

In light of inability to keep a regular weekly schedule, the update report from Natural Resources will be released monthly in the future, hopefully as closely to the end of the month as possible. Following is an abbreviated and late May report, with a fuller June report to follow shortly.

NATURAL RESOURCE STEWARDSHIP AND SCIENCE MAY INFORMATION REPORT

DISCUSSION OF CRITICAL LOADS FOR THE NORTHERN ROCKIES: The Canadian Province of Alberta convened a symposium on "Acidifying Emissions in Alberta", to solicit expert advice on the issue of setting "critical loads" to protect resources from damage from sulfates, nitrates, and acidity. These pollutants are an emerging problem in the fast-developing area along the Rocky Mountains due to emissions of nitrogen oxides and sulfur oxides from oil and gas operations, power production, and vehicles. NPS-ARD staff was invited to address the stakeholders of the Clean Air Strategic Alliance for Alberta on the subject of deposition effects in protected areas in the U.S., especially in sensitive watersheds of the Rocky Mountains in Montana, Wyoming, and Colorado. ARD staff also discussed the progress of the U.S. in cleaning up emissions of SO_x and NO_x under the Clean Air Act Amendments of 1990. We noted that emissions of both NO_x and ammonia in the western U.S. may affect soils, forests, and surface waters. These nitrogen compounds contribute to nitrogen deposition and ozone formation, two regional pollutants of concern in national park units. We will continue to confer with Alberta Environment on the issue of setting deposition standards that might be generally applicable to the Rocky Mountain region.

ZOOS/AQUARIA FOR FISH RESTORATION The first meeting of the NPS and other federal agency partners with representatives of the American Zoo and Aquarium Association (AZA) was held at the Baltimore Aquarium on April 9th. NPS, USFWS, BLM, NMFS, and USFS recently signed a MOU with AZA for the purposes of conserving and restoring native fishes, to provide opportunities for cooperative research projects, and to improve information and education efforts. This first meeting identified a need to improve communications, identify "national program needs", and to endorse collaboration and implementation of "local programs." Towards these ends, the group agreed to implement the following strategy: 1) Develop a national directory of fishery/aquatic professionals and key organizational contacts, targeted for completion by July 1996; 2) provide a fact sheet of agency/partner roles in fisheries conservation, research, and education for inclusion in the directory; 3) use both a top-down and bottom-up approach for program development and collaborative efforts. The top-down approach would involve the development of a "national project," with preliminary discussions centering on a public education program or video dealing with the "Wonders of Our Waters." The emphasis would be on developing an awareness for the need to preserve aquatic biodiversity, the plight of N.A. native fishes, what the public can do to preserve biodiversity, and how to deal with "orphan species" (those at risk but not protected by law or regulation). The product would be one that could be used at either federal visitor centers or at cooperating zoos and aquaria. The bottom-up approach would provide for brokering of projects and cooperative efforts at the field level. The work group hopes to develop an Action Plan, budget proposal, and to seek outside funding to support the program.

SOUTHERN APPALACHIAN MOUNTAINS INITIATIVE (SAME): NPS staff (ARD, GRSM, SHEN, DEWA, SEFA) attended SAMI's fifth semiannual meeting in

Lexington, Kentucky. SAMI's contractors gave updates on the four effects reports and the various committees held breakout sessions. At the Governing Body (GB) session, the most substantive discussion pertained to the budget and the integrated assessment framework proposal (IAF). The IAF is a tool to evaluate the feasibility of identified emissions management options, integrating all available information and is estimated to cost \$3 million. With SAMI's other budgeted expenses, a total of approximately \$4 million is needed to complete its work (\$2 million in FY97 and \$2 million in FY98); SAMI currently has access to only about \$1 million, but is expecting another \$1.25 million from an enforcement action. The GB decided to move forward with the entire assessment, but to ensure there are some interim work products in the event future money is not available. As an aside, Mary Nichols, EPA's Assistant Administrator for Air and Radiation, was a surprise guest at the SAMI meeting and expressed interest and support for SAMI's work. (Air Resources Division)

"SON-OF" NATURAL RESOURCE TRAINEE PROGRAM INITIATED The first Fundamentals for Professional Natural Resource Managers course was held, starting in May at Albright Center. Twenty-three trainees were selected and attended the course. The course is designed as an orientation to natural resource management in the NPS for new, or relatively new, NPS employees. It is not designed to teach how to manage natural resources (professional expertise is assumed), but NPS policy, unique NPS approaches, location of assistance, and other topics related to what is unique about managing natural resources in NPS. It is hoped that two sessions will be able to be held in the future, depending upon the training budget.