

Editorial

Science has long been recognized as an essential tool in the management of our National Parks. A major "new look" at its role and function is now underway again (see pages 16, 17). More and more, science is finding an equally essential place in park interpretation.

This issue contains a number of articles and items dealing directly with interpretation of scientific information about parks. It seems editorially worthwhile to point out that interpreters can benefit, and so can their receiving publics, from an acquaintance with the general contents of *Park Science*.

Scientific research and the application of its results to park management can be a fascinating ingredient of park interpretation. Visitors love to feel that they are peeking behind the scenes at what lies back of all the beauty and splendor they came to see. Even more important perhaps is the *human* level and the very real advantages that can derive from a public with a deeper appreciation and understanding of park ecology and park management. This is the realm of *social* science, which rides and operates on top of all the physics and chemistry and biology whose ironclad laws govern parks.

Only an enlightened, involved, enthused public can provide the support that parks must have if they are to continue to offer the quality experiences they now afford. Interpretation needs every ounce of knowledge – about both parks and visitors – that it can muster if it is to serve both the parks and the public at the highest level of professionalism.