

## SUPERINTENDENT'S ANNUAL REPORT

1991

### JOSHUA TREE NATIONAL MONUMENT

1991 has shown a continued rise in visitation, and is the second year to exceed 1,000,000 visitors. Joshua Tree can no longer be considered just a winter park, and it is now a place that people go for vacations through all seasons. Foreign visitors are using the park much more during the summer season.

Superintendent Rick Anderson retired November 30, 1990 after 14 years at Joshua Tree National Monument. Bob Griego (Administrative Officer, Sequoia-Kings Canyon National Park) was Acting Superintendent from December 1990 until March 9, 1991. Curt Mossestad (JOTR Chief of Maintenance) was Acting Superintendent from March 10th until June 29, 1991. David E. Moore became the new Superintendent on June 30, 1991.

The General Management Plan lacked direction, and on October 1st, Don Tiernan was assigned the position of Team Captain in place of Mary Magee. Don Tiernan was also the author of the Environmental Assessment for the Federal Highways Loop Road Package. This was the most controversial issue the park faced in 1991. During public meetings in November, all of the alternatives were considered to be flawed, and we will need an Environmental Impact Statement in 1992.

Another issue that was controversial during 1991, is the proposed development of the Eagle Mountain Landfill Project to the south of the Monument boundary. We formally commented to the Western Regional Office stating our concerns in relation to the Environmental Impact Statement. Region will combine all comments, and the National Park Service Comments will come from them.

We Celebrated the 75th Anniversary of the National Park Service and the 55th Anniversary of Joshua Tree National Monument at Park Headquarters on August 25, 1991. Many local residents attended the event. We continue to enjoy an excellent cooperation with the local communities and with the Marine Corps Air-Ground Combat Center (World's Largest Marine Base).

In October, an Operations Evaluation was conducted at Joshua Tree National Monument, and serious deficiencies were noted, and many solutions were recommended. The greatest deficiency that was noted was in the area of administration.

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**ADMINISTRATION**

This was an extremely difficult year for administration. FSS and AFS never seemed to reconcile, and even at the end of the calendar year, the status of funds are clouded.

The operations evaluation conducted in October observed a great many deficiencies in Administration that need to be corrected. Kathy Davis is a fairly new Administrative Officer. The Personnel Officer is a trainee and this position was vacant for seven months. As this park continued to grow in visitation, the workload also increased in personnel and financial functions during 1990.

**Property Management**

Property Management at Joshua Tree National Monument was basically non-existent in 1991. No inventory is current, and the division was unable to get rid of surplus or excess equipment that had been on hand for some time. Equipment is marked when it is received, but there is no tracking system or standard operating procedures for property management.

**Personnel**

Sixty eight employees are needed throughout the year to serve the park and visitor needs. This personnel workload was being handled by the Administrative Officer when the Personnel Officer position was vacant. Since Rebecca Patterson arrived as the PO (Trainee), our personnel service has increased to an acceptable standard.

**Procurement**

Purchase Orders were up over 100 from the previous year, and totaled 540 for FY-91. We requested an imprest fund increase to \$2,000 from \$400. Since we did not have an original request for the Third Party Draft, this was delayed. We submitted a request on July 7th, and it has not arrived at the park as of this date.

## Finance

The ONPS funding for FY-90 was 1,629,100, but 92,700 was withdrawn for annual assessments. In 1991, our final ONPS authorization was 1,545,676 plus an additional 348,733 for Fees (Operational Maint.). FIREPRO funding included: 42,200 for permanent staffing, 3,000 for Fairshare-Dispatch, and 62,100 for Presuppression. Drug Enforcement funding was 110,000, ARPA was 4,000, and Firearms Assessment was 16,000. VIP funding was 3,600.

