



THE THIN GREEN LINE

NEWSLETTER OF THE INTERNATIONAL RANGER FEDERATION

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OFFICERS REPORTS

President's Report

Dear Friends and Colleagues:

Core IRF activities have quieted down a lot over the last few months, which has brought a much-needed respite from daily concerns, although there are still on going issues which the IRF is addressing. South America is particularly active at the moment and Daniel Paz and Marcelo Segalerba in particular must be given credit for their hard work.

New Members

We welcome the news that Rangers of Peru formed a national ranger association last December, and we look forward to welcoming them as a member of the international family of rangers in the very near future. At the same time, we've learned that the indigenous Waiana-Apalai Guardeparque of Brazil are currently forming an association and hope to join the IRF family soon. This would bring the membership of the IRF to 60 members.

Youth Award

During the Fifth IRF World Congress in 2006, the first recipient of the joint IRF/WCPA Young Conservationist Award was announced. Calls for nominations for 2007 will soon be released on both the IRF and IUCN websites. There were 48 nominations in 2006, but very few nominations for rangers in the field. We hope to see even more nominations in 2007, and certainly more rangers being nominated for this prestigious award.

Ranger Deaths

In 13 quarterly contributions to the **The Thin Green Line** over four years, I believe that this only the second time when I have not had to report a ranger killed or seriously injured (that we are aware of), and we must be thankful for that. That said, I would ask that you spare a thought and prayer for Mario Pop Maquín and Julio Santiago Vásquez Ordóñez, who were abducted in November 2005 from the Campo Volcan Atitlan and are still missing. For Daniel Kurday from the Araucarias Park, who is still seriously injured after being shot by a poacher in 2004. For the embattled rangers of the DRC and the Galapagos Islands who continue to face extreme pressures on their parks and on their lives. For the rangers of Portugal and Slovakia who face political decimation of all that they have protected and fought so hard for over so many years.

International Day of the Ranger

The International Day of the Ranger (or World Ranger Day) will be held on July 31st. After some discussion amongst member associations during IRF2006 in Scotland, it was agreed that the International Day of the Ranger would be celebrated on the 31st of July annually. This is the date on which the IRF was born, when the accord establishing the IRF was signed at Losehill Hall in Peak District National Park. World Ranger Day 2007 promises to be a very special day, because it will be celebrated with the world premier of the ranger documentary, *The Thin Green Line*.

The Thin Green Line is a documentary of rangers around the world, filmed and produced by a ranger – Sean Willmore of Australia. Sean spent all of 2004 and still more time during 2005 travelling the world, working with and filming rangers. A preview of his documentary was screened during the Fifth IRF World Congress in Scotland and received a standing ovation. This documentary promises to be very special, as it shows the heart and the guts of a ranger.

There are a number of things that will make this premier a very special event for the rangers of the world, Sean has very generously offered to donate 100% of the profits of the event, and the sale of the DVD's of the documentary, to the Rangers Dependents Fund.

The premier of *The Thin Green Line* is to be a gala “green carpet” event to take place in more than 48 countries around the world all on the same day. The IRF has 58 members in 48 countries and we are asking each and every member association to arrange a premier gala event. Individual protected areas and even individual rangers can organize their own premier events. The aim is for 500 premiers of *The Thin Green Line* documentary to be held in at least 50 countries around the world on International Rangers Day. The premier will also be the launch of the Friends of the IRF campaign, an initiative that offers members of the public subscription (not membership) to the IRF in a few categories of “ranger” for a small annual fee, which can provide much-needed funding for the IRF.

Not only is *The Thin Green Line* a very special documentary about rangers, it is also an event that has the potential to be a significant fund raising opportunity for the Ranger Dependents Fund, and through the Friends initiative to provide sustainable operational financing for the IRF. The IRF is not only growing, but the issues that are faced by rangers around the world are increasing and becoming more complex, which requires that the IRF grow to new organizational level in order to serve the needs of the rangers and the profession of ranger into the future.

I would urge, indeed beg, all IRF member associations and even individual rangers who believe in their profession and care for their fellow rangers to get out and arrange a premier event of *The Thin Green Line*. Details on how to do this can be obtained on the documentary's website (www.thingreenline.com) or through Sean directly (seanwillmore@iprimus.com.au). It is easy to organize and an information/registration pack will be sent out to you on request. You are of course at all times also more than welcome to contact me directly.

Warm Regards,

David Zeller
President
irfpresident@soft.co.za

Vice President's Report

Over the past three months, the International Executive Council has invested more energy into strengthening communication within IRF. As you will read in this issue, more regional representatives submitted reports for this issue and those regional reps are also expanding their communication with member associations. We're very pleased to get the first report from the newly established Asia representative position. At the Scotland Congress last year, the attending member associations from Asia elected Bum-Whan Shin from the Korean Rangers Association, Republic of Korea. Han-Seok Ryoo was serving as the secretariat to that position, but left the national park system and we temporarily lost contact with the representative. The new secretariat is Gyu Sung Lee, also with the Korean Rangers Association, Republic of Korea. He is planning to submit a series of articles to **The Thin Green Line** and **Guardaparque** on issues with the Korean national parks and with rangers.

Condolence Letter

In April IRF sent a condolence letter from the vice-president to Craig Giggelman and his family for the loss of his wife, sea turtle patroller biologist Marina Giggelman, in Corpus Christi, Texas, USA. Marina was raised in Lagunilla, Venezuela, and was killed when her all-terrain vehicle flipped while she was patrolling a sea turtle recovery area.

