DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS
441 G STREET NW
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20314-1000

REPLY TO
ATTENTION OF

CECW-CO-N

MEMORANDUM FOR CHIEFS, OPERATIONS AND NATURAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT DIVISIONS AND DISTRICTS, AND OPERATIONS PROJECTS MANAGERS

SUBJECT: FY12/13 Natural Resources Management (NRM) Park Ranger Community of Practice (CoP) Advisory Board

1. I'm pleased to announce the restructured NRM Park Ranger CoP Advisory Board. The Board updated its original Charter to increase field-level park ranger membership and better prepare it for the many dynamic challenges the NRM Park Ranger CoP will experience in the future. The revised Charter, dated 17 June 2011 (Enclosure 1), reshaped the Board's membership structure to include two Park Rangers from each Major Subordinate Command, as specified below.

- The first representative, typically serving a 4-year term, will be a GS-09, or above Park Ranger (functioning as a Park Ranger not as an Operations Project Manager or Park Resource Manager) with at least 5 years of Corps experience, and a broad background in Park Ranger programs.

- The second representative, typically serving a 3-year term, will be a GS-04/05/07/09 Park Ranger with less than 5 years of Corps experience at the time of the appointment. This individual will have demonstrated the capacity to consistently, effectively and professionally execute Park Ranger programs.

2. The Board serves as a cross-functional team of advisors with the goal of providing an ongoing support platform for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Park Ranger Program. The current membership includes:

<u>Park Ranger CoP Board Chair</u>
- Freddie Bell, Chief of Natural Resources Management, Nashville District, LRD

<u>MSC Representatives</u>

- Hallie Groff, Park Ranger NRM Specialist, NAD
- Tara Whitsel, Park Ranger NRM Specialist, NAD
- Scott Kelley, Park Ranger NRM Specialist, SAD
- Juanita Souther, Park Ranger NRM Specialist, SAD
- Mark Klimaszewski, Park Ranger NRM Specialist, LRD

SUBJECT: FY12/13 Natural Resources Management (NRM) Park Ranger Community of Practice (CoP) Advisory Board

- Rebecca Elefante, Park Ranger NRM Specialist, LRD
- Scott Tichy, Park Ranger NRM Specialist, MVD
- Dayne Magneson, Park Ranger NRM Specialist, MVD
- Michael Lowry, Park Ranger NRM Specialist, SWD
- Courtney Hammonds, Park Ranger NRM Specialist, SWD
- Stanton Rains, Park Ranger NRM Specialist, NWD
- Michelle Frobose, Park Ranger NRM Specialist, NWD
- Carrie Richardson, Senior Park Ranger, SPD
- Austin Kuhlman, Park Ranger, SPD

Headquarters Support

- Steve Austin, Headquarters Proponent
- Dr. Bonnie Bryson, ERDC Support Specialist

3. The Board will undertake three very critical tasks in FY12/13 as identified in the Board's Project Management Plan:

- Champion the action items provided to HQUSACE from the Ad Hoc Team's review of Michigan State University's recommendations following its analysis of the Visitor Assistance Park Ranger and Manager surveys (Enclosure 2).
- Lead the effort to accept nominations and select one primary and one alternate park ranger to participate in the Pre-Command Course held at HQUSACE each June.
- Brief the Chief, Operations, Directorate of Civil Works, HQUSACE, on program activities and progress.

4. Please join me in congratulating and thanking the outgoing Advisory Board members for their willingness to serve on the NRM Park Ranger Advisory Board. Their exemplary service and contributions are greatly appreciated. Additional information on the NRM Park Ranger CoP can be found at http://corpslakes.usace.army.mil/rangers.cfm. For questions regarding the Advisory Board please contact the Board Chair, Mr. Freddie Bell, at 615-736-2160 or via email at Frederick.B.Bell @usace.army.mil.

2 Encl

RICHARD C. LOCKWOOD
Chief, Operations
Directorate of Civil Works

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20314-1000

AUG 15 2011

CECW-CO-N

MEMORANDUM FOR CHIEFS, OPERATIONS AND NATURAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT, MAJOR SUBORDINATE COMMANDS AND DISTRICT COMMANDS, AND OPERATIONS PROJECT MANAGERS

SUBJECT: Revised Charter - Natural Resources Management (NRM) Park Ranger Community of Practice (CoP) Advisory Board

1. The NRM Park Ranger Community of Practice Advisory Board recently updated its original Charter. The revised Charter, dated 17 June 2011 (Enclosure 1), significantly reshapes the Board's membership structure to include two Park Rangers from each Major Subordinate Command, as specified below.

a. Paragraph E. Advisory Board Membership - Each Major Subordinate Command (MSC) will have two representatives who are field-level NRM team members authorized to wear the Park Ranger uniform and whose primary duties involve Park Ranger programs.

