



THE THIN GREEN LINE

NEWSLETTER OF THE INTERNATIONAL RANGER FEDERATION

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OFFICERS REPORTS

President's Report

Dear Friends and Colleagues:

The past few months have flown by and already its time for another edition of **The Thin Green Line**. This has been a very busy period, both personally and for the IRF. I have resigned from my position as park warden to concentrate full time on IRF issues, and have moved to the Southern Cape, where my home office looks out over a beautiful bay with whales and dolphins to be seen almost every day. Now that I can give my full time attention to the IRF, I realize just how much still needs to be done, and I will be relying on the rangers of the world to support IRF and help it grow.

It was with profound sadness and a deep sense of loss that we learnt this summer of the tragic death of Jeff Christensen, who fell while on a backcountry patrol in the Rocky Mountain National Park. The International Ranger Federation extends its heartfelt condolences to the family of Jeff, and to his colleagues and friends. In Paraguay rangers Rosalino Ayala and Red Elvio were ambushed, shot and beaten by heavily armed illegal loggers in the San Rafael National Park. They were both badly wounded and we wish them a speedy recovery.

The scale, intensity and frequency of natural disasters give credence to the dire warnings of global warming. The impact of global warming is not a maybe, but a reality that is already with us. The terrible devastation of hurricanes Katrina and Rita on the U.S. Gulf Coast, the tragic earthquake in Pakistan and India, the disastrous landslide in Guatemala and the ongoing drought in Portugal and Spain give credence to this. Our thoughts and prayers are with the families, friends and colleagues of those affected by these disasters.

On a positive note, the International Ranger Federation is proud to announce the membership of its first indigenous community ranger association. On September 27, 2005, on the occasion of the First Iberoamerican Ranger Congress held in Santiago, Chile, the Associação dos Povos Indigenas Tiriyo, Kaxuyana e Txikuyana (APITIKATXI) was accepted as the first indigenous community ranger association to become a full member of the International Ranger Federation.

APITIKATXI rangers protect some 4,2 million hectares of natural and cultural heritage of the Tumucumaque mountains, an indigenous protected area in the tropical rain forest of the Amazon basin of Brazil. The Tumucumaque area is rich in natural resources and is under constant threat from poaching (animal and fish), trafficking in drugs, animals and weapons, bio-pirates and illegal mining and logging. The area is very remote and accessible only by air. In September this year, Marcelo Segalerba, a ranger and coordinator for the Amazon Conservation Team (ACT) in Brazil, joined others in training the first 22 rangers from these communities, and they expect to have trained 60 rangers by 2007. Marcelo mentions that it was not necessary to train these indigenous rangers in the basic skills, such as survival, tracking, and orienteering.

I was able to attend the First Great Apes Survival Project (GRASP) inter-governmental meeting and council meeting, held in Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), from September 5 to September 9, 2005. Over 500 delegates attended the meeting from eighteen range states, seven donor countries, 29 GRASP partners, various commissions and conventions, intergovernmental organizations, the scientific community, indigenous groups and the private sector.

We were partner and contributor to a joint NGO statement that was presented to the meeting. Of note is that the IRF is the only NGO that is not a category G (full partner) to be included in this statement. In participating in the working group drafting the declaration, I was able to ensure that ranger capacity was included. I was also invited to make a presentation to the high-level ministerial segment of the GRASP intergovernmental meeting, the only NGO invited to do so. At their request, I also had a very productive two-hour meeting with the local DRC NGO's and the Director General of the Office National du Tourisme, Honoré G. Kabunda Mbuta. They have undertaken to address the issues of IRF importance: protecting the protectors, capacity building, management effectiveness and youth development. They were particularly excited about involving youth in their structures and work.

The GRASP councillors have stated that they will be proposing the IRF for full partnership (we are currently only a supporting partner) at the next GRASP executive committee meeting. In all, I believe it was a very successful meeting for both the great apes and the rangers who protect them.

After the GRASP meeting, I was able to visit and discuss issues relating to ranger capacity and safety in the DRC, in particular with regard to Parc National de la Garamba in the northeast of the DRC. While in Kinshasa, I had a very productive meeting with the Director General of the Institut Congolais pour la Conservation de la Nature (ICCN), Pasteur Cosma Wilungula Balongelwa.

