



February 8, 2004

NLCJournal

The National Leadership Council (NLC) is the most-senior strategic advisory team serving the Director of the National Park Service. Meeting quarterly, its work serves as a vehicle for solving pressing Servicewide problems and a forum for dialogue in addressing big picture issues critical to the long-term success of the Service.

The NLC met in Washington, D.C., on February 4-5 to tackle challenges relating to the FY 2004 budget, the Competitive Review Program, and workforce development. The most significant outcome of the meeting was action on a comprehensive Servicewide strategy to manage '04 budget reductions and absorptions. When completed, the strategy will include multiple commitments to mitigate the impacts of budget shortfalls. NLC discussions about the budget ranged broadly, with members expressing strong and unanimous concerns about the effects of tightening budgets. Focusing on the parks, the NLC agreed to test a system by which parks can develop more accurate cost estimates and better project operating needs, thus the implications of short- and long-term budget reductions. The NLC also considered and approved an approach to reduce shortfalls in regional offices and headquarters.

The NLC reviewed the Service's FY 2004 Competitive Review Program schedule of work and reaffirmed the considerable advantage provided through the program's Preliminary Planning effort, which allows a detailed look at functional areas before decisions are made to continue the competitive review process. It was agreed that a team of Chiefs of Maintenance would advise Natchez Trace Parkway on its current competitive review effort, and that the NLC will be closely involved in developing the FY 2004 Federal Activities Inventory Reform Act listing of NPS functions that are inherently governmental or commercial. The NLC will be briefed on the status of the program in a March NLC conference call. Finally, the NLC considered the overall goals of the draft NPS Work - force Development Plan and will provide

comment on 16 key areas proposed for special attention in FY 2004.

Proposed National Park Service IT (information technology) priorities were considered, as were prospective costs associated with their implementation. The NLC acknowledged that the proposal contains priorities that have been determined by statutes, the Office of Management and Budget, the Department and the President's Management Agenda, and agreed that commitments must be made to address them. Immediate funding requirements were discussed.

The meeting concluded with the NLC reviewing and reaffirming its purposes and responsibilities. Members recalled that the NLC functions in an advisory capacity to the Director, and offered that this counsel is best rendered when addressing issues of both short-term tactical and long-range strategic import. It was observed that the dialogue at this meeting had been especially positive throughout the two-days and that with a number of new members joining the body in recent months, there is an excellent opportunity to develop fresh collaborative working relationships and new thinking to strengthen deliberations and decision-making. It was noted also that Associate Directors (Washington staff) and Regional Directors (the field) require one another if the NLC is to function effectively as the principal leadership body for the organization.

The meeting ended with a decision to develop issues for NLC attention through the year, identify immediately an agenda for the April 13-15 meeting, and agree on the goals and topics for the April meeting in a February 20 NLC conference call.

• 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
- **Benjamin J. Holmes, Jr.**
• Acting Chief
• United States Park Police
- **Michael (Mike) Soukup**
• Associate Director
• Natural Resources
• Stewardship and Science
- **Richard (Dick) Ring**
• Associate Director
• Administration, Business
• Practices, and Workforce
• Development
- **Chris Jarvi**
• Associate Director
• Partnerships, Interpretation
• and Education, Volunteers,
• and Outdoor Recreation
- **Karen Taylor-Goodrich**
• Associate Director
• Visitor and Resource
• Protection
- **Dr. Janet Snyder Matthews**
• Associate Director
• Cultural Resources
- **Steve Martin**
• Regional Director
• Intermountain
- **Ernie Quintana**
• Regional Director
• Midwest
- **Terry R. Carlstrom**
• Regional Director
• National Capital
- **Marie Rust**
• Regional Director
• Northeast
- **Jon Jarvis**
• Regional Director
• Pacific West
- **Pat Hooks**
• Acting Regional Director
• Southeast
- **Marcia Blaszk**
• Acting Regional Director,
• Alaska