### Cultural Resources Cyclic

8333-2500-301	Museum Curation	\$37,000
8333-2500-302	Archaeological Resource Assessment	65,400
8333-2501-302	Magnetic Media File	400

### Interpretive Exhibits Cyclic

8333-2501-290	Nature Trail Signs-Hidden Valley	8,600
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### Regular Cyclic

8335-2510-290	Blade Patch, Route 11	86,000
8335-2511-290	Replace Generators, Cottonwood	26,700
8335-2512-290	Replace Garage Doors, Pinto Wye	21,600
8335-2513-290	Paint Exterior of Buildings	64,400

### Repair/Rehabilitation

8335-2500-241	Hazardous Waste	3,400
8335-2500-291	R/R Potable Water System-Black Rock	29,700
8335-2518-291	YCC	10,500

### Natural Resources/Cyclic

8336-2500-187	Air Quality Monitoring	13,500
8336-2500-290	Guzzler Maintenance	2,300
8336-2502-182	Burro Control - FY-91	5,000
8336-7001-595	Nursery - Federal Highways Reveg.	123,800

Fees collected at Joshua Tree totaled over 250,000 and cost of collections were 125,800.

Quarters expenses were equal to the income.

## INTERPRETATION

### Interpretive Operations

Interpretive operations in 1991 increased slightly over 1990, due to the first substantial funding increase in ten years. Four permanent Interpreters were on the staff with only a short lapse after Maria Gillett transferred to Kenai Fjords and before Art Webster arrived from Abraham Lincoln Birthplace NHS. We were able to keep on all of the Seasonal employees hired in October of 1990, hired an emergency appointment seasonal Interpreter to help out at the Oasis Visitor Center during the spring and were able to use two fee collectors as intermittent part-time seasonal interpreters to help keep visitor centers staffed during the summer months. Three main visitor centers were operated during the year with the Oasis and Cottonwood centers open year round and Black Rock Canyon VC open from October through May. Interpretive talks were presented at four of the major campgrounds, averaging nine a week, and an average of about fourteen interpretive walks offered each week.

The following is a breakdown of programs offered and the number of visitors contacted:

Visitor Centers	146,586
Tours and Walks	1,550
Talks (NPS and VIP)	6,889
Environmental Education	3,192
Fee Interpretive Tours (Association)	1,423
Community Group Presentations (19)	573

A special employment note: During the fall of 1991, Supervisory Park Ranger Grady Arrington assisted with interpretive operations, helping out two days a week at the Oasis visitor center and assisting with computer entry of interpretive materials. Grady was left paralyzed following a serious accident over a year ago and this part time employment assisted him with rehabilitation. He transferred to Mammoth Cave in December, 1991.

### Cooperating Association

Other important temporary and part time seasonal employment assistance was also provided by nine Natural History Association employees. These included information/sales desk employees, the Environmental Education Specialist position, and three part time Historic Tour Guides for the Keys Ranch tours. The Association also provided funds for the stipend of a Student Conservation Association employee, allowing Joshua Tree to have two SCAs this year. During 1991 the Joshua Tree Natural History Association reached an all time high in gross income, topping \$204,000.00, with approximately \$41,000.00 going to Aide to the National Park Service. During the summer the Natural History Association sponsored a two week Environmental Education Camp at Black Rock Campground.

## **Volunteers In The Parks**

The Interpretive Division continued to coordinate the VIP program during 1991 and signed up 146 active VIPs during the year, who had contributed 23,575 hours as of October, 1991. Approximately 20 Volunteers in the Parks worked directly for Interpretation, plus 2 Student Conservation Association Aides (one funded by the SCA and the other funded by the Natural History Association), and a Student Youth Employment Training program worker. Weekly evening programs were presented by a VIP at Black Rock Campground, twice monthly campfire talks were presented at Jumbo Rocks by a VIP, once a month star talks were presented at Hidden Valley by a local Astronomy club and once a month star talks were presented at Cottonwood campground by another VIP, who also gave interpretive walks. VIPs were used almost exclusively by Interpretation at the Black Rock visitor center. Campground Hosts were assigned for various work periods at five of the monument campgrounds during the year, and the Joshua Tree Search and Rescue team also utilized over 20 VIPs this year.

### **Interpretive Training**

Division Personnel received some excellent training opportunities during the year.

