



Visitor and Resource Protection

FY 2004 Year-in-Review



Visitor and Resource Protection

FY 2004 Year-in-Review

Since its establishment in October 2002, the Visitor and Resource Protection (VRP) directorate has continued to evolve and improve its capacity for addressing national issues across a wide range of program areas, and can report significant progress in 2004. Although law enforcement, under the Division of Law Enforcement and Emergency Services (LEES), remains a focal area, equally critical programs and operations are managed under the VRP directorate including Fire and Aviation Management, Health and Fitness, the National Park Service (NPS) Unit at the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center (FLETC), Public Health, Risk Management, Wilderness Management, and Regulations and Special Park Uses.

I would like to take this opportunity to share with you our collective accomplishments and projects in this first annual "Year-in-Review." And to thank you for your support and involvement as we protect our visitors and resources. We look forward to working collaboratively with all of you and our other partners as we carry out our critical mission.

For continued updates on our programs and organizational developments, please visit the VRP website on InsideNPS.

*Karen Taylor-Goodrich
Associate Director, Visitor and Resource Protection*

Fire and Aviation Management

The Division of Fire and Aviation Management (FAM) includes the Wildland Fire, Structural Fire and Aviation program areas. FAM is dedicated to delivering these programs safely, professionally and efficiently in support of the overall mission and vision of the NPS. Key points, short- and long-term goals, as well as emphasis items, are highlighted annually in the "Division Vision" which is tied to strategic plans for each program area.

Entering its fifth year, the National Fire Plan continues to provide invaluable technical and financial resources, and resources, and resource guidance and support for wildland fire management across the United States. FAM continues to participate in the five key program areas: firefighting, rehabilitation, hazard fuels reduction, community assistance and accountability.



Primary accomplishments in 2004 include completion of 105% of planned hazardous fuels reduction target by treating 131,064 acres (35,255 acres of Wildland Urban Interface and 95,809 acres of Non-Wildland Urban Interface). Additionally, 89,804 acres of Wildland Fire Use acres have been reported beyond formal targeted acres. Of the parks needing a Fire Management Plan, 58% had completed one by December 2004. It is anticipated that by the end of 2005, nearly 100% will have a Fire Management Plan in place.

The Rural Fire Assistance program continued to have a positive impact on local volunteer and rural fire departments throughout the country adjacent to NPS managed lands. \$1,522,000 in funds was distributed for training, personal protective equipment, and other fire equipment. The partnerships formed through Rural Fire Assistance are invaluable for mutual assistance on federal lands.

The Healthy Forests Initiative (August 2002) and the Healthy Forests Restoration Act of 2003 (HFRA) remain a critical emphasis area. Although not specifically defined within the language of the HFRA, the NPS has and will continue to implement numerous projects meeting the intent of this act. Many of these projects are necessary for maintenance of park administrative sites and protection of infrastructure (roads, trails, boundaries, etc.).

FAM continues to support the NPS Director's membership activities on the Wildland Fire Leadership Council (WFLC). The council is a cooperative interagency organization established by Congress to provide leadership and oversight to ensure policy coordination, accountability and effective implementation of the National Fire Plan and in the Federal Wildland Fire Management Policy.

In the structural fire program, significant progress was made towards correcting the deficiencies that resulted in the NPS designation of structural fire as a "Material Weakness," including formal steps toward integration with the Facilities Management Software System. This included coordination with the facilities management program, regions and parks to secure fee demonstration project funding to complete fire protection condition assessments on 286 "high priority" buildings.

In 2004, FAM continued to partner with the interagency community in various capacities. FAM also partnered with other divisions in the Service as well as private partners such as The Nature Conservancy and Eastern National Cooperating Association. The partnership with Eastern National through the website eFire.org as well as eparks.com provided the opportunity to provide publications about wildland and structural fire as well as fire leadership.

Law Enforcement and Emergency Services

The Law Enforcement and Emergency Services (LEES) Division continued to establish capacity to provide for the protection ranger and special agent field activities at the national level. The division built and re-enforced partnerships, increased the efficiency of available resources, continuously updated and improved policies, and provided leadership and guidance on initiatives and programs supporting the ranger profession.

