

GULF ISLANDS NATIONAL SEASHORE
Annual Narrative Report
October 1, 2000 through September 30, 2001

MANAGEMENT OVERVIEW:

A final purchase agreement between the National Park Service (NPS) and the owners of Cat Island was executed late in FY 01. This was accomplished through cooperation between the Trust for Public Lands (TPL), NPS, the Bodie family and political interests. The management team met and identified actions to be taken in a preliminary effort to prepare for the inclusion of Cat Island into park operations. Comprehensive funding requests for Cat Island were developed and initiated in the Operations Formulation System (OFS). Request includes start-up needs for personnel, equipment, supplies and materials, resource management and facilities. Initial resources management needs and preliminary planning to address basic resource issues on this new acquisition were identified. Resources Management submitted requests for an archeological inventory and natural resource assessment and inventory. Additional needs such as literature search, vegetation, exotic, insect, bird, herpetological, and mammal surveys, GPS, and others have been identified.

The Personal Watercraft issue and the Park's plan to allow the ban to go into effect in April, 2002, was publicized; significant effort was expended in working with public, political, media and industry interests.

Both the natural and cultural programs made significant gains. Natural tagged four Loggerhead turtles with satellite tracking devices; the movements of four females from the Gulf population may now be observed on the internet. The speed limit on Fort Pickens Road was lowered to 35 mph, and informational signs posted, significantly reducing the loss of threatened and candidate bird species. Cultural resources completed major repairs to Fort Barrancas, the Spanish Water Battery, and the Advanced Redoubt. Utilizing these fortifications as teaching objects, the Preservation and Skills Training (PAST) program trained thirty students from across the country in preservation skills.

Interpretive programs highlighted the Seashore's 30th anniversary. Special programs in January were presented by the Chief Historian of the Park Service, the former Chief Historian of the Park Service, *Pensacola News Journal* editor *emeritus*, and the director of the University of West Florida Archeological Institute. Interpretation focused on educational needs of the community by targeting positions in each district to lead educational programs for students and teachers. *EcoVentures: Focus on the Gulf*, an interactive CD-ROM was completed by the Florida State University and mailed to all high schools in counties along the Gulf of Mexico. The number of different interpretive programs increased by 50% from 2000 and the number of special programs increased.

Several major incidents that occurred during FY '01 had a significant impact upon employees and park operations as well as widespread associated media and public interest. These included a shark attack, which generated worldwide interest, two drownings from rip currents on one day, and a lightning strike that killed two persons.

Park staff involved with identifying project needs met twice to work on Combined Call. As a result of efforts in writing funding requests, Gulf Islands received notice of several projects being funded in 2002 for resource needs, a General Management Plan (GMP) is scheduled for 2003, and a line item construction project will be funded by 2005. Training was accomplished with management and district level staff to improve quality of Performance Management Information System (PMIS) projects to become more competitive on a nation-wide basis.

Other: This FY the park collected \$1,172,162 in 80% fees retaining a total of \$937,730. The Park purchased and installed a Technological Enhanced Learning (TEL) System in the Florida District and purchased one for the Mississippi District to allow for on-site training via satellite. Gulf Islands became the first park in the region to successfully utilize wireless technology to extend a network system to a remote facility. The Park's surf rescue program was accredited by the United States Life Saving Association as an advanced agency. A wildfire on Horn Island burned 108 acres at an expense of \$24,100. Subsequently, the Park was awarded funding in the amount of \$23,500 for a Burned Area Rehab Plan.

Partnerships

Discussion and meetings occurred to determine the feasibility of starting a Florida Chapter of the *Friends of Gulf Islands*. The Mississippi Friends group officially turned over the completed Ship Island lighthouse to the Park. We have continued to use our partnership with the Mobile Corps of Engineers for plans and specifications for major projects. A partnership with the Baptist Foundation, Gulf Breeze Hospital, and Gulf Breeze Chamber of Commerce was established in order to produce a video on the environmental hazards of a marine environment; partners have a tentative commitment for \$7,000 in funding donations to produce the video. Under a partnership agreement with the U. S. Forest Service on a wind research project designed to investigate the uplift forces at the roof-wall interface due to high winds such as experienced in hurricanes and typhoons, an office/garage building was constructed within the maintenance complex at Naval Live Oaks at no expense to NPS. In cooperation with Escambia County's Neighborhood and Environmental Services Department a full-scale educational program named "Got Habitat" was launched to protect fragile dune habitat. The Seashore has been working under a recovery plan with the Fish and Wildlife Service for the endangered Perdido Key Beach Mouse. The mouse was the catalyst for the educational program and became the program's "poster child". The County received a \$100,000 grant and produced cinema slides for movie theaters, two color brochures, a web-page for Gulf Islands, and a 30-minute documentary. In addition, they recruited volunteers for sea oat plantings, did a community kick-off campaign, and scheduled two growth-management workshops.

