

NBS-USGS Merger Update

ON MARCH 22, 1996, NBS DIRECTOR RON PULLIAM ANNOUNCED THAT THE NBS-USGS merger was in progress and would be completed on or before October 1, 1996. At that time, NBS biological science and related activities will become the Biological Resources Division (BRD), a fourth division within USGS (USGS currently consists of the Geologic Division, Water Resources Division, and the National Mapping Division).

A transition steering team composed of NBS and USGS representatives established four issue subcommittees (science, management, administration, and information and technology) that worked toward a June 1 final report that will serve as a final plan for the NBS-USGS consolidation. Under the flag of USGS, the BRD will continue serving the biological research needs of DOI agencies with the potential for increased funding in fiscal year 1997 to address priority science needs of the DOI land management bureaus. This new initiative would expand research assistance by means of tactical research, inventory, monitoring, mapping, and data support. Combined with a commitment by the National Park Service to provide matching support for NBS NRPP (Natural Resource Protection Program) work, hope for a continued emphasis on a strong science-based approach to land management is foreseeable.