



THE THIN GREEN LINE

NEWSLETTER OF THE INTERNATIONAL RANGER FEDERATION

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OFFICERS REPORTS

President's Report

Dear Friends and Colleagues:

The IRF thanks the Congolese Institute for the Protection of Nature, the Alexander Abraham Foundation and the Wildlife Conservation Society for recognizing and honoring the bravery and dedication of 30 rangers in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). A number of these awards were made posthumously. During the past 10 years, over 200 rangers have lost their lives protecting the protected areas of the DRC.

Yet even while this recognition of ranger dedication was taking place, we learned of three more rangers in other parts of Africa who have paid the ultimate sacrifice. In Kyabobo National Park, Ghana, rangers Paul Nyame and Ntim Obofor were fatally shot and another ranger was wounded when their patrol was ambushed by a large group of armed men. A colleague has described the two rangers as "loyal and committed to the end," and it is heartening to note that the Ghanaian government has viewed this attack in a serious light and provided incredible support in the form of resources and manpower (see the report below under "News About Rangers" for more). In Kruger National Park, South Africa, ranger Wilson Ndlovu was trampled to death by an elephant while on patrol. The South African National Parks have renamed the patrol picket where Wilson was based in his honor.

At the time *The Thin Green Line* was going to press, we also learned with a profound sadness and a deep sense of loss of the tragic death of U.S. National Park Service ranger Jeff Christensen, who fell while on a backcountry patrol. We also commend the men and women who so selflessly conducted the search and rescue effort and who will continue in his important legacy, but in particular we pay tribute to Jeff Christensen, who was last seen and heard to conduct himself as an exemplary ranger, sharing with others the wonders of which he was privy to.

We are also saddened to learn of the death of 11 Spanish firefighters who died while trying to control a forest fire in Guadalajara province, Spain. The fire has been termed one of Spain's worst environmental disasters.

The International Ranger Federation joins the rest of the world in mourning the tragic deaths of so many innocent people in the July terror bombings in London and Egypt, and in condemning these cowardly attacks. Our thoughts and prayers are with the families, friends and colleagues of those affected.

It is with deep regret that we bid a fond "adieu" to our IRF administrator of many years, Alison Wheeler, who recently resigned. Alison was always a friendly, efficient and dedicated worker for the IRF. Those that worked with her know her worth and she shall be sorely missed.

May 21, 2005 marked the 10th anniversary of the very first IRF World Congress in Zakopane, Poland. The vision of a "few good men" four years earlier was realized when rangers from 35 countries across the world stood for the raising of the IRF flag at this first congress. (IRF membership today consists of 42 regular members, two associate members and 12 provisional members – a total of 56 ranger associations worldwide). The subsequent triennial IRF World Congresses have been greatly successful in all respects, so please make sure you do not miss the Fifth IRF World Congress, to be held in Stirling, Scotland, in June 2006.

Declan Keiley, a director of the IRFC, and I attended the ad hoc, open-ended expert Working Group on Protected Areas (WGPA) meeting of the Convention on Biological Diversity in Montecatini, Italy, this past June. Among the general contributions to the work of the working group, Declan and I presented a side event titled "Rangers Turning Lines on a Map into Protected Areas." The event generated a lot of interest and support.

One of the main areas of focus of the biodiversity meeting was the further development of tool kits for the identification, designation, management, monitoring and evaluation of national and regional systems of protected areas, and to ensure that tools are relevant to users and also effectively applied.

As usual the concept of "protecting the protector" was carried throughout, and has been given increasing support. I have been invited by the secretary general of the RAMSAR Convention to attend the next COP9 RAMSAR meeting in November to contribute to further to debate on the need for an improved "rapid response" ability by the UN, governments and NGO's to natural or man-induced disasters.

The IRF regional representative for South America, Marcelo Ochoa, has been appointed by the Argentinean Administration of National Parks (APN) as coordinator of a new training course to financed by Japanese funding. In the "ranger" section of the course, Marcelo plans to discuss ranger profiles, ranger duties, competencies, codes of ethics, national ranger associations, the IRF, etc. He has invited all rangers to send him information that we think should be included in the course materials for this section of the course. Whatever he receives he will put in a document that will serve the participants in the course and others who may be interested. Well done Marcelo, and be assured of our full support.