- Maria Gillett attended Interpretive Skills IV, 80 hours.
- Jimmy Pritchett attended FLETC, ten weeks.
- Bill Truesdell, Rosie Pepito, and VIP Howard Newman attended a 3 day Cultural Resources of the Desert Seminar at Anza Borrego Desert State Park.
- Rosie Pepito attended 40 hour ARPA course.
- Bill Truesdell was assigned to 2 1/2 month Acting Superintendent Detail at Chiricahua National Monument and Fort Bowie National Historic Site.
- Carol Peterson attended NPS Education Program Training in San Francisco.
- Truesdell and Peterson attended Drug Free Workplace training at the Marine Corps Base.

### **Interpretive Projects**

During 1991 a Visitor Use Survey was completed for Joshua Tree. It was coordinated by Supervisory Park Naturalist Carol Peterson, and carried out by Margaret Littlejohn of the CPSU at the University of Idaho.

The Indian Cove Nature Trail relabeling project was completed in 1991. Text and artwork for Hidden Valley, Barker Dam and Cottonwood nature trails were also done, with the materials for Barker Dam sent to the anodized aluminum sign company. Funds have been obligated and Cottonwood and Hidden Valley materials will be sent in early 1992.

New Japanese and Dutch language translations were done this year and are available for copying. Printing will be accomplished when funds are available.

The Harpers Ferry Center provided funding to repair the mammal adaptation exhibit in the Oasis Visitor Center.

Interpretive staff members assisted with several planning efforts, including road planning, wayside exhibit planning and General Management planning.

#### **Awards**

Park Naturalist Jimmy Pritchett received a Superior Performance Award on 1/23/92.

Supervisory Park Naturalist Carol Peterson received a Superior Performance Award on 7/30/91.

#### **CULTURAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT**

##### **Management**

Cultural Resources Management Plan Update submitted on 1/31/91, with Project Statement JOTR-C9, Establishing a Cultural Resources Management Program for Joshua Tree the number one priority. During 1991 Chief Interpreter Bill Truesdell developed 19 additional Cultural Resources Project Statements and matching Development Study Package 10-238 forms.

Chief Interpreter Truesdell worked with WRO Chief of Cultural Resources Tom Mulhern and Eric Delony, WASO, Historic American Engineer Record Chief, to initiate the first year of a two year HAER survey in Joshua Tree. A five person team came to Joshua Tree during the summer and completed the survey and documentation of the Wall Street Mill, Pinto Wye Arastra, and the Keys Ranch single stamp mill.

Chief Interpreter Truesdell worked with Roger Kelly, WRO Archeologist, and Claude Warren, University of Nevada Las Vegas Anthropology Department Head, to get an Archeological Survey started in Joshua Tree this year. Museum Registrar Rosie Pepito also worked closely with Dr. Warren and Joan Schneider from the University of California, who is the on site coordinator of the survey.

The Museum Register Position Description was rewritten and sent to the Regional Office where it was reclassified to be a Museum Curator(Archeologist), who will serve also as Monument Cultural Resources Specialist.

## **Research**

The University of California at Riverside Anthropology Department completed the Human Remains and Grave Artifacts report for Joshua Tree.

Dr. Claude Warren began a research project on the work of Elizabeth Campbell.

Adell Schroth, UCR continued her work under an ARPA permit at the Pinto Basin Early Man site.

## **Museum Collections**

Two full time Museum Registrars worked on the Joshua Tree collections this year, providing day to day monitoring, preservation work, continuing to catalog the backlog of artifacts, completing the annual Random Sample and Controlled Property Inventories, and assisting with the review of research and planning documents.

During the year Museum Registrars Pepito and Yanuchi completed the revision of the Scope of Collection Statement.

Also during the year Cultural Resources funding was available for a Collections Management Plan to be written, under the guidance of WR Museum Curator Diane Nicholson.

## **Native American Contacts**

On January 18, 1991 Acting Superintendent Griego and Chief Interpreter Truesdell met with members of the 29 Palms Band of Mission Indians, a Chemehueve Band. We discussed General Management Planning efforts that are underway and the need for Native American input as we had been discussing with other Native American groups in meetings in November and December of 1990.

