

Software Improved for Annual Resource Management Updates

Parks prepared over 14,000 project statements in the 1995 annual resource management plan (RMP) update. The new RMP software (version 2.12) allows park staff to track project funding beyond the previous limitation of 4 years, automatically generate annual accomplishment reports for funded projects, and archive completed project information including the problem statement and description of actions. The archive function should substantially increase the ability of the RMP system to serve as a parkbased data repository of resource management goals, priorities, and accomplishments.

The RMP software also enables park staff to prepare and track project statement information in a consistent format. Administrative offices and program managers use the information provided in the annual updates to ascertain and justify resource management budget requests and allocations. Without the automated RMP annual updates, parks would receive frequent requests for data surveys, project justifications, and status reports.

Another benefit of the RMP update process is the ease with which the project database can be searched. For example, we recently searched the 1995 servicewide RMP data to identify and fund high priority projects meeting the specific

criteria of a corporate sponsor providing a \$450,000 donation. The rapid identification of specific resource management project types and ability to justify funding requirements with problem statements and action descriptions is only possible through the data and software capabilities provided in the RMP system.

In March, parks gathered information for 2,155 research projects for the 1994 Investigators Annual Report (IAR) update. The IAR system was originally designed to provide park staff with an automated tool for organizing, storing, and tracking annual activities and accomplishments performed by non-NPS researchers. This information includes project objectives, findings, and bibliographic references, which can supplement the long-term history of science within parks.

Computer Specialist Tim Goddard of the NPS Natural Resource Service Center in Fort Collins, Colorado, is re-designing the IAR software so that park staff can more effectively store multiple year report data. This will enhance the functionality of the IAR system to better serve park needs as a repository of research project reports collected over many years. Additional modifications should also enable parks to automate the process of generating and tracking research permits.

Both the resource management plan and investigators annual report systems are useful tools for parks and administrators to track progress toward research and resource management goals. Goddard

will continue refining software periodically to ensure that these systems evolve in order to meet the demands and expectations of NPS information users for planning and documentation. For further information, contact Goddard at (970) 225-3543.