Web Site

We have incorporated many member suggestions for updating the IRF website (www.int-ranger.net). David Burns (Australia) is our volunteer web manager and has made key improvements over the past two months:

1. The membership page now gives contact information for Secretary Elaine Thomas, has a new membership form, and gives more details on joining IRF. We've included information on requirements for being a member in good standing, which was added to the standing rules during the Scotland Congress.
2. The "forums" page continues to be a challenge to manage. It gets taken over by advertisements and other spam daily. David tried deleting messages daily but the automatic spam system is too fast. We have eliminated the ranger forum temporarily and are researching other ways to improve that area.
3. The Congress page lists the 2009 Bolivia Congress and will be updated as the organizers have information to share.
4. The current and back issues of **Guardaparque** have been added to IRF Newsletter page where **The Thin Green Line** is posted.
5. The temporary header on the home page links to Sean Willmore's home page on his film, *The Thin Green Line*.

We are working on ways to update the entire web site with updated web software. That may take some time, but once in place will help with some of our technical difficulties. We will continue work on the web page in these areas:

1. Update the home page,
2. Add an "International Day of the Ranger" page with links to the film premiere information,
3. Recruit someone to coordinate enquiries about ranger exchanges between countries,
4. Recruit volunteers to translate IRF publications into other languages.
5. Update the training page.

Please send me an e-mail if you know volunteers who could assist with translations of **The Thin Green Line** and **Guardaparque**.

With warm wishes,

Deanne Adams
Vice President
IRFdeanne@aol.com

Past President's Report

First Congress of Spanish Environmental Agents

A helicopter circled a vacant lot in downtown Murcia, Spain. Orange smoke rose from the lot and the helicopter slowly lowered. When it was three feet off the ground, a squad of Spanish environmental agents, dressed in Nomex clothing, leaped out. The 300 to 350 participants of the first congress of Spanish environmental agents (rangers), most in their uniforms, applauded and returned to the congress meeting site. This was the spectacular beginning of their congress, held from March 30th to April 1st.

When they got down to business, the environmental agents followed an agenda that would look very familiar to rangers around the world. They discussed jurisdiction, career opportunities, training and professional competencies. Rangers from France, Italy, Argentina, Portugal, and the United States gave presentations on the roles and responsibilities of rangers in their countries. Daniel Paz from Argentina discussed the International Ranger Federation. As always, the participants exchanged points of view about the challenges they faced during coffee breaks, meals, and what little free time there was.

The final day was a field trip to a nearby regional park. The highlight of that trip was a visit to an historic site. The site was a cannon emplacement built in the 1930's. The cannons protected a harbour on the Mediterranean Sea. It was beautiful.

Most participants felt that the congress was a resounding success. One of the most frequent comments as they departed the congress was that they would see each other at the next congress. Congratulations to the organizing committee for their work on coordinating the congress and to the environmental agents of Spain for taking the initiative to meet to discuss the issues of importance to them. The next congress will even be better.

Primer Congreso de Agentes Medioambientales de España

Un helicóptero daba vueltas alrededor de un espacio abierto en el centro de Murcia, España. Humo naranja salía del suelo y el helicóptero lentamente se bajaba. Cuando llegó a un punto un metro del suelo, saltó un grupo de agentes medioambientales españoles (guardaparques), vestido en Nomex, al suelo. Salió el helicóptero. Los 300-350 participantes del Primer Congreso de Agentes Medioambientales de España, la mayoría de los cuales vestida en sus uniformes, aplaudieron y regresaron al sitio de reuniones del congreso. Así fue el comienzo espectacular de este congreso.

Cuando empezaron a trabajar, los agentes medioambientales siguieron una agenda que parecería muy familiar a guardaparques de otros países. Trataron de jurisdicción, oportunidades de carrera, formación continua, y competencias profesionales. Guardaparques de Francia, Italia, Argentina, Portugal y los Estados Unidos hicieron presentaciones sobre los roles y responsabilidades de guardaparques en otros países. Daniel Paz de Argentina tocó el tema de la Federación. Como es la costumbre en este tipo de reunión, los participantes intercambiaron puntos de vista durante las pausas, las comidas y durante el poco tiempo libre que hubo.

El día final del congreso fue una visita a un parque regional cercano. El punto culminante fue la visita a un sitio histórico. En el sitio en los años de treinta, el gobierno había instalado cañones para proteger un puerto en el mar mediterráneo. Fue un lindo lugar.

La mayoría de los participantes consideró que el congreso había sido un éxito. Uno de los comentarios más frecuentes de ellos a salir del congreso fue "hasta el próximo". Felicidades al comité organizador por el trabajo de la coordinación del congreso y a los agentes medioambientales por haber tomado la iniciativa de reunirse para discutir los temas importantes para ellos. El próximo congreso será aún mejor.

Rick Smith
Past President

European Regional Representative Report

Situation In Slovakia

In the beginning of February, the leader of the Slovakian Ranger Association, Juraj Svajda, sent information to Gordon Miller concerning the new situation in the Slovakian national park administration. Juraj reported that the Ministry of Environment called this a long-term planning reorganization. Dismissal of employees were announced, especially rangers. In Tatra NP, where Juraj works, five employees have to leave their jobs. Juraj asked if IRF could help in some way. As IRF's European Representative, I contacted Juraj and notified him that I would like to visit Slovakia on behalf of IRF at the end of March. The intention was to get firsthand information about the situation at the moment. We agreed on a meeting in Slovakia during the weekend of March 23rd - 26th. Juraj developed a program, including meeting with rangers in Male Karpathy PLA and

Tatra NP, Vlado Vancura from PAN Parks and Director Anna Juskova from the Department of Nature and Landscape Protection at the Ministry of Environment in Bratislava.