I then spent a further nine days in an abortive attempt to reach Garamba National Park, but this gave me the opportunity to visit both Virunga North and Virunga South National Parks and areas in between and further north. Time and a difficult schedule did not allow the tourist bit of viewing the great apes in these parks, but I did get to meet with the park wardens and rangers and to view their situations, infrastructure, equipment and operations first hand. Photographs I had seen of the park headquarters in Rwindi, Virunga National Park, in no way prepared me for the utter devastation and destruction of any and all park infrastructure that I was to see on my visit.

The general DRC protected area and ranger situation can be summed up as follows: Despite the on-going peace process and up-coming elections, the situation in the DRC is still very unstable, in particular in the north-eastern and eastern regions, with unrest in neighbouring countries exacerbating the situation. The Director General of the ICCN is particularly supportive and sympathetic to the plight of the DRC rangers. He acknowledges the appalling number of deaths of park rangers and recognizes the dire need for developing capacity and supplying equipment.

During my visit to Virunga South National Park, I visited the new Ishanga training base, which had just been completed. A major training initiative under the auspices of the Frankfurt Zoological Society was about to get under way. This initiative will go a long way toward addressing training needs there.

The situation in the Virungas was tense, with renewed rebel activity in the Kivu provinces (including rumours of two field artillery pieces). This came on top of massed land invasions by neighbouring communities, and it fell to the rangers to evict these illegal invasions (which task should have fallen to the police or army). With the upcoming elections, politicians are using the parks and natural resources as pawns to gain favour with the voters. In Virunga South the military, under orders of politicians, are complicit in, and even directly involved in, large scale poaching to supply meat to the local populations.

In Virunga North, the mayor of Beni issued a press statement directly accusing the rangers of burning the houses and destroying the crops of legitimate farmers. During my visit to this park, I witnessed first hand renewed invasion, clear felling and ploughing.

The situation in Garamba is even worse. Heavily armed poaching gangs from Libya move through the Sudan on horseback to poach rhino and elephant in Garamba during the dry season. Further, the so-called 'lords resistance army' rebels of Uganda are once again active and move in and through Garamba. These cross-border incursions of heavily armed groups are severely testing the ranger corps. More than half of all ranger patrols are involved in firefights with these armed insurgents – a situation which is possibly the worst since 1997/98. There is a total lack of infrastructure.

The plight of the northern white rhino (*Ceratotherium simum cottoni*) is dismal, but not yet hopeless. It must be remembered that – through almost ten years of civil war in the DRC and conflict in neighbouring countries (Sudan, Rwanda, Uganda) spilling over into Garamba – rangers have been at their posts and have at least maintained the population of northern white rhino. The elephant population has been greatly reduced, but there are still many to be found in Garamba, adding a further enticement for the commercial poachers. The northern savannah giraffe, or Congo giraffe, (*Giraffa camelopardalis congoensis*) is endemic to the area and is also under immediate threat of extinction.

The ICCN has just signed a five-year contract with the African Parks Foundation to manage Garamba. African Parks Foundation has strong financial resources, with a pledge of \$1.2 million per year over the next five years, and by all accounts is putting a very competent team together for this task.

I will be visiting Garamba on November 16 – 23, and will meet with José Kalpers, the Francophone Project Manager for African Parks Foundation and the IRF will continue to work with the ICCN and IUCN in finding a resolution to these problems, and in particular to ensure that the rangers get the support, training and equipment that they need.

The First Iberoamerican Ranger Congress was held in Santiago, Chile, from September 26 – 30, 2005. Over 100 rangers attended the congress from 11 Latin American countries. The Congress was extremely well organized and there was lively and even emotional participation by the rangers present. Over the five days of presentations and deliberation, five main themes or issues were identified:

- Improving communication with each other;
- A concern about the continued conservation of natural and cultural resources with the threats of globalisation, climate change, etc;
- Recognition of the importance of participative management strategies;
- The need for society to recognize the value and importance of ranger work; and
- The need for conservation agencies to recognize the professional status of the ranger.

The delegates also expressed their solidarity with their colleagues who had died or been injured in the line of duty.

The outcome of the congress, the Santiago Declaration, is a well worked through document which also reflects the concerns and needs of rangers worldwide, and will be taken to the Fifth IRF World Congress in Scotland in 2006 (IRF 2006) for consideration and adoption by the international ranger community. In this sense the Iberoamerican congress was a regional pre-congress for IRF 2006.