A number of organizational changes were implemented that will better utilize limited personnel. LEES initiated a Department of the Interior (DOI) policy change that allows protection personnel to work in field positions and participate in the Field Training Evaluation program while undergoing the lengthy adjudication process. Previously, this was not possible, and backlogs at the Office of Personnel Management and Federal Bureau of Investigation (both integral in the adjudication process) meant long processing delays. The division also improved

the Background and Security database system, making it more user-friendly, reliable and accurate.

LEES also directly assisted park units financially 28 times during the year, providing a total of \$2,366,863 in Emergency Law and Order Requests, and also allocated funding for the Drug and ARPA program.

The division also created and strengthened internal and external relationships essential for the NPS to identify and continuously improve the security posture. This also served to improve communications and confidence at park field level protection ranger operations.

LEES established and filled the Service's Security and Intelligence Manager position, as required by the Secretary's Directives for Law Enforcement program reforms (2002). This specialist serves as the liaison with the DOI Office of Law Enforcement and Security, the US Park Police (USPP) Intelligence Unit, and with other governmental entities. Examples of the benefits resulting from these efforts include working closely and successfully with the USPP at the Statue of Liberty to address security and safety concerns, and with the Springfield Armory to address security shortfalls discovered during a recent Department of Homeland Security review. This position also worked with park management staff at several icon parks and participated at DOI sponsored dam security meetings on issues to enhance physical security.

LEES used technology to provide safety improvements and increase security measures long-term. The division coordinated a major facility security data call (working with experts in FMSS, a database the Service uses for assessing and managing physical facilities). The security data call will enable the Service to utilize data collected on facilities to provide enhanced physical security. The





division also developed and implemented a NPS Intelligence Fusion Website and a Field Intelligence Alerting System to streamline critical intelligence data collection and dissemination throughout the Service. The division is striving to further enhance physical security by preparing to assist with implementation of a Smartcard system to comply with Homeland Security Presidential Directive-12 (HSPD-12), that mandates a government-wide standard for a secure and reliable form of identification for federal employees and contractors.

The division also coordinated a partnership with the National Park Foundation for the annual Harry Yount Park Ranger Award, which recognizes superior professionalism in the protection ranger ranks.

As a result of the events of September 11, 2001, and new challenges affecting the law enforcement community, LEES developed position papers and briefing statements for the field and management levels, and has updated pertinent rules and regulations affecting this workforce including issues related to the Firefighter and Law Enforcement Retirement Team (FLERT), as well as preparing numerous briefing papers on issues related to Icon Parks, Border Parks, and overall security issues.

Director's Order 9: Law Enforcement Program has been revised to include the USPP. This revision provided defined regulations and provided uniformity of all law enforcement under NPS. The Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP) also was updated in accordance with DOI standards. The COOP is vital to the Service. It outlines how DOI will continue to operate in the event of a national crisis or other disaster. The division also updated the National Emergency Response Plan to include the new presidential directives resulting from the creation of the Department of Homeland Security.

NPS protection personnel have experienced a seemingly high rate of assaults in comparison with other law enforcement agencies. The division has commissioned the Ranger Assault Study, conducted by Northern Arizona University, to analyze data and identify causes so the Service can make changes to improve the on-duty safety of protection rangers. While the physical safety of protection rangers is of utmost importance, the division also zealously guards the credibility of the visitor and resource protection profession, and to that end, successfully concluded 98 internal investigations and advised parks and regions on many others.

