

Southwest Region

During the week of April 11, 1988, NPS Chief Scientists held a three-day meeting in Santa Fe. Dr. Eugene Hester and several of his division chiefs were present to discuss Water and Air Resources, GIS progress in the NPS, National Natural Landmark activities, and other topics. How to better utilize scientific personnel in the Service was a topic of great interest. The Chief Scien-

tists are preparing a position paper on CPSUs and their activities.

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A report recently released by the NPS/CPSU at Texas A&M describes the results of a survey by three Southwest Regional permanent park employees and VIPs. The study, entitled "Relations Between National Park Service Employees and Volunteers in the Park" indicates that VIPs are greatly appreciated by NPS permanent employees. Those agreeing or strongly agreeing that "VIPs provide a great service to our Park" made up 87 percent of the sample. Eighty-three percent of the sample agreed that VIPs are dependable workers. Copies of the study may be obtained by contacting the CPSU Leader at Texas A&M University.

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Peregrines have returned to Big Bend and Guadalupe Mountains NPs again. Big Bend believes they have seven or more active eyries even though Case Grande may have been abandoned. Guadalupe has an active eyrie at Peregrine Palace. Until young birds hatch and can be seen by monitors, a lot of speculation exists about eyrie status. This looks like another banner year for peregrines.

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Ah spring, when Padre Island National Seashore gears up for the annual Ridley Turtle watch. Supt. John Hunter, moving smoothly from managing burros at Bandelier NM to turtles at Padre Island, reports that an adult Ridley came ashore the week of April 25 and laid 103 eggs. The nesting, at Mustang Island just north of Padre Island, was not a tagged turtle from the Head Start program but she renewed interest of turtle scientists and the public as well. The Atlantic Ridley Turtle is the smallest and most endangered of sea turtles with a total adult population in the wild of approximately 600 animals. The eggs of the Ridley were recovered and are being incubated at the Padre Island hatching facility by NPS Resources Management personnel. Hatching will occur in approximately 58 days. The sex of the hatchlings will be determined by the incubation temperature – a phenomenon common among reptiles.