Safety

Fire safety and physical security inspections were conducted in both districts. Two sessions of Defensive Driving were conducted this FY (MS & FL); one session of Hazardous Communications (HAZCOM) training was conducted in the FL District in Sep 01 – training is to be mandatory for all Seashore employees and several additional sessions are planned for FY 02. Safety Officer participated in the local Federal Field Safety Council by attending 2 of the 4 quarterly meetings and was an active member of the Southeast Region Safety Advisory Team. An environmental audit was conducted by Prizm Inc., and the Park continues to work on corrective actions. Safety newsletters are being prepared quarterly and distributed to all employees. The Park management team and Safety Officer all attended “Managing the Safety Performance Process” training in June. As a result, a long-range safety plan, an updated Park Safety Policy, and Executive Safety Committee were established. The Park became fully engaged in the bathing beach monitoring protocol as required under Director’s Order/Reference Manual-83 during FY 01. Through partnership with the Escambia and Okaloosa counties, sampling is being conducted at no expense to the NPS in the Florida District of the Seashore. Sampling is being accomplished in Mississippi through the University of Southern Mississippi, Gulf Coast Research Lab. Safety committee focused on educating park employees on safety issues and developing an employee reporting system of unsafe work areas. Injuries for FY 01 = 2 lost time and 16 non-lost time (including three Volunteer injuries & one Youth Conservation Corp (YCC) injury).

Diversity

Personnel Officer was trained as a NPS servicewide conflict resolution (CORE) counselor. The number of Gulf Islands staff in targeted occupational series in 2001 consisted of seven employees from underrepresented groups and 11 disabled permanent employees. The Park received funding for a YCC program; one leader and five enrollees participated in the summer program. A white female was hired through the Student Career Employment Program (SCEP) program into a permanent position as a Maintenance Worker WG-5. One Hispanic male on staff was promoted to Maintenance Worker/Water Operator. Two female law enforcement rangers were recruited and hired in the Florida district. Utilizing the handicap authority, the Park was able to hire a candidate with physical disabilities as a temporary Geographic Information System (GIS) specialist. Accommodations in building access, equipment modification, and work schedule flexibility were extended to this individual to gain the expertise this individual possessed.

Of the park’s 120 employees, approximately 49% are diverse (includes 7 native Americans, 6 African Americans, 1 Hispanic male, 5 Asian/Pacific Islanders, 7 employees with physical or mental disabilities, 33 white females). Some of the actions engaged in to support diversity during the fiscal year included the use of the student employment programs (STEP and SCEP), a junior lifeguard program, targeted recruitment by the lead

lifeguard for park seasonal positions, recruitment for a handicapped student summer position, participation by the Personnel Management Specialist on the regional diversity recruitment task force, career information disseminated through educational outreach programs and participation in career day activities.

INTERPRETATION:

The division's primary focus was on the 30th anniversary of the establishment of Gulf Islands National Seashore. The staff presented commemorative programs plus special onsite and community events. In addition, interpreters led a wide range of programs including fort tours, jon boat salt marsh tours, beach walks, night hikes, full moon programs, and junior ranger programs. All visitor centers were opened year-round. However, as a result of multiple drownings, a well-publicized shark attack, and two lightning fatalities the division acted to educate and inform the public of natural hazards. Educational programs were presented and analyzed to determine effectiveness. Volunteers continued to assist the interpreters and new partners were made with local public agencies. Special emphasis was placed on protection of the Perdido Key beach mouse, wilderness education, World War II 13th Coastal Artillery soldiers, and Civil War African-American soldiers. The division began upgrading the site bulletins using the new National Park Messaging Project format. The Southeast Regional Workshop for Chiefs of Interpretation and Education was hosted at Gulf Islands as well as a 101 module for interpretation. Eastern National opened a new outlet at Langdon Beach, hired a new manager, and printed a new publication.

30th Anniversary

Former Chief Historian Ed Bearrs, University of West Florida Archeology Director Dr. Judy Bense, *Pensacola News Journal* editor emeritus and author Earle Bowden, and current NPS Chief Historian Dwight Pitcaithley presented special commemorative programs during the month of January. A poster contest was held in honor of the park's birthday and awards were given to upper elementary school winners. The resumption of the Gulf Islands Guide was a joint venture with the Division of Visitor Protection producing a 28-page edition, "Sharing the Shore for 30 Years".

Special Community Events

Both districts participated in local Mardi Gras parades attended by thousands of park neighbors and visitors. Florida District volunteers and staff promoted beach habitat protection for sea turtles by constructing a sea turtle float for the Mardi Gras parade in Pensacola Beach. The Mississippi District featured "Kids for Parks" with a local 4-H Environmental Club in their parade.

The Mississippi District's annual Earth Day celebration featuring the Southeast Raptor Rehabilitation Center based in Auburn University drew over 2,000 visitors. The Center's staff and volunteers brought a variety of birds of prey including bald eagles to present to festivalgoers and at local schools. The Florida District staff participated in the "Earth Day at Seville Square" and other community events including the "Market Place of Ideas."

In addition to career day programs at different schools, the Mississippi District organized *Drums and Shadows Troopers and Infantryman* which was presented to the public and school children along the Mississippi Gulf Coast. This event, covering the history of the African-American Louisiana Native Guards on Ship Island during the Civil War, was presented by re-enactor Murry Dorthy from Los Angeles, California, Jean LaFitte Ranger Ramon Johnson, and volunteer Ike Edwards. Local coverage included newspapers and local television.

Seashore Special Events

In October and April volunteers from Virginia to south Florida represented the 13th Coastal Artillery and set up tons of World War II equipment so visitors could learn more about the military role during the 1940s on Santa Rosa Island. The volunteers also installed telephone lines from Battery Cooper and Battery 234.

Each November the Seashore traditionally celebrates the preservation of wilderness areas. Author and naturalist Ed Zahniser discussed the wilderness movement and the special status of Horn and Petit Bois Islands in Mississippi while addressing the visiting public. A press trip to Horn Island resulted in newspaper articles and television news stories on commercial and educational networks.