- The first representative, typically serving a 4-year term, will be a GS-09, or above, Park Ranger (functioning as a Park Ranger, not as an Operations Project Manager or Park/Resource Manager) with at least 5 years of Corps experience, and a broad background in Park Ranger programs.

- The second representative, typically serving a 3-year term, will be a GS-04/05/07/09 Park Ranger with less than 5 years of Corps experience at the time of their appointment. This individual will have demonstrated the capacity to consistently, effectively, and professionally execute Park Ranger programs. (Pacific Ocean Division may elect not to select a second representative.)

b. Paragraph F. Functions - Facilitate communication and education of others about the roles of the USACE Park Ranger through internal and external outreach. A Corps-wide competitive process will be established to select one Park Ranger to participate in the annual Pre-Command Course at HQUSACE.

2. The current Board membership will remain in place until the revised membership structure becomes effective on 1 February 2012. The revised membership roster (Enclosure 2) indicates the number of positions that will be vacant as of 1 January 2012. Next month, we will make a formal request of all MSCs to nominate a representative(s) to fill their respective vacant position(s) on the Board.

CECW-CO-N
SUBJECT: Revised Charter - Natural Resources Management (NRM) Park Ranger Community of Practice (CoP) Advisory Board

3. Last year, we announced the first Park Ranger participation in the Pre-Command Course at HQUSACE. Based on very positive course feedback, this year Kayl Kite, Park Ranger, Nashville District, participated in the course and, once again, new Commanders were very interested and engaged in understanding the Park Ranger's role in the context of the Corps overall mission. Beginning in FY12, we will make a formal request of all MSCs for nominations offering this unique opportunity to all Corps Park Rangers.

4. I'm excited about the Advisory Board Chair's vision and plan to restructure the Board's membership. I believe it will ensure that the Board is fully prepared to meet the many dynamic challenges the NRM Park Ranger CoP will experience in the future. The diagram provided (Enclosure 3) demonstrates how the Board will function after its reorganization. I'm also very pleased with the Board's progress on several very important projects, including the Park Ranger/Visitor Safety Survey and the Visitor Assistance Program Management Survey. I look forward to examining the results and final report which will assist us in improving our Visitor Assistance Program. We anticipate releasing the final report no later than 15 September 2011. Questions related to the Park Ranger CoP Advisory Board should be directed to Mr. Freddie Bell, via email at Frederick.b.bell@usace.army.mil, or at 615-822-4846.

3 Encls

MICHAEL G. ENSCH
Chief, Operations
Directorate of Civil Works

Enclosure 1

USACE Park Ranger Community of Practice
Advisory Board Charter
Update 17 June 2011

A. Background. Park Rangers are the professional uniformed team members (including but not limited to 0099, 0025, 0028, 0400 job series) who perform, manage, or supervise work and stewardship of Federal lands, waters, and park resources at U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE or Corps) operated and maintained water resources projects. Functions include, but are not limited to, park management; natural, historical, and cultural resource management; watershed management; endangered and/or special status species management; flood risk management; real property and shoreline management; environmental compliance practices; asset management, visitor assistance; safety; infrastructure surveillance and protection; and the development of interpretive and recreational programs for the benefit of the public. Park Rangers are leaders in both emergency response and community outreach. Park Rangers are the Corps face to the nation and may be the only contact many members of the public have with the agency. The decision to establish a Park Ranger Community of Practice (CoP) was based on discussions at Natural Resources Management (NRM) national conferences and meetings of the Recreation Leadership Advisory Team (RLAT) and the Stewardship Advisory Team (SAT).

B. Goal. To develop and administer the Park Ranger CoP Advisory Board and to provide for a unified and on-going support platform for the USACE Park Ranger.

C. Purpose. To advance the technical and leadership skills of USACE Park Rangers and empower them to accomplish professional Park Ranger duties in an agency-of-choice work environment; to develop and implement a plan for Park Ranger program sustainability which ensures that the Park Ranger is appropriately positioned for the future; to develop and implement plans and tools to communicate with and educate others about the current roles of the Park Ranger; and to develop and implement a plan of action to address any barriers to internal or external recognition and support of expanding Park Ranger roles across all business lines.