Cassie Wright, the IRF Youth lead, won the CIPAM-IUCN youth scholarship for protected areas, and will not only be learning from the experience but will further the cause of the ranger in this and other forums. I wish to emphasize the very urgent need for the IRF to make good its commitment of the WPC 2003 on youth and a similar IRF-IUCN award for youth. Welcome to Marius Fuls of the Game Rangers Association of Africa as the GRAA youth lead.

The Fifth Conference on Protected Areas in East Asia took place in Hong Kong this past June. Attendees at the conference heard that all countries have made significant progress in the last ten years in establishing new protected areas, but that these areas face significant challenges. There were many inputs from young people to the conference and special awards were presented to three young scientist/managers for their outstanding presentations.

I would again make an urgent appeal to all rangers to try to raise funds and to attend important international meetings to ensure that the voice of the ranger is heard at these important forums. The first Iberoamerican Ranger Congress takes place in, Santiago, Chile, in September (see Rick Smith's report below) and the World Wilderness Congress takes place in Anchorage, Alaska, from September 30 to October 6. Most importantly, ensure that you are booked for the very important IRF 2006 World Congress to be held in Stirling, Scotland, next June.

Guatemala is the most recent ranger association to join IRF. Croatia has submitted an application to join the IRF. We welcome these new members to our ranger family.

When next on the internet, please check out the PALNet (Protected Areas Learning Network) website (<http://www.parksnet.org/index.php>). This is a key knowledge management tool for protected areas and the IUCN Program on Protected Areas would welcome any comments or suggestions.

Warm Regards,

David Zeller
President, International Ranger Federation

Vice President's Report

Dear Colleagues:

In May, it was the tenth anniversary of the first IRF Congress, held in the town of Zakopane, Poland. Zakopane – a sweet word for many of us.

Even while it was by far the least attended of our congresses, for “only” 135 rangers gathered before IRF flag at the opening ceremony, that congress represented to many of us the very beginning of IRF. Poland had only recently emerged from behind the Iron Curtain, and the east European spirit was present everywhere. Poland, a country that did not call the attention to its protected areas, surprised all of us with the quality of its national parks and the amount of wildlife in the remote forests. I was very lucky to see some of the remaining European bison, the ones pictured in rock walls tens of thousands of years ago in other parts of Europe. They were still alive in Poland.

The Zakopane Declaration, the first message issued jointly by rangers of many countries, denounced the meagre salaries that most rangers receive, the violence that some are subject to, and other things regarding ranger security and quality of life. I am very proud of that declaration, and we have to ensure we keep denouncing and working to reduce the problem of the violence perpetrated on rangers.

This is probably a good opportunity to say that I belong to the group of people who have not missed any IRF congresses only because of the permanent help received from rangers of different associations. Thanks to you all!

In Uruguay, the Macá Agency, which operates a single motorboat which transports visitors to Laguna de Castillos, donated US \$177 to the Dependant's Fund, and that money was sent to the bank account of ranger Daniel Kurday, who was shot in his back some months ago in the north of Argentina. That small agency did something worth to be imitated. If you want to contribute to the Kurday fund, you or your ranger association can do so by sending donations in the name of Daniel Kurday to account 402300004692799 at the Banco Macro Bansud, Argentina. We will have an address for you in the next issue.

At the 8th World Wilderness Congress, which will be held in Alaska in October, I will give an oral presentation denouncing one more time the many murders of rangers, but unfortunately the list is increasing. This time I will ask the support of the private sector working in tourism inside protected areas to support the Dependant's Fund.

Marcelo Ochoa, our representative in South America, surprised us while presenting the new two-month-long training course devoted to rangers who are already working but have not had formal training. The Japanese Agency of International Cooperation and the National Parks Administration of Argentina are paying all of the costs of transportation, meals and accommodations for all attendees. Brilliant!