The new situation in Slovakia can be expressed into the following points:

- After the election in July 2006, the new government announced a 20% reduction of government employees. The argument is to save money. The ministers at each ministry have to make an action plan for this reduction. The decisions are not made yet.
- A document for 2002 – 2006 from the previous government included plans to increase the numbers of rangers in PLA and NP in Slovakia from the current total of 108 to 170 rangers. In Tatra NP, that meant an increase from 1 to 23 rangers. This process was stopped already in 2004. Today, 17 rangers work in Tatra NP.
- The Slovakian Ranger Association wrote a letter to the Minister of Environment in January in which they expressed concern about the situation and pointed out that the number of rangers were not at the level today as the previous government planned.
- During this process, the Slovakian national park administration has been reorganized. A new level has been established between the General Director of State Nature Conservancy and the PLA and NP. Eleven directors of new regional centres of nature conservation are employed at this level. Some national parks have got new directors. Tatra NP has got a new one. The previous director was offered a ranger job, but he resigned.

A meeting was held at the Ministry of Environment in Bratislava on the 26th of March. At this meeting, held with the director of the Department of Nature and Landscape Protection, I expressed on behalf of IRF concerns about developments in the PLA and NP in Slovakia. I also focused on the very important work the rangers do and I pointed out the difference between this importance and the status of the ranger in nature management in Slovakia. I informed her about our coming European Ranger Seminar in Romania in September. I expressed hope that rangers from Slovakia could get a chance to come to the seminar.

The director, Anna Juskova, said she was concerned about the new situation. She said that the reduction of employees would be announced before the summer. There is no decision yet to reduce numbers of rangers. The reduction in the number of governmental employees is no longer 20%, but perhaps 10% or even less. But a reduction in employees also means a reduction in money to projects in PLA and NP. Mrs. Juskova works for a study program for rangers at the University of Zilina.

The new directors and the new people at the Ministry of Environment seem to be very flexible in connection with development of the areas close to and inside the PLA and NP. The fact is that the directors are managers of very attractive areas for development. The positive thing seems to be that the rangers have got support from the public due to reports in the national media. Juraj Svajda and the Slovakian Ranger Association are doing a very good job. According to the last message from Tatra NP, it's not the rangers who will lose their jobs but other employees. But nothing is decided yet. All in all, the situation in Slovakia seems to be negative for the Nature Conservation in the country.

Upcoming Training Seminar in Romania

The International Ranger Federation and the Romanian Ranger Association will hold the first European rangers' training seminar in Retezat National Park in Hunedoara, Romania, from September 17th to September 21st. The goals of the seminar are:

- To share experiences and to learn from each other
- To inspire and gather motivation for the protection of nature
- To offer the opportunity to experience the natural and cultural heritage of Romania.

Monday, September 17

Hunedoara: Arrival day and opening ceremony. Arrive at the Deva rail station (the shortest way is to land in Budapest Airport and then take the train to Deva), transfer by bus to Hunedoara, accommodation in Rusca Hotel. For people from Eastern Europe a solution could be to use private cars.

Noon – 5 p.m. Registration and accommodation of arriving participants

6 p.m. The official opening and welcome
7 p.m. Dinner

Tuesday, September 18 – Thursday, September 20

Retezat National Park: Field-training seminar. Participants will be split into three working groups; each group will attend each topic of the seminar. Transfer by bus from Hunedoara to the three starting points of the park trails (Rausor, Gura-Zlata, Poiana Pelegii).

7:30 – 8:30 a.m. Breakfast
8:30 a.m. Departure from the hotel
10:00 a.m. Field training seminar, Retezat National Park (during the field trip, the participants will be offered snacks and water)
6:30 p.m. Return to the hotel
8:00 p.m. Dinner

The topics of the day will be as follows:

1. Education/Interpretation – Educational trail, Rausor - Lolaia Ridge, Retezat NP. The topic will be discussed during the trip on the educational trail Rausor – Lolaia Ridge. The goal of the educational trail is to describe the biodiversity of the park and how it is addressed to different categories of tourists. Presentations are made by means of informative panels and flyers. During the trip, the different types of site interpretation in various European parks will be discussed. On our way back, we will continue to debate on the topic in the Ostrovel Visitors' Center.
2. Management/Biodiversity Conservation – Field trip to Gemenele Scientific Reserve (first IUCN category). The aims of the topic are exchanging information and different approaches in biodiversity monitoring, the problems faced by rangers from all over Europe, particularly related to the management of biodiversity. The trail is placed in the most untouched area of the park, Gemenele Scientific Reserve, Gura Zlata - Gemenele Romanian Academy Lab – Gemenele Lake.
3. Management Of Tourist Activities – Field trip in the core area of Retezat NP, Lapusnicu Valley, Poiana Pelegii, Bucura Lake. For this topic we chose the following trail: Rau Mare Valley – Lapusnicu Mare Valley – Poiana Pelegii – Bucura Lake. This is one of the most popular trails travelled by the tourists, with a large number of people who use the camping places. Here we encounter most of the problems in applying the park regulations, environmental legislation and the management of tourist activities. Different models of marking and maintenance of the tourist trails will also be discussed.

Friday, September 21

8:30 – 9:30 a.m. Breakfast
10:30 – 12:30 p.m. Meeting in the conference room of the hotel for discussions related with European rangers' issues, the relations between IRF and other institutions and future activities.
11:30 a.m. Coffee break
1:00 – 2:00 p.m. Lunch
2:30 – 3:00 p.m. Transfer of the participants to the conference room of the Hunedoara Technical University
3:15 p.m. The opening of the conference
3:20 p.m. Guest speakers from: the Romanian Ministry of the Environment, Europarc, PanParks, and The Romanian National Forest Administration
4:00 p.m. Romanian premiere of international rangers documentary, *The Thin Green Line*, by Sean Wilmore, park ranger from Warringine Park - Victoria, Australia
5:30 p.m. Press conference
6:00 p.m. Transfer to Corvins' Castle
6:15 p.m. Visit to the castle
8:00 p.m. Transfer to the hotel
8:30 p.m. Closing of the seminar and dinner

Saturday, September 22

Departure or start of post-seminar tours.

