

Research Integration Into Management Was Conference Objective

September 9-10, 1982 marked the beginning of biennial conferences on "Research in California National Parks," sponsored by the Cooperative Parks Studies Unit, Davis, and hosted by the University of California at Davis. The theme of this conference was "the integration of research into National Park Resource Management Decision-making," with a major aim of helping researchers and managers to better coordinate their respective expertise.

More than 150 participants listened to papers from 76 scientists who had conducted research in a California National Park. Topics dealt with California plant communities, geology, water quality, forest rehabilitation (particularly in Redwood NP) California mammals, birds, fish and amphibians. Also dealt with were the effects of fire on the ecosystems of California's National Parks, and the scientific study of lakes, ponds, and streams. A number of papers were concerned with visitors in the parks — their perception of park areas and the impacts they are having on various resources, backcountry campgrounds in particular.

In addition to the paper sessions, one evening was spent viewing 15 poster presentations and 3 NPS films on the Channel Islands and Sequoia & Kings Canyon NPs. Sections of each day were devoted to panel discussions in which participants discussed how research was implemented into management decisions in their respective expertise areas. Panel members consisted of NPS research scientists, resource managers, and superintendents, in addition to university and other governmental agency personnel. The closing panel, chaired by Dr. David Parsons from Sequoia & Kings Canyon NP, dealt with positive aspects of the conference and how it might be improved in future years. In all discussion sessions, the audience was invited to participate.

Key-note speaker was Dr. Roderick Nash, a professor of history at the University of California at Santa Barbara, and a noted historian of the National Parks. Dr. Nash stated that National Parks reflect the social and cultural values of society, and that these values have changed over the past century. In taking the audience through a historic tour of

National Parks, from their inception to the present, he stressed that many of the mistakes park managers have made in the past were a direct result of their responding to the needs and desire of the public at that time. For instance, in the early stages of the National Park Service, people wanted a resort-type of situation. The grandiose hotels still extant in many of the parks reflect that period's desire. Also, people then wanted to lounge around and at the same time be able to view the wildlife. Bear feeding was instituted as a result. Today, visitor desires have shifted in the direction of more wilderness experience, leading to elimination of the bear feeding programs and emphasis on preserving the natural conditions of the National Parks.

Limited copies of abstracts of the conference are available from Dr. Charles van Riper III, Unit Leader CPSU/UCD, Institute of Ecology, Wickson Hall, University of California, Davis, CA 95616. The proceedings of this conference will be published by the CPSU and the Institute of Ecology at UC Davis, and is expected to be ready by late 1982. Copies may be purchased by contacting Dr. van Riper.