Our TGL editor, Bill Halainen from the U.S., has received a nice recognition by our colleagues in Scotland. He was given the Margaret Fraser Award for the best article edited in their newsletter, *SCRAmble*. Congratulations, Bill! It was a very good article about IRF history.

Our dear Cassie Wright from Australia also won an award, the CIPAM-IUCN youth scholarship for protected areas. The award consists of a two-and-a-half week training session in protected area management which will be held in a beautiful area of the Rocky Mountains in the U.S. Cassie is one of the most promising people for the IRF. All people who know her know that Cassie is going to make very good use of that training. All the best for you, Cassie!

In Uruguay, we continue to lobby, trying to create the National Corps of Rangers. So far, we work for different agencies and that has already proved to be inefficient. Meanwhile, our association has enlarged its services again. Now, a farmer who created his own park contracted two rangers directly from our association.

UNESCO is helping us finance travel costs for some South American rangers to the First Iberoamerican Congress of Rangers, which will be held in Santiago, Chile, next September. UNESCO does not normally offer this kind of support, so we are very happy to receive their financial aid.

While I was writing this report, London was hit by terrorism. It is difficult to express our feelings when we see this kind of madness. When the towers fell in New York, many people felt that it marked the beginning of something. Then there were the attacks in Madrid and now in London. I told my children that it is very likely many of the injured and killed persons were present at the demonstrations against the invasion to Iraq. My condolence to all members of Countryside Management Association and the Scottish Countryside Ranger Association

I hope all rangers in the world keep doing their good job, in a way to balance the world. All the best to you!

Juan Carlos Gambarotta
Vice President, International Ranger Federation

Past President's Report

Our colleagues in Chile are inviting everyone to participate in the First Latin American Park Ranger Conference, which will be held from September 26th to September 30th in the Diego Portales Convention Center in Santiago, Chile. The IRF is a co-sponsor of this event.

The objectives for the Congress are to:

- Define common policies and action strategies for the adequate use and management of our protected ecosystems;
- Articulate and systematize the knowledge, skill, and abilities of the participants so that we can develop creative, innovative, responsible, measurable and flexible solutions for modernizing and improving the protection, conservation and management of our protected ecosystems;
- Strengthen local and regional ranger associations to improve the quality of life, the professionalism and the performance of Latin American park rangers.

If you need more information regarding the congress and/or are seeking registration information, you may contact [Claudio Corvalán G.](#) or [Ángel Lazo A.](#) Costs for Congress registration are \$150 (US). This fee includes room, board, congress fees, etc. It is all-inclusive, a remarkable bargain. Those people who wish to present papers need to send an abstract and the complete work to the Congress organizers.

All this information can be found at the Congress' website: www.guardaparque.cl. Remember that the information will be in Spanish. If you need help in translation, contact Rick Smith at rsmith0921@aol.com or Juan Carlos Gambarotta at jgambaro@adinet.com.uy.

This is a big deal for our Latin American colleagues. I hope a few people can attend from the English-speaking world.

Rick Smith
Past President

El Primer Congreso de Guardaparques, Áreas Silvestres Protegidas se encuentra constituido y organizado de la siguiente manera:

Identificación General:

- Fecha de realización: Desde el día lunes 26 hasta el día viernes 30 de septiembre del año 2005.
- Lugar: Centro de Convenciones Diego Portales de la ciudad de Santiago de Chile.
- Participan: Delegaciones de Guardaparques de los Países Iberoamericanos.
- Patrocinan: Ministerio de Agricultura, Ministerio del Interior, Secretaría de Desarrollo Regional y Administrativa, Comisión Nacional del Medio Ambiente, CONAMA, Instituto Nacional de Desarrollo Agro Pecuario, INDAP, Servicio Nacional de Turismo de Chile SERNATUR.
- Invitados Especiales: Autoridades del Gobierno de Chile, Presidente e integrantes de la Comisión de Recursos Naturales, Bienes Nacionales y Medio Ambiente de la Honorable Cámara de Diputados - Congreso Nacional de Chile, Organización de la Naciones Unidas para la Agricultura y la Alimentación FAO, Representante para América Latina y el Caribe de UNESCO, Unión Mundial por la Naturaleza, UICN, Fondo Mundial por la Naturaleza, WWF. Fundación Darwin, Fondo Nacional de las Américas.
- Asisten al Acto Inaugural: Señor Presidente de la República de Chile, don Ricardo Lagos Escobar, señores Ministros de Estado, señores Representantes del Poder Legislativo de Chile, Representantes diplomáticos de los países Iberoamericanos.
- Colaboran: Organizaciones públicas y privadas.