D. Guiding Principles. The following principles will help guide this Community of Practice and its Advisory Board into the future:

- The Park Ranger CoP Advisory Board will function as a guiding coalition to maintain focus on CoP principles. They will champion current and future initiatives to enhance CoP effectiveness in the face of impacts to the workforce and project use that may occur as the focus of agency leadership evolves, and as political, social and economic trends develop.
- Park Rangers are absolutely essential and the key to the success of the execution of the Operations and Maintenance mission at Civil Works projects of the Corps of Engineers.
- The role of the Park Ranger will continue to expand in support of additional Civil Works missions such as flood risk management, homeland security, stewardship, environmental compliance, regulatory, asset management, and real estate actions.

- The Corps must augment current learning and future development opportunities by providing the tools, training, and resources necessary to enhance Park Ranger safety, success and career satisfaction.
- As with much of the Federal and Corps workforce, demographic trends indicate that there will be increased needs for succession planning and retention strategies to ensure that an adequate, capable, and professional Park Ranger staff is sustained in the upcoming years. These needs mandate a Park Ranger CoP to sustain this staff while also preparing future managers and program leaders.

E. Advisory Board Membership. Membership of the Advisory Board and meeting descriptions follow:

- The Advisory Board will typically consist of up to sixteen members representing eight MSCs including an Advisory Board Chair, Headquarters (HQ) proponent, and an Engineer Research and Development Center (ERDC) representative to provide technical assistance.
- Each Major Subordinate Command (MSC) will have two representatives who are field-level NRM team members authorized to wear the Park Ranger uniform and whose primary duties involve Park Ranger programs.

    - The first representative, typically serving a 4-year term, will be a GS-09, or above, Park Ranger (functioning as a Park Ranger, not as an Operations Project Manager or Park/Resource Manager) with at least 5 years of Corps experience, and a broad background in Park Ranger programs.

    - The second representative, typically serving a 3-year term, will be a GS-04/05/07/09 Park Ranger with less than 5 years of Corps experience at the time of their appointment. This individual will have demonstrated the capacity to consistently, effectively, and professionally execute Park Ranger programs. (Pacific Ocean Division may elect not to select a second representative.)

- Membership terms initially will be staggered to maintain continuity, yet allow new members to periodically transition onto the board and provide fresh perspectives.
- Meetings will be primarily virtual in nature; however, periodic face-to-face meetings may be held as necessary. Face-to-face meetings will be held in conjunction with other scheduled meetings as much as possible to reduce costs.
- From time to time the Advisory Board may call upon subject matter expert resources to assist with specific issues.
- The Advisory Board Chair will provide overall direction and leadership to the Board, conduct meetings, and represent the Board in reporting to the HQ Natural Resources Management (NRM) and Operations CoPs.

F. Functions. The Park Ranger CoP Advisory Board will perform the following functions:

- Develop and maintain a working Project Management Plan (PMP).
- Develop an annual plan of action for new CoP initiatives and submit it to the HQ Natural

Resources Management Chief for approval.

- Effectively and efficiently deal with issues that arise as a result of ongoing CoP initiatives.
- Support the NRM Career Development Steering Committee in recruiting, training, and development, maintenance of career ladders, and retention actions for team members accomplishing professional Park Ranger duties (including but not limited to those accomplished by job series 0099, 0025, 0028, and 0400).
- Work with ERDC to develop and maintain an NRM Gateway web page, as well as other learning tool and information-sharing tools and initiatives.
- Appoint ad hoc committees or task forces as needed to accomplish specific tasks. Task forces may consist of Advisory Board members and/or members of the NRM community.
- Fulfill other responsibilities mutually agreed to by the Advisory Board and Headquarters.
- Facilitate communication and education of others about the roles of the USACE Park Ranger through internal and external outreach.
- Continue Park Ranger participation and briefing at the Pre-Command Course held annually at HQUSACE. Beginning in FY12, a request for nominations will be distributed through each MSC to the Districts. One primary and alternate Park Ranger will be selected.
- Brief the Chief, Operations, Directorate of Civil Works, HQUSACE, once annually on program activities and progress.