During the closing ceremony, I also presented the president of APITIKATXI, Juventino Pesirima Kaxuyana, with a ranger uniform shirt, with the Guardaparques shoulder flash and IRF badge. I was particularly honoured to plant an indigenous Quillay tree in the Río Clarillo Nature Reserve during a tree planting ceremony to honour the Chilean national “Ranger Day”.

Ana Carola and the Bolivian rangers raised US \$250 for the Ranger Dependants Fund by selling raffle tickets for a few nylon daypacks.

Although I do not speak Spanish, the Latin American rangers at all time made me feel welcome and part of the meeting. I was able to participate and contribute, and even address the meeting on more than one occasion, thanks to both Juan Carlos Gambarotta and Rick Smith translating for me. A special thanks to the rangers of Chile who hosted the congress, and also to all those rangers who attended and participated.

IRF’s Vice-President, Juan Carlos Gambarotta, was able to attend the World Wilderness Congress in Anchorage, Alaska, from September 30 – October 6, 2005. By all accounts, this congress was once again a great success and Juan Carlos will report further on this.

In November, I will be attending the RAMSAR Convention COP9 meeting, at the invitation of the Secretary General, in Kampala, Uganda, to contribute to further to debate on the need for an improved “rapid response” ability to natural or man-induced disasters. Of course our ranger issues developed out of our IRF congresses will be taken into the meeting.

As with the IRF input into the World Parks Congress in Durban, the only way to truly influence the esteem and care in which the profession of ranger is held by the international community, is to take these issues into the international conservation arena. During a recent IUCN WCPA steering committee meeting, the WCPA agreed to the establishment of a Youth Task Force to drive the youth development issues agreed to at WPC Durban. Well done to Cassie Wright, the IRF Youth lead, who has been carrying this issue.

In addressing the need for improved communication, Marcelo Segalerba has established a chat room on <http://groups.google.com/group/GUARDAPARQUES>. This site is already very busy and well worth a visit.

Warm Regards,

David Zeller
President, International Ranger Federation

Vice President's Report

Dear Colleagues:

I was fortunate to be able to attend two congresses since the last issue of **The Thin Green Line** came out in July. One was the First Iberoamerican Congress of Rangers and Protected Areas held in Santiago, Chile, from September 26 – 30, and the other was the Eighth World Wilderness Congress, held in Anchorage, Alaska, in the USA, from September 30 – October 6.

I was able to attend both due to the help provided by different organizations and persons, but I must mention the help provided by the regional office of UNESCO for Latin America and the Caribbean. UNESCO also partially financed the trip of some rangers of Bolivia.

The Iberoamerican Congress was successful in bringing rangers from 11 countries, which is not an easy task. One of the products of that congress was the Santiago Declaration, which continues to demand more support for rangers.

But, for me, the single most important moment of that congress came when Juventino Pesirima accepted the offer to include the Tiriyo-Kaxuyana and Txikuyana Aboriginal Peoples Association as a member of IRF. Many of the tribes' men have received ranger training, and I believe this is opening a new window for our federation.

I must thank Marcelo Segalerba for the very important task he is performing on behalf of the conservation of the Amazon forest and its aboriginal peoples.

The congress was also like a big party for all the rangers from Latin America. We share the same language and feel all we belong to a single and big nation.

I went to Anchorage two days before the closing of the Iberoamerican Congress and arrived a little late anyway. The congress was a true celebration of wilderness and nature. There were again many examples showing the way in which aboriginal communities have to maintain their links with nature.

I wrote a proposal for a resolution from the congress demanding more recognition and support for rangers and other staff of protected areas. The idea was seconded by Paul Cornes from the U.S. and by Sonja Kruger and John Crowson from South Africa. The resolution was approved.

After the congress, I spent some days in Denali National Park and lived in the wilderness in a remote cabin. There have been few times in my life when I have been so moved by a place.

Juan Carlos Gambarotta
Vice President, International Ranger Federation

Editor's Report

The deadlines for the next two issues of **The Thin Green Line** appear below.

