interior this fall.

The group listened to presentations and assessments from Assistant Secretary Frampton, Deputy Director Reynolds, senior NPS managers, Congressional staff, and representatives from conservation groups, then broke into subgroups and worked for several days to develop draft action plans that will be utilized in a final report to Director Kennedy next spring. That process was ably facilitated by Regional Director Bob Baker. The recommended actions to be set forth in the final report are to:

- * enhance awareness of the significance of wilderness values within the National Park System among both visitors and employees;
- * provide wilderness leadership and improved organizational structures to facilitate wilderness stewardship;
- * forward pending wilderness recommendations from the Service to the Department so that legislation can be developed;
- * promote wilderness training and communications;
- * develop wilderness stewardship planning guidance;
- * strive for greater interagency cooperation and consistency; and
- * work to develop partnerships with wilderness constituency groups.

Further updates will be provided in CLEAR TEXT over the next few months.

Wes Henry
RAD/WASO

RECREATION FEE PROGRAM UPDATE

Many questions have been raised lately about what's going on in the recreation fee program. The following information will help answer some of those questions. Please keep in mind that the situation regarding fees is very fluid at present, so some of this information may change. We'll attempt to keep you posted on a regular basis.

Title V of the Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1993 (P.L. 103-66) contained a number of amendments to the Land and Water Conservation Fund Act (LWCFA). Among them was one which authorized the Service to retain funds equivalent to the cost of collection of recreation fees, not to exceed 15%. This is a Servicewide authority which we intend to manage in a conservative manner.

We will initially seek a warrant from the Department of Treasury to expend an amount equal to 15% of revenues collected in FY 93, about \$10.5 million. Amounts available in excess of this amount will be sought later. This money will be used to pay for the existing cost of recreation fee collection, to enhance existing fee collection operations, and to expand fee collection efforts.

Because the current cost of collection, estimated cost of enhanced collection and cost of expanded collection exceeds the amount we will request from Treasury, some portion of existing ONPS funds used for fee collection costs will continue to be allocated for those purposes. ONPS monies not needed for collection costs will be reallocated to fund other Servicewide needs, such as increased uniform costs, Ranger Futures, or conversion of temporary employees.

The Service has drafted proposed legislation for 1995 which will give it general broad authorities for the management of the recreation fee program. The Service has also developed a program that will help ensure the integrity of recreation fee collection activities by allocating cost of collection funds in a fair and equitable manner based on existing hard data. The program, known as FARMCON (Fee and Revenue Management Concept), will initially be put into effect in parks with large entrance fee programs. Smaller entrance fee collecting parks will be allocated a standard package to support their fee collection activities. A key element of FARMCON is the idea of a performance contract with park managers. In other words, allocation of funds for recreation fee collection is expected to result in a certain level of actual revenues collected.

A number of other fee program management tasks are in progress:

- * An order has been issued for the printing of a redesigned Golden Eagle passport which will be valid for 12 months.
- * Interagency meetings are being held to brainstorm problems, identify tasks and assign responsibilities for non-federal sales of Golden Eagles.
- * The draft text for a new passport brochure has been completed and a meeting has been set with the printing coordinator.
- * A manual application of FARMCON has been completed which will be tested at selected parks.
- * AN INITIAL DISTRIBUTION OF COST OF COLLECTION MONIES IS ABOUT TO BE MADE.
- * Legislation for the 1995 legislative program is in the works. The Secretary and Assistant Secretary for Policy, Management and Budget have been briefed on details of the proposal.
- * A proposal regarding commercial tour fees has been approved by the acting Associate Director, Operations, and an implementation memo is being drafted.

John Townsend
RAD/MWRO (on detail to WASO)

EMERGENCY SERVICES

Several developments have occurred recently in emergency services programs:

* The Service will be conducting an interagency evaluation of personal locator beacon (PLB) systems with the Forest Service next year. One PLB test will occur in Rocky Mountain NP, the second is tentatively set for Wrangell-St. Elias and Denali. Decisions on whether or not we should implement such systems Servicewide will be made following these tests.

* NPS-51, the Services' EMS guideline, has been revised and will be ready for distribution in early 1994.