## **VISITOR PROTECTION**

### **Visitation**

Joshua Tree National Monument experienced an increase of 12.0% in visitation for 1991 bringing our yearly total visitation to 1,150,026. Overnight use (camping) was up 8.8% bringing the yearly total to 251,573 overnight stays in our campgrounds.

This increase in visitation was reflected in our law enforcement, emergency medical services, search and rescue, and backcountry use statistics for 1991. A breakdown of the more significant statistical activities is listed on the following page.

### Search and Rescue

Search and Rescue Missions Performed	36
Man Hours Utilized	807
Costs	\$13,016.00

### Law Enforcement

Burglaries	12
Larcenies	39
Part I Offenses	55
Vandalism to Park	39
Weapons Offenses	29
Drunk Driving Arrests	4
Arrests for Drug Use or Possession	113
Drug Cases	134
Value of Drugs Confiscated	\$6,704,000
Wildlife Poaching	3
ARPA Cases	19
Total Part II Offenses	292
Motor Vehicle Accidents	43
Persons Injured in MVA's	23
Property Damage MVA	\$110,350
Number of Case Incident Reports	752
Number of Violation Notices Issued	956

### Fire Activities

Number of Wildland Fires	6
Number of Acres Burned	8
Number of Fire Responses	27

The Black Rock Interagency Fire Center construction was completed, and this now shelters three engines. The work was mostly accomplished by the interagency fire crews.

### Special Uses

Film Permits Issued from June 1991	52
Commercial Use Licenses	27

\* Protection Division began administrating film permits in June 1991 and Commercial Use Licenses (now Special Use Permits) in November 1991.

### Personnel

Black Rock District Ranger Grady Arrington transferred to Mammoth Caves NP, Kentucky. Tandra Waldrop was hired as the Protection Division Administrative/Fiscal Clerk. Long term seasonal Ranger Gary Youngblood accepted a permanent position at Olympic NP.



## **MAINTENANCE**

### **Maintenance Operations**

During 1991, maintenance completed the five cyclic/repair-rehab projects listed below. All work was accomplished through contracting except for the day labor project for the water line at Black Rock.

- Blade Patch Route 11	\$86,032
- Replace Generators	35,000
- Replace Garage Doors	28,000
- Paint Building Exteriors	58,500
- Black Rock Water Line Rehab	30,000

Several other day labor projects were completed such as fencing at three Mission 66 quarters at Cottonwood, the relocation of the radio repeater from Paxton Mountain to Copper Mountain, a hazardous waste project completed at Pinto Wye, installation of a new Balley building for communications on Bell Mountain and installation of nature trail signs at Indian Cove by the YCC. Five YCC employees completed the 1991 summer accomplishing projects such as trail maintenance, dam vegetation removal, and sign installation.

The monument entered into an agreement with the Yucca Valley Water District for controlling the water to the 100,000 gallon water tank at Black Rock.

We received a new road grader (CAT), which was sent to Chiricahua National Monument for one year. We also received a John Deere 210 Fresno Loader on equipment replacement.

Caesar Garcia completed his MAAP assignment and was converted to career status. The Chief of Maintenance was Acting Superintendent for over three months from March to June 1991.

### **Cooperative Activities**

Many cooperative activities in the monument involved Maintenance. The REI donation of \$4,000 to rehabilitate the old scout trail head and road into Keys Ranch. The annual clean-up day in April sponsored by the Access Fund. Two parades - with preparations for the "Grub Stake Days" in the spring, and "Pioneer Days" in the summer. The Marine Base personnel were utilized to clean up Adobe Road. Many interagency meetings with federal, state and local governments were attended and input provided. General Management Planning input was provided by all maintenance employees, and also input concerning wayside exhibits in conjunction with Federal Highway planning efforts. Site evaluation for collections storage with WRO architects and planners.

Keys Ranch maintenance work that was accomplished by VIPs were supported by the maintenance staff.