Issue	Submission Due Date	Publication Date
January – March	Friday, January 13, 2006	Sunday, February 4, 2006
April – June	Friday, April 7, 2006	Sunday, April 23, 2006

Bill Halainen, Editor

NEWS FROM NATIONS AND NATIONAL ASSOCIATIONS

Brazil

NOTE: The following was prepared by Marcelo Segalerba of the Uruguayan Ranger Association and appears in both Spanish and English. Past president Rick Smith prepared the latter. It is entitled "Guardaparques Indígenas son reconocidos en el 1er. Congreso Iberoamericano de Guardaparques" in Spanish; in English, "Indigenous Park Rangers Are Recognized During the First Iberoamerican Park Ranger Congress."

Santiago de Chile, Chile. 1 de octubre del 2005: Con la inclusión de la Asociación de los Pueblos Indígenas Tiriyo, Kaxuyana e Txikiyana – **(APITIKATXI)** de Brasil, como miembro pleno de la Federación Mundial de Guardaparques, concluyó ayer en Santiago de Chile el Primer Congreso Iberoamericano de Guardaparques.

“Fue un congreso de varias ‘primera vez’” afirmó Marcelo Segalerba, coordinador del Área Naturaleza de la organización brasilera Amazon Conservation Team -ACT Brasil-. De esta forma, “APITIKATXI es la primera institución brasilera en ser reconocida por la Federación Mundial de Guardaparques. Fue la primera vez que un indígena del Brasil se presenta en el ambiente internacional de los Guardaparques. Fue la primera vez que un Guardaparques Indígena es reconocido como tal por la Federación. APITIKATXI es la primera institución indígena a nivel mundial en ser reconocida por la Federación, como una institución representante de los Guardaparques Indígenas”. Segalerba se refirió a la presencia en el Congreso, del Guardaparque Indígena Juventino Kaxuyana de la etnia Kaxuyana de los estados brasileros de Pará y Amapá, que se desempeña como Coordinador del Proyecto de Vigilancia del Parque Indígena Tumucumaque.

Según Juventino Kaxuyana, el Congreso le permitió ampliar su visión del trabajo de los guardaparques: “Yo fui para el evento y aprendí cosas que no sabía y eso me permite ir para mi pueblo y pasar ese conocimiento: la importancia de la preservación de la naturaleza. El trabajo del guardaparque fue presentado con videos y CDs. Eso es lo que debe ser hecho por los guardaparques indígenas. Fueron muchas cosas de importancia, todo lo que se presentó fue muy importante.”

El Primer Congreso Iberoamericano de Guardaparques se realizó en la capital Chilena de Santiago de Chile del 26 al 30 de setiembre, con el objetivo de definir políticas y estrategias comunes de acción en materia de uso y manejo adecuado de los ecosistemas protegidos de América Latina. Además, el Congreso pretendió articular y sistematizar el intercambio de experiencias entre los representantes de áreas silvestres protegidas.

Ciertamente, fue un congreso muy exitoso para los pueblos indígenas. Dentro de la declaración final, denominada como la “Declaración de Santiago de Chile”, se incluyó un llamado a que se reconociera la importancia de los valores del saber tradicional y su intención de protección. Así mismo, fue reconocido el saber empírico de los Guardaparques Indígenas sobre los procesos naturales y el manejo de áreas. Específicamente, fue incluida en la Declaración Final una mención a la importancia de la presencia del Guardaparque Indígena Juventino Kaxuyana, “como uno de los últimos representantes de su etnia, con la intención de protección de su territorio, patrimonio cultural y ambiental, para lo cual, expresamos nuestro apoyo y solidaridad”.

El Congreso se organizó en varias mesas técnicas de trabajo que incluyeron temas como los desafíos y el papel de las Asociaciones de Guardaparques en el marco de la globalización, el cambio climático y la creciente importancia de las comunidades tradicionales e indígenas. Igualmente, se trató el tema de la profesión del guardaparque abordando la carencia de seguridad social, su remuneración, el reconocimiento a la mujer guardaparque y la falta de capacitación adecuada. Para finalizar, los asistentes al Congreso visitaron la Reserva Nacional de Río Clarillo.

Para Juventino Kaxuyana la mención de su pueblo en la Declaración Final fue muy importante. “Y por supuesto es también muy importante que APITIKATXI haya sido reconocida como la primera

Asociación de Guardaparques Indígenas. Y es bueno que los demás Guardaparques sepan que nosotros los indígenas, también luchamos para la protección de la naturaleza.”

