



April 3, 2003 (Report on the January 28 and 30 Meeting of the National Leadership Council)

NLCJournal

“In a democratic society such as ours, it is important to understand our past, the journey of liberty and justice that is our story. The National Park Service plays an important role telling this story and in growing public awareness and appreciation of our history. We make available to our citizens—to citizens of all the world!—historic places of defining importance to the nation, places which allow us uniquely to take the measure of our history. Our mission is to preserve not only America’s heritage, but also public memory about it.”

—Fran Mainella, Director, National Park Service

Director Fran Mainella opened the January 28-30 meeting of the National Leadership Council (NLC) in Washington, D.C., thanking NLC members and field personnel for their responsiveness in meeting the demands of a growing organizational workload. She said the increased pace of activities is a reflection of interest within the Department and the Congress in NPS issues, and it is important to acknowledge and provide answers to inquiries and requests as rapidly as possible. She reiterated her strong regard for the dedication of, and outstanding work performed by, National Park Service employees, and said the NPS workforce has a much-deserved reputation for public service.

The Director reported that, at the time of the meeting, the FY 2003 NPS budget was still in play, as Congress was continuing to debate the entire Federal budget. She stated the Service should be prepared for possible reductions in its budget as a final outcome of these deliberations. She said she and Deputy Directors Randy Jones and Don Murphy were interviewing candidates for the positions of Associate Director for Resource and Visitor Protection and Associate Director for Partnerships, Interpretation and Education, Volunteers and Outdoor Recreation. She anticipated selections would be made in the coming few weeks, which would then be

forwarded to the Executive Review Board for processing. She expected that appointments would be announced in the spring.

The Director expressed disappointment that a January 26 edition of the *L.A. Times* had inaccurately characterized National Park Service plans associated with the Administration’s competitive sourcing initiative. The article reported that Secretary Norton had earmarked 11,807 full-time NPS positions for privatization. Saying this was not true, the Director stated that the 2002 FAIR Act (Federal Activities Inventory Reform Act) mandates that each agency identify a list of commercial functions it performs—i.e., those that are not inherently governmental. She said the Department is requiring each bureau to prepare (1) a plan evaluating these functions for efficiency and, (2) where appropriate, offer them to the private sector for competitive bidding. The list of NPS commercial functions FTEs is 11,524, the number of positions the Service is studying through FY 2003 and 2004 is only 1,700. She stated that studies are being done not to eliminate positions, but to determine the most cost-effective way to provide the services of those functions.

Reforming Park Law Enforcement Programs

The July 2002 report prepared by the Secretary’s Law Enforcement Review panel, entitled “Recommendations to the Secretary for Implementing Law Enforcement Reforms,” requires the NPS to reform its Servicewide law enforcement program.

- National Leadership Council
- Fran Mainella
 Director
- Randy Jones
 Deputy Director
- Donald W. (Don) Murphy
 Deputy Director
- Lisa Mendelson
 Associate to the Director
- Sue Masica
 Associate Director
 Park Planning, Facilities,
 and Lands
- Bruce Sheaffer
 Comptroller
- Teresa Chambers
 Chief
 United States Park Police
- Pat Tiller
 Acting Associate Director
 Cultural Resources
- Michael (Mike) Soukup
 Associate Director
 Natural Resources
 Stewardship and Science
- Richard (Dick) Ring
 Associate Director
 Administration, Business
 Practices, and Workforce
 Development
- Brian O’Neill
 Acting Associate Director
 Partnerships, Interpretation
 and Education, Volunteers,
 and Outdoor Recreation
- Karen Taylor-Goodrich
 Acting Associate Director
 Resource and Visitor
 Protection
- Robert L. (Rob) Arnberger
 Regional Director, Alaska
- Karen P. Wade
 Regional Director
 Intermountain
- Ernie Quintana
 Acting Regional Director
 Midwest
- Terry R. Carlstrom
 Regional Director
 National Capital
- Marie Rust
 Regional Director
 Northeast
- Jon Jarvis
 Regional Director
 Pacific West
- William (Bill) Schenk
 Regional Director
 Southeast

The National Leadership Council (NLC) is a forum to unify the National Park Service and to provide consultation and strategic leadership on major policy and program issues.