Pathway to Fishing was presented to children as a way to encourage wise recreational fishing practices as well as offering hands-on activities.

A Seminole-Creek hunting camp was created on Santa Rosa Island by re-enactor Farris Powell, *Blue Heron*, for a June evening program.

A living history Civil War encampment was held on West Ship Island in June. Twenty-five local re-enactors portrayed Union soldiers stationed on Ship Island in 1863.

Three beach cleanups were scheduled to educate beach users of the dangers of marine debris and to cleanup miles of barrier island beaches and salt marsh areas.

Interpretive Programs

During the 30th anniversary year-round celebration the division was able to offer a full range of interpretive programs with the addition of two seasonal interpreters and one Student Conservation Association intern. Old favorites such as the jon boat tours of Davis

Bayou were rescheduled occasionally throughout the year plus tours of Fort Barrancas were once again given on a daily basis. A new program was offered four days a week at Naval Live Oaks, and a natural history program was given five days a week at the Perdido Key Area in the summer. Daily summer programs including fort tours, naturalists programs plus Junior Ranger and Sea Star programs were well attended. Over 353,000 visitors were contacted through personal services such as ranger-led programs or at visitor centers.

Safety

Surf conditions and thunderstorms plus a rare shark attack unnerved not only visitors but employees as well. Coincidentally a new safety wayside under design was altered to include prevalent visitor concerns. Rangers presented safety messages in programs and on tour boats. Safety issues were also addressed in the two park newspaper editions and two safety site bulletins, *History Can Hurt* and *Survival Guide*.

Educational Programs

A plan to hire two term employees to fill in for rangers responsible for educational programs was not implemented because of a hiring freeze. Although the number of pre- and post-site schools visits was limited, an educational assessment tool was designed and used to measure the effectiveness of curriculum-based programs to meet the GPRA goal IIB1X. Dr. Diane Chapman, an adjunct professor at William Carey College on the Gulf Coast, designed the educational assessment tool and determined the results. Over 100 upper elementary students participated in the educational programs. The pre-test scores were averaged at 69% accuracy and the post-test scores were averaged at 80% accuracy. This goal of 71% was exceeded by 8%.

Park rangers helped conduct two teacher workshops, "EcoVentures: Focus on the Gulf" and "Traveling Trunks" in the Santa Rosa School District.

Teachers were able to checkout traveling trunks in the Florida District and two wilderness trunks were assembled for Mississippi teachers.

Volunteers and Park Partners

Volunteers in the Division of Interpretation provided 20,751 hours of service. Several volunteers were instrumental in the smooth interim operation of the Fort Pickens Eastern National outlet until a manager was hired and in setting up a new Eastern National outlet at Langdon Beach in Florida. A Pensacola, Florida, volunteer, Bonnie Becker, represented Gulf Islands National Seashore and the National Park Service at the Boy Scout National Jamboree in Prince William Forest Park.

The Environmental Protection Agency's Gulf of Mexico Program Office provided the funding to complete a Parks as Classroom project, "EcoVentures—Focus on the Gulf," an interactive CD-ROM for 9th and 10th grade students.

Gulf Islands NS formed a partnership with the Escambia County Environmental and Neighborhood Services Department through contacts with the Pensacola Area Chapter of the Florida Public Relations Association. The County received a \$100,000 grant from the Florida Advisory Council on Environmental Education plus \$100,000 in matching funds to design a comprehensive educational program on coastal beach habitat protection featuring the endangered Perdido Key Beach Mouse. The county's "Got Habitat" included production of theater slides, a 20-minute documentary, color brochures, and encouraged dune vegetation plantings with volunteers plus sponsored workshops. All the services produced focused on the Perdido Key Area of the park. The Division benefited greatly from outside assistance especially since the Seashore did not have the funding or the employees to produce such a comprehensive educational program.

Non-personal Services

The Division published two editions of the newspaper, *The Gulf Islands Guide*, and began the process of upgrading texts according to the NPS interpretive standards and new NPS publication templates for 13 site bulletins. Three educational programs were reprinted for distribution. Two waysides, "Beach Safety", and "Ship Island Lighthouses" were produced. New park bulletin boards were given a fresh and professional look by installing vinyl visitor orientation signs.

Park rangers completed a park-wide accessibility survey and developed a park-wide patch program for scouts, 4-H groups, and other organized participants. Production began on an in-house video to show to visitors who are physically unable to tour Fort Pickens.

Training

The Division not only hosted the training Module 101, *Fulfilling the National Park Mission: The Process of Interpretation* in January but the Southeast Region's Chief of Interpretation and Resource Education in June as well.

Cooperating Association

Eastern National approved the opening of another outlet at the Langdon Beach Pavilion at the Fort Pickens Area with plans to operate it in the summer months. Maintenance employees converted the old snack bar into the outlet. In addition, new employees were hired to fill vacant positions including a new sales manager. Better management included having merchandise on shelves and adding new sales items. Eastern published *The Fort Massachusetts Story* by former GUIS ranger, Ed Kanze and began selling a Falcon Press publication, *Exploring Gulf Islands* by Robert Falls.

Changes took place for the Mississippi District bookstore operations in FY 2001. In the past, Eastern National employed a bookstore cashier during the summer months. A part-time year round Eastern employee was hired this year to maintain the business and inventory aspects of the operation. Beth Rayburn and Barbara Luedke were hired to fill this position. This allowed consistency in the operation and freed up Park Ranger staff to concentrate on other projects and interpretive programming.