Fiscal Year 2004 was the first full year that the Special Agent (SA) program was managed under the Washington Office. The program, though still experiencing a need for budget and personnel due to the reorganization, continued to provide a key component to the Servicewide protection program through the following accomplishments:

- A permanent Special Agent in Charge, Criminal Investigations, was selected.
- Each region, with the exception of National Capital Region, had a designated Regional Special Agent in Charge directing the work of field agents.
- SA representation on important interagency drug, ARPA, and terrorism task forces continued to increase bringing NPS issues to local, state, and federal attention.
- Operation Indian Rocks, a large, complex, interagency and multi-year ARPA investigation, received significant convictions and favorable media coverage nationwide.
- SAs provided specialized training to park rangers, and other law enforcement partners in many venues including the Northeast Region Anti-terrorism training, FLETC basic and advanced courses, Special Events Teams, and other tactical training, Annual Law Enforcement Refresher Training, and seasonal academies.
- SAs provided critical support to the new Internal Affairs Branch by investigating numerous complex, highly sensitive internal investigations throughout the Service.
- SAs, working with the US Secret Service and other federal and state entities, provided professional technical advice and assistance for numerous events, including one national political convention, throughout the election year.



Federal Law Enforcement Training Center (FLETC)

The NPS Law Enforcement Training Center (LETC) graduated four National Park Ranger Integrated training program (NPRI) classes, graduating 77 rangers and followed by participation in the new Field Training Evaluation Program (FTEP). FTEP was a resounding success with 20 parks and approximately 120 field training leads and instructors taking part in the pilot year. With the already outstanding NPRI serving as the basis for ranger training, the term “turn-key” rangers became a common description for the rangers completing their assignments at the field training parks. The NPS/LETC also collaborated with Michigan State University to accredit basic law enforcement ranger courses received while attending the NPRI. Graduating students are eligible to receive up to 10 hours of undergraduate and six hours of graduate credit for their NPRI training.

Nearly 400 other NPS law enforcement personnel and line managers attended advanced training courses at FLETC. While the majority of students visiting the FLETC attended training related to national programs such as Physical Fitness Coordinator, Defensive Tactics and Firearms Instructor, the NPS/LETC also provided distance learning with several broadcasts focusing on legal topics and use of force. The success of those pilot broadcasts has led to the scheduling of at least 16 other broadcasts for the 2005 training year. To keep the field informed of training events and news from the FLETC, a new NPS/LETC “Inservice” newsletter was developed and published. The newsletter, accessible on the VRP-NPS/LETC website, provides information and the latest news about law enforcement training Servicewide.

The year 2004 also highlighted the important work of NPS/LETC staffers. The FTEP program manager received the NPS “Crystal Owl” for outstanding work in devel-

oping and implementing the field training program. Staff members also developed and carried out the DOI Fitness Validation Study, traveling around the country testing DOI employees around the country to set baselines for the new physical standards to be implemented in October of 2005. Staff also participated in the Reference Manual 9 workgroup, assisted the field with Personal Protective Equipment orders at icon sites for special events, participated in a seasonal training academy workgroup, and conducted boat operator training, use of force refreshers and supervisory courses.

Health and Fitness

In the Medical Standards program, the new contractor, Comprehensive Health Services, Inc. (CHS), performed medical examinations on 1,335 law enforcement personnel. The program attained approximately 85% compliance with park rangers and the special agent program attained 100% compliance. Waivers were issued in approximately 18% of cases and final disqualification accounted for six cases. Two full Medical Review Boards were held in Washington for rangers requesting accommodations from the medical standards. The number of formal Boards was significantly reduced from previous years due to better information, through the program website, for the field and increased efforts between the NPS program personnel and the medical providers. This resulted in significant cost savings. Six “Fitness for Duty Evaluations,” including medical and psychological exams, were conducted at the request of parks.

The program improved customer service to the field in many ways:

- Fiscal and personnel resources were conserved and more efficient service to the field provided by contracting the process of billing for follow-up appointments.
- Reports were added to the database simplifying the process of scheduling exams, tracking medicals, and identifying program compliance.



- Respirator clearances were added to exam components to eliminate extra exams.
- A Frequently Asked Questions section to assist the field with procedural issues was posted, and routinely updated, on the division's website.
- At the request of the field, CHS began mailing medical status information to the park and to the employees (in addition to being posted on the database).
- A customer satisfaction survey for the field to provide feedback on CHSs performance was instituted. This provides a quick method of identifying and correcting problems with provider clinics.
- Sponsored two interagency peer support CISM classes and advanced training for experienced peers.
- The NPS CISM program continues to participate as the only DOI member of the DHS Federal Emergency Responders Subcommittee.

