

CLEAR TEXT:
WASO Ranger Activities'
Electronic Newsletter

February 4, 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: February 18, 1994
Submission deadline: February 16, 1994

RANGER FUTURES

The implementation schedule for Ranger Futures has been revised and to some extent accelerated.

Director Kennedy will be signing a special directive establishing National Park Service policy on the management of the ranger occupation some time within the next few weeks. The directive will include the principles contained in the concept paper which you saw last summer and will establish the framework for managing the ranger profession from recruitment and entry to retirement.

Three generic position descriptions will be sent out with a transmittal letter to all parks later this month. The letter will contain a schedule for putting Ranger Futures into effect, a request that managers become familiar with the new position descriptions, and instructions on beginning parkwide position management reviews.

The next significant increment in this process will occur at the end of March, when a training session for regional implementation teams will be conducted. Each of these ten teams will be comprised of the regional chief ranger, regional chief of interpretation, a personnel management specialist, and a field representative. The teams will become conversant with Ranger Futures principles, the new position descriptions, and particulars regarding the implementation of the ranger career initiative.

In April, superintendents will begin position management reviews of all GS-025 positions within their areas in accord with conversion implementation instructions. Parks will be required to have comprehensive Ranger Future implementation plans with supporting personnel documentation completed by mid-June. The plan will include upgrades, reclassification to other series, and cost estimates for FY 94 and FY 95. Superintendents will receive a call for the FY 94 estimates sometime in April or May and a request for the FY 95 estimates in late June.

The final step will be to complete SF-52s and have them in effect in the first full pay period in July (PP 16).

All of these actions will apply to permanent rangers. The next conversion in

this sequence is for seasonal rangers and is currently in the works. This plan may be completed by the end of the summer, but more likely will be finished some time during the fall. At the same time, we will be developing a comprehensive plan for management of ranger careers; our intent is to complete this document and other supporting paperwork by year's end.

TWENTY-YEAR RETIREMENT

We are currently in the process of responding to OPM's interim regs regarding 6(c) retirement. We will be asking OPM to abandon all OPM 6(c) regulations entirely and instead delegate full authority for 6(c) determinations to the agencies. Individuals and groups interested in commenting on the interim regs should do so NOW, as they're due by February 7th. Meanwhile, we are awaiting action by OPM to formally authorize DOI to adjudicate PAST 6(c) claims.

If you're awaiting action on a claim for past coverage, you'll probably have to wait a bit longer. As far as we know, no action has been taken on any pending claim for the last few months due to the pending delegation. As far as we know, however, every denied claim that has been appealed to MSPB has resulted in an award of coverage to the plaintiff. We've also learned that a Fish and Wildlife Service refuge law enforcement officer has been awarded coverage. What's interesting about that case is that he was given credit for investigation as a component of the patrol function, which is a position we've held for some time.

At present, we anticipate and are actively supporting the resolution of all past claims and establishment of covered positions by the end of this fiscal year.

ENVIRONMENTAL CRIMES TRAINING

The National Park Foundation has awarded a grant to pay the costs of the environmental crimes training course scheduled for March 21st through the 25th at the FBI Academy in Quantico, Virginia. When the training announcement went out a couple of weeks ago, it stated that travel costs would have to be picked up by benefitting accounts. It will now be possible to cover those costs. Interested parties should contact Einar Olsen at RAD/NCR at 202-619-7065.

DIVING CONTROL BOARD MEETING

The Service's national diving control board (NDCB) met in New Orleans the third week of January in conjunction with a meeting of the Diving Equipment Manufacturing Association. Attending were Jim Lee (WASO) and regional dive officers Dan McFadden (USPP/NAR), Al Henry (MAR), Joel Tutein (SER), Chris Johnson (RMR), Stu Croll and Vern Hurt (MWR), Dan Lenihan (SWR), Dave Stoltz (WR), John Brooks (SCRU), Larry Murphy (CRM), and Gary Davis (NRM/NBS).

Some highlights of the meeting:

- * NPS-4, the diving guideline, was reviewed and updated. It will be printed and distributed at the end of March.
- * Dan Lenihan is the new NDCB chair; Al Henry is the vice chair.
- * The NDCB is recommending (through appropriate channels) that WASO Training offer advanced operational dive training courses as soon as feasible. Possible locations for such training would be Scrips Institute, Lake Mead, Channel Island or Key Biscayne.
- * The NDCB is recommending that current hazardous duty pay rates for

GS/WG be revised to address pay disparities, safety issues, and skills enhancement.

* The NDCB is recommending that a database be developed listing all NPS divers and their skill levels and abilities to make it easier to identify available resources.

* The NDCB is recommending a joint managers' meeting among Ranger Activities, Cultural Resources, Natural Resources, National Biological Survey, and Submerged Cultural Resources Unit to discuss Servicewide training and needs.

BOATING ISSUES

We are soliciting information and proposals from persons - particularly in the Service's design center - interested in making presentations at a roundtable discussion on a number of topics pertaining to NPS support of small boating opportunities, such as development of handicap access power boat launch ramp facilities and innovative methods for disposal of human waste in areas of heavy use.