* Additional copies of NPS-57, the health and fitness guideline, have been printed and distributed to all regions to cover all employees in volunteer programs. If you need more copies, please contact me at 202-208-4188.

* There is new direction on the management of bloodborne pathogens in NPS-50, chapter 36. Park managers should make every effort to provide funding to cover those employees who may be exposed to bloodborne pathogen or HIV viruses by virtue of their duties. Table A on page 6 of that chapter provides a listing of those occupations in which employees may be exposed to bloodborne pathogens.

If you have questions on any of these matters, please give me a call.

Jim Lee
RAD/WASO

CISD TEAMS

Leaders have been chosen for the national East and West CISD teams. Rick Obernesser, the chief ranger at Cape Cod, will head the Eastern team; Sherrie Collins of Grand Canyon will head the Western team. Both have excellent skills and have demonstrated leadership qualities in this field. The team leaders will choose the active members of the national team in early 1994 from applications already received. The mission and role and function statements for these teams will be developed in the near future. The annual training session for the national team will be announced this spring.

We'd like to thank the employees of the NPS for their support of this effort. Questions on the CISD teams or program should be directed to the team leaders or to me.

Bob Marriott
RAD/WASO

NEW UNIFORM COMPONENTS

Although the following was transmitted to all park uniform program administrators on November 8th, it appears that not everyone got the word about the new items which have been added to the program. Before listing the components, please note they WILL NOT BE AVAILABLE UNTIL AFTER THE NEW YEAR. Over coming weeks, we'll be building up inventory and developing order forms for these items. PLEASE advise your uniformed employees that they should await the order forms and that they should not call R&R with requests for these items.

* Hiking Boots - Earlier this year, we sent out a hiking boot needs assessment form to all field areas as an attachment to a uniform program update. That form was completed and returned by almost 300 employees in 130 areas and provided a wealth of information on what type of boots most employees wanted to see in the program. Since it's not currently possible to provide boots to meet all field needs, we sought a boot that would meet the majority of field requirements. The assessments revealed that most employees wanted a true hiking boot which would provide support for someone carrying a moderately-sized pack, and that it should be of good quality construction, all leather, durable but light, waterproof and in the \$100 to \$150 price range. A small work group subsequently met to evaluate a number of boots which met these criteria. We were assisted in the process by a recent Backpacker magazine review of medium-weight boots. After a number of discussions and contacts with manufacturers representatives, we narrowed the field to three boots - Technica's Acadia GTX, Merrill's Ultimate, and Vasque's Sundowner. We then selected eleven field rangers from parks throughout the system to test the boot - six women and five men, some of them seasonals and some permanents, all backcountry rangers. Most wore all three pair for the better part of two months (there were some sizing problems), then submitted reports to Hugh Dougher of North Cascades, the group's chair. Based on their evaluations and subsequent discussions with the manufacturers, we selected the Vasque Sundowner for the program. Vasque is a well-known and highly regarded company, and the Sundowner is a proven, quality, all-leather, Goretex-lined boot which comes in size ranges which exceed those of other manufacturers. It will sell for \$145.55. We think it will be an excellent addition to the program.

* Field Work Boots - The assessment and decision process was very similar for the field work boots. The needs assessment which was sent out to the field was returned by just under 300 people from 70 field areas. Steve Iobst of Rocky Mountain, who coordinated the evaluation, found that there was a consensus on what kind of boot should be sought - all-leather, lightweight, waterproof, unlined, breathable, eight to ten inch uppers, in the \$100 to \$150 price range. They also had to meet firefighting criteria. We again sought samples from a variety of vendors. Red Wing was approached on two occasions, but declined to participate. Whites were also excluded because of their cost. This time we found a single vendor - Georgia Boots - that we agreed met all the basic criteria. Paul Broyles of the Branch of Fire and Aviation affirmed that the models we chose were acceptable for firefighting. The boots were wear-tested by 26 men and women in a number of maintenance occupations and from a wide variety of areas and working environments. The average responses to evaluation criteria, which were on a 10-point scale, ranged from 7.6 to 8.8 - quite favorable. We accordingly decided to add this boot to the program. The women's version will sell for \$87.50; the men's for \$98.50.