In the Physical Fitness program, the physical fitness validation project continued with the following accomplishments:

- DOI fitness coordinators for the project evaluation and validation study were trained at FLETC. Of the 35 fitness coordinators, 23 were from the NPS.
- Validation testing was conducted at six sites across the country. 490 DOI law enforcement employees participated, of which 225 were NPS.
- Tests and data study resulted in a validated fitness standard now under review for implementation in 2005.
- An accurate, comprehensive Servicewide Health and Fitness Coordinator database was established.
- A physical fitness program website was created for InsideNPS.

Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM), the employee support program, continued to provide emergency callout peers throughout the Service assisting employees mitigate the effects of stress following horrific incidents such as suicides, major SARs, multiple fatalities, and natural disasters. In addition to short-term in park support, CISM peers also accomplished the following:

- Responded to approximately 50 incidents requiring from 4 hrs – 10 days of on-scene crisis support.
- Provided major assistance to affected parks and survivor families in two instances of line of duty death of employees.
- Developed a draft "Line of Duty Death Response" procedural manual which was sent to the field for review; completion is set for 2005.



Public Health

The US Public Health Service is entering its 87th year of partnership with the NPS. The year 2004 was filled with opportunities and challenges. At this time of ever tightening resources, Public Health Program (PHP) made an active effort to renew its commitment to NPS by reviewing all aspects of the programs, searching for ways to continuously improve. PHP is taking steps to ensure the following:

- Advice offered NPS is soundly grounded in science,
- Risk-based priorities are set,
- Consultations assess any potential for the convergence of park activities and infrastructure with the cycles of disease transmission,
- Actively assist park units in finding solutions that both protect the public and contribute to all other aspects of the NPS mission, and
- Activities and methods are conducted in ways that efficiently and effectively stretch every public dollar.

The officers assigned to the PHP provide direct public health services to the parks through onsite evaluations of food service operations, water and wastewater systems, and vector-borne disease threats, as well as investigations of outbreaks of disease among park visitors, employees, and partners. In addition to assistance provided by phone and correspondence, in 2004 PHP officers provided more than 300 days of onsite consultation to parks across all regions, completing 685 public health evaluations.

Incident Management, Analysis and Reporting System (IMARS)

NPS continues to lead a Departmentwide effort to collect, manage, analyze and report incident information related to law enforcement, emergency management and security. The Incident Management, Analysis and Reporting System (IMARS) will provide consistent and accurate incident information from all bureaus to improve strategic management, resource allocation, tracking and reporting at multiple levels of the bureaus and DOI. Participating bureaus include the NPS, US Fish and Wildlife Service, Bureau of Land Management, Bureau of Indian Affairs and Bureau of Reclamation.

Several key project events occurred during Fiscal Year 2004. These included briefings held for project kick-off with senior managers, as well as for the identification of subject matter experts from each bureau to participate in the development of project requirements. Additional meetings were held throughout the year that included kick-off meetings with participating bureaus and focus meetings with subject matter experts.

As the project requirements gathering phase progressed through the year, the IMARS team focused on identifying bureau needs and writing clear, concise and measurable requirements for the Functional Requirements Document (FRD). Requirements also focused on meeting DOI Enterprise Architecture needs, security requirements, as well as being in line with the Draft DOI Law Enforcement blueprint. Draft versions of the FRD were routed to each bureau and DOI personnel for comment, clarification and validation. At the end of the year, the comprehensive FRD was 90% complete, and work had progressed on several key documents including the IMARS Solution Architecture and the Law Enforcement Data Modeling report.

The Initial Law Enforcement Data Modeling report was completed in April 2004. The report and underlying data model will continue to be expanded, and will play a key roll in the effectiveness of being able to share and exchange DOI incident data throughout the Department and with external parties.

