

Southeast Region

Dr. Stephen V. Cofer-Shabica, oceanographer, has been named Director of the NPS/CPSU at the University of Georgia following the departure of Dr. Susan Bratton.

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Skip Snow, Resource Management Specialist at Everglades NP, participated in a USFWS-sponsored technical workshop on the Florida manatee population biology in Gainesville Feb. 4-7, 1992. Seventy participants provided information on manatee biology and ecology to an invited panel of 10 population biologists and statisticians, including such notables as Lee Eberhardt of Battelle Labs, Douglas DeMaster of NMFS, Charles Fowler of Alaska Fisheries Science Center, James Nichols of USFWS, Robert Garrott of U/WI, and Helene Marsh, dugong researcher from James Cook University, Australia.

The panel was charged with making recommendations on how to improve our knowledge of manatee

mortality and survivorship, population estimation and trends, and estimates of growth rate and development of simulation models. One recommendation was to establish a Manatee Aerial Survey Working Group. Snow was selected as a member of this group. Workshop proceedings will be made available in coming months.

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Everglades Resource Management Specialist Skip Snow and pilot Dave Dutcher participated in the 1991-92 Florida Statewide Synoptic Manatee Aerial Survey Jan. 17-18, 1992, by contributing aerial survey results from the park's entire coastline and mangrove

zone. Conditions were near perfect and a record 1,856 manatees were counted statewide.

Within Everglades NP and the adjacent upper Florida Keys, 106 manatees were counted. Despite the high count (1,856), the true population size remains unknown, and there is no reason to believe that manatees are less endangered than before or that we should halt any ongoing manatee conservation strategies. The record numbers of documented deaths in recent years remain a major impediment to the species' recovery. More manatees died from human-related causes (68) in 1991 than ever before. Likewise, more small ("perinatal") calves died (53) than ever. Statewide, continuing levels of habitat loss and degradation, as well as possible water pollution, also are serious ongoing concerns.

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The CPSU at U/TN is expanding. A search is underway for a second research ecologist, to join Stephen Nodvin, who has been the only NPS scientist on staff since 1988. John Peine also has been added to the staff as Research Social Scientist.

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Nodvin has submitted two proposals to the Cooperative States Research Service through U/TN toward developing new research in the Great Smoky Mountains NP. He worked with Dr. Helga Van Miegroet of Oak Ridge National Lab (ORNL) in developing the proposal: "Nitrogen Dynamics and Nitrate Export in Southern Appalachian Forests" to evaluate the importance of ecosystem and geographic factors such as forest age and disturbance and stand elevation in regulating the export of nitrogen and other nutrients from forests at Great Smoky Mountains NP.

Nodvin also worked with Henriette Jagen, also of ORNL, in developing a proposal entitled "Multivariate Spatial and GIS Techniques to Monitor and Map Water Quality," which, if funded, would incorporate available stream quality data, new GIS data, and new multivariate techniques to develop water quality maps for streams at Great Smoky Mountains NP.

Nodvin and his CPSU staff are developing an indexed bibliography of references for Great Smoky Mountains NP – a database of primarily scientific references which now contains approximately 1800 records. Office Asst. Susan Twigg and Nodvin are indexing the references and plan to have a printed draft ready for review by this summer.