

CLEAR TEXT:
WASO Ranger Activities'
Electronic Newsletter

September 27, 1994

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 - Field Notes; Park Exchange; and Vacancies, Register Openings and Details - are welcome and encouraged.

Next issue: October 7, 1994

Submission deadline: October 5, 1994

RANGER ACTIVITIES PERSONNEL CHANGES

The staffing picture in Ranger Activities continues to change. Here's how things look at present:

* Chris Andress, who has been acting chief of the Branch of Resource and Visitor Protection for several months, will be returning to his regular position as regional chief ranger in Mid-Atlantic Region on Friday. Dick Martin will fully resume his duties as branch chief.

* Dick Young is the Service's new special park use coordinator. Following the principles of decentralization, he will remain duty-stationed at Colonial NHP. He will be responsible for rights-of-way, memoranda of understanding and agreement, interagency agreements and special use permits. You can reach him by phone at 804-898-7846 or 804-898-3400, by his name - Dick S. Young - on cc:Mail, and by fax at 804-898-6025. Please see his update below for further info.

* Dennis Burnett, district ranger at Delaware Water Gap, has been selected as Tony Sisto's replacement as regs coordinator for the National Park Service. He formally EODs in early October.

* The uniform program manager position is currently in classification for review. Bill Sturgeon will continue to serve as acting program manager through the end of this week.

ENHANCED ANNUITY RETIREMENT - Bill Sanders

Late last week, the chief of Branch of Labor and Employee Relations Office in WASO sent the following memorandum to all regional personnel offices regarding updates of 6(c) claims. The full text of the memo and its attachment follows:

"Again, it will be necessary for CSRS employees who filed timely requests for individual service credit under 8336(c) (and yearly updates), to file a new update by September 30, 1994, to cover an additional year. It will also be necessary for any other CSRS employees who wish to have the Department consider coverage for their present position to file within one year of the date they entered that position.

"Employees who have been assigned to 6(c) covered positions, including employees recently reassigned to the covered protection benchmark positions, do not have to file yearly updates as long as they remain in those covered positions.

"Please forward the attached information to all interested employees within your region as soon as possible. Any questions may be referred to Marsha Lee of the Branch of Labor and Employee Relations on 202-208-4434."

Here's the text of the attachment:

DECLARATION

I, _____, state as follows:

1. I filed a timely request for individual service credit under 8336(c), followed by a timely submission of the appropriate documents to support that request.

2. I declare that I am performing the same duties that I described in that documentation as of the date of submission or that I described in my latest documentation if I have changed positions.

3. I understand that if at any subsequent time I am assigned to a position not covered by 8336(c), I will be required to file an additional request with my agency within one year of the effective date of the assignment.

4. In accordance with 28 U.S.C. 1746, I declare under penalty of perjury that the foregoing is true and correct.

Executed on the _____ day of _____, 1994.

Signature

Print full name

Current Address

Daytime Phone Number

SPECIAL PARK USES - Dick Young

The entire field of special park uses has been in flux recently, with task forces updating guidelines, regulations and fee structures, practically across the board. For this and other reasons, Dick Young is asking that regional special park use and rights-of-way coordinators contact him as soon as possible so he can establish a mailing list for distribution of the latest special park use and rights-of-way developments. Dick also notes that he has a limited budget to provide on-scene technical assistance and advice as needed.

REGULATIONS UPDATE - Dennis Burnett

* RS 2477: The comment period for the revised statute has been extended

to November 15th. The vast majority of comments are going directly to BLM.

* Climbing Regulations: A final draft of the climbing regulation is being reviewed in this office. The Department is interested in moving forward with the regulation, and it should clear DOI later this fall. There are still some issues that need to be ironed out by the NPS, BLM and the Forest Service regarding climbing in wilderness areas.

* 43 CFR 36: Russ Wilson is in town from to work on revisions to 43 CFR 36. This section affects only Alaskan parks; requests for comments have been sent to those areas.

* 36 CFR Part 2: The work group revising these regs will be meeting in Durango, Colorado, in October. Comments on the regs should be submitted to work group chair Bruce McKeeman at Voyaguers.

* Native American Issues: A small work group in SWRO is working on updates to 36 CFR 2.1 regarding the gathering of native plants and materials from ancestral grounds within park areas by Native Americans employing these materials for ceremonial and religious purposes. These revisions will be incorporated into the Part 2 update package.

* Solid Waste Management: The final rule on solid waste management sites in NPS areas (36 CFR 6) has been signed by Assistant Secretary Frampton. Once it clears the Office of Regulatory Affairs, it will be ready for printing in the Federal Register.

FEES UPDATE - Tim Stone

* The Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources passed the NPS fee legislation on to the floor of the Senate on September 21st. This legislation is basically the same as the amendments to the Land and Water Conservation Fund Act proposed by Representative Vento, chair of the House Subcommittee on National Parks, Forests and Public Lands. The full House Committee on Energy and Natural Resources meets on September 28th to consider the fee legislation. The bill contains many of original proposals for the NPS Entrepreneurial Management Reform Act of 1994, including raising individual entrance fees, raising the Golden Eagle and annual Park Pass caps, and a 50% unallocated return to the NPS of all recreation fee revenue collected above FY93 levels.