The NPS pilot is scheduled for summer 2005 at Everglades, Lake Mead, Organ Pipe, Ozarks, Yosemite and US Park Police (Washington, DC). Following briefings at each location, pilot parks and areas will gather GIS information, prepare "dummy data" based on previously documented incident records adapted for testing, and identify employees to assist in entering, analyzing and evaluating the vendor product. The initial pilot phase will focus predominantly on testing of law enforcement related data. During the pilot, a series of evaluative questions will be answered by each system user. To further test the system, pilot parks will host evaluators from US Fish and Wildlife, Bureau of Reclamation, Bureau of Land Management and Bureau of Indian Affairs to gather a broad perspective of system effectiveness. With a successful pilot, roll-out on a national level will begin in December 2005.

The program initiated a major change in the approach to conducting food safety evaluations, shifting methods from an inspectional approach (comparing on-site observations to a list of things to do and not to do – a food code) toward a systems-based analysis. This new method goes beyond traditional compliance inspection in an attempt to more deeply understand food operations and what degree of control they have over critical food safety issues. Nearly 400 in-depth evaluations of approximately 250 food service facilities were conducted in parks Systemwide.

Several outbreaks (disease transmission above average or "normal" levels) were detected and investigated in 2004, including transmission events at Yosemite, Yellowstone, Bryce Canyon, and Glen Canyon. Disease agents or issues that the PHP assisted parks with included norovirus, Hantavirus Pulmonary Syndrome, Relapsing Fever, West Nile Virus, Tularemia, *Nagleria fowleri*, Rabies, and Chronic Wasting Disease.

Risk Management

In 2004, the Risk Management division established a working group representing the NPS field management and employees, and tasked that group with developing a realistic and feasible employee safety and health action plan that would provide strategic direction in efforts to control the hazards that are causing the high accident and injury rates. This working group, known as the NPSafe Action Team, produced the comprehensive strategic plan that will guide NPS Risk Management efforts for the next five years. The plan, known as NPSafe, includes a series of specific actions and due dates that affect all levels of the Service, from the Director, through management, to entry level park employees. The goals outlined in this plan to ensure NPS safety are:

- The NPS becomes the safest place to work in DOI.
- Safety is integrated into all NPS activities.

- The NPS organizational culture values employee safety as much as it values protecting resources and serving visitors.
- Employees, supervisors, and managers demonstrate unwavering commitment to continuous improvement in employee health and safety.

The plan has been presented to all levels of the Service, including four TelNPS interactive training sessions conducted in late August 2004, reaching more than 1,600 participants at more than 125 NPS sites. All seven regions have now completed their NPSafe Action plans. Concurrently, the Risk Management division, in conjunction with the NPSafe Action Team, the training community, and regional risk managers, have begun a series of planned activities including distance learning based training events for employees, managers and collateral duty safety officers, formation of employee safety trainer cadres, identification of an audit tool that will be used nationally by all levels of the Service with the goal of developing safety program consistency across regions, highlighting safety program strengths and weaknesses, and encouraging continuous safety program improvement. To improve communications, increase employee awareness, and make up-to-date information readily available, a revised Risk Management intranet website on InsideNPS has been implemented. This website contains safety and occupational health information and best management practices.

In the Occupational Health and Industrial Hygiene program, the division prepared clear policy and guidance for implementation and management of all major occupational health program areas. Training has been presented on all program areas via TELNPS. The division is creating instructor-led DVD versions of these workshops that will allow participation and training of staff at any NPS field location.

In 2004, Risk Management training reached approximately 2,800 people in 180 locations throughout the Service. The training classes, using TelNPS broadcasting, are real-time and interactive. Students and instructors share questions, information and comments.

The NPS achieved the highest percentage of timely filing of OWCP claims (55%) in DOI in 2004. The Service also has seen a 16% reduction through a five-year period in the numbers of lost-time injuries/illnesses (that caused loss of time from work beyond the day or shift that the injury occurred). Additionally, last year saw a 12% reduction in continuation of pay (COP) hours.

Wilderness Management

Wilderness stewardship in the regions and parks across the NPS is well entrenched and strong, and much was accomplished in 2004. The National Wilderness Program Manager was permanently filled. Nine parks received wilderness training courses for their employees and partners. The National Wilderness Steering Committee (NWSC) recruited and filled four new members including superintendent, park wilderness program manager, landscape architect, and chief ranger positions. A fire liaison position and an at-large member were added to develop a tool-box item to assist other managers completing a successful wilderness study, proposal, and designation package. The NWSC, assisted by numerous individuals from around the country, completed the NPS Wilderness Action Plan, which was announced by the Director in September, and the interpretive handbook "Celebrate Wilderness!" which has received widespread acclaim.