Option 1	Retezat National Park
Option 2	Piatra Craiului National Park
Option 3	Apuseni Natural Park
Option 4	Danube Delta Biosphere Reserve

Since all of the activities will take place in the outdoors, minimal hiking equipment is needed: hiking boots, backpack, waterproof jacket and sunglasses. For the conference day, official uniforms are required. The costs of the seminar, including accommodations, meals and transportation during the seminar, are as follows

Double Room	285 euro/person
Single Room	335 euro/person
Suite, Double Bed	360 euro/person

Sign up for options required by June 15th. Contact: rangers_training@retezat.ro.

Tel: +40 724302875 Florin Halastauan - Ranger Retezat National Park
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Africa Regional Representative Report

The recent Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the GRAA held in the De Hoop Nature Reserve in the southern Cape of South Africa included a one-day seminar on the marine environment. The seminar, which was well attended, featured an impressive line-up of excellent speakers. The theme was most appropriate considering that marine protected areas have become increasingly recognized, as a priority need across Africa and elsewhere around the globe.

During the AGM, Timothy Snow stepped down as chairman of the GRAA, after having served the association very well in this position for the past three years. Wayne Lotter was elected as his successor for the next two-year term. As usual, the GRAA recognized a handful of people for their outstanding achievements and contributions to conservation and/or to the profession of game ranging during the annual awards ceremony. The very prestigious lifelong achievement “Spirit of Africa” award was bestowed, posthumously, to Ms. Blythe Loutit for her decades of tireless dedication to rhino conservation in Namibia. The first and only other recipient of the GRAA “Spirit of Africa” award is Dr. Ian Player, who received it in 2005.

Further pleasing news from Africa relates to the formal agreement between GRAA and the Southern African Wildlife College (SAWC), which, I am happy to report, will be signed by both parties at the college on April 27th. Members of the press will be invited and a press release made on the day. Mr. Rene Valks of the Dutch-based Liberty Foundation will also be present.

This occasion will mark the beginning of the achievement of GRAA’s dream to develop a training facility where game rangers can receive training in a variety of skills and be linked to a national qualification framework for the accreditation of the training received. The SAWC is a registered non-profit organization that is proudly supported by both the Peace Parks Foundation and WWF South Africa. SAWC is situated in a natural Lowveld environment in a contractual SA National Park, approximately 12 kms west of the Orpen Gate to Kruger National Park.

To recap on what was reported previously, details of the agreement include the following:

- Income generated from the SAWC use of the tented facility will be shared on a 50/50 basis for accommodation used.
- Use of the camp will be made available to GRAA members at agreed rate, but subject to availability.
- SAWC will be the GRAA provider of choice, but the GRAA will retain the right to choose its own providers, who will make use of the accommodation and training facilities at SAWC for training not provided by SAWC.
- All learners who complete training using the facility should receive a certificate bearing the GRAA logo.
- Off-site training can also be provided as per separate agreement for each project.
- Both GRAA and SAWC will seek funding for bursaries for the envisaged training both in South Africa and abroad.

This project not only has great potential to grow and deliver well-trained field rangers who can be deployed at the coal face of conservation, but it also represents an excellent networking opportunity and introductory point of contact between the GRAA in South Africa and members/potential members from elsewhere in Africa, as many rangers from throughout the continent attend various SAWC courses on an ongoing basis.

An additional current area of focus for the GRAA is the marketing of its' capacity to provide expert services in the field of protected area management effectiveness; primarily the promotion of the tool (known as PAMS) for achieving and maintaining effective management in protected areas. The Protected Area Management System (PAMS) addresses all conservation concerns, the achievement of goals, and ensures verified progress and improvement. Third party PAS (Protected Area Stewardship) certification of outsourced tourism and/or hunting agents against acceptable standards is recommended as a complementary addition to the implementation of PAMS by conservation agencies. The attaining of PAS certification is a secondary consideration, but there are advantages of third party certification. In brief summary, PAMS is a risk management system, which will reduce liabilities, win stakeholder support and has potential commercial benefit. The GRAA is also keen and able to assist conservation organizations with conducting objective management effectiveness evaluations of protected areas and in compiling integrated management plans for protected areas.

More information is available by contacting Ms. Jan Phelan (mwplanit@mweb.co.za, +27(0) 82 876 0003) or the GRAA chairman (waynelotter@iafrica.com) who can by request; give a short presentation outlining the system.

Wayne Lotter
GRAA, South Africa
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Australia/Oceania Regional Representative Report

New Zealand

Kit Howden of New Zealand has supplied me with the following two items, which may be of interest to readers. Kit is not part of The New Zealand Department of Conservation (DOC), he works for a local urban parks.

Identifying and protecting World Heritage sites in the Pacific was the focus of a workshop held at Tokaanu, near Turangi, in February. Ngati Tuwharetoa, paramount chief and chairman of UNESCO's World Heritage Committee Tumu te Heuheu, said that supporting Pacific nations to achieve more recognition and protection of their cultural and natural heritage was an important aim of his year as chairman of the committee. "Pacific Island nations have a rich and diverse heritage, and their cultures should be treasured and valued by the international community. The World Heritage Convention is an opportunity to recognize these values, and this workshop is an important step toward preparing nominations for World Heritage status". The workshop brought 40 Pacific Island heritage and conservation planners from 15 nations together with staff from the Department of Conservation, the Australian Department of Environment and Water Resources, the Paris-based World Heritage Centre, and other World Heritage experts from New Zealand and Australia to develop plans and nominations for World Heritage status.