* Field audits of recreation fee programs and obligation of the 15% cost of collection funding have been completed for several parks throughout the system. The audits have shown that the parks are doing a fine job of collecting fees and that monies have been spent on direct costs of collection. The 15% monies have allowed parks to fully operate most of the entrance kiosks and provide a much greater park presence - disseminating park information, providing safety information such as the buffalo warnings in Yellowstone, discouraging activities that detract from park purposes, and allowing the visiting public to interact with someone in grey and green. It has become apparent that park fee program manager positions are needed in the larger parks to ensure that uniform fee programs and operating procedures are put into place. A shortage of FTEs and late receipt of funding advice on the 15% funding hindered many of fee collection programs from operating at full collection capacity.

* Mary Wilson, fee program manager at Rocky Mountain NP, has been on detail to Ranger Activities to help develop standard Pds for the cash clerk fee collector series and to develop a fee program manager PD for the park level. It's hoped that these Pds will be classified at the national level and be made available to park areas in the near future.

AIRCRAFT OVERFLIGHTS - Wes Henry

* The long-awaited NPS report to Congress on the overflight issue is in OMB awaiting final clearance prior to transmission to the Hill. A limited number of copies will be available immediately through this office. We hope to arrange a full-scale printing in the new fiscal year so that it can be distributed widely. Assistant Secretary Frampton will hold a press conference when it is released. It's expected that it will received quite a bit of media attention.

* The Park Service and FAA are jointly working on overflight problems at the Statue of Liberty. A public meeting will soon be held on the issue. The Service will be seeking a greater stand-off distance for sightseeing helicopters, which we believe are too close to the statue - they are a source of annoyance to visitors, are perceived as a safety concern to some, interfere with speech, and pose at least a small concern about possible structural damage.

* Deputy Director John Reynolds will represent the Service at NTSB hearings on safety in the air tour industry at hearings in Phoenix on October 11th and Honolulu on October 13th. The NTSB is concerned about both safety within the industry and FAA's piecemeal approach to finding solutions.

* The FAA will soon issue emergency SFARs (special federal aviation regulations) for Hawaii. The regs should offer some relief to national parks, but do not really deal with environmental issues since they are emergency safety regulations. There will be a 90-day comment period during which the NPS will be able to make comments.

* The FAA and NPS are still analyzing comments from their joint ANPRM (advance notice of public rule making) on commercial overflights. Further action may occur this fall.

WILDERNESS - Wes Henry

* The report from the 1993 wilderness task force meeting will be released this week. Deputy Director Reynolds and Assistant Secretary Frampton have been briefed on its contents. Its recommendations will be considered in the on-going restructuring plans.

* Director Kennedy will be a keynote speaker at the Sixth National Wilderness Conference in Santa Fe during the week of November 14th to the 18th. Deputy Director Reynolds will also attend, and Assistant Secretary Frampton will be the banquet speaker. It promises to be an excellent conference. "Scholarships" which cover the cost of registration are available to NPS personnel. For more information, contact Jim Walters in SWRO.

* Early this summer, Ranger Activities announced the inauguration of a wilderness awards program for the NPS. Categories of awards include wilderness education, maintenance leadership in wilderness, outstanding wilderness management program, and individual champion of wilderness management. The awards will be announced at the conference in Santa Fe. The original deadline for nominations was September 1st, but has been moved to September 30th. It will be further extended into October if anyone wishes to make a nomination. Contact me at 202-208-5211 if you're interested.

FIELD NOTES

No notes.

PARK EXCHANGE

No entries.

VACANCIES, REGISTER OPENINGS AND DETAILS

No entries.

DIVISIONAL TRAVEL - Dana Dierkes

**** SEPTEMBER ****

9/26 - 9/30 Spruill Meeting with committee on revisions to DM 350
9/27 - 10/2 Farrel Monitor transition ceremony, Golden Gate,
Presidio, CA

**** OCTOBER ****

10/3 - 10/7 Spruill Delivery of aircraft to Death Valley, CA
10/12 - 10/14 Sanders Ranger careers and law enforcement
Marriott credentials, Cape Hatteras, NC
10/15 - 10/20 Dickerhoof IACP Conference, Albuquerque, NM
10/15 - 10/21 Sanders Ranger Rendezvous, Durango, CO
10/24 - 10/28 Spruill DOI Pilot Workshop, Orlando, FL
10/24 - 10/28 Burnett 36 CFR, Part 2 work group meeting, Durango, CO
10/31 - 11/4 Sanders Western Region Chief Ranger's Conference,
Marriott Scottsdale, AZ

**** NOVEMBER ****

11/1 - 11/6 Dierkes Co-presenting "Wildland Fire: Friend or
Clark Foe?", National Association for
Interpretation Conference, Cleveland, OH
11/6 - 11/11 Dickerhoof VRAP Meeting, Yosemite National Park, CA
11/13 - 11/15 Dickerhoof Meeting with LES and SLETP personnel, FLETC,
Glynco, GA
11/14 - 11/18 Henry Wilderness Conference, Santa Fe, NM

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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