Although visitation dropped slightly in both Mississippi locations from 2000 to 2001 there was a slight increase in overall sales. A nominal decrease in sales occurred in the Visitor Center. Though there was decreased visitation for Fort Massachusetts, sales increased by \$349.92. The staff continues to depend highly on volunteers to staff the sales outlet. Volunteers donated 8,102 hours to the Visitor Center, Davis Bayou campground, and Ship Island facilities.

	<u>Visitation</u>		<u>Sales</u>	
	<u>2000</u>	<u>2001</u>	<u>2000</u>	<u>2001</u>
Visitor Center	39,946	35,727	\$21,799.13	\$21,596.70
Fort Massachusetts	16,018	14,360	\$2,007.22	\$2,357.14
TOTAL	55,364	50,087	\$23,806.35	\$23,953.84

Many new sale items were added to the inventory this year. Items included books such as *The Fort Massachusetts Story*, *Brady's Civil War*, *What Lives in a Shell*, and *Civil War Days*, part of the *American Kids in History* series. The West Ship Island lighthouse was featured in new postcards, 8 x 10 prints, and notecards. These new items helped increase sales and kept the interest of Gulf Islands repeat visitors. Popular items that appealed to the young children were Dover's *Little Activity Books* because of their subject matter and cost. These items gave the children more of a hands-on learning experience. Framing prints and graphic nature postcards were our top selling items at the William M. Colmer Visitor Center bookstore and Confederate and Union money were popular at the Fort Massachusetts outlet.

Visitors contributed \$1,112.12 to the donation boxes at the Visitor Center and Fort Massachusetts on Ship Island. These reserve account funds made Gulf Island's annual Earth Day festival on April 21st possible. Twenty-five exhibitors from various government and state agencies and local organizations participated in the event. A total of 2000 visitors attended the festival. Eastern percentage account funds were also utilized during the Earth Day Festival. These monies provided the opportunity for the Southeast Raptor Rehabilitation Center to educate festivalgoers about birds of prey.

Both the reserve and percentage accounts were used to fund other events this past fiscal year. In celebration of the park's 30th Anniversary, a poster contest was held for young people. Eastern funds provided the prize money. Funding also made it possible to participate in the Ocean Springs Mardi Gras Parade on February 3rd, celebrate the National Park Service's birthday, provide recognition picnic for the park volunteers, and educate local school children about the coast's local history. Louisiana Native Guard re-enactors Murry Dorthy, Ramon Johnson, and Ike Edwards conducted 16 education programs reaching 2, 899 kindergarten through 12th grade students.

ADMINISTRATION:

The Administrative Division improved customer service and accomplished several efficiency actions to save time/money and assist other parks and/or the regional office:

Contracting Officer negotiated \$13,000 in savings with the local telephone company. Contracting and Budget worked with the Regional Solicitor to resolve a contract dispute that resulted in a refund to the park of \$92,315.

Gulf Islands purchased and installed a Technology Enhanced Learning (TEL) System in the Florida district and purchased one for the Mississippi district. The system will allow employees to take training on-site via satellite and will greatly expand training opportunities during days of shrinking travel dollars.

Established new Employee Assistance/Wellness program, and established a new occupational health agreement with large local hospital. The new program offers a greater variety of services/opportunities for employees at a reduced cost (\$2,000 less) to the park.

Received funding for a Youth Conservation Corp (YCC) program. One Leader and five enrollees participated in the program, which ran from June 18 through August 11 (first YCC program in several years).

Human Resources recruited locally and the park hired a summer seasonal handicapped employee to assist with the park's GIS program.

Gulf Islands hosted the Southeast Region Administrative Officers Conference in Pensacola April 30-May 4. The conference was attended by more than eighty NPS employees.

The Administrative Officer conducted a training session on Choosing by Advantages to Cumberland Island park staff and facilitated a discussion on choosing an alternative for a ferry/pier project on the island.

The Management Team met and identified actions to be taken in a preliminary effort to prepare for Cat Island. A detailed, joint effort resulted in the formulation of a budget

request for Cat Island entered into OFS. In addition, a request was written and submitted to revise the GMP and that is now scheduled for FY2003. Efforts to obtain necessary inventories and base lines for Cat are underway and PMIS funding requests have been submitted for a range of needs from research to equipment purchases.

Staff involved with identifying project needs received training on how to write better project descriptions and met twice (in a workshop format) to work on the Combined Call. The value of projects in PMIS grew by \$9,253,566. The following Combined Call dates were met:

All PMIS 2/15 (now have a total of 204 project requests in totaling more than \$24,010,566)
 GMP 2/16
 Fee Demo Program 2/16
 OFS FY2002 3/1
 OFS FY2003 4/1
 (OFS requests total \$2,455,000 for FY2002)

Procurement and Contracting

167 Purchase Orders totaling \$1,666,290.00
 26 Request for Quotations for Construction & Service
 Two (2) Invitations for Bid, for Asphalt Overlay of Roads and Parking Lots
 One (1) Formal Contract totaling \$208,900.00
 One (1) New Interagency Agreement with the Army Corps of Engineers for Dredging of Davis Bayou Boat Dock area
 One (1) Modification to existing Army Corp of Engineers Agreement in the amount of \$300,400.00 for a multi-purpose trail, Florida
 125 Credit Card Transactions Totaling an estimated \$77,000.00

Additional accomplishments completed by the procurement section this fiscal year were: The removal and replacement of the Ft. Pickens carpenter shop, Bldg. #29; asphalt overlay and stripping of the Okaloosa and Opal Beach parking lots; removal and replacement of the bulkhead located in Mississippi; clearing of fire breaks in the Mississippi district; exotic tree removal in Florida, the acquisition of a multi purpose boom lift for the park; overhead door replacements for the Opal Beach Area; and research work on the effects of wildfire on the Naval Live Oaks Area.