In CY91 Joshua Tree was successful in implementing a Memorandum of Understanding with the Sheriffs of San Bernardino and Riverside Counties. This agreement gave the commissioned rangers California State Peace Officers Authority. This authority gave the rangers greater latitude in prosecuting offenders under the state law. Numerous other benefits were derived from this agreement along with the hope of a better opportunity to secure concurrent jurisdiction in 1992. March 2, 1992

## **NATURAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT**

### **Planning General Management Plan**

The development of the General Management Plan has been a long and slow process spanning several years. Because apparently no Superintendent's Annual Report was prepared in 1990. It is probably important to recap the development of this important planning process from its inception. This is not meant to represent a detailed chronicle of every event but a general overview with dates noted.

The first visit to the monument by the GMP team occurred on the week of August 22-25, 1989. At this time Mary Magee was the Team Leader and the objective was to familiarize Mary with the park and its resources, and develop written statements of park purpose, significance, management objectives and issues. The outcome of this initial meeting was the production of a draft Task Directive prepared on September 15, 1989.

In May of 1990, the full team under Mary's direction along with Dan Olsen from WRO met with monument staff to review the Task Directive, conduct public scoping meetings and develop management alternatives for the GMP. In December 1990, a copy of the draft Task Directive was sent for review to the State Historic Preservation Officer for review. Also in December, review of the draft Task Directive was completed by WASO, WRO and the monument staff with comments provided to the GMP team leader.

In January 1991, in support of the GMP, the design of a visitor use survey was agreed on. The survey was conducted in April 1991.

February 13, 1991, Team Captain Magee and a new interpretive planner, replacing Bart Young who had left the team, met with the monument's resources chief and a group known as the Interagency Natural Areas Coordinating Committee. This group was made up of managers from adjacent land managing agencies such as the Bureau of Land Management, Department of Defence, California Department of Fish and Game, etc. The GMP team had mailed questionnaires to these agencies in an attempt to gain an understanding of how these agencies saw the monument as a portion of the larger public lands in the California desert.

At this same time, design of the next road reconstruction project for park route 12 was being developed. Due to perceived resources impacts from the initial design, alternative for reconstruction designs had to be developed. Due to the implications for possible management issues associated with the GMP, a combined meeting of highway designers, GMP team, and monument staff was conducted in March of 1991. The primary purpose of the meeting was to look at interpretive opportunities with alternate road designs. The GMP team interpretive planner proposed road design features to accommodate future interpretative efforts identified in the draft GMP alternatives.

In September, 1991 a meeting was held at monument headquarters between monument staff and the GMP team captain Magee along with Don Tiernan the team's resources management planner. At this meeting it was announced that Mary would be leaving the position of team captain and that Don would assume the role. As of January 1992, Don Tiernan was still GMP team captain. 1991 closed with little progress on the plan and the teams composition uncertain.

#### **Planning Highways Reconstruction**

Highway planning in 1990 included the completion of the first draft of an environmental assessment for the next proposed phase of reconstruction of park route 12. This section would connect with the terminus of the last reconstruction package near the intersection with the Geology Tour Road, and proceed west to connect with another earlier package that ended near Quail Springs Picnic Area. The route would also include the spur road from Cap Rock to Key's View. The initial review by park staff, WRO staff and planners from San Bernardino and Riverside Counties indicated significant impacts to large numbers of old Joshua Trees adjacent to the existing roadway. Based on these preliminary reviews, it was decided to ask the Denver Service Center planners for alternative designs which could avoid excessive impacts to Joshua Trees.

In December 1990, a design team conducted a field review of a new design alternative that included a one way road design using existing road corridors. This alternative became know as the Loop Road and was selected by WRO as the preferred alternative in the revised draft environmental assessment.

A final draft environmental assessment was prepared in August 1991 for public review and comment. Prior to the release of the environmental assessment, special interest groups such as rock climbing organizations heard rumors about the loop road and developed a campaign to oppose the road on the grounds of inconvenience for access to climbing areas and environmental impacts. This caused significant controversy and misunderstandings about the development of the design alternative and the objectives for its development. Two public meetings were conducted on November 6 and 7, and controversy continues with design alternatives.