The NPS Annual Wilderness report was issued, and Directors Order 41 was revised and internally reviewed. A new series of NPS Wilderness white papers also was launched. The first two papers provided additional guidance details for the management of cultural resources in wilderness, and the role of ecological restoration in wilderness. Several more are under development. All wilderness parks received a supply of 40th Anniversary Edition maps and brochures of the National Wilderness Preservation system.

The Wilderness Stewardship Planning Handbook was completed and is available on the Inside NPS wilderness website to assist parks with their wilderness planning efforts. Two new strategic goals were implemented Service-wide, tracking the progress of parks in developing wilderness planning documents, and monitoring the condition



of their wilderness areas. More than 15 parks received technical assistance.

In addition to a sustained effort to build interdivisional communications networks throughout the Directorates, much interagency coordination was also accomplished through the Interagency Wilderness Steering Committee and the Interagency Wilderness Policy Council (IWPC). The Associate Director for VRP represents the NPS on the IWPC, and was aided in addressing natural resources and science issues by the Deputy Associate Director for Natural Resources, Stewardship and Science. The Memorandum of Understanding providing interagency collaboration and partnering for the Aldo Leopold Wilderness Research Institute and the Arthur Carhart National Wilderness Training Center was renewed by the Associate Directors for VRP and Natural Resources.

Regulations and Special Park Uses

Regulations and Special Park Uses is VRP's newest unit. In 2004, the NPS Regulations program was relocated from the Policy Office under the VRP directorate and combined with Special Park Uses (formerly aligned with Law Enforcement and Emergency Services).

The interim snowmobile regulations for Yellowstone, Grand Teton and John D. Rockefeller Jr. Memorial Parkway were finalized in December 2004. This regulation will be effective until 2007 when a final rule will be published. The notice of proposed rule making for snowmobile use in Apostle Islands National Lakeshore was published with a final rule expected in 2005. The final rule for 36 CFR part 13 adjustments (Alaska) became final in the later part of the year. This action made final several temporary compendium closures and adjustments.

The final rules for personal watercraft use (PWC) at Amistad, Lake Meredith and Lake Roosevelt national recreation areas were finalized in 2004. In addition the notice for proposed rulemaking for PWC use was published for Fire Island and Pictured Rocks national lakeshore. The notice of proposed rule making for 36 CFR part 3 (boating/water use) was published, with a final rule expected in 2005.

In the Special Park Uses program, an updated Director's Order 53 was submitted for approval to replace the order that sunset in April 2004. A work group was formed and began updating Reference Manual 53.

Fundamentals of Special Park Uses has been expanded, adding a session on visitor and employee safety. Two courses were held in 2004 with 45 participants. Addi-



tionally, an 8-hour special park use session was held in conjunction with law enforcement in-service held at Santa Monica Mountains. The Special Park Uses program manager continues to serve as an instructor for the Wireless Communications course offered at the Bureau of Land Management training facility. Four NPS employees attended the wireless communications course in 2004 and four are scheduled to attend in 2005.

36 CFR Part 14 has been submitted to the Solicitor's Office for a legal review before being submitted for review by the National Leadership Council. The regulation on filming and photography location fees was completed and submitted for review to the US Fish and Wildlife Service and Bureau of Land Management before publication in the Federal Register in 2005.

The Special Park Uses manager participated in several interagency task forces to streamline compliance and permitting procedures for energy related projects. These meetings led to closer participation and cooperation between the NPS and other federal land use and energy regulatory agencies. Special Park Uses also worked with GAO on two inquiries, one concerning location fees for filming and photography and one on grazing fees. Data for the report on location fees was gathered in the fall of 2004 with the final report due to the NPS in the spring of 2005. Working with GAO staff members a data collection form for grazing fees in the NPS was developed in 2004. The request for information will be sent to parks early in 2005.