Objetivos Generales:

- Definir políticas y estrategias comunes de acción, en materia de uso y manejo adecuado de nuestros ecosistemas protegidos.
- Articular y sistematizar el intercambio de conocimiento, experiencia y los esfuerzos, entre representantes de las Áreas Silvestres Protegidas de los Estados Iberoamericanos y Guardaparques, a fin de buscar de manera conjunta soluciones creativas, innovadoras, flexibles, responsables, concretas y medibles para la modernización y mejoramiento de la gestión, preservación y conservación de nuestros ecosistemas protegidos.
- Fortalecer la organización Local e Iberoamericana de los Guardaparques, a fin de contribuir al desarrollo del mejoramiento de la calidad de vida, el desempeño laboral y la profesionalización del sector.

- El valor por participante al Congreso es de USD \$150. Valor que incluye:
 - ✓ Alojamiento desde el día 25 hasta el día 31 de septiembre.
 - ✓ Alimentación completa: desayuno, almuerzo y cena.
 - ✓ Transporte del día 25, desde el Aeropuerto al lugar de alojamiento, día 31 desde el Alojamiento hacia el Aeropuerto.
 - ✓ Participación desde el día 26 al día 30 de septiembre a todas las mesas técnicas, ponencias y talleres del Congreso.
 - ✓ Material de trabajo (Bolso-mochila, folletería, programas de trabajo, carpeta archivador conteniendo todos los documentos de las ponencias, block de apuntes, artículos de regalo del Congreso)
 - ✓ Café y bebidas durante la realización del evento..
 - ✓ Participación de la visita guiada a la Reserva Nacional Río Clarillo.
 - ✓ Participación de las actividades previstas por la Ilustre Municipalidad de la Comuna de Pirque para los Guardaparques de Iberoamérica.
 - ✓ Acto de Celebración del día del Guardaparques de Chile y de Clausura del Congreso.
 - ✓ Atención primaria de salud en caso que se requiera.
 - ✓ Participación a las diversas actividades culturales, turísticas y recreativas previstas durante le desarrollo del congreso.

Cualquier consulta hacerla a nuestros correos:

Claudio Corvalán G.
corvalan@guardaparque.cl

Ángel Lazo A.
alazo@conaf.cl

Continental Representative for North America

In May, North American representative Deanne Adams sent an update to officers and individual members of the three North American associations, with a request for volunteers to assist with IRF work. With most parks preparing for the traditional summer holiday season, it is perhaps not surprising that no volunteers have yet stepped forward. The update and details of the request are posted on the Canadian website of the National Park Warden Association (<http://www.parkwardens.ca/>).

IRF has another formal connection with the World Commission on Protected Areas. Tony Sisto, chair of ANPR's International Committee and liaison to IRF, has been invited to be a member of the WCPA, representing ANPR. The invitation came after the nomination from another partner, Dave Harmon, who is executive director of the George Wright Society and a WCPA member.

The California State Park Rangers Association (CSPRA) has a new president, Ron Brean. Here's his first message to the membership, published on the CSPRA website:

"As I take over the presidency from Val Bradshaw's able hands, the membership might wonder what new initiatives may be in the offing. It's a reasonable question. So here's the answer: More more of the same. That's not a typo. I hope to do what CSPRA has always done right, but more of it.

"It's hard to imagine why it always seems to be the case, but parks in our state and across the country face budget reductions, threatened closures, potentials for less staffing, abandonment of resources, and increasingly insidious efforts to take park lands and resources away from the public for dedication to other uses. In some cases those uses amount to resource rape and pillage for non-public purposes, and in all cases it is theft of the public trust.

