



PARK SCIENCE

A RESOURCE MANAGEMENT BULLETIN

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

VOLUME 3 - NUMBER 2

WINTER 1983



Cover photo:

Resource Management Trainees start their stints: *(see story p.3.)*

Front row (lt. to rt.): Bill Ehorn (Channel Islands Supt.); Debbie Buzzell (Morristown + Roosevelt-Vanderbilt); Norm Fletcher (Acadia); Brad Cella (Wrangell-St. Elias); Garree Williamson (Cuyahoga); Walter Loope (Pictured Rocks); Tim Tunison (Hawaii Volcanoes); Jack Galvin (Yellowstone); Stan Lock (NCR Coordinator); Ro Wauer (WASO Coordinator); Jon Jarvis (Crater Lake); John Miller (Grand Canyon); Jeff Conner (Canyonlands); Allan O'Connell (Fire Island); Joanne Michalavic (Mt. Ranier).

Center row (lt. to rt.): Ed Schreiner (Olympic); Hank McCutcheon (RMRO); Steve Budd-Jack (Mesa Verde); Steve Chaney (Buffalo River); Ken Stephens (Bandelier); Bruce Rogers (Assateague); Bob King (Padre Island); Dave Reynolds (New River Gorge); Kathy Jope (Katmai); Chris Baumann (C + O Canal); Barbara Samora (Cape Cod); Jeff Bradybaugh (Theodore Roosevelt); Ron Nagata (Haleakala); Frank Buono (Chaco); Len Frank (NAR Coordinator); Steve Cinnamon (Waputki-Sunset Crater); Gary Ahlstrand (Alaska Coordinator).

Back row (lt. to rt.): Ed Drtego (SWRO); Ben Holmes (NWR Coordinator); Steve Smith (SER Coordinator); John Lissoway (Bandelier); Mike Maule (MAR Coordinator); Steve DeBendetti (Sequoia-Kings Canyon); Dick Prasif (PNR Coordinator); Gordon Olson (Antietam); Keith Langdon (Catoctin); Larry Belli (Glenn Canyon); John Townsend (Indiana Dunes); Bruce Freet (Big Cypress); Mike Duwe (Big South Fork); Lillian Rummel (NCP-East); Linda Dye (Biscayne).

37 Parks Participate In Natural Resource Management Training

By Ro Wauer

In the second State of the Parks Report (1981), most often referred to as the prevention/mitigation report, the Park Service outlined a strategy designed to address the numerous threats to park resources that had been described in the 1980 State of the Parks Report. That strategy included both immediate and long-range actions. The immediate activities consisted of the identification and ranking of Significant Resource Problems (SRPs) to identify the Service's most critical natural and cultural resource priorities. Long-range activities included (1) the reemphasizing of area Resource Management Plans as the primary vehicle for documenting resource threats and the mitigation actions required; (2) the design and development of a Resources Information Tracking System (RITS) to provide managers, planners, and scientists with a pertinent information base; and (3) a program to train four levels of Park Service employees in the philosophy and fundamentals of natural resources management.

Three of the training levels were implemented immediately. Natural Resource Management courses for Superintendents and Mid-level (park division chiefs) personnel had already begun, and two workshops (Natural Systems and Coastal Systems) for current Natural Resource Management Specialists were held in April and September 1982. Five additional workshops were identified and are expected to be implemented during ensuing years.

The fourth level of natural resource management training, and one that is expected to be the most important for the long-term protection of park values, is a new, innovative program designed to place specially trained Natural Resource Management Specialists into parks presently lacking the personnel and expertise to identify, assess and monitor threats and to prepare and implement scientifically-based prevention and mitigation plans. This training program is funded by special allotments to the participating regional offices for salaries and support costs. It involves a series of two-year training assignments which run one after the other and are expected to continue through 1990. The first of these started August 1, 1982, in 37 park units; the 37 trainees (see photograph) were selected on the basis of their qualifications to meet the requirements of the various recipient parks.

The trainees' first responsibility is the completion of an acceptable Individual Development Plan (IDP). Each IDP will include 35-plus components that may vary greatly in length and intensity, depending upon the specific park requirements and

the trainee's level of expertise and interest. As an example, the Cave Management component may last only a few hours for Bruce Rodgers, Assateague's trainee, but may last several weeks for Steve Chaney, Buffalo River's Natural Resource Management Trainee. Some components, such as Resource Management Plans, Vegetation Management, Exotic Animal and Plant Control, and Integrated Pest Management, will require considerable attention throughout the course of the training assignment.

All 37 of the trainees began their training at Ft. Collins, Colo., Sept. 8 to 17, 1982, when several of the 35-plus components were discussed. Most of these components were only introduced, and each trainee is expected to continue with the rest of the components during the follow-up activities as described in the IDPs. Topics discussed at Ft. Collins included environmental law, ecosystem maps, natural resource management planning, endangered/threatened species management, integrated pest management, public relations, and political realities. The Ft. Collins session was the first time all the trainees had been assembled. For many of the new appointees it was their first introduction into the purpose and format of the program.

All of the trainees are expected to be together again at least one more time, for a week-long sociological component scheduled at Texas A & M University in December 1983. Introduction to statistics and probability analysis for natural resource manager also will be included.

Although a good deal of the training activities is likely to take place outside of the trainee's home park, either at other parks that can provide on-site training opportunities, at a variety of other federal or state agency sites, or at other offices or institutions, all should be product oriented. However, each product should benefit the trainee's home park. And the trainee's curriculum must be sufficiently flexible to allow for day-to-day activities required in the operations of the home park as part of the completion of the ingredients outlined in the trainee's IDP.

The basic premise of the Natural Resource Management Trainee Program is to provide greater assurance for the perpetuation of park natural resources. In a sense, the program is training people in 37 parks to be resource ecologists. The trainees must learn the art of people management and at the same time understand and apply basic ecological principles that provide the building blocks for resource planning and decision-making. They must comprehend that "the first rule of intelligent tinkering is to save all of the pieces," accept the truth that "nature will win in the end," and utilize the concept that if "it ain't broke, don't fix it."