

Special Initiative Funding For Servicewide Projects Now Into Second Year

In November 1989, a call went out to NPS Regional Directors from the Associate Director for Natural Resources (AD/NR), for "pre-proposals for substantive technical investigation of two critical issues of Servicewide importance:

- The management of animal populations
- The role of diseases and parasites in natural ecosystems."

The first of these issues had been identified by NPS Regional Chief Scientists as a high priority; the second is emerging as a significant national problem as parks become more and more surrounded by intensive human developments and activities.

A number of excellent pre-proposals emerged, many of them involving cross-Regional staff work in a Servicewide partnership. Seven were chosen for funding in FY 1990; one was in the area of synthesis of large mammal activities, three involved modeling animal population dynamics, one concerned restoration of native animals and removal of exotic animals from park areas, and two dealt with the role of diseases and parasites.

As AD/NR Eugene Hester noted in his October 11, 1990 memorandum to the field, the FY90 effort was "a well-conceived, though modest, program," whose success was due in part to the early involvement of the Regions. Dr. Hester had framed his 1989 Call for Pre-proposals as a response to comments of the Regional Chief Scientists regarding increasing the involvement of Service personnel in carrying out the purposes of the Natural Resources Special Initiatives program. "I welcome this involvement," he said at the time.

In an October 11, 1990 follow-up, Dr. Hester has informed the Regional Directors that he would like to continue the program in FY 1991. He notes that the FY90 program "complemented our overall Natural Resource Preservation Program (NRPP) project list and related closely to the major Servicewide issues we have identified through the Natural Resources Assessment and Action Program and other mechanisms," and solicits pre-proposals for specific projects in the following categories:

1. Effects of Urbanization and/or Boundary Development on Park Environments;
2. Management of Animal Populations;
3. Managing Human-Natural Resource Conflicts and Issues; and
4. Other proposals that address Servicewide natural resource policy issues, especially those that are interdisciplinary and multi-regional in scope.

Pre-proposals were due to the AD/NR by December 14, 1990. January 11, 1991 is the date set for issuance of the invitation for proposals. Proposal deadline is February 22; award decisions are slated for March 15, and funds will be transferred on March 29, 1991.

Park Science will be reporting on the seven projects funded in FY90 as results become known.

In the Pacific Northwest Region, the three funded projects are (1) a synthesis of activities and issues related to wildlife management in the National Parks; (2) development of a conceptual model to provide guidance for the management and regulation of animal species in the National Parks, and (3) animal disease issues in the National Park System.

The other four projects funded in FY90 are:

Midwest Region, population management of white-

tailed deer in relation to spatial attributes of Midwestern NP areas; Southwest Region, landscape structure and its impact on interpretation of desert mule deer population; North Atlantic Region, arthropod-borne diseases in and near national parks, national seashores,

national lakeshores, and national rivers in the continental US; and in the Western Region, restoration of native animals and removal of exotic animals in NP areas.