“If those sound like fighting words, it is because they are. CSPRA has always been the proactive professional organization that gives voice to the concerns, fears, anger, and determination of park professionals in California. It has been the organization that fights for the right thing to be done in and around parks. We need more of that.

“We need more park professionals that see the need for the alarm to be sounded and use CSPRA to blow the whistle. We need more activism. We need more growth in professionalism. We need more enthusiasm for doing the right thing for parks. We need more cache in the legislature. We need to be more of a force with which to be reckoned. We also need to directly represent more park professionals more professionally.

“I ask your help, participation, ideas, and enthusiasm. With the help of the Board of Directors and the membership I look forward to a year of doing what CSPRA has always done. With your help we'll do more of the same.”

Deanne Adams
North American Continent Representative

Editor's Report

The deadlines for the next three issues of *The Thin Green Line* appear below. If you can plan on getting your reports to me by those dates, that will be a great help.

Issue	Submission Due Date	Publication Date
October	Friday, October 7, 2005	Sunday, October 30, 2005
January	Friday, December 16, 2005	Sunday, January 7, 2006
April	Friday, April 7, 2006	Sunday, April 23, 2006

Bill Halainen, Editor

NEWS FROM NATIONS AND NATIONAL ASSOCIATIONS

Canada

Lots of news from Canadian park wardens....

There were two significant wildlife-poaching cases this past season. A trophy big horn ram was poached in Banff National Park. The case is still under investigation and no one has yet been charged. In Jasper National Park, a large trophy elk was poached. In this incident, the suspect was apprehended at the scene and charged under the National Parks Act. This was a joint investigation with the RCMP, as it was one of their sharp-eyed officers who apprehended the poacher.

The warden service has just completed a classification review and results are positive that all general technician jobs within the warden service will be going up a level. This agreement is retroactive for five years to 1999, the year that the reclassification process started. Most of us should be expecting quite a check and feel that the pay raise is justified given our range of responsibilities.

There will be a new warden uniform designed and ready this summer for field-testing. We will retain our historical flashes and other parts of the uniform that identify us as law enforcement officers. This new uniform will go a long way towards unifying the look of the warden service. The

uniform committee will hopefully be addressing some wide-ranging concerns, from maternity uniforms to colors to pocket placement!

Parks Canada Agency has initiated an exchange program with Parks Victoria, Australia, and the first Aussie rangers have arrived in their Canadian parks. It is a two-year pilot project with Aussies in Canada for summer '05 and '06, and Canadians in Australia for winter '05 and '06. A four-season commitment! The host parks are spread out from Gros Morne in Newfoundland to Jasper National Park in Alberta. Our own Jack Dinkgreve, from Prince Albert National Park in Saskatchewan, is in Danendong Ranges National Park near Melbourne. He has been doing forest bird monitoring, chainsaw proficiency, and is currently designing a monitoring program for a prescribed burn. "Absolutely loving it!" he says of the exchange program. Big thanks to Rob Kaye in Canada and Kane Weeks in Australia for getting the program up and running.

The ongoing law enforcement issue of whether park wardens should be carrying sidearms has just gone through another upheaval. The Federal Court of Appeal set aside a 2002 decision that said a warden's job description did not constitute danger under a strict Canada Labour Code definition. The court ruled that appeals officer Serge Cadieux failed to consider all of the evidence, including the risk of assault, serious injury or possible death of wardens doing law enforcement. The matter has been sent back to the appeals officer for redetermination. The court's decision, made May 13, does not give wardens the right to carry sidearms. The exact implications of the decision are not yet known, but senior management has said that wardens won't be taken off law enforcement duties. Parks Canada Agency has undertaken a comprehensive officer safety analysis and implemented additional safety procedures since the first complaint in June 2000.