Recent agreements have been signed with Italy and Korea e.g. establishing a partnership with Cinque Terre and Te Wahipounamu (South Westland) as World Heritage parks to compare and managing similar issues, establish a partnership with Korean National Parks Service and share information on common biodiversity values e.g. feeding grounds for migratory sea birds that visit both countries. Following his initiative, the department is also currently investigating an agreement with the Brazilian Ministry of Environment with the aim of sharing bilateral initiatives in invasive species management, national parks/forest mgt and eco-tourism. Other previous agreements include the United Kingdom, California and Fiji. These agreements are usually formed on a memo of understanding between DOC and the agency and could include joint working parties, research forums, sponsored collaboration, networking and staff exchanges etc. DOC has been working on a system and processes to offer the formal exchanges as development opportunities for staff as well as providing benefit to the department. These processes have been based on experiences through exchanges previously arranged by staff with environmental agencies in Australia, UK and various Pacific Island nations.

Australian Rangers Federation

The Australian Rangers Federation (ARF) held a teleconference committee meeting on April 3rd. This was the first meeting since the AGM held at Stirling in June 2006, so there were a lot of issues that needed to be discussed and sorted out to ensure that the ARF remains a strong group with the drive and respect of colleagues to represent the ranger groups of Australia. All states were represented except for South Australia, Tasmania and Australian Capital Territory. The meeting was very productive, with positive debate on how the federation should progress from here. Two potential models are being looked at with regard to the future direction of the ARF, with each proposal to be supplied back to the committee by May 31st for discussion and a decision to be made on which direction the federation will progress. A further report will be provided on the final result in time for the next issue.

Queensland Rangers Association

The Queensland rangers held their annual conference on April 17th and 18th at Paluma, which is north of Townsville, approximately 1500 kilometres north of Brisbane. The theme for this year's conference was "Fire in the Mountains" and focused on the use of fire as a natural resource management tool. Speakers from various management agencies – both government and non-government – delivered information and feedback on their best practice of using fire in a sustainable and responsible manner. The conference also featured a trade display showcasing some of the latest in fire fighting technologies and developments, along with additional improvements in a number of items commonly used by QPWS. Paluma township is nestled high on the Paluma Rang some 1000 meters above sea level. High rainfall and the altitude combine to form the perfect environment for cool lush rainforests to thrive and form the backdrop of the village.

North East Arnhem Land

Phil Wise has sent along the following report: Since returning from the IRF Congress in Scotland in 2006, there have been a number of positive outcomes for the Parks and Wildlife Service of the Northern Territory and its partnership with Dhimurru Land Management Aboriginal Corporation. For those who didn't catch the presentation in Scotland, both organizations are committed to a joint management agreement for the Indigenous Protected Area (IPA), and this has been ongoing since 2003. One of the most important aspects of the agreement is the governance structure that is in place. The agreement ensures that all decisions remain in the hands of the traditional landowners, with the NT government assisting in an advisory role. The agreement also ensures that the PWSNT are working towards the commitments of the NT parks master plan to support community ranger groups throughout the region. In September last year, both organizations were recognized for their partnership when they were awarded a Chief Ministers Award for Excellence in Public Sector Management in the category of Indigenous Community Development, and were highly commended in the category of Regional and Remote Development. In its struggle to raise adequate recurrent funding and its reliance on grants and sponsorship, Dhimurru relies on positive partnerships to assist with effective management of its IPA. To this end, Dhimurru released its sea country plan, which clearly sets out the aspirations of its traditional custodians with regards to management of its marine estate. It also clearly defines how other agencies and non-government organizations may be able to help Dhimurru to achieve its aims. A copy of the sea country plan can be downloaded from Dhimurru's web site - www.dhimurru.com.au.

Protected Area Workers Association of NSW (PAWA)

Tegan Burton reports: Congratulations to New South Wales (NSW) rangers on the formation of their ranger organisation – it has been a long time coming. Following lots of supportive feedback from my initial email towards the end of last year about forming an Association for NSW rangers, Tegan Burton, Dave Burns, Michele Cooper, Chris Keyzer and Steve Woodhall have been working hard between fires and other commitment to get an association up and running. The Protected Area Workers Association NSW was incorporated on February 27th. We have established a bank account and are now seeking members. For incorporation purposes, those of us mentioned above have become the caretaker committee with the aim of getting the association up and running and organizing the first AGM where all committee positions will be vacated and up for election. The caretaker committee strongly believes the association should be inclusive of all people who directly work in the management of protected areas in their broadest sense and that membership should not be exclusive to rangers in the NSW NPWS. The choice of association name was therefore very deliberate and our constitution and membership criteria reflect this philosophy. The association will be affiliated with the Australian Ranger Federation and the International Ranger Federation, both of which support this inclusive philosophy. I think this is the start of something exciting for us here in NSW. In our own way, we can do something meaningful for our ranger colleagues and ourselves, while having fun along the way. Get ready to get involved!

PAWA to the people.

Paul Lawless-Pyne
Queensland
paul.lawlesspyne@epa.qld.gov.au

North American Regional Representative Report

We have begun discussions with members of the Alberta Natural Resource Officers Association in Canada about possible affiliation with the IRF. Their association members are conservation officers responsible for protected lands in the province of Alberta, Canada. The group is about 20 years old and currently represents approximately 75 full-time officers within the province and about 100 seasonal officers. Their positions are similar to that of the National Park Service ranger in the U.S. or Parks Canada warden in Canada, but they are provincially based. Murray Ingstrup is our contact in Alberta.

