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*Cover: Bruce Connery from Wrangell-St. Elias NP
accepts his diploma from NPS Director William Penn
Mott, Jr. (Story on page 3).*

Third Class of NRMS Trainees Complete 12 Month Program

By Richard L. Harris

The third class of Natural Resource Management Specialist trainees completed their 12 month program on Nov. 5, 1987, and were presented their certificates for completing the training by NPS Director Mott. The 20 participants began their training in November 1986 and participated in 22 weeks of intensive instruction at various National Parks and universities. The remaining time was spent at their respective parks or on additional training as part of their individual development.

Unlike the first two trainee classes, which were administered by the Office of the Associate Director for Natural Resources, this program was set up and run by the Division of Training in the Washington Office of Employee Development. For the 1986/87 trainee program, parks within the 10 NPS Regions identified the need for specialized resource management expertise. Training positions were then advertised and filled through vacancy announcements or training opportunities at the regional level. Although trainees for the second program were also selected on a regional basis, the candidates were selected through a single competitive personnel process with a list of qualified candidates prepared at the WASO level. Members of the first group of trainees were not selected through a competitive process, but were picked from parks that identified a need for additional resources management expertise and could allow a trainee time away from assigned duties to pursue formal coursework.

The third trainee program was conducted over a one year period instead of two as previous programs had been. However, approximately the same amount of time was devoted to academic coursework as during the second program. Academic coursework varied little from the second program, and exposed trainees to a broad range of resource problems and issues. For the majority of courses, trainees were required to pass an exam or complete and submit a post course paper.

Training completed during the program included: Computers and statistics and Natural Resource Policy and Law, held at Clemson University; NPS Administration, Budgeting, and Contracting, and NPS Planning and Cultural Resources Management at the NPS, Washington Office; Vegetation Management at UC Davis; Wildlife Management at Texas A&M; Air Quality, Integrated Pest Management, Geographic Information Systems, and Mining and Minerals at the Denver Service Center; Water Resources Management at Colorado State University; Fisheries and Aquatic Systems at Oregon State University; Fire Management at Boise Interagency Fire Center and Sequoia/Kings Canyon NP; Interpretation and Communications, and Situational Leadership at Harpers Ferry Training Center; and Conflict Resolution and Negotiation, and Coastal Process and Geomorphology, held at the NPS Washington Office.

In addition to structured courses, trainees participated in a two week resource management training practicum at Yellowstone NP. This was an optional training opportunity, which gave participants a chance to use some of the skills acquired during the program. Trainees spent time in the field working on projects dealing with fisheries management, bear management, and resource rehabilitation, to name a few. This constituted a break from the more academic course-

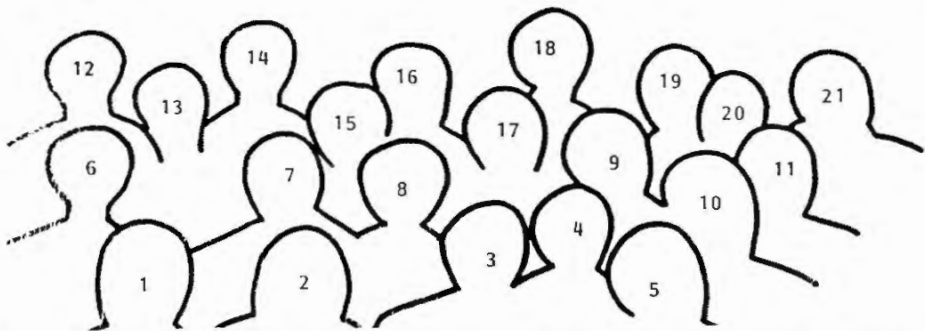
work and allowed participants to experience resource issues facing the oldest National Park and the social impacts created during its peak visitation period.

Due to this program's one year duration, the in-park project required of the second trainee class was dropped. However, because all but one trainee remained at their respective parks at the end of the training, trainees were able to readily apply newly acquired skills and knowledge to ongoing projects and undertake others that could be carried through to completion after the program.

Because of the compressed time frame, travel and training made for a potentially stressful situation. Two

trainees became fathers which made being away from home difficult at times. To help alleviate some of the pressures on the home front, spouses and families sometimes accompanied trainees at their own expense on trips during the summer months. This was encouraged by program coordinator, Dr. William Walker.

Although much was gained through the learning experiences provided, the resources of friends and other resource professionals will prove equally important throughout the trainees' careers. And the opportunity to experience first hand the resource issues facing parks throughout the system and to maintain



The graduates: This year's graduating class of Natural Resource Management Specialist Trainees was recorded for posterity on the steps of the Interior Building in Washington, DC, by Rosa Wilson of the WASO office of public affairs. By name, Region, and duty station during training, they are: 1. Jeri Hall, NCR - GWMP; 2. Ruth Scott, PNR - OLYM; 3. Richard Bryant, SER - CANA; 4. Anne Marie LaRosa, WR - WRO; 5. Donna Shaver, SWR - PAIS; 6. Judy Hazen, NAR - ACAD; 7. Rick Harris, MWR - INDU; 8. Bruce Connery, AR - WRST; 9. Kate Kitchell, RMR - CANY; 10. Larry Katahira, WR - HAVO; 11. Rick Potts, MAR - SHEN; 12. Ken Stahlnecker, NCR - ANTI; 13. Ray Snow, RMR - THRO; 14. Carl Zimmerman, SER - GUIS; 15. Clive Pinnock, NAR - GATE; 16. Larry Norris, SWR - JELA; 17. John Apel, MAR - HOFU; 18. Dick Anderson, WR - SOAR; 19. Jim Hammett, PNR - NOCA; 20. Jack Delfke, MWR - WICR; and 21. Bill Walker, WASO, Coordinator of the trainee program.

a dialogue with other trainees, proved beneficial for all.

Not unlike the members of the past two trainee programs, the third class was a diverse group consisting of 6 women and 14 men who ranged in age from 27 to 40 by the program's end. Nine have completed masters' degrees and 11 have completed bachelors', with one trainee now completing course work that will lead to a bachelor's in natural resource management. All had NPS field experience prior to entering the program.

During graduation exercises, Director Mott and Associate Director for Natural Resources, Eugene Hester, gave their support for the continuation of the program in 1988/89. A new program is scheduled to kick off at Clemson University the first week of April. The program will again be run under the direction of Reginald (Flip) Haygood in the WASO Office of Employee Development and coordinated by Dr. Walker.



Director Mott accepts the tee shirt that makes him one of the third NPS Natural Resource Specialist trainee graduating class.

Partly based on input from this past group of trainees, the new program will run for a year and a half, allowing trainees to spend more time in their parks on current projects and to escape some of the pressures caused by continually being on the road. Filling trainee positions is being carried out in the same way as for the last program, and at present little change has been made in the academic structure. One difference is that the new group of trainees will have the option to develop and carry out a project if it fits in with the objectives of a park's overall resource management program.

In all, individuals who have been selected as trainees and parks that have benefited from them, have the highest regard for the program. The professional skills developed by trainees now makes them a valuable part of the cadre of natural resource professionals needed to effectively address resource issues that will continue to confront the NPS now and in the future.

The author is No. 7 in the class photo.