Santiago, Chile. October 1, 2005: The first Iberoamerican Park Ranger Congress concluded yesterday in Santiago, Chile with the inclusión of the Association of the Indigenous Peoples Tiriyo, Kaxuyana and Txikiyana (APITIKATXI) of Brazil as a member of the International Ranger Federation. (IRF)

“It was a congress of various ‘first times’, said Marcelo Segalerba, Coordinator of the Natural Areas for the Brazilian Amazon Conservation Team, ACT Brazil. APITIKATXI is the first Brazilian institution to be recognized the IRF. It was the first time that a Brazilian indigenous person was present in an international meeting of park rangers. It was the first time that an indigenous park ranger was recognized by the Federation. APITIKATXI was the first indigenous association to be recognized by the IRF as representing indigenous park rangers.” Segalerba is referring to the presence during the Congress of the indigenous park ranger Juventino Kaxuyana of the Kaxuyana race that lives in the Brazilian states of Pará and Amapá and who is the Coordinator of Protection of the Indigenous Park Tumucumaque.

According to Juventino Kaxuyana, this first Congress allowed him to expand his vision of what the work of a park ranger is. “I went to the Congress and I learned things that I didn’t know before. I can now return to my people and share this knowledge about the importance of preserving nature. The responsibilities of a park ranger were presented in videos and CD’s. This is what we indigenous park rangers should do. There were lots of important things. Everything that was presented was important.”

The First Iberoamerican Congress of Park Rangers took place in the Chilean capital of Santiago from the 26th to the 30th of September. Its goal was to look at common strategies and policies that could lead to more effective use and management of Latin America’s protected areas. The Congress additionally sought to promote an exchange of points of view and experiences between the rangers of these protected areas.

Segalerba added, “This Congress was certainly important for indigenous people. In the final statement of the Congress, titled the ‘Declaration of Santiago, Chile,’ the rangers called for the recognition of the importance of traditional practices of conservation. It recognized that indigenous park rangers possessed knowledge of these practices and could apply them to protected area management. The Declaration specifically recognized the importance of the presence of Juventino Kaxuyana as “one of the last representatives of his race, and we express our support and solidarity for his efforts to protect the cultural and natural heritage of his people.

The Congress was divided into various work groups that looked at the challenges of conservation, the role of Ranger Associations in relation to globalization, climate change and the growing importance of traditional and indigenous communities. The participants in the Congress also looked at professional issues such as the lack of training, the problems of female rangers in Latin America, on-the-job security and adequate compensation for the work they do. On the final day, the participants visited a nearby Natural Reserve, Río Clarillo.

For Juventino Kaxuyana, the mention of his people in the Declaration was very important. “It was also very important that APITIKATXI was recognized as the first Association of Indigenous Park Rangers. It is also good that other rangers know that indigenous park rangers also fight for the protection of nature.”

Canada

Park Wardens in Canada have had another eventful summer go by and are moving into fall hunting patrols and writing plans for next year. Some parks already have snow on the ground – better for tracking those poachers!

The Australia ranger exchange with Parks Victoria has had an exceptional first season. The Canadian counterparts are headed down to Oz this week and the Aussies should be back in their home parks ready to experience another summer. The program is two years long, with both rangers in the same country for the high seasons. Just think, over the next two and a half years they will have endless summer. We in the north cherish that!

Parks Canada will be bringing in a new uniform for the next operating season. Field testers wore it through snow, mud and sun and came up with only a few changes to the prototype. Our flashes needed to be much more visible and the shirts, being cream, were soon dirty beyond washing, certainly on a five day horse trip.

The Ranger Relief Effort is still alive in Canada. Right now we are trying to round up all of the old soft body armour carriers that will be changed to the new uniform style carriers. We have a partner interested in covering shipping costs to ranger organizations in the Congo Basin, where they routinely put their lives at risk for wildlife and wild places. We are having trouble finding enough expired ballistics panels to fill these carriers, though we are working on partnerships with the RCMP and other police forces. Any donations of expired panels would be appreciated. Call me at Prince Albert National Park at 306-663-4532

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

England/Wales

Sixty Countryside Management Association members attended the association's annual meeting, which was held over two days at the end of September in Peak District National Park. The theme of the meeting was integrated land management and included a series of keynote speakers and interactive workshops followed by a day of invigorating site visits in and around the Peak District and Derwent Water. CMA was pleased to welcome two members from SCRA, the Scottish Countryside Rangers Association, to the meeting. They carried out some fundraising for the 2006 IRF Congress to be held in Stirling. During the conference dinner, there was an auction of paintings by IRF's vice president Juan Carlos Gambarotta to help support attendance at the Stirling Congress.