The contracting office worked extensively with other divisions, primarily Maintenance, to ensure the completion of storm damage projects. Many large purchase orders and contracts were a result of the final stages of hurricane recovery efforts.

The contracting office also worked on projects such as: satellite transmitter tracking of sea turtles; storm shutters for the Mississippi (MS) Visitor Center/HQ building; an

environmental research program assessment of Petit Bois Island; the extension of the MS government boat dock; environmental and wilderness educational assessment plans for the park; and standard/annual grounds maintenance and refuse collection contracts for the both the Florida and Mississippi Districts.

Property and Housing

Debbie Pratt, SERO Property Specialist, conducted property audit January 29-30. Findings were overall satisfactory.

Completed the following annual property reports:

- a. Annual Personal Property Inventory Report
- b. Weapons Inventory (semi-annual)
- c. Federal Motor Vehicle Fleet Report
- d. Personal Property Furnished to a Recipient other than a Federal Agency

Completed the following property transactions:

- a. Report of Survey...14
- b. Certificate of Unserviceable Property...31
- c. Transfer of Property...7
- d. Receiving Report...2
- e. Reports of Excess Property for Sale through GSA...6

Issued a total of 578 third party draft checks with extensive travel and utility payments made. Completed 18 imprest voucher transactions.

Information Technology

Major accomplishments were achieved in the Information Technology arena:

Development and installation of TEL center in the Florida District. The planning, funding and purchase of a second TEL center for the Mississippi district was completed.

Upgraded three exiting network circuits to support new e-mail Lotus Notes.

Migration of parks ccMail e-Mail system to Lotus Notes included installation of software on all clients and converting archived mail to new Lotus format.

Development and installation of new network at Fort Pickens Building 5. Installation of infrastructure including cable plant, router, hubs, circuits, NT 4.0 Server, setup all user accounts and access privileges.

Designed and setup wireless bridge that extended new Bldg. 5 network out to Bldg. 3. This is the first use of wireless network technology in the region. Realized cost savings of \$4,000.00 over fiber installation.

Relocation of network equipment at Naval Live Oaks (HQ) from first floor to second floor, including the removal of poorly designed preexisting cable plan. This included moving/replacing circuits, hubs, router, modems, and patch panel.

Replacement of park standard virus software, Command anti-virus, with Norton on all servers and PC's.

Maintenance, repair and upkeep of over 200 pieces of ADP equipment including PC's and printers.

Human Resources

FY 2001 was an extremely busy year in Human Resources with a continuing trend of increasing technological advances, Reference Manual and Director's Order-57 and Resources Careers implementation follow-up, and a high level of staffing which continues to occur.

Streamlining of processes and procedures remains a paramount consideration. Access databases (classification, background investigation, physical exam, training, past/present employee, etc.) that were converted/established/updated last year to maximize the accuracy and accessibility of human resources related information have been refined. These databases have proven to be a great timesaving and accountability management tool.

The Human Resources Officer completed the mandatory conflict resolution (CORE) Specialist training in Washington DC and is now available to co-mediate and soon mediate situations Regionwide, Servicewide and/or for the Department on request.

During the year, the Human Resources Officer and Human Resources Specialist were able to assist the SERO with several projects including classification backlogs, and provided individualized advisory and work processes assistance to Christiansted, Virgin Islands and Cumberland Gap.

The Seashore's Personnel Management Specialist remains an active member of the Southeast Region Recruitment Task Force and has conducted an internal Delegated Examining audit of Mammoth Cave.

Staffing, Recruitment & Diversity

Recruitment continues to be a focus for the Seashore and is geared towards increasing the quality and diversity of applicants in both the seasonal and permanent workforce. More direct involvement by supervisors is taking place through off-site interviews, contacting sources of potential employees, and accompanying the human resources staff on on-site recruitment trips. The Seashore's Equal Employment Opportunity Committee is also working diligently in support of recruitment efforts by searching out and referring recruitment source information and contacts to the human resources staff.

In the seasonal workforce, thirty-two (32) hires and ten (10) rehires were made and included nine(9) females and three(3) minority males. The STEP authority was utilized Seashore-wide and represented eight (8) of the thirty-two (32) seasonal hires.

The SCEP appointing authority enabled the park to retain two employees with high potential this year - one (1) female in the trades and crafts and one (1) male who provides year-around continuity to the coordination of and recruitment and hiring for the seasonal lifeguard program. The female was converted to a career-conditional appointment.

A total of nine (9) new hires were made this past fiscal year – one (1) was from outside federal service, six (6) from other parks, and one (1) from another agency. Of those hires, two (2) were female and two (2) were minority males. Other actions were: Competitive (12); accretion of duties (1); and temporary (1) promotion totaling 14 for the year. Ten (10) were in-house (4 female, 2 minority). Three (3) were from other parks and the one (1) temporary promotion was an in-house minority male.

The park saw the retirement of two (2) staff members this year.

Employee Development

Gulf Islands sponsored several training sessions during the past fiscal year. Many were open Region-wide and to local, state and other federal agency participation. Included were:

40 Hour Annual LE Refresher, January 22-26, 2001; daily total attendance ranged from thirty-five (35) to eighty (80) with officers from the Escambia County Florida Sheriff's Office, Florida Marine Patrol, University of West Florida and the City of Gulf Breeze Florida Police Department in attendance for special sessions.