Jeanine D'Antonio, Park Warden
Prince Albert National Park
Canadian National Park Warden Association

England/Wales

Survey of Members – A recent survey of Countryside Management Association members resulted in a 15% (81 out of 521) response. The results highlighted the fact that the name "Ranger" is fast disappearing from countryside job titles and is being replaced with terms such as "Project Officer" and "Manager." The main reasons for members joining the CMA were to network with colleagues and to support the professional voice of rangers/countryside managers. About 50% of employers in the survey valued the fact that their staff were members of the association and particularly liked the opportunities it gave for training/staff development and exchanging best practice amongst members of the profession. Regarding future development priorities for the association, the top three ranked by members were:

- Working with training organizations to develop new programs
- Promoting our professional membership throughout the industry and lifting CMA's profile with employers
- Responding to consultations by government/national organizations

Natural England – Following the restructuring of England's Countryside Agency, English Nature and the Rural Development Agency, the new organization to be responsible for England's natural environment, effective in October, 2006, will be known as "Natural England." This organization will have all the powers and duties of the existing organizations including:

- Awarding grants
- Giving advice and information
- Designating sites of special scientific interest, national parks, and areas of outstanding natural beauty
- Managing nature reserves
- Enforcing regulations

New Forest National Park – The New Forest National Park became England's eighth national park on March 1, 2005. It is the first to be created in southeast England and is in fact the smallest by area (57,000 hectares) but also one of the most populated (34,400). As the name implies, it is mainly forest – though ancient" rather than "new," having been designated by William the Conqueror as a royal forest and hunting ground in 1079 AD. For more information, go to <http://www.newforestnpa.gov.uk>.

CMA Seminar – CMA recently held a seminar for its corporate and senior members at Losehill Hall in the Peak District National Park. Action points arising from this seminar included:

- Development of training profiles for generic posts in the industry.
- Provision of a training information resource that identifies external and internal training schemes and facilitates placements and exchanges.
- Creation of a register of CMA mentors.
- Accreditation of external training courses by CMA
- Develop a national contact network for countryside managers.
- Deliver a recruitment drive to develop membership.
- Put in place a network of policy advisors.
- Develop an e-library resource.
- Initiate a senior managers e-group.
- Consider development of a dedicated CMA officer/role to reduce burden on volunteer activity.

IRF 2006 and Financial Support to Eastern European Rangers – CMA is inviting applications from rangers from Eastern European countries who seek financial support to attend the Fifth International Ranger Federation Congress in Scotland next June. The level of support offered will depend on the number of applications and a selection procedure may have to be developed. However, we anticipate the support grant for successful applicants will pay for at least 75% of the basic Congress registration fee with possibly some assistance towards travel costs. The successful candidate(s) would be expected to raise any remaining costs themselves. In order to confirm eligibility, those wishing to apply for funding support should contact Roger Cole, CMA's head of marketing, at thecolefamily@btinternet.com. The main conditions for eligibility should be that the candidate is actively working as a ranger or in a similar role in one of the countries of Eastern Europe including those countries of the former Soviet block. Once eligibility has been confirmed, the candidates will then be invited to submit short letters of application stating:

- Why they would like to be sponsored
- What they feel they will get from attending the congress
- Whether they have attended previous congresses or other overseas visits
- What their current contribution is to their own national ranger association
- What they feel they will take back to further the development of ranger professionalism in their home country.
- Whether they will present a paper or poster in one of the congress sessions
- Whether they will write a short article for CMA's *Ranger* magazine after attending the congress.

Roger Cole
Countryside Management Association

Scotland

We have now sent all IRF international representatives copies of the booking information and forms for the IRF's Fifth World Congress, to be held from June 14 – June 21, 2006, at Stirling University, here in Scotland.

The plan is that international representatives will distribute this information to interested parties within each country. This information will also be available in a PDF format from the Congress website, along with other information about accommodation, travel, pre congress tours, job shadowing, etc. The address is www.ranger-irfc.com/scotcover/2006.

At the moment, we are working with the IRFC and our sister associations in England, Wales and Ireland to finalize the program, which will appear on the website as it develops. Along with the weeklong congress, there will be opportunities for delegates to enjoy pre- and post-congress tours and work shadowing. These will be available, not just in Scotland, but also in the other countries of the British Isles.