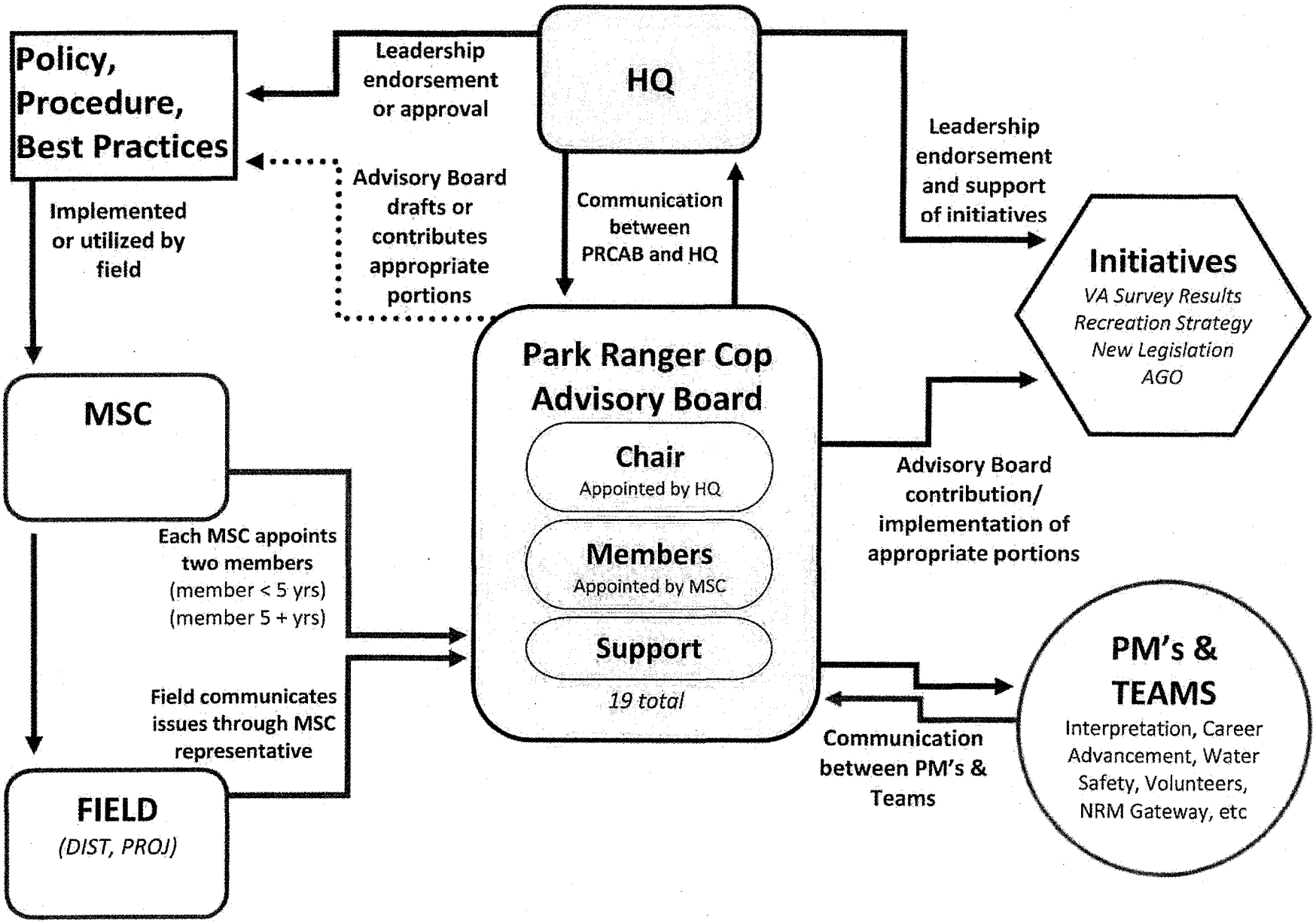
(Effective January 2012) Park Ranger CoP Advisory Board - MSC Roster