Module 101, January 23-24, 2001; open to Regionwide participation. A full class of 30 participants attended.

SER Administrative Officer's Conference, April 30 – May 4, 2001. Park provided local coordination and planning. The Administrative Officer was integral in providing a first-

class conference that included approximately 80-100 park and Regional Office participants and speakers.

Locally significant training was conducted for employees on topics covering fire, Bureau of Prisons, new employee and Ship Island orientations, Visitor Use Assistant Annual Refresher, Employee Assistance Program orientations for supervisors and employees, Incident Command modules, Merit Promotion Plan and completion of job application forms, and numerous other job-specific technical training courses.

Awards

The number of awards expanded slightly this year. Twenty (20) monetary, seventeen (17) Time-Off, seven (7) Quality Step Increase, five (5) non-monetary and one (1) valor were given.

Budget and Finance

Planned and tracked park's base ONPS funding and additional annual project funding in the amount of \$6,140,100.

Tracked Hurricane Georges projects which involved \$1,410,282 in expenditures. Participated in planning and reported status to Regional office. Estimated \$591,500 remains of the initial authorization of \$7.5 million. This year marked six years of continuous hurricane recovery from Opal, Erin, and Georges.

Received/Deposited \$12,577 in donations – all for specific projects. No general donations were received.

Tracked approximately \$1,172,162 fee demo collections and applied 80% (\$937,730) of the collections to 9 projects and the cost of collections. The park successfully covered all project expenditures using prior year carryover and current year income. Provided status of project reports to the Regional office. Estimated carryover to FY 02 is \$90,000.

This was the largest fire budget in a decade - Tracked \$228,200 Fire Program Funds. They were as follows:

- Rural Fire Assistance \$18,000
- Wild-land Urban Initiative \$114,650 (Est.\$12,000 expended, the remaining returned to SERO)
- Firepro Budget of \$46,050
- Burned Area Emergency Rehabilitation (BAER) (Big Lagoon Fire) \$23,500
(Expended \$7,500 and will carryover \$16,000)
- 7 Fires \$26,000 (5 Park Fires and 2 Assist Fires)

There were three Search and Rescue project accounts involving drowning and a shark attack – funding was \$4,000.

Completed one PCS move totaling: \$36,000 (Region funded)

There were three active reimbursable agreements. Tracked funds (\$337,901 total) processed payments and coordinated project establishment and status with AOC. Of major importance was coordination of the advance of funds for construction of the DOT Santa Rosa multi-use path - \$300,401.

Processed modifications and payments for Interagency Agreements (\$514,136 total) and for Cooperative Agreements (\$79,900 total).

Credit Card expenditures with 50+ cardholders were \$451,225.

The park spent 44% of its base operating funds by March 31 and ended the year with a zero balance.

MAINTENANCE:

Florida District

The Carpenter Shop (Rehab. Maintenance Facility) located in the Fort Pickens Area was completed in September 2001. The new updated and handicap accessible carpenter shop includes an energy efficient geothermal system, dust collector/vacuum system, loading dock and new tools/equipment that meet safety requirements. The original facility and equipment was damaged or destroyed by Hurricane Opal in 1995 and Georges in 1998.

Repairs to the VIP Cottage at Fort Pickens have been completed. The cottage has new kitchen countertop, wood floors have been refinished in living room and bedrooms, and vinyl floor replaced in kitchen and bathroom.

A new Eastern National bookstore and Lifeguard Station was constructed at Langdon Beach Hut. Complete rehab/reconstruction of this section of the pavilion was necessary, due to storm damage from previous hurricanes.

Plans and Specifications have been completed to overlay the Fort Pickens Parking Lot and a portion of the roads. The contract has been sent out for bids and an award is expected to be made in January 2002.

Campground electric upgrade in C & E Loop was completed. This project has upgraded each site in C & E loop campground with 50 amp service. Upgrading of these sites accommodates visitors with the larger RV's.

The Maintenance Division implemented the completion of the Fort Barrancas drawbridge repairs. Rotten wood and metal components were replaced and new decking and handrails installed. Cultural Resource and Maintenance worked closely to accomplish this project.

Hurricane building construction began in July and should be completed in 2002. This project is in conjunction with U. S. Forest Service and Gulf Islands.

At the Rosamond Johnson Beach Day Use Facility in the Perdido Key Area, the nature trail was completed. (Repair Perdido Key Trail - Cyclic). The trail is six foot wide, constructed of treated wood, handicap accessible, with an observation deck that is also handicap accessible. Along the trail are several benches and interpretive exhibits to enhance visitor satisfaction. The nature trail/boardwalk will result in increased habitat protection of the Perdido Key Beach mouse and the existing dune system. The trail will enhance visitor satisfaction and knowledge by providing an easy access to an area (wetlands) for bird watching, relaxation and learning about the ecosystem (interpretive exhibits).

In 2000 an extensive sand restoration project was started at Perdido Key and accomplished in 2001. Specific sections were cordoned off with sand fencing in an effort to rejuvenate dune growth. Beach access is provided by the completion of eleven (11) dune crossover boardwalks.

Perdido Key road repairs were completed in 2001. The parking lot and road was overlaid and restriped. A wider turnaround at the end of the road was required for safety, which allows the visitor to pull to the side and load and unload passengers with their daily beach supplies/equipment. Road shoulders have been restabilized for roadside parking and a bicycle rack installed at the end of the road.