There is also a call for papers, in the form of presentations and posters, on the website. Anyone who wants to submit an abstract for a paper should follow the procedure highlighted there.

With regard to the other work SCRA carries out, we are still working with government agencies and local authorities to promote the new access laws that came into force last February. We are also corresponding members of the National Access Forum, the body that oversees the implementation of this legislation. As part of that forum, we are helping to develop the new national signage policy for access in Scotland. Linked to this we are in the process of revitalizing our national training program in order to reflect the changing role of the ranger.

The celebratory dinner that we held as part of our 30th anniversary year was a great success, with rangers from the past joining with present members for a memorable evening.

Our aim to develop SCRA over the next few years by employing a new development officer to help raise our profile, co-ordinate our efforts and raise money for projects is currently being completed. We hope to set it up next year. This follows on from our appointment of an administrative assistant, which has been a great success and improved our efficiency enormously.

Tony Wilson, Chair
Scottish Countryside Rangers Association

United States (California)

Representing park professionals in the California state park system, the California State Park Rangers Association (CSPRA) is working with the Park Rangers Association of California (PRAC, representing regional and county park rangers) to develop our annual parks conference in March in Laughlin, Nevada. The format has expanded beyond the normal California boundaries as a means of welcoming Nevada's park rangers into PRAC membership. Additionally, park rangers from Arizona (just across the river from Laughlin) are being encouraged to attend. Other park employees beyond these areas are invited to consider attending. As the agenda develops details will be available on the web at www.cspra.com. Topics will be discussed and training provided in the fields of natural and cultural resource management, law enforcement/public safety, park operations and facilities maintenance, and interpretation. Additionally, a track will be developed intended to attract retired rangers and other park professionals to share their experiences and expertise with each other and with those still working in the field.

Ron Brean, President
California State Park Rangers Association

United States (National)

On May 10, the Association of National Park Rangers (ANPR) was asked to testify before the U.S. Senate Subcommittee on National Parks. The purpose of the hearing was to review the budget for the National Park Service for 2006. ANPR President Lee Werst testified that the proposed budget as submitted by the administration was almost 3% less than the 2005 budget. This continues a gradual decline in available funding over the past five years of almost 10%.

Mr. Werst gave specific examples from several U.S. parks to show that funding for ranger activities at the field level did not match the rosy projections from the administration of a healthy park operation. ANPR will continue to work with the U.S. Congress and others to show the true impacts of budget cuts on field rangers and park resources.

Tony Sisto, International Affairs Representative
Association of National Park Rangers

IRF NEWS

Polish Rangers Join IRF

We are delighted to welcome the newly formed Polish Rangers Association (Polskie Towarzystwo Slub Ochrony Przyrody) into the 'world family.' Bogdan Jaroszewicz, who attended the last World Ranger Congress in Australia and was a member of the IRF delegation to the World Parks Congress in Durban, is to be the first president. It is ten years since the first World Ranger Congress was held in Zakopane, Poland, so it is an appropriate time for Poland and the IRF to celebrate the founding of the association. Bogdan can be contacted by email at bogdanjaroszewicz@wp.pl. The secretary is Tadeusz Sidor. The association will have a website www.ptsop.org.pl up and running shortly. Initially it will only be in Polish, but an English version of text is planned.

Gordon Miller
Past President

Meetings With Rangers In Many Lands

While I cannot claim to have traveled the length and breadth of the planet filming rangers like Sean Willmore, I did meet with a number of rangers during a trip earlier this year. On my way to do some writing for three months in New Zealand, I met with rangers at Bukit Timah Reserve in Singapore, and then spent a week back in Wilson's Promontory National Park with Elaine Thomas and Mick Keenan. I also met up with Andy Nixon of the Victoria Rangers Association and with Sean Willmore, back from his adventures around the world. Sean showed me his park on the way to taking me to the airport. In New Zealand, I met up with local rangers and discussed IRF – still no progress on getting an association up and running. On my way back I spent a few days on Fiji and met IRF representative Josefa Ceinaturaba. Josef showed me some of the highlands area and we discussed progress on forming an association. I enjoyed the usual warm hospitality of Deanne Adams and Tony Sisto of ANPR in San Francisco area on my way home. It is always a pleasure to meet up with rangers on their own 'patch' and to exchange stories of congresses, discuss issues that are currently affecting rangers and to keep the spirit of IRF alive. I have recently been in a national park in a fairly remote part of Russia and was encouraging local rangers to join the Russian Rangers Association. We still need efforts on the part of our members to encourage new associations, so why not try and get rangers in neighboring states or countries where you have historical or cultural links, to form associations – the Federation still has some way to go to be truly representative of rangers worldwide.

