

Forward Header

Subject: April NRSS Monthly Report

ACCOMPLISHMENTS/SIGNIFICANT ACTIVITIES

VOLCO MINERAL REPORT COMPLETED. The mineral report on the validity of the Volco mining claims in Mojave National Preserve is complete. GRD submitted the report to a BLM Certified Review Mineral Examiner on 5 April. The report states that insufficient quantities or qualities of minerals on the claims do not constitute a discovery of a valuable mineral deposit. The report also contends that the Black Claims Volco Associated Placer mining claim was located improperly and cannot be amended after the date of withdrawal to correct the improper location.

PESTICIDE SOFTWARE The Pesticides Use Proposal System (PUPS) has been distributed to the field and Terry Cacek has been assisting parks and central office personnel in getting on line with the new intranet system. This system allows parks to request pesticides for specific projects electronically and allows IPM coordinators to review and comment on the projects. Non chemical action is also included in the memo field. Parks are getting on line with few problems. PUPS will enable us to accurately report pesticide use at the end of the year.

PROGRESS

EMAP-Western Pilot. At a major symposium in San Francisco, EPA discussed its new initiative of moving EMAP (Environmental Monitoring and Assessment Program) to sites in the western United States. The status of ecosystem health in areas under the jurisdiction of EPA Regions 8, 9, and 10 will be investigated. Much of the work will be the organization of existing environmental data into GIS format. During the plenary session of the symposium, EPA officials specifically mentioned the NPS/EPA index site (PRIMENet) network as an example of advanced understanding of ecosystem health in the West as a result of interagency cooperative programs.

LEVEL-1 WATER QUALITY INVENTORY STUDY PLANS. The Natural Resource Information and Water Resources divisions evaluated and approved Level 1 Water Quality Inventory Study Plans for 11 parks that were submitted in response to the FY99 call. Inventorying and Monitoring Program funding for the water quality inventories in FY99 will consist of \$194,282 for new inventories and \$50,342 for continuing inventories that were initiated in FY98, i.e., for a total of \$244,624. The primary objectives of the Level 1 field inventories are to ensure that the parks have a nominal inventory of some basic water quality characteristics and that those data are available in a data management system

consistent with park management needs.

JOSHUA TREE NP URGES BLM TO DECLARE WHEELING'S CLAIMS NULL and VOID. Joshua Tree National Park asked BLM to void a mining claim by John Wheeling in the park. Wheeling alleges he qualifies for the small miner waiver under BLM's maintenance fee regulations. However, claimants must conduct assessment work to qualify for the waiver. Assessment work in a park requires an approved 9A plan of operations. Wheeling has not obtained the plan and thus is not entitled to a waiver from the fees. NPS will continue to work closely with BLM to get this issue resolved.

Toxic Air Contaminants. At the meeting of the International Joint Commission, air quality modelers presented information from studies of deposition of toxics in the border region between the United States and Canada. Inventories of toxic emissions will be used for modeling the contributions by major sources to the Great Lakes and the Gulf of Maine. Acadia NP will be used as a receptor of mercury emissions transported from sources throughout North America. Researchers of the Lake Michigan Mass Balance Study prepared a manuscript on deposition of toxics in the Lake Michigan Basin. Sleeping Bear Dunes and Indiana Dunes national lakeshores were selected as receptors in the model.

PRIMENET UPDATE Investigators of USGS, Utah State University, and the universities of Utah, Denver, and Arkansas initiated a study of the effects of different stresses on terrestrial ecosystems, including cryptobiotic crusts and arid land grasses. They will apply varying amounts of nitrogen, rain, and UV exposures to experimental plots in and adjacent to the Needles section in Canyonlands NP. Jayne Belnap (USGS) is the site coordinator and co-PI. Data from the experiments will be applied to other Colorado Plateau parks.

