

NPS "Common" Data Base

The WASO Natural Resources Divisions, in cooperation with other WASO program areas and the Information and Data Systems Division, is currently completing initial development of a Servicewide automated information base containing key information on each park unit. This Servicewide information management system, called COMMON, represents a "corporate data base" for the Service, and will allow NPS staff throughout the System to quickly retrieve and exchange key information on park resources, planning, operations, and administration.

The objective of COMMON is to provide an easily accessible source of key, summary-type information on the parks, covering a variety of different topics such as lands information, budget and visitation information, planning document information, administrative-type information, law enforcement information, and cultural and natural resources information.

In a typical "corporate data base" environment, users from many different organizations (parks, Regions, offices) **share** in the use of this "common" data, with each user organization contributing some of the data they generate or maintain into the com-

mon pool. In many cases, selected data from existing, program-specific data bases (such as the NPS lands data base or the NPS park directory data base) are directly "uploaded" into COMMON, on a recurring basis, thereby reducing actual data entry requirements and helping to ensure data accuracy and currency.

COMMON includes "basic" natural resources-related information including park significant resource features, significant resource problems or threats, status and availability of park baseline information, park ecological classifications, and management of areas adjacent to the park. The WASO Natural Resources Divisions will also be incorporating several additional "modules" into the overall COMMON system in the next six months.

Included are modules on park threatened, endangered and exotic species; park pest management problems and pesticide applications; park water rights information; park energy and minerals-related activities and threats; and a "Decision Tree" system, which will allow park users to identify the source of an observed pest problem and to receive treatment

advice. In addition, the Servicewide NPFLORA data base soon will be incorporated into the COMMON system. At the same time, other WASO program areas, including Park Operations, Administrative Services, Cultural Resources, and Planning and Development, are contemplating the addition of "modules" to COMMON.

COMMON is currently running on the Service's Hewlett-Packard minicomputer system. COMMON is completely menu-driven and definitely "user-friendly." It can be accessed by anyone with a terminal, microcomputer, word processor, etc. with standard communications capability. Natural Resources and Information and Data Systems are planning to provide a series of workshops on COMMON early in 1986 to introduce the system for full field use and to get field suggestions on how to improve the system. User's manuals on the system should be ready for distribution to the field at the same time.

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