The group requesting the presentations is the Organization for Boating Access (SOBA), an organization of state officials responsible for administering, financing, developing and/or maintaining recreational boating facilities. SOBA promotes these ends by providing a medium for the exchange of views and experiences; by fostering private, interstate and federal-state cooperation and coordination in boating facility design, construction and financing; by providing a forum for the exchange of views, ideas, concepts and experiences relating to all aspects of recreational boating facilities; and by increasing efficiency in the acquisition and construction of recreation boating facilities.

The following topics of discussion have been recommended:

- * Unique designs
- * Creative funding
- * Environmental challenges
- * Litter management
- * Barrier-free constructions
- * Developing needs assessments
- * Public information and outreach
- * Risk management

The forum will be held at SOBA's fall conference, which will be held at the Marriott Hotel in Salt Lake City between October 8th and 12th. The forum will consist of a panel presentation using slides, posters, design charts, and similar media. SOBA would prefer that some types of visual aids be employed and that handouts be available. Presenters need not stay for the entire conference.

All applicants should submit a one page proposal for a 30- to 50-minute presentation. For more information, contact Bob Marriott in RAD/WASO at 202-208-4206.

FIRE EXHIBITS

The WASO Branch of Fire and Aviation Management and National Capital Region are preparing several exhibits pertaining to fire in conjunction with other agencies in DOI. If you have photographs or items appropriate for such exhibits, we'd like to see them. We're also interested in information on fire exhibits and interpretive programs created in parks. Please send

photocopies of photos or other information to Dana Dierkes at this office or fax it to her at 202-208-5977. Materials should be clearly marked with the name of the person who sent it, his/her park's name, a phone number, and information on what the item depicts and where it originated (i.e. incident name, photographer's name). If we can use the actual photo or item, we'll give you a call. Please also ask your contacts in BLM, FWS and BIA for related material. We need to receive these items by March 15th. Any slides specifically depicting fire in a wildland/urban interface setting would be greatly appreciated. Please include the incident date and where it occurred. The slides will not be returned, but will instead be used in an S-205 ("Fire Operations in the Urban Interface") course - and possibly in an exhibit.

If you have any questions, call Dana at 202-208-5573.

FIELD NOTES

No listings.

PARK EXCHANGE

Canyonlands

The park is preparing a sweeping revision of its backcountry management plan. Group size limits, which could affect certain commercial operations, have become a controversial issue. The park is proposing to limit backpacking groups to six persons in the Island in the Sky and Needles Districts and to four persons in the Maze District. The National Outdoor Leadership School (NOLS) and Colorado Outward Bound (COB) are protesting these limits as being too restrictive to permit an economical operation and are arguing that commercial education groups such as theirs would be effectively eliminated from the park. The superintendent would like to coordinate with other parks where NOLS, COB or other similar groups are operating. What have you found to be effective group sizes? What problems have you encountered in dealing with educational institutions and large group sizes? Canyonlands is also proposing to eliminate all commercial use licenses and establish a limited number of concession permits if there is demand for guided backpack services. [Walt Dabney, Superintendent, CANY]

VACANCIES, REGISTER OPENINGS AND DETAILS

Boston Register Opening

OPM will be accepting applications for GS-025-05 park ranger (interpretation and protection) positions between February 1st and 15th. All applicants must submit the following:

- * SF-171, OPM-1170/17 or list of college courses;
- * BNS-16 supplemental qualification statement;
- * SF-15 application if claiming 10-point veteran's preference.

Applications should be sent to Boston Service Center, U.S. Office of Personnel Management, Thomas P. O'Neill Jr. Federal Building, 10 Causeway Street, Boston, MA 02222-1031. The register will be used to fill a minimum of two protection park ranger positions and will be good for a period of 90 days. [Jon Dick, CR, BOST]

New York Register Opening

OPM will be accepting applications for park rangers for the Statue of Liberty

between February 7th and 11th. The park will be hiring several PFT law enforcement rangers from this cert. The positions are for rotating shifts, working weekends and holidays. Interested applicants should send SF-171s, transcripts and supplemental forms to Statue of Liberty NM, Attention Jackie Martinez, Liberty Island, NY, NY 10004. The announcement number is 31-91. Supplemental forms are available from personnel at 212-363-7726. [Scott Pfeninger, CR, STLI]

White Sands

The park is advertising for a temporary GS-4 law enforcement ranger position. The vacancy announcement and application procedures can be obtained by calling 505-479-6124. [Bob Appling, CR, WHSA]

CALENDAR AND DIVISIONAL TRAVEL

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

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

2/7-2/11 TRAINING: Criminal investigator training course, Lake Mead, NV. Bob Marriott attending for RAD.

2/14-2/18 MEETING: Conservation Law Enforcement Association (CLEA), Prescott, AZ. Bob Marriott attending for RAD.

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

3/28-4/1 TRAINING: Regional Ranger Futures implementation teams, location TBA. Topics: Instructions on how to put the Ranger Futures initiative into effect. Coordinator: Jim Brady, RAD/WASO.

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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