At meeting between the monument's superintendent, WRO and DSC staff it was decided to prepare a full Environmental Impact Statement for the road design alternatives. The EIS is in progress with an expected initial draft to be released by October of 1992. Due to the delays in compliance, and subsequent cuts in the Federal Highways operating budget, the next road reconstruction package will mostly likely be delayed until FY95.

### **Cooperative Activities**

Cooperative activities have been diverse and extensive. Interagency cooperations includes active participation in organizations such as the Interagency Natural Areas Coordinating Committee. This committee meets quarterly to address issues of common concern such as cooperative management efforts to protect biological diversity. Members of the monument's staff are involved in a variety interagency groups ranging from specialty committees such as mining reclamation reviews to general groups such as desert area managers meetings.

Cooperative agreements have included contracts between Lake Mead National Recreation Area, California State Parks, and the U.S. Forest Service with our Center for Arid Lands Restoration nursery for production of native plants for restoration efforts on other agency lands. Over the past two years, the Center has cooperated with four other federal agencies, three state agencies, ten other NPS units, a dozen private cooperations and many different schools, colleges and universities.

A cooperative agreement with the State is providing analysis of potentially hazardous materials in old mining waste.

Like interagency, cooperation with private industry has also been extensive and beneficial for monument operations. These ventures have included donations from Recreation Equipment Inc. for the restoration of an old. The financial contribution was also accompanied by a donation of labor to facilitate planting nursery stock. Other private cooperation included an arrangement between Apple Computers, Magellan Global Positioning Systems, and others to create an innovative monitoring and data management system for the desert tortoise. The results of this program have received national recognition.

### **Natural Resources Management Operations**

Several issues with potential significance as threats to monument resources developed in 1990 and 1991. One of the largest, in terms of potential threat and involvement for monument staff, was the proposal to create the world's largest landfill in the old mining pits, owned by Kaiser Steel, less than two miles from our south boundary in the Eagle Mountains.

Issues identified through the compliance process that could adversely affect the monument include: ravens, air quality, bighorn sheep, bats, blowing trash, noise, smell, visibility and others. Comments have been provided on the draft Environmental Impact Statement by NPS specialists.

The project is highly controversial but enjoys wide support in Southern California's metropolitan areas from which the trash will be hauled by rail and trucks to the open pits. At this point the projects looks likely to be permitted. Our goal is to obtain as many concessions for mitigation of what will be numerous impacts to our natural resources.

Another significant event in 1990 was the listing of the desert tortoise as a threatened species. The monument not only has population of tortoise, at the present time the monument represents the only tortoise habitat protected by wilderness legislation. Unfortunately, our knowledge of tortoise in the monument is severely lacking. Major proposals for tortoise inventories, monitoring and research have been prepared. While funding has been minimal, significant accomplishments have been made through the use of volunteers and cooperative programs with other agencies and private industry (see section on cooperative activities).

Other programs that saw significant accomplishments during this period include the air quality monitoring and vegetation management programs. Air quality monitoring was significantly improved by innovations in solar power supplies for the lost horse site, as well as additional monitoring equipment associated with visibility analysis being added as part as the MOHAVE project to look at visibility issues throughout the Southwest. In 1991 the monument's ozone monitoring station was officially designated as one of the long-term network sites to be maintained by the NPS.

Vegetation management improved greatly over these two years primarily through the development and expansion of the native plants nursery operation. In 1991, the nursery program was expanded under the auspices of the Man in the Biosphere program. As a World Biosphere Reserve unit, we adopted the concept of an interdisciplinary, multiple agency "Center" with the primary objective of fostering restoration at Joshua Tree and providing information on restoration of Mohave desert vegetation systems to all agencies and private industry interested in this problem. The program is know as the Center for Arid Lands Restoration. This program has received national as well as international attention. A cover story article on the Center is due to appear in the journal, " American Nurseryman" in April of 1992. Additionally, the nursery facility was more than doubled in size in 1991 through funds received from Lake Mead Federal Highways project dollars. The nursery now has the capacity to produce approximately eight to ten thousand plants all accommodated under shade and on automated watering systems.