Air Quality SUMMIT. Governor James Hunt (NC) hosted the first Governor's Summit on Mountain Air Quality in Asheville on 7 April. Governor Sundquist (Tennessee), Governor Barnes (Georgia), and representatives from the other five Southern Appalachian Mountains Initiative states (SC, VA, AL, KY, and WV) also attended. The goal was the establishment of a basis for a cooperative address of air pollution problems in the Southern Appalachians. There was also a signing ceremony of the Permitting Procedures Agreement, which defines the roles of agencies and permit applicants in the permitting process. North Carolina, Tennessee, and the USDI and USDA were signatories.

ADMINISTRATION OF SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH AND COLLECTING PERMITS. A software planning meeting was held in Fort Collins on 21-22 April to determine the functional requirements of a system designed to support the administration of scientific research and collecting permits. The major features of the system will allow the public to access permit application materials, complete the permit application form, and review special park conditions and instructions. Park research coordinators will be able to use the system to quickly process and track issued permits, denied permits, and revoked permits. NPS staff interested in helping to test the software as it is developed should send a CC:Mail message to Tim Goddard.

UPCOMING MEETINGS/TRAINING

NEPA TRAINING SCHEDULED - Joint NPS and FWS training on implementation of NEPA will be held at the National Conservation Training Center in Sheperdstown, WVA September 27 to 30th. An additional course has been scheduled for July and August in the West.

American Geophysical Union Meeting, 1-4 June in Boston The AGU will hold its spring meeting in Boston. Among the topics to be discussed in the Hydrology Section will be the role of acid rain in the northeast in the depletion of calcium in soils. This topic is also covered in a recent publication of the USGS-Water Resources Division, which can be found on the Web at <http://bqs.usgs.gov/acidrain>. Information on the meeting can be obtained at the

Web site: <http://www.agu.org>.

Wilderness Science in a Time of Change. The University of Montana and the Aldo Leopold Wilderness Research Institute will host a conference on the topic of Science and Wilderness on 23-27 May 1999 in Missoula, Montana. Information can be obtained from their Web site at www.umt.edu/wildscience.

NADP Sponsors to Meet in Boulder, Colorado. The National Atmospheric Deposition Program will hold its business meeting in Boulder at the Regal Harvest House on 3-5 May 1999. Several status reports on the 220-station wet deposition network will be delivered by agencies who sponsor sites. Agenda information is available on the NADP web site at <http://nadp.sws.uiuc.edu/>.

Partners in Amphibian and Reptile Conservation (PARC) The Savannah River Ecology Lab, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and the Fish and Wildlife Foundation are organizing a multi-sector conservation partnership to preserve amphibians and reptiles and their habitats. The organizational meeting will take place in Atlanta on 2-4 June. NPS will be represented at this meeting.

OTHER INFORMATION

NRAG MEETING The Natural Resource Advisory Group met in Shepardstown, WV at the National Conservation Training Center the week of April 19. Recommendations stemming from that meeting will be posted separately on the Natural Resources bulletin board and sent as an attachment to the next monthly report.

New UV Web Site. EPA announced the availability of UV data collected on the 14 PRIMENet sites on a new Web page: <http://www.epa.gov/uvnet>. This site is linked to the NPS-ARD Web site that describes the background and current effects studies as part of PRIMENet.

NATIVE PLANT EVENTS Directories were distributed to NPS IPM Coordinators, public affairs offices, cultural landscape representatives, and parks. If you are interested in receiving a directory, please contact Carol DiSalvo.

PROFESSIONAL MEETING ATTENDANCE/PAPERS/PRESENTATIONS

DEATH VALLEY GEOLOGIC MEETING A SUCCESS. More than 110 geoscientists from NPS, USGS, academia, and the Department of Energy attended a 3-day meeting on the status of geologic research and mapping in Death Valley National Park. Park staff and researchers networked extensively on projects and park access. A session on mapping uncovered many previously unknown maps, and USGS unveiled its digital index map of geologic maps of the park. The Program Center agreed to maintain the index map. For use by park interpretive staff, a USGS outreach geologist translated esoteric discussions of the park's geologic story.