Santa Rosa Day Use Area (Opal Beach) asphalt overlay and striping contract was completed in February 2001.

Okaloosa Day Use Area road repairs were completed in June 2001. Parking lot and road was overlaid and striped.

Carpet was removed and replaced at Naval Live Oaks Area headquarters building (Replace Carpet Naval Live Oaks - Cyclic). This project was completed January 2001.

Mississippi District

The Mississippi Boat Dock Extension (repair/rehab) project was completed in March 2001. The government boat dock extension included concrete piles (10) and approximately 700 square feet of frame and decking.

The repairs on the Mississippi Visitor Center deck (Rehab MS VC Deck - Cyclic) were completed. The old supports and decking have been removed and replaced with new

supports and decking. The 13000 sq. ft. of decking was installed using recycled (TREX) lumber.

Absorption boom was staged at fueling stations located at Ship Island, Horn Island and Davis Bayou meeting environmental compliance.

The bulkhead project, paving and striping project at Davis Bayou have been started and will be completed in early 2002.

RESOURCES MANAGEMENT:

Natural Resources

Turtle nesting was about half of what it was in the previous year. While this decline seems high it is within the variation experienced over the past ten years. Nest depredation was zero percent for the third year in a row - this is attributed to the active staff and volunteer turtle management program.

Two additional female loggerhead turtles were satellite tagged. The data from this tagging program supports cutting edge research on the location and range of the northwest Gulf loggerhead breeding population.

The nesting shore bird population continued to remain above pre hurricane Opal levels.

A major goal in shore bird conservation was achieved by the reduction of the speed limit from 45mph to 35mph on Fort Pickens road. Chick survival was raised from 10% to 15% by this simple action.

Nine pilot whales beached on Santa Rosa Island. A combined effort of Gulf Islands NS, National Marine Fisheries, Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Service, Escambia County, and hundreds of volunteers led to the rescue and transport of three whales to a rehabilitation center. Of the nine: one went back to sea; two were dead on the beach three were euthanized, and of the three transported to the rehabilitation center, one survived.

Gulf Islands participated in the regional exotic plant control program. Exotic trees in the park and on adjacent lands were removed. Staff work with adjacent land holders was exemplary and despite the delicate operations of tree removal on private land all went well.

The agreement with the State of Florida to allow duck hunting in the Florida District was fully implemented this year. All documents were filed on time, the area was posted, and the hunt proceeded without incident.

We participated with the State of Florida and Escambia County in monitoring water quality on park beaches for the Clean Beaches Program. Park staff did monitoring in the Mississippi District. The beaches of GUIS were clean and free of contamination.

Cultural Resources

FY 2001 was a very productive year in Cultural Resources. Consultation with Regional Office specialists on museum and archive issues and on structure conservation issues set the tone for the year.

Training sessions by the servicewide Preservation and Skills Training (PAST) program focused on Fort Barrancas, the Water Battery, and Advanced Redoubt. Along with park staff these trainees made significant repairs and improvements to these structures. These fortifications are now in better condition and are safe and presentable to the public.

A cadre of masons from the Harpers Ferry center began extensive masonry repairs to Fort Massachusetts. This work stabilized areas of failing brick and repointed areas of decayed mortar.

Archaeologists from the Southeast Archeological Center (SEAC) conducted an ASMIS survey of park cultural resources. This work met GPRA goal Ia8 and trained park staff to conduct future surveys.

Staff and contractors continued to address the backlog of collection items. Staff continued to improve the condition of the collection and all reports and standards were met.

Research

In 2001 twenty research permits were issued and six educational permits were issued.

A significant permit for the investigation of a sunken Spanish vessel was issued to the University of West Florida. Preliminary reports indicate this is a valuable archaeological find.

RESOURCE AND VISITOR PROTECTION:

The steel hulled shrimp boat 'Capt Hung' was sunk in park waters on a shallow shoal. After unsuccessful negotiations with the owner, the park eventually contracted with a commercial salvager to remove the vessel, thus removing a significant resource threat as well as a visual intrusion.

The Perdido Key beach mouse habitat has been protected and actively patrolled by law enforcement personnel. The no-parking area on the last ½ mile on Perdido Key Drive and at the cul-de-sac has been strictly enforced.

The posted speed limit on all park roads on Santa Rosa Island have been reduced to 35 MPH to protect the nesting terns, skimmers, snowy plover and their hatchlings. Rangers increased patrols in these areas and started issuing citations to violators once they were operating 10 miles above the posted speed limit.

Florida District grass beds have been closed to all motor operated vessels and citations have been issued to boat operators in these areas.

Hunting patrols were re-instituted in the waters off Santa Rosa Island for compliance with state and federal hunting regulations.

American Bald Eagle nesting on Horn Island has been monitored and protected through the cooperative efforts of the Resource and Visitor Protection and the Resources Management divisions.

Nesting shorebird closures for terns, skimmers, and other species were established on Horn and Spoil Islands this year, resulting in the successful hatching of over a thousand shorebird chicks.

Commercial fishing and recreational fishing stops resulted in numerous convictions, providing protection for endangered marine mammals and the many fish species found along the upper Gulf coast. One commercial fishing case (USA v. Boyd) has appealed his conviction to the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals. The increasingly successful nesting of sea-turtles along the island beaches is at least partially due to the park's commercial fishing prohibition and strong enforcement stance.

