

Honors awarded for natural resources work

The National Park Service recently presented six individuals with its 2000 Director's Awards for Natural Resource Stewardship and Science. The honors recognize outstanding achievements in the protection of ecosystem health in parks. This year, a sixth award was initiated, the Director's Award for Professional Excellence in Natural Resources, given in recognition of an NPS employee who fosters creative and innovative resource management practices in support of the mission of the National Park Service. The awards were given during the October 2001 meeting of the Natural Areas Association in Jacksonville, Florida. The people selected for these awards have, among other things, developed innovative vegetation management programs, advanced the use of sustainable practices, restored native ecosystems, and furthered our knowledge of coastal ecosystems.

Tamara S. Naumann, botanist at Dinosaur National Monument, Colorado-Utah, was the first recipient of the Director's Award for Professional Excellence in Natural Resources. Tamara designed and developed a vegetation management program that addresses weed management, restoration of native species and communities, and rare plant research and monitoring. Each of these components has applicability to other parks and agencies across the Colorado Plateau. Each component also has a strong educational aspect ranging from presentations to volunteers, to development of a rare-plant coloring book for youngsters. Tamara's involvement in national and interagency activities, volunteer activities, weed programs, weed management, and rare plant management serves as a model for parks on the Colorado Plateau and elsewhere.

Mike Finley, the immediate past superintendent of Yellowstone National Park, was the recipient of the Director's Award for Superintendent of the Year for Natural Resource Stewardship. Mike was recognized for his instrumental leadership in several complex and controversial areas of resource management, including the restoration of the gray wolf, management of bison, winter use in Yellowstone, and conservation of the Yellowstone cutthroat trout. Mike has shown strong support for scientific research and professional resource management. He has recognized the importance of good information in decision making, insisting that management decisions be science-based.

Chris V. Case, Facility Manager at Pictured Rocks National Lakeshore, Michigan, was presented the Director's Award for Excellence in Natural Resource Stewardship through Maintenance. Chris is a leader in the field of sustainable resource management and in the application of "green" technologies at the park. He has researched, developed, and introduced a comprehensive program encompassing sustainable energy (including solar), park-wide recycling, "biofluids" conversion, and product inventory and standardization. His efforts resulted in the conversion of six hand-operated camp-



Several of the winners assembled in Jacksonville, Florida, in October to receive the awards from Mike Soukup, NPS Associate Director for Natural Resource Stewardship and Science. Pictured from left to right are: Chris Case, Mike Soukup, Samantha Weber, Tamara Naumann, and Charles Roman. Absent are Mike Finley and Tim Tunison.

ground water pumps to 24 solar chlorinated well pump systems; development of a solar power grid system for seasonal employee housing, and conversion of diesel additives and hydraulic fluid to soy-based biofluids in vehicles. He has worked closely with Sandia National Laboratory, U.S. Department of Energy, solar contractors, and the Michigan Soybean Promotion Council in applying these technologies in the park.

The recipient of the Trish Patterson-Student Conservation Association Award for Resource Management in a Small Park was **Samantha E. Weber**, Chief of Natural Resource Science at Cabrillo National Monument, California. Through her hard work and determination, Samantha initiated the Division of Natural Resource Science at Cabrillo and implemented a geographic information system (GIS) program. Lacking professional and support staff for her program, she developed a network of resource managers and scientists in and outside the National Park Service to assist the monument. The natural resource science and GIS programs are now integral parts of the monument's operation. Samantha also has worked closely with scientists who wished to do research in the monument to ensure that their projects meet the monument's information needs.

J. T. "Tim" Tunison, Resource Management Specialist at Hawaii Volcanoes National Park, was presented the Director's Award for Natural Resource Management. Tim led and documented experiments to remove exotic plants in very small areas called special ecological areas (SEAs), and focused on methods that encourage native species to reestablish. He collaborated with scientists to use SEAs as living laboratories, formulating and testing hypotheses about native ecosystems and their vulnerability to exotic plant invasions, and devising practical techniques to restore and protect native systems. As a result, Tim and his resource management crew have effectively restored native ecosystems in the park ravaged by exotic plant infestations—a task some thought was hopeless. His successes have encouraged all the



NPS land managers of the Pacific islands to revisit their techniques for managing exotic species.

Dr. Charles Roman was the recipient of the Director's Award for Natural Resource Research. Dr. Roman is a research scientist in the Biological Resources Division of the U.S. Geological Survey. He has been studying the ecology of coastal ecosystems on behalf of the NPS Northeast Region's coastal parks for more than 15 years. Dr. Roman's research has been essential to the protection of coastal barrier national seashores in four major areas: evaluating effects of hydrologic alterations on freshwater wetland ecosystems; restoring salt marshes and small estuaries; quantifying changes in coastal ecosystem structure, function, and process; and evaluating relationships between sea level rise and salt marsh habitat structure. His innovative work has inspired much research interest in national parks among the scientific community.

Park Science congratulates all of the year's award winners.