Roger Cole
Countryside Management Association

United States (California)

The following first appeared in a recent edition of the California State Park Ranger Association newsletter:

There seems to be a bit of a theme developing in my life lately. I count animals. Now I know that some might think it a little strange, but it works for me on a number of levels. In fact, the more I think about it, the more it seems to be a practical metaphor for what parks professionals have pursued for years. Perhaps I should explain.

After helping to finish up a census of oystercatchers in our "backyard" along the Oregon Coast for researchers at Oregon State University, my wife and I headed south to count other creatures. For

eleven years now, my spouse, counting partner and CSPRA's Executive Manager (all the same person – Laura Svendsgaard) and I have traveled to Anza Borrego Desert State Park in early July. It is the hottest, driest period of the year, an ideal time to sit out in the desert and scan the harsh terrain for the illusive peninsula bighorn sheep. We're veterans, but there are some who have been at it much longer than we have. Past CSPRA President Bud Getty has done it for more than 30 years. Back home we missed a blue grass festival, a hometown parade, a number of special events and the Fourth of July fireworks, and it was a cool 110 degrees in the shade when we turned in our count results. But, like most of the other counters we'll be back next year.

At the other end of the same month and at the other end of the same state I joined CSPRA member and retired Superintendent Rick Sermon on another count. Along with 30+ volunteers we travelled into the watershed affecting Jediah Smith Redwoods and Del Norte Coast Redwoods State Parks. Here the environment and the counting task was more apt to cause hypothermia than heat stroke. We donned full wetsuits complete with hoods, neoprene gloves and booties, a mask and snorkel and swam a couple of miles of the Smith River. Attempting to keep abreast with the rest of the team in the differing currents and eddies, groups of four or five counters drifted and stroked and bumped and tumbled down runs and rapids while searching the depths and the shallows and the underwater ledges for the finned inhabitants of one of California's purest watercourses.

If you've bothered to read this far, many of you are probably thinking that you've elected a lunatic as your CSPRA president. You may be right, but let me get to the metaphor. I have no hesitation about participating in this sort of adventure. I find great satisfaction in sighting, recognizing, recording, and observing wild creatures in the places they live. The fact that I couldn't survive long in the environments these creatures call home somehow makes it all the more appealing. The animals, and their habitat, are what really counts.

Consider the peninsular bighorn sheep. They have been beset by diseases borne by domestic animals, loss of habitat to development, probably increased predation due to habitat reduction for mountain lions, and man-caused changes in the availability of water. They carve out a living in harsh terrain, among plants that seem to have evil designs on any bare flesh that comes near, without plentiful water, and in temperatures that only insane human beings (or inveterate counters of wildlife...if there's a difference between the two) would venture into on purpose. With their populations hovering tentatively around 700 individuals, they are an indicator species of the health of their environment. They are what counts.

The Department of Parks and Recreation, the Smith River Alliance, and the Save the Redwoods League (to name some of the major players) have recognized the Smith River as an extremely significant watershed in a state where every run-of-the-mill watershed is significant. The salmonids, or even the suckers or lamprey, that inhabit that river are great indicators of the health of the entire watershed. If the gravel beds used for spawning are silted up, if pollutants and toxins are spilled up stream, or if any one of thousands of influences are out of balance it affects the whole river. Algae in balance with nymphal aquatic insects, in balance with salmon and steelhead smolt, in balance with resident and sea-run cutthroat trout indicate a healthy, though harsh, environment. The number of adult fish in the river tells us what's going on there. They are what count.

I used to count visitors. I used to debate the appropriate "carrying capacity" – how big the count of people should get to be – for sensitive park units. I used to count revenue and seasonal salaries, OE funds, person years, overtime hours and crime stats. All of those bottom line numbers aren't the bottom line. They represent the numerical machinations we go through to be sure we get the job done, the visitors served, the facilities cleaned and in repair, the resources protected, and the story delivered to the visitors about the value of park lands. They are the numbers between the State's annual budget and the actual reality of a healthy park. Life is simpler for me now. I've cut out the "middle man" numbers. Now I get to count what really counts.