I set up and staffed an IRF display at the biennial conference of the George Wright Society during the week of April 16-20. This conference attracts about 700 professionals interested in the science and historical research that form the basis for the management of protected areas. Although the organization started in the United States and attracts most of its members through affiliation with the U.S. National Park Service, the focus of the organization has always been international. Go to www.georgewright.org to learn more about the group. I will be seeking ways that our two organizations might collaborate.

Meg Weesner
Association of National Park Rangers
Meg_Weesner@nps.gov

IRF Youth Development Program

Since you heard from us last, the Young Professional Ranger (YPR) team have been busy making things happen in their corners of the world.

Team Updates

Scotland Update from Jane Evans, – The Scottish Countryside Ranger Association held its annual general meeting (AGM) last month and the three Young Professional Ranger council members were re-elected. Niall Lobley, having been vice chair, was voted on as chairman; Caroline Robertson was voted on to council as a member and retains her rolls as *SCRamble* editor and regional representative coordinator; Jane Evans was

voted on as secretary. Around 11 rangers at the AGM were within YPR age range (approximately 20 to 35 years old). Jane intends to start a thread at the SCRA online forum about YPR and to contribute an article for *SCRAmble* to try and encourage more members to come forward and join the YPR cause.

South Africa Update from Marius Fuls, – The Game Rangers Association of Africa held its AGM in February, during which quite a few new members signed up – mostly young professional rangers. What’s encouraging is that they are mostly rangers in marine protected areas, an environment previously neglected by the GRAA. Marius is working hard on a launch for *The Thin Green Line* movie on World Ranger Day and has two functions lined up in the Kruger National Park area in South Africa so far. One of these is in conjunction with WESSA (Wildlife & Environment Society of South Africa), which is very excited about it. Plans are to invite some really high profile people with influence in environmental protection, such as politicians, big businessmen and celebrities. Hopefully other GRAA members will do similar launches in other parts of South Africa.

North America Update from Emily Murphy, – Following our YPR workshop in Scotland, Emily wrote an article for *Ranger, The Journal of the Association of National Park Rangers* (US), to spread the word to all of those who couldn’t make it to Scotland. She is planning to lead a session at the ANPR Ranger Rendezvous (their annual meeting) in October on the Young Professional Ranger workgroup, and to hopefully develop an action plan for how the US YPR’s can get involved.

Austria Update from Barbara Mertin, – From July 5 to July 10, the sixth International EUROPARC Junior Ranger Camp will take place in the Lake Neusiedl–Seewinkel National Park in Austria. Approximately 35 junior rangers and their mentors from different European countries who share the same love and interest for nature will participate. Program activities will include excursions through the Neusiedler See–Seewinkel National Park, as well as presentations by the hosting park and about other European protected areas and their junior ranger programs. Participants will have a chance to visit the neighbouring Fertő-Hanság National Park in Hungary and to make friends with junior rangers and rangers across Europe during an eventful program, which will also include conservation work in the field. By creating a network of young professionals who participate in nature protection and act as advocates for their protected area, EUROPARC has supported this project since 2002 with lots of efforts and financial help from its partners. EUROPARC aims to raise awareness about the natural, cultural, social and economic values of protected areas and promotes friendship and a group ethic among young professionals by engaging them in the achievement of the common goals of European protected areas beyond the boundaries of the EU. For more details, go to www.europarc.org. Barbara feels privileged to be involved in this project since 2003 and is honoured to run it on behalf of EUROPARC again this year.

Working Groups

We have four working groups. These groups will be planning and carrying out activities to:

1. Raise the profile of young rangers and involve young rangers in decision making processes
2. Improve career development opportunities for young rangers
3. Improve opportunities for young rangers to network and connect with one another
4. Look at junior ranger issues at the global level

Thanks to Marcelo Segalerba and Diego Saad, we have translations of our Scotland workshop outcomes in both Portuguese and Spanish, which I can send to anyone who is interested.

We’re always looking for other people to get involved – the more of us there are, the bigger the impact we can have! So if you’d like to know more, please send us an email at the address below.

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NEWS FROM NATIONAL ASSOCIATIONS

Russia

Rangers Association Of Russia

The park rangers' winter competition was held on March 10th in the surroundings of Kazan. Fifteen teams of park rangers from regional (Tatarstan Republic) refuges, Volzhsko-Kamsky biosphere reserve, national parks Nizhnay Kama and Mariy Chodra took part in the competition. The Ministry of Ecology and Natural Recourses of Tatarstan Republic and the ecology police were also involved in this competition.



Rangers at the opening ceremony at the winter ranger competition.

The program included car and snowmobile races in the winter forest, putting up the tent and campfire. A lot of fans supported the participants. Teams of Spassky refuge, Volzhsko-Kamsky biosphere reserve and refuge Kichke-Tan were the leaders. All teams got the certificates with scores. We plan the second phase of the competition this summer. It will be the car and boat races, swimming and cross-country race.

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Republic Of Korea Korean Ranger Association

As a new member of IRF, we would like to introduce ourselves to IRF members:

About the Republic of Korea – Korea is located in East Asia. The capital is Seoul, the language Korean. It has a continental climate and a monsoon climate. The population is 49 million and the country covers 99,000 square kilometres.