* Brush Pants - Over the spring and early summer, about a dozen male and female maintenance employees from throughout the system conducted a wear test of brush pants - 100% cotton duck pants with double thicknesses on the front and below the knee on the back and a wider cut. Because the pants are thicker, there was some concern about warmth in southern areas, but the pants overall received a very positive evaluation - an average of about 8 on a 10-point scale, with several very enthusiastic comments written in. These pants will sell for \$33.75.

* Sox - Over the years, a number of employees have recommended that we add Thorlo sox to the uniform program because of their outstanding comfort and ability to wick moisture. We accordingly had several styles field-tested

this year by about 30 men and women from around the agency. The results were even more positive than those for the brush pants, with a high number of respondents rating the sox as 10 on a scale of 10. We are therefore adding four types to the program - a medium-weight hiking sock, a heavy-weight hiking or trekking sock, a dress crew sock, and a knee-high western boot sock (all current sox will remain in the program for the balance of the year, after which we'll conduct an evaluation to determine which should be retained). The sox and their prices are as follows:

* Dress Western boot sock	\$5.70
* Dress crew sock	5.90
* Hiking sock	6.35
* Trekking sock	8.95

Many, many thanks to all the employees who participated in these wear tests for taking the time to evaluate the components and provide us with thoughtful comments.

Bill Halainen
RAD/WASO

TELECOMMUNICATIONS

Some confusion has arisen about the different modes of distribution for the morning report and for CLEAR TEXT. The morning report is distributed on a special, "bankshot routing" system maintained by cc:Mail hub coordinators. It is available to any interested party, but requests to be added to the mailing list need to go to your servicing cc:Mail coordinator. CLEAR TEXT, on the other hand, is distributed via a mailing list developed and maintained within Ranger Activities. Requests for CLEAR TEXT, also available to any interested party, should be sent via cc:Mail to WASO Ranger Activities.

Incidentally, a separate mailing list is also maintained to distribute Word Perfect versions of the morning report. Many areas like receiving the document with typeface, margins, bold face, underlining, page breaks and other features already written into the document. Although recipients can always add those features, many deem it easier to receive a duplicate of the copy that's prepared and disseminated locally in the Department. Word Perfect files are generally not too much longer than the DOS versions that come out through the normal distribution system. Any office may get the Word Perfect version by sending a request via cc:Mail to WASO Ranger Activities.

Bill Halainen
RAD/WASO

SEMI-AUTOMATIC WEAPONS

On November 8th, a memorandum containing supplemental guidelines for implementation of semi-automatic pistol transition training and weapon issuance was sent out Systemwide. At that time, we said that information regarding authorized semi-automatic qualification courses would be sent out in the near future. That information will be sent via cc:Mail to all chief rangers and regional offices this week. Keep an eye out for it.

Paul Berkowitz
RAD/WASO

FIELD NOTES

Isle Royale

Chief Ranger Stu Croll will retire on January 1st after 32 years of federal service. The park is soliciting cards and letters from friends and fellow employees for a book they'll be putting together for Stu and his wife Ellen. Cards and letters should be mailed FLAT to the Superintendent's Secretary, Isle Royale NP, 800 East Lakeshore Drive, Houghton, MI 49931-1895. Contributions toward a gift may be sent to Jack Oelfke at the same address. If you'd like to attend his retirement dinner on January 8th, please contact the park for particulars (906-482-0986). [Linda Witkowski, AO, ISRO]

PARK EXCHANGE

Independence

The park is seeking a database application to track park-specific violators and warrants. If you can help, please contact Patrick Bowman, the park's assistant chief ranger, at 215-597-5437, or send a note to INDE Ranger Activities on cc:Mail. [Linda Lafferty, INDE]

Bryce Canyon

The park has been plagued by the same pipe safe thefts that Pete Armington (CURE) reported in the last CLEAR TEXT, but has found another source for shrouded padlocks - Nevada Lock Supply, 2969 S. Highland, Las Vegas, NV 89109. The contact there is Buddy Wright (702-737-0500). The locks are Master Lock Pro Series #6325 (2 3/8 inch body width, \$19) and #6321 (2 1/7 inch body width, \$17). The locks, which have a lifetime guarantee, have solid steel armored shrouds, boron alloy shackles with sheer strengths in excess of 10,000 pounds, and interchangeable cores so that they can be cored to a single key. They fit the parks pedestal and canister pipe safes and are working well. The price listed is wholesale and offered to all government agencies. [Charlie Peterson, CR, BRCA]