Ron Brean, President
California State Park Rangers Association

United States (National)

The Association of National Park Rangers held their annual "Ranger Rendezvous" in South Carolina from December 4th to December 8th. Approximately 100 rangers and others attended. Association President Lee Wurst gave an overview of the state of the association. As is true with other rangers associations around the world, ANPR is facing a membership crisis. Not including our life members, regular membership has fallen over 33% in the past few years. A key focus during the next year will be to increase this membership. One scheme will be to accentuate the IRF as being a big reason to join ANPR. New application pamphlets have been printed up and were distributed at the rendezvous.

Fortunately, the finances for ANPR look stable. Recently, the board decided not to renew the contract of its executive director. Although there were benefits gained from our past three years of a paid executive director, they were determined not worth the expense at this time. Perhaps this issue will be visited again at a future date.

ANPR will be sponsoring scholarships this year for several new ANPR members to assist them in attending the IRF Congress in Scotland in 2006. This will be accomplished through the John Muir Fund, established for this purpose with donations from members and others. This will be in addition to our sponsorship of Latin American rangers to attend. Fund raising for this has also begun.

I and other ANPR members look forward to seeing everyone in Scotland next year!

Tony Sisto
ANPR International Affairs

NEWS ABOUT RANGERS

Paraguayan Rangers Assaulted

The following was prepared by Ramón Villalba and passed on by past president Rick Smith....

Dos Guardaparques de la Reserva para Parque Nacional San Rafael, Rosalino Ayala y Elvio Rojas, fueron heridos mientras patrullaban un área de conservación indígena. Ellos y dos guardaparques más fueron emboscados por personeros de la Mafia Maderera en el sitio conocido como Arroyo Claro, donde se había producido el incendio forestal más grande conocido en Paraguay en marzo pasado.

El hecho ocurrió cuando habían acabado de inspeccionar un sitio donde había apilado rollos listos para ser retirados ilegalmente por estos comerciantes. Ellos viajaban en camioneta y los disparos fueron hechos desde atrás del móvil, en una picada en el bosque. Rosalino recibió dos balines y tres esquirlas en la zona de la cabeza, y Elvio tres balines en la espalda. El vehículo se estrelló pero lograron llegar a un hospital 4 horas después. Ambos están a salvo ahora, pero los balines no han podido ser retirados aún. A pesar de todo, ellos han tenido buena fortuna porque los tiros no llegaron a dañar (increíblemente por milímetros) nada importante.

Es importante destacar que esta mafia tiene importantes contactos políticos y a nivel de parlamentarios, algunos de los cuales poseen aserraderos clandestinos que reciben madera robada de comunidades indígenas en la zona, e incluso se habla de respaldo de autoridades de administración de justicia, pero aún así confiamos que harán bien su trabajo para individualizar a los culpables y castigarlos.

Si quieren escribir para presionar que esto se cumpla favor escriban a gabinete@seam.gov.py, al Ministro Alfredo Molinas, Secretario Ejecutivo de la Secretaría del Ambiente

Two park rangers from San Rafael National Park, Rosalino Ayala and Elvio Rojas, were injured while they patrolled an indigenous conservation area. Rosalino, Elviro and two other rangers were ambushed by the logging mafia in a site known as Arroyo Claro, the same place that the largest forest fire ever known in Paraguay occurred last March.

The incident occurred when they had completed an inspection of the site where logs had been piled up prior to being removed illegally by these mafia members. The rangers were in a truck and the shots came from behind them from a slope in the forest. Rosalino was hit by two bullets and three pieces of shrapnel in the head and Elvio got three bullets in the back. It was not til 4 hours later that they were able to get to a hospital. Both are safe now although the bullets have not yet been removed from either. Both were incredibly lucky that the bullets did not hit any real vital organ.

It's important to point out that these mafia people have important political connections at the level of the parliament, some of whom have clandestine sawmills that use wood illegally taken from indigenous communities. There has even been some talk about these illegal places having support from the Justice authorities but we can't say for sure that this is true or that we know who the guilty parties are.

If you want to write to apply pressure to resolve this issue, please write to Alfredo Molinas, the Executive Secretary of the Minister of Justice. The email address is gabinete@seam.gov.py

CALENDAR

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

June 14 – June 21, 2006	Fifth International Ranger Federation World Congress, Stirling, Scotland.
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