About the Korean National Park Service – There are 20 national parks – 16 terrestrial (mountain), two marine, one seashore and one historic. Half of parklands are state owned, with 11% public and 39% private. The parks cover a total of 6,580 square kilometres (3,899 square kilometres terrestrial, the rest marine). Park visitation in 2005 reached 27 million. The first national park was Jirisan NP, created on December 29, 1967. The Korean National Park Service was established under the Natural Parks Act and the Urban Parks Act; the

governing body is the Ministry of Environment. There are 1,000 rangers in the parks. The main issues that we deal with are partnerships with local people and conflicts with local government and private landowners (preservation against development). The Korean National Park Service web site is www.knps.or.kr.

As mentioned above, we have many problems to solve, but we are confident that we can overcome them wisely.

Gyu Sung Lee
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Italy

Associazione Italiana Guardie Dei Parchi E Delle Aree Pprotette

The Italian Ranger Association had its annual meeting to renovate the association's council in March.

From March 15th to March 18th, rangers took part in an annual competition (cross-country skiing, slalom skiing, trekking skiing and rifle shooting) at Mercantour French National Park in memory of Italian ranger Danilo Re, who died in Service 12 years ago.

Guido Baldi
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Czech Republic

Czech Ranger Association

The annual meeting of rangers and the General Assembly of CRA was held from April 18th to 22nd in Cesky kras (Bohemian Karst) near the city of Prague in the Czech Republic. Interpretation of natural heritage was the topic of this meeting and Jana Kozubkova, from the Agency of Nature Protection, gave the opening lecture. Sixty rangers from 17 different Czech and Slovak protected areas (PA), regional offices and the Ministry of the Environment attended and visited nature trails around the popular Konepruske jeskyně (Konepruske Caves). Part of the program focused on the Junior Ranger Project in Krkonose NP and Sumava NP and the diploma thesis of Kveta Cernohlavkova from the education faculty at Charles University in Prague. The topic of her thesis was "Junior Ranger Project for Protected Landscape Areas (Low-Budgeted Version)" see below for more.

Attendees at the General Assembly outlined a ranger handbook, which was inspired by several publications obtained at the IRF Congress in Stirling. An external editor will prepare the handbook from sources provided by members of the CRA board. The plan is to have chapters about environmental laws, communications skills, public relations, and first aid in the field. It should have a total of about 250 pages. This manual should be in each ranger's rucksack.

CRA fundraising in 2006 contains sums for four work activities in Jeseniky PLA and Poodri PLA and two projects with the Czech Ministry of Environment. A second edition of a leaflet entitled "Who is Ranger" was published (60,000 units). Leaflets were distributed to protected areas via PA authorities and regional offices that manage nature protection in PLAs and NPs.

The Junior Ranger Project (JRP) has run in Krkonose NP since 2002. Two-week summer JRP camps are held regularly each year and JRP follow-up has also been managed since last summer camp. Fifteen Junior Rangers meet monthly for seven-hour programs focused on learning about nature and ranger service. Special emphasis has been placed on communication and interpretation skills. These programs are conducted in accord with a Kveta Cernohlavkovas diploma thesis. I am the coordinator of the JRP in Krkonose NP.

There is also a low-budget version of JRP for PLA. The Junior Ranger Project (JRP) is a Europarc Federation pilot project that has been going on in many European states as well as outside Europe since 2002. The main aim of JRP is first and foremost to boost the image of protected area authorities by influencing children and subsequently people around them (parents, schoolmates etc.). Kveta Cernohlavkova, a student from Charles

University in Prague, prepared her diploma thesis, “Junior Ranger Project for Protected Landscape Areas (Low-Budgeted Version)”. The thesis includes five self-contained, one-day (seven hours) JRP programs created ad hoc to work with children in the field of nature conservation and ecology. In the programs, children are introduced to the job of protected area conservationists. They become Junior Rangers and acquire and develop abilities and skills that every real ranger must possess. A ranger should know a lot about nature, but should also be able to pass information in an appropriate manner. To know how to communicate and react in conflict or crisis is very important. The thesis thus contains programs focused on learning about natural conditions of protected areas, training to build up skills facilitating staying in nature, and communication training. These programs were tested in reality in Beskydy PLA, Ceske stredohori PLA, Sumava NP and Krkonose NP. The structure of programs allows using them in elementary schools, in youth clubs, or with groups of adult volunteers.

The author will next prepare four different programs. The Czech Ministry of Environment has subsidized the thesis and there is a brochure with the most important part (programs) published for use in Czech protected areas. The author is considering translating it into English and/or German. The ministry has promised to subsidize two days of JRP seminars for JRP lecturers. The author’s address is kveta.cernohlavkova@seznam.cz.

Michal Skalka
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United States Association of National Park Rangers

ANPR has been asked to sponsor a new ranger association for membership in the IRF. The rangers of the Alberta Natural Resource Officers Association, located in Alberta, Canada, wish to become regular members. ANPR will be working with Meg Weesner, the IRF North American representative, and Alberta in their application for membership. I will have further updates in future issues of **The Thin Green Line**. We look forward to working with our Canadian friends.

Recently, ANPR conducted a survey of U.S. National Park Service employees. ANPR is seeking to identify key issues that are of interest to and have an impact on rangers. One question, for example, asked: “What are your most important job priorities?” The top three priorities of respondents were: protect the environment; collaborate with colleagues, and education for young people. Similar answers, I expect, would be found from rangers in many countries. Another question relating to organizations such as IRF was “What would encourage you to join an outside organization?” The top three reasons were: professional development, training programs, and collaboration with others. Again, I believe many IRF member organizations would agree. Complete results from the full survey are being tabulated and developed into a written report, to be completed by July or August. This report may be able to assist both the National Park Service and ANPR in determining recruitment/retention and membership issues, as well as helping us respond positively to ranger skills and interests. As we begin to take action based on the results, I will share these with members through **The Thin Green Line**.