To address the Secretary's directives, Director Mainella established the Protection Ranger Leadership Board (PRLB) and instructed the group to develop reform implementation strategies. Karen Taylor-Goodrich, Acting Associate Director for Resource and Visitor Protection, reported that considerable progress had been made to package a draft strategy. When completed it will be submitted to the PRLB and the National Leadership Council for review and comment. She said it will address a broad range of subject matters, including: program leadership; the structure for a reporting system for NPS special agents; a centralized management system; funding and budgetary oversight; staffing requirements and models; officer safety; certification of collateral duty and seasonal commissioned staff; establishing a security manager position; internal affairs; establishing a recruitment process; improving workforce diversity; and reporting and data management systems. She said that at the time of the NLC meeting revisions were being made to some of these components and a final draft strategy would be circulated soon.

Visiting with Deputy Secretary of the Interior J. Steven Griles

Director Mainella welcomed Deputy Secretary Steve Griles to the NLC meeting, saying he was good friend of the Service who has proven himself knowledgeable and very supportive of the NPS. Deputy Secretary Griles in turn commended the Director for her energetic presence in Department deliberations on Park Service matters. He observed that increased funding for park roads is expected this year from the Federal Highway Administration, and he encouraged the Service to ensure that these funds are expended in a timely fashion. He called for active efforts to develop partnerships, saying that appropriated funds and other NPS revenues will never be enough to get the things done the Service wants. He stressed the importance of implementing the Secretary's law enforcement directives and acknowledged the considerable efforts underway to reform the NPS law enforcement program. The Deputy Secretary said that with war being the Administration's current priority and

the economy in transition, budgets will be tight for some time and the Service must be creative in pursuing its purposes.

Developing and Broadening the NPS Workforce

The National Park Service is required to develop a workforce strategy as part of the Department's Strategic Human Capital Management Plan, a Presidential management initiative. At its November meeting, the NLC provided suggestions for preparing a strategy, and asked for a full program briefing in January, when plans would be well-formulated. Responding to this request, Dick Ring, Associate Director for Administration, Business Practices and Workforce Development, and Alex Young, Chief of the Denver Administrative Program Center, outlined a proposed framework for the workforce strategy and a timetable for developing it. The NLC discussed suggested areas of focus, attaching particular importance to: programs and services for park visitors; administering parks as places for learning, acquiring a broadly diverse NPS workforce, ensuring the security of parks, securing adequate resources to manage an increased number of national park units, the loss of institutional knowledge as the workforce changes; and coping with impacts on park resources from development pressures outside park boundaries. The NLC emphasized the need for skills in business, partnership development, and conflict management and dispute resolution.

Director Mainella spoke of the nation's changing complexion and the NPS goal to enhance workforce diversity. She said it is essential that the NPS include more minorities to be representative of the emerging nation, and that having a workforce that looks like America helps the Service remain relevant and attract a broader representative range of park visitors. The NLC reaffirmed its commitment that the workforce strategy will include a strong action component to enhance diversity. Bill Gwaltney, Assistant Regional Director for Workforce Enhancement, Intermountain Region, and J. T. Reynolds Superintendent, Death Valley National Park, proposed a comprehensive, broad-based "menu"

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of possible approaches, among other things addressing outreach, marketing and recruitment; hiring; employee mentoring and training; retention and promotion.

Contributing to the discussion was Roger Rivera, President of the National Hispanic Environmental Council (NHEC), a national non-profit membership organization which seeks to educate, unite, and engage the Hispanic community on environmental and sustainable development issues. Rivera called particular attention to recruitment opportunities that national organizations offer through their annual meetings. He identified the NHEC's April 5-8 Sustainable Energy and Environmental Conference in Albuquerque as one such excellent venue. Director Mainella responded by directing every region to participate in the conference, bringing to it actual vacancies that could be filled.

The NLC discussed the variety of approaches offered in the menu identified above, agreeing unanimously that action on a broad front was required. The Director commended Gwaltney, Reynolds and the team preparing the presentation, saying that a package of approaches would be included in the workforce strategy, and management would be held accountable for results. She said that action to broaden workforce diversity is not a programmatic "initiative," but good "mainstream business." The Director asked NLC members to provide Deputy Director Randy Jones with specific comments on the menu options, and she instructed the diversity enhancement team to work closely with the group overseeing development of the workforce strategy. It was agreed that a draft of the strategy would be completed and ready for NLC review in May.