Gordon Miller
Past President

NEWS ABOUT RANGERS

Two Rangers Killed at Kyabobo NP in Ghana

Pete Hartley at Kyabobo National Park prepared this report on the deaths of rangers Paul Nyame and Ntim Obofor:

“It is with regret that I have to report on the death of two field rangers, Paul Nyame and Ntim Obofor, at Kyabobo National Park. The two were fatally shot when the patrol they were operating in was ambushed by a large group of armed men.

“On Monday the 11th of July, the patrol was patrolling along the boundary line in the south of the park. At 10 a.m., the patrol of five walked into a well-planned ambush set by members of a particularly antagonistic community. Without any warning, approximately 25 attackers opened fire, fatally hitting Paul and Ntim. One other ranger was hit in the leg and managed to escape the ambush with the other patrol rangers. A support patrol which was close to the ambushed patrol, responded to the gunfire and cries for help, but they too came under heavy fire and were forced to take cover.

“It was extremely difficult for the park management and indeed myself to hear the pleas of help from the patrols over the VHF radio system, knowing that it would take at least 6 hours to reach them. Unfortunately, the rescue team was unable to reach the patrols before darkness fell and were forced to spend the night a mere 3 kilometres from their besieged colleagues. At first light, the rescue team reached the scene and recovered the two bodies and moved as a group to a suitable LZ on the ridge top. At 1 p.m. that afternoon, the Ghana Government dispatched an Air Force helicopter to recover the men and the bodies. Unfortunately, the helicopter sent was a large Russian Mi8, which was too large to land anywhere in the immediately vicinity of the group. A food and water drop was however carried out before the helicopter had to return to base. That night the entire group walked out of the park to a friendly village on the Togo border and was airlifted back to the Headquarters the following morning. They all received a hero’s welcome by the entire town of Nkwanta.

“The motive of the attack was in response to boundary disputes and sustained anti-poaching operations in the area over the past two years. The staff have remained strong and are determined not to allow this to influence their responsibility to protect one of Ghana’s protected areas. The Ghanaian Government has viewed this attack in a serious light and has provided unbelievable support in the form of resources and manpower. Investigations are under way and a number of ringleaders have already been arrested. The arrests of the people involved in the actual shooting will begin in the next few days.

“I had the privilege to have worked with the two fallen men, who I can describe as loyal and committed to the end. They were, as are the other Kyabobo Rangers some of the best I have worked with. They will be sorely missed, but will be remembered for all time for their ultimate sacrifice.”

CALENDAR

Upcoming events being sponsored or attended by IRF and IRF member associations:

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| September 26 – 30, 2005 | First Latin American Park Ranger Conference, Diego Portales Convention Center, Santiago, Chile. |
| September 29 – 30, 2005 | CMA annual seminar and AGM, Losehill Hall, Peak District National Park Centre, Castleton, Derbyshire, UK. The theme is “Integrated Land Management – Is It Possible For The Countryside Manager To Understand All The Pieces In The Puzzle?” Any IRF members in the UK at this time are welcome to attend. Further details are available from Mike Marshall marshall.i.r.@btinternet.com |
| September 30 – October 6, 2005 | World Wilderness Congress, Anchorage, Alaska, USA. |
| December 4 – December 8, 2005 | Rendezvous XXVIII, Association of National Park Rangers, Francis Marion Hotel, Charleston, South Carolina, USA. |
| June 14 – June 21, 2006 | Fifth International Ranger Federation World Congress, Stirling, Scotland. |