Weekly water quality testing was initiated at the Ship Island designated swim beach this year. The tests are conducted by park personnel and transported to a State testing laboratory for analysis.

Perdido Key Backcountry Camping Permit procedure established. New permits ordered, new signs directing how to fill out a permit and backcountry camping rules yet to be printed. Also permit registration station needs to be built near PK Ranger Station office.

New Educational Fee Waivers procedure in place that streamlines and provides a better customer service via one call that approves the activity date, time, and location. At the same time information on how to obtain an Educational Fee Waiver is provided to the caller and followed up in writing with the program confirmation letter.

Fishing Pier permit purchased for Fort Pickens. This permit enables nonresidents to fish on the pier without a FL Fishing License.

Most of the structures within the Mississippi district were inspected by certified personnel for fire safety deficiencies and a correction plan has been implemented.

All structures within the Florida and Mississippi districts were inspected for physical security deficiencies and an improvement plan has been implemented, with most deficiencies already corrected.

Using Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) monies, four sections of boundary in the Davis Bayou Unit were mechanically cleared to establish defensible fire lines, to be used in the event of wildfire and prescribed fire activities.

A High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area (HIDTA) proposal jointly developed by Gulf Islands and Harrison County Sheriff's Department in Mississippi was funded by the Department of Justice, allowing for an increased presence on the waters of the park by enforcement personnel from several agencies. These HIDTA operations have resulted in narcotics being seized and suspects arrested, leading to a safer park environment for visitors.

Mississippi District commissioned personnel are now receiving the consolidated U.S. Customs and Coast Guard 'Watch List' containing identification of vessels suspected of narcotics smuggling or other significant violations of law.

The two individuals who kidnapped a 22 month old child from the Davis Bayou campground were convicted and subsequently sentenced to 40 months and 49 months in prison.

The Surf Rescue Program continues to improve and has been certified through United States Life Saving Association. Even though there were four drownings in the park this year none have been on or near the guarded beaches. When lifeguard personnel were available they did perform patrols of the unguarded beaches on ATV's. Throughout the summer the lifeguards presented programs to visitors on water safety.

In Florida, the number of speeding citations has increased this fiscal year to 374. Driving under the influence cases also increased by 7 to a total of 29. Crimes and case loads have also increased along with fatalities and traumatic injuries. The number of protection staff was either at its current level from last year or below minimal staffing levels.

Through undercover work in Florida a car burglar was apprehended and charged with 31 counts of theft from auto.

All permanent Florida law enforcement Rangers are currently deputized in Escambia and Santa Rosa counties.

A seasonal emergency medical services coordinator was hired to assist the park with upgrading its emergency medical services program. Over \$9,000 was expended on equipment to improve emergency medical responses by law enforcement and surf rescue staff.

All Resource and Visitor Protection personnel performance plans are directly linked to Annual Performance Goals.

Commissioned personnel received training in numerous law enforcement disciplines, including hazardous enforcement operations and viewed the Kolodski murder video, officer survival, advanced interviewing, and other topics.

All Resource and Visitor Protection division employees received training and updates in emergency medical procedures. New Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) and Emergency Medical Services (EMT) protocols were established and an agreement with a local physician has resulted in the park medical program now being under the supervision of a medical director. Another Mississippi district ranger was certified as an EMT.

All red-carded wildland firefighters received annual refresher training.

All commissioned employees received advanced law enforcement training using non-lethal training ammunition. This training allows the ranger to be placed in situations where he or she can be shot at, using paint bullets. This is probably the most effective officer survival and use-of-cover training available today.

All lifeguard personnel received a two week advanced surf rescue refresher with all personnel being certified as First Responders.

The fee program manager was delegated the responsibility to supervise the park's Special Park Uses Program. She attended Special Park Uses Managers Training.

All Visitor Use Assistants (VUA) attended the Annual Park Fee Conference held January 2-3 and CPR training on January 4, 2001. All employees completed web based training on safety and credit card use.

The fee program manager was assigned to WASO (temporary promotion to GS-11) to assist with the National Park Reservation System (NPRS) day-to-day field operations. Duties included organizing and presenting two, one-week session at NPRS call center in Cumberland Maryland, refund report and cancellation adjustment refund requests, and assisting parks with miscellaneous NPRS issues.

Three seasonal VUAs selected with Student Hiring Authority – 2 from local colleges and 1 from Nebraska.

Females and minorities were recruited and hired for the surf rescue unit.

A female criminal justice major and intern from the University of West Florida was hired as a seasonal law enforcement ranger for the Florida District.

There were **no** lost time accidents within the division.

Hazardous storage buildings have been acquired and installed at both offshore island ranger stations, providing safe and legal storage for flammable and hazardous materials used at on islands. Fuel spill prevention and containment material for boat refueling have been acquired for each island and the mainland fueling station.

The radio system between Gulf Breeze Communications Center and the Mississippi district was upgraded to improve emergency communications.

The division obtained \$10,000 in funding from the Baptist Medical Foundation to produce a environmental safety orientation video.

The division received \$2,000 in funding the Santa Rosa Triathlon Committee to purchase an automatic external defibrillator for the Florida District.

The division received \$7,500 in funding from the Blessing of the Recreational Fleet Committee to purchase automatic external defibrillators for the Mississippi District.

A fee operations position management review was completed by Regional Fee Program Manager Bill Sturgeon. No deficiencies were found.

The park collected \$1,454,000 dollars in gross revenue in FY-2001. The division exceeded the FY-2001 park goal by \$562,599 dollars.