Communicating with the Congress

The NLC heard from Jeff Taylor, Assistant Director, NPS Office of Legislative and Congressional Affairs, who spoke about leadership changes and possible legislative activities in the 108th Congress. The NLC discussed changes in the membership of key committees and reviewed NPS legislative proposals that will be submitted

to the Congress. The Director emphasized the crucial importance of regular communications with Members of Congress, and committee and congressional office staff, and she described plans to meet with committee chairmen and new members. She asked that regional directors instruct all superintendents to begin immediately keeping the Office of Legislative and Congressional Affairs informed about special events taking place in their parks, as Members of Congress might be interested in attending. It was agreed that Taylor would develop for consideration a common format for congressional visits, highlighting key NPS messages and success stories.

Planning for the World Parks Congress

The NLC welcomed Dr. Kenton Miller, Vice President, International Development and Conservation, World Resources Institute, who briefed members on the status of planning for the World Parks Congress (WPC), September 8-17, 2003, in Durban, Republic of South Africa. Convened by the World Conservation Union (IUCN), the World Parks Congress meets every ten years as the major global forum for protected areas. Dr. Miller reported that the WPC offers a unique opportunity to take stock of protected areas; provide an honest appraisal of progress and setbacks; and chart the course for protected areas over the next decade and beyond. He said the theme of this WPC, "Benefits Beyond Boundaries," is intended to stimulate broader thinking about protected areas; the opportunities, the values and the beneficiaries in a rapidly changing world. Issues on center stage in Durban will be the role of protected areas in alleviating poverty; how protected areas adapt and anticipate global change—biophysical, economic, and social; the place of protected areas as part of our sustainable future; and the contribution of protected areas to security. He said almost exponential growth in the number of protected areas and universal acceptance of the protected area concept throughout the world represents a tremendous commitment by countries to protect their biodiversity and heritage so that it may be passed onto future generations. In closing Dr. Miller noted that the United States

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has been a key player in supporting the work of the IUCN, and the National Park Service a leader in the success of the world parks movement.

National Park Service/National Park Foundation Partnership

Acting Associate Director Brian O'Neill and National Park Foundation (NPF) President Jim Maddy reported on discussions and developments since the September 2002 joint NLC and National Park Foundation Board meeting. It was proposed that a top-level NPS/NPF partnership committee be established to provide strategic direction and oversight to the relationship, and a draft committee charter was distributed to NLC members for comment. It was observed that the partnership between the NPS and NPF has matured and grown in complexity and the interaction between them has become increasingly complex and vital. The need for effective collaboration and communication at the strategic and executive level is fundamental to the future expansion and success of the partnership. It was reported that the NPF envisions a near-term future where it can raise \$100 million annually to support the National Park Service. To help realize this goal it is essential to structure closer communications. O'Neill said the committee's brief extended only to the NPS/NPF relationship, whereas the NPS Partnership Council deals with the broader field of all NPS partnerships. Subject to revisions in the charter based on input from NLC members, there was agreement to create the committee, which is expected to meet this spring.

Joint Ventures: Partners in Stewardship

Peggy O'Dell, Harpers Ferry Center Associate Program Manager, provided an update on planning for the November 2003 *Joint Ventures: Partners in Stewardship* conference in Los Angeles, November 17-20. The broad goal of the conference is to spotlight partnerships as powerful tools to help accomplish conservation and recreation objectives. She said the conference will be a forum to demonstrate and evaluate successful partnership models; to learn how the philosophy and culture of organizations can support partnering environments; and to explore ways to cultivate partnerships for a national network of parks, historic places and open spaces. She announced that six other Federal agencies are expected to join as co-hosts/conveners of the conference—the Army Corps of Engineers, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Bureau of Land Management, Bureau of Reclamation, U. S. Forest Service and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. She said that planning anticipates some 2,000 individuals will attend the event, with NPS invitees capped at approximately 250.

She said the majority of attendees will be non-Federal. Director Mainella commended the preparation work for the conference, and underscored the importance of growing NPS partnership skills and competencies, and the value of learning new strategies and techniques in partnering, to help accomplish our mission.