VACANCIES, REGISTER OPENINGS AND DETAILS

Indiana Dunes

The park is accepting applications for GS-462-4 firefighter positions. The employment period is from February 20, 1994 to August 6, 1994. Indiana Dunes is a good place to get fire training and experience; in 1993, we taught eight different "S" courses, suppressed 46 wildfires (more than 350 acres), and carried out five management ignited prescribed fires. The announcement, number 93-RT-06, closed on December 31st. Applications must be on an SF-171. For more details or a copy of the announcement, contact personnel, the park FMO, or the fire clerk at 219-926-7561. [Bill Gabbert, FMO, INDU]

Golden Gate

An "all sources" GS-081-7 firefighter/paramedic series announcement opened on December 9th and will close on December 20th. Paramedic certification with California or the National Registry is the screening element. The qualification for structural fire is FF I. For a copy of the announcement, please call 415-556-0245 ext. 233. [JR Tomasovic, GOGA (Presidio)]

Statue of Liberty

The park is recruiting law enforcement rangers for temporary, 180-day appointments. Announcement number T3193 for four GS-0025-05 rangers closes on December 27th. The EOD will be February 6th; termination will be sometime in October. The positions are designated drug-testing. Applicants must pass a background investigation and possess a commission or be commissionable. Housing may be available. Interested applicants must submit a 10-139 to the park personnel office. Further information may be obtained from the park communication center at 212-363-3260. [Scott Pfeninger, CR, STLI]

Voyageurs

The GS-401-11 resource management specialist position at Voyageurs is open and on the street. The announcement number is MWRO-93-7, and it closes on January 10th. Interested parties are strongly encouraged to apply. If you have any questions, please call Bruce McKeeman at 402-221-3475. [Bruce McKeeman, CR, VOYA]

CALENDAR

The following Servicewide or regionwide meetings are upcoming. Please let us know if you have an addition:

1/11-1/13 National Wildfire Coordinating Group (NWCG) meeting, Phoenix, AZ. Topics: Strategic plan, regular business. Coordinator: Jim Farrel, RAD/Boise.

1/14-1/21 NPS dive control board meeting, New Orleans, LA. Topics: First part of meeting in conjunction with Dive Equipment Manufacturers' Association (DEMA) meeting; second part will deal with NPS-4 review, Servicewide training, latest developments in dive procedures and technology, ICS, and other topics. Coordinator: Dan Lenihan, SCRUI.

1/25 Regional fee coordinators' meeting, Tucson, AZ. Topics: Update on fee program. Coordinators: Mark Forbes, John Townsend.

1/26-1/29 Servicewide uniform committee meeting, Tucson, AZ. Topics: 1993 uniform recommendations. Coordinator: Bill Halainen, RAD/WASO.

2/7-2/8 Interior Fire Coordination Committee (IFCC) meeting, Boise, ID. Topics: DOI strategic plan, regular business. Coordinator: Doug Erskine, RAD/Boise.

2/22-2/24 Regional fire management officers' meeting, Boise, ID. Topics: Annual fire management issues. Coordinator: Mark Forbes, RAD/PNRO.

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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SkyPager: Emergencies ONLY - 1-800-759-7243, PIN 2404843

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POST SCRIPT

Through an oversight, we neglected to add the following to the section on "VACANCIES, REGISTER OPENINGS AND DETAILS":

Bureau of Reclamation

The Bureau of Reclamation is seeking a detailee to work in their offices in Washington for the next three to six months on the following projects:

- * draft law enforcement authority legislation;
- * draft internal law enforcement policies, using NPS-9 as a model; and
- * draft general resource and visitor use regulations, using 36 CFR as a model.

The Bureau of Reclamation will pay all travel, per diem and base costs. If you're interested, please contact Bob Marriott in this office.