

Eight Regions Participate in Wildlife Management Workshop

By Thomas W. Lucke

Twenty-eight NPS employees from eight Regions gathered on the Colorado State University (CSU) campus in Ft. Collins from Sept. 15 to Oct. 3 for a Basic Wildlife Management Workshop, sponsored by the Albright Training Center. The workshop was designed by Eugene Decker, a professor in the Department of Fishery and Wildlife Biology at CSU, and coordinated by Doug Morris of the Training Center. Instructors included William Ehorn (Superintendent of Channel Islands NP), Cliff Martinka (Research Biologist, Glacier), Regional Chief Scientists Dan Huff and Milford Fletcher, Maurice Hornacker (Director of Wildlife Research Institute in Moscow, Ida.), Al Le Count (Research Biologist, Arizona Game and Fish Department), Henry McCutcheon (Research Biologist, Rocky Mountain NP) and various professors from CSU. Management perspectives and concerns about wildlife issues facing the NPS in the 1980s were addressed by Jack Neckels (Deputy Regional Director, Rocky Mountain Region) and James Thompson (Superintendent, Rocky Mountain NP).

Classroom presentations examined issues such as wildlife ecology, characteristics of wildlife populations, wildlife habitat concepts, conservation of endangered species, remote sensing of wildlife habitats, the role of fire in habitat management, grizzly bear management, management of marine resources and ungulate ecology. Comparative approaches to wildlife management were reviewed during discussions on National Parks in Zimbabwe by Eugene Decker, on wildlife management in Central Europe by Professor Julius Nagy of CSU and on wildlife management in Bavarian National Parks by Prof. Wolfgang Schroder of the University of Munich.

In addition, workshop participants spent a day at Rocky Mountain NP, where park staff introduced the group to the complexities and realities surrounding an elk management program. A second field trip took the trainees to Wind Cave NP, where Supt. Ernesto Ortega and his staff detailed the delicate blend of law, politics, pressures and science required to manage the park's bison herd.

A final aspect of the workshop required attendees to break into small groups and discuss the 1963 Leopold Report, which has guided wildlife management in NPS areas over the past two decades. In a lively evening session, each mini "blue ribbon panel" presented its recommendations as to how the Leopold Report should be expanded or modified to meet the new challenges and conditions the NPS will face in the 1980s and beyond.