

The human dimension

Social science studies are the focus of two articles in this issue. An important management tool, social science can provide answers not only to questions about the basic kinds of activities that visitors engage in, but also about their motivations, level of satisfaction, and attitudes related to their park experience. However, as our cover story indicates, this information is not commonly available to park managers. Clearly, we need to be asking more of these kinds of questions, which is what Rocky Mountain National Park and the U.S. Geological Survey have done in their study on the attitudes of backpackers and day users in the park, our second social science report. Both stories are reminders that park management is as much about managing people as it is about managing natural and cultural resources.

Another facet of the human dimension in park management is the quality of leadership within our own ranks. In an interview, our first, Lake Mead National Recreation Area Superintendent Alan O'Neill discusses his success in building a top resource management program at the park during the last decade. His talents as a manager are inspirational and his methods for redirecting a park's energies toward resource preservation and gaining support for increased resource management program funding are insightful.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jeff", is located at the bottom right of the page.