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Natural Resource Stewardship and Science  
February 2001 Monthly Report

### **Accomplishments/New Developments**

NPS Colorado River Summit Meeting -- NPS conducted an internal strategy workshop in Salt Lake City, UT on February 12-14 to discuss agency efforts and effectiveness in participating in Colorado River management decision making processes, in cases where outcomes can affect NPS natural and cultural resources. Emphasis was on identifying ways to improve coordination between and among parks, regions, Washington office staff, and other partners so that NPS resources receive greater consideration in efforts to manage the Colorado River. A work group was established to develop an "options paper" that will be discussed at the Intermountain Region's general conference on May 17, 2001.

Partnership With The Geological Society of America Growing - The Natural Resource Program Center is focusing efforts to expand the highly successful Geologist-in-the-Parks (GIP) Program into a Scientist-in-the-Parks Program. The program would allow the NRPC to place paid volunteers to help with science needs of the parks, including air, water, geology, and integrated science projects. The managers and staff from the Geologic Resource Division and Water Resource Division met with the Geological Society of America to discuss ongoing cooperative efforts and new partnership opportunities. GSA has more than doubled the number of GIP stipends this year to 25.

### **Natural Resource Challenge**

Oversight Hearing to be Held On March 8, the appropriations subcommittee will hold an oversight hearing on the Natural Resource Challenge. There is interest in learning of the status of actions resulting from the Challenge. Deny Galvin will testify.

Brochures in Development Thanks again to the staff at

Point Reyes, new one-pagers on Exotic Plant Management Teams, Learning Centers, Inventories, and Monitoring are being prepared. We will post them on the web when completed and get copies printed and distributed.

## **Progress**

New World Mining District Repository Site Selected -- The USDA Forest Service has selected the location for a final repository for District mining waste. The decision places the repository back at the originally proposed (smaller hillside) location instead of a larger, lower valley site tentatively agreed to by the Forest Service and NPS last June. The lower valley site was determined to not be viable due to concerns about potential encroachment on adjacent wetlands. The smaller capacity of the selected site precludes disposal of McLaren tailings at the repository, increasing the possible need for in-situ treatment and disposal of tailings within the floodplain of Soda Butte Creek.

USGS-BRD Columbia Lab Will Fund Contaminants Research Projects In Parks - The Columbia Environmental Research Center (Columbia Lab) has \$200,000-\$300,000 to fund contaminant research in NPS units. The NPS Contaminants Technical Advisory Group (CTAG) submitted a list of 18 projects to the Lab. Projects include: impact of abandoned mine drainage on water quality and aquatic biota, Whiskeytown NRA; assessment of contaminants from a landfill, Pinnacles NM; sediment contamination from an abandoned uranium mine, Lake Roosevelt NRA; and assessment of oil and gas wastes leaching into surface waters, Big Thicket NPRES. Columbia Lab will select projects for funding, and contact the NPS for implementation.

National Cave And Karst Research Institute (NCKRI) Update -- The National Speleological Society (NSS) has appointed Penny Boston as liaison to NCKRI, and invited NPS attendance at an upcoming NSS Board of Governors meeting. The NPS Mexico Affairs Office has arranged an informal meeting with University of Chihuahua staff to discuss possible collaboration. The Cave Research Foundation and the Kentucky Geological Survey have contacted NPS to discuss potential collaboration and formal agreements. Discussions with USGS-Central Region also have indicated interest to produce a USGS Circular on the federal karst programs. Investigations are underway to establish a non-profit group associated with NCKRI to handle private donations.

## **Professional Meeting Attendance**

Future Directions in Air Pollution Research -- Shenandoah and Great Smoky Mountains NP personnel and staff of the Air Resources Division attended a conference that focused on current air pollution transport and effects research and recommended additional needs. There was consensus that future research efforts should examine effects from multiple pollutants and stressors rather than looking at effects from individual pollutants. There were also a number of sessions devoted to air pollution policy in the U.S. and Europe. EPA speakers echoed the need for multi-pollutant studies and indicated that future regulatory actions will address multiple, rather than single, pollutants.