	NAME	REPRESENTING	BOARD ASSIGNMENT	POSITION	BUSINESS LINES	EXP.	SERIES	TERM ENDS
1	Freddie Bell	Advisory Board Chair Nashville District	Advisory Board Chair	Resource Manager Nashville District	1,2	8/17	0099,0025,0028, 0401	Nov 2013
2	Steve Austin	Headquarters Proponent	HQ Advisor	Senior Policy Advisor for Park Ranger Activities	1,2	12/32	0023, 0025, 0026, 0401	Indefinite
3	Dr. Bonnie Bryson	ERDC	ERDC Advisor	Data Mgmt. Specialist	1,2,3	15/31	0023, 0025, 0401	Indefinite
4	TBD	LRD TBD District	Park Ranger (GS-09 or above) *At least 5yrs experience*					
5	TBD	LRD TBD District	Park Ranger (GS-04/05/07/09) *Less than 5yrs experience*					
6	TBD	MVD TBD District	Park Ranger (GS-09 or above) *At least 5yrs experience*					
7	TBD	MVD TBD District	Park Ranger (GS-04/05/07/09) *Less than 5yrs experience*					
8	Tara Whitsel	NAD Baltimore District	Park Ranger (GS-09 or above) *At least 5yrs experience*	Natural Resource Specialist/Park Ranger	1,2	6/6	0401	July 2012
9	TBD	NAD TBD District	Park Ranger (GS-04/05/07/09) *Less than 5yrs experience*					
10	TBD	NWD TBD District	Park Ranger (GS-09 or above) *At least 5yrs experience*					
11	TBD	NWD TBD District	Park Ranger (GS-04/05/07/09) *Less than 5yrs experience*					
12	TBD	SAD TBD District	Park Ranger (GS-09 or above) *At least 5yrs experience*					
13	TBD	SAD TBD District	Park Ranger (GS-04/05/07/09) *Less than 5yrs experience*					
14	Carrie Richardson	SPD Sacramento District	Park Ranger (GS-09 or above) *At least 5yrs experience*	Senior Park Ranger	1,2	17/17	0025, 0099 , 0401	July 2012
15	TBD	SPD TBD District	Park Ranger (GS-04/05/07/09) *Less than 5yrs experience*					
16	Traci Robb	SWD Tulsa District	Park Ranger (GS-09 or above) *At least 5yrs experience*	Natural Res. Management Specialist	1,2,3,6	12/12	0025,0401	July 2012
17	TBD	SWD TBD District	Park Ranger (GS-04/05/07/09) *Less than 5yrs experience*					
18	TBD	POD TBD District	Park Ranger (GS-09 or above) *At least 5yrs experience*					

The REPRESENTING column describes who the members represent on this board plus their location. BOARD ASSIGNMENT indicates ranger tenure and program assignment. The POSITION column shows member's current job title. BUSINESS LINES shows all applicable Corps business lines in which Board members are experienced and are coded as: 1 for Recreation, 2 for Environmental Stewardship (includes Natural Resources), 3 for Flood Risk Management, 4 for Hydropower, 5 for Navigation , 6 for Water Supply. The column abbreviated EXP, lists the years of experience the member has in positions authorized to wear the Park Ranger uniform and total government service. For example, 10/26 means the member wore the uniform for 10 years and has 26 years with the government. The SERIES column represents the various job series in which the member is experienced. For example, : 0023- Outdoor Recreation Planner, 0025 – Park Ranger, 0028 – Environmental Protection Specialist, 0099 – Student Career Experience Program, 0400 – Biologist or Natural Resource Specialist

Enclosure 2

Park Ranger CoP Advisory Board Illustration



Enclosure 3

PARK RANGER COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE (CoP) AD HOC TEAM

RESPONSE TO MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY RECOMMENDATIONS

FOR USACE VISITOR ASSISTANCE (VA) PROGRAM

MSU recommendations contained in Final Report of results for the 2010 Park Ranger & Visitor Safety and the 2011 Visitor Assistance Program Management Surveys

BACKGROUND

Park Ranger CoP Chair Freddie Bell assembled an Ad Hoc Team to review the MSU report of surveys results (authored by Dr. Charles Nelson), and to develop a response to the report's recommendations for Mr. Mike Ensch, Chief, Operations, Civil Works Directorate, consideration. The Ad Hoc Team members are as follows:

Freddie Bell, Resource Manager, Chair of Park Ranger CoP, Nashville District
Steve Austin, Senior Policy Advisor for Park Ranger Activities, CECW-ON
Charlie Burger, Chief of Operations, Ft. Worth District
Jill Russi, Chief, Operations-Technical Section, Sacramento District
Phillip Brown, Operations Manager, Kansas City District
Bill Jackson, Supervisory Natural Resources Specialist, Lead PROSPECT VA Course Instructor, Vicksburg District
Aaron Wahus, Park Operations Manager, Savannah District
Kayl Kite, Conservation Biologist, Nashville District
Bonnie Bryson, Data Management Specialist, ERDC

INTRODUCTION

The Ad Hoc Team's big picture response to the report can be summarized in the following items. Based on this report of results:

a. The role of the Corps Park Ranger will remain intact with no changes.
b. The current ER/EP 1130-2-550, Chapter 6, Visitor Assistance Program, contains authority for the improvements recommended herein, however accountability at the management level for implementing the VA program in accordance with National policy and guidance must be reinforced.
c. Mandatory and required training and equipment for VA personnel must be made a priority and a peer-review process must be established to measure success.
d. The changes implemented from the 1995 survey appear to have had a positive overall effect in terms of perception of Park Ranger and Visitor Safety.

Responses to specific MSU report recommendations