Tony Sisto
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Australia – Victoria Victorian Ranger Association

The VRA held a professional development workshop in November 2006. This was at the Phillip Island Nature Park, a high profile nature ‘tourism’ park on the southeast coast of Australia. Attending members looked at new (feral) fox control measures and also oil-affected seabird (most particularly the fairy penguin) management. Attendees included new local government and national botanic garden rangers.

VRA will be hosting two visiting Chilean rangers – Cesar Carmona Oyarzun and Erwin Aguilar Lagos from Torres del Paine NP – over the Victorian winter (June to August). Opportunities for working at various sites, including Wilsons Promontory and Kinglake NP, are being organised.

Many VRA members had a very heavy involvement in one of the worst bushfire seasons on record. The Great Divide complex fire went for 69 days, and burnt 1.1 million hectares. Fortunately, only one death (volunteer fire-fighter) occurred and loss of assets, whilst devastating for those involved, was minimal. Assistance from our New Zealand, Canadian, and USA friends was appreciated. The majority of the Victorian Alpine NP has been burnt out over a three-year period, emphasising the effect of long-term drought in much of Australia.

The VRA will be assisting member Sean Wilmore on the launch of his world-park-travel documentary 'The Thin Green Line'. The launch is to occur on the inaugural International Ranger Day, July 31st. Sean is planning to gather support for the day by simultaneous launch of the film in as many locations around the globe as possible. To gain further insight into TGL 'the Film', & communicate with Sean on the project go to www.thingreenline.info

Andrew Nixon
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Scotland

Scottish Countryside Ranger Association

There have been a few changes to the SCRA council since the last issue of **The Thin Green Line**. We had our annual conference at Balmoral Castle, the Queens highland estate, a few weeks ago. Besides learning about management techniques for upland habitats and opportunities for working with green tourism, we also had our Annual General Meeting. As I have been chair of the association for the maximum five years, I have had to step down and am now the vice chair. Niall Loble, from Perth & Kinross Ranger Service [and our old vice chair], has taken over as beloved leader. The post of secretary, so ably filled by Alison Wilson for the last four years, also became vacant when Ali decided to take a step back so she can get on with other things in her life. Our new secretary is Jane Evans from the Great Glen Way Ranger Service. Mark Palmer is still treasurer. Those of you who were at Stirling may recall that all these people wore the purple shirt of the volunteer.

Regarding work, we are still being consulted over the review of ranger funding by Scottish Natural Heritage, the deadline for decisions on this is set for later this year although it will probably slip.

We are currently in the run up to the elections for the Scottish Parliament so there is a bit of lobbying going on to try to influence prospective members of that body. SCRA is a member of Scottish Countryside LINK, an umbrella body for environmental groups. They have organised a series of hustings in the next month, which SCRA is involved in at a local level.

Our training program for the year has been developed and we are currently developing a foundation ranger-training course as part of a planned overhaul of our training output.

Tony Wilson
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Brazil

Colleagues:

We are glad to announce the conclusion of the second indigenous park ranger training course held in Revecom Protected Area in Amapa, Brazil, last November. The training was organized and developed by ACT-Brazil, APITIKATXI and APITU partnership. Many government and non-government institutions also participated, including Instituto Brasileiro de Meio Ambiente (Ibama), Batalhão Ambiental, Universidade Federal do Amapá (Unifap), Ministério Público do Amapá, Corpo de Bombeiros do Estado do Amapá, FUNAI,

Kanindé, Revecom, Associação de Guardaparques do Amapá, Federação Internacional de Guardaparques, ACT SURINAME, Fundação Moore, Faculdade SEAMA, IEPE, APITU, APITIKATXI.

Eleven ethnic groups were represented in the training: Waiana, Apalai, Tiriyo, Kaxuyana, Txikiyana, Arapasso, Txicão, Cariri, Surui, with the special participation of two representatives from Suriname Wai-Wai and Trio.

Activities during the training focused on:

- gaining knowledge about several environmental and bio-cultural protection and conservation issues such as waste management, conflict resolution, monitoring/vigilance activities, preservation of biodiversity and eco-systems, environmental education (how to work with indigenous communities), environmental and indigenous legislation and law
- obtaining skills regarding identification of several flora and fauna, combating and controlling forest fires, patrolling activities on land and water, first aid and emergency rescue techniques, cartography and GPS use, etc.
- improvement of (personal) contact and traditional knowledge transfer between indigenous people from different tribes and different parts of the country and also between indigenous people from different countries

At the end of the training, all of the participants were presented with a certificate indicating their partaking in the course. Also indicated on the certificate is subject matter that was discussed during the course, and a list of instructors, presenters and institutions that delivered a contribution during the course.

A total of 78 rangers were trained – 50 indigenous rangers and 28 state park rangers.

The meeting of representatives of the different ethnicities allowed to progress in the objectives of the training course and, thus, to promote the interchange among communities who shared cultural traditions, experiences of land monitoring, and protection of traditional knowledge. It enhanced the cross-cultural communication, aiming at the reciprocal strengthening among communities and the finding of solutions of common issues.

There will be state park ranger training (August 23rd to September 6th) and indigenous park ranger training (October 8th to October 27th) in Revecom Protected Area, Amazon Basin, Amapa, Brazil (www.revecombr.com.br).

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The following is for quick reference only and does not include the names of individual ranger associations. Where more than one name is listed for a given nation, it is because there's more than one ranger association in that country. For a complete list, please contact Elaine Thomas, IRF secretary, at the address below. If you find any error, please contact Bill_Halainen@nps.gov.

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#	Fauna and Flora International	##	Int. Centre for Protected Landscapes
+	Royal Society for the Preservation of Birds	++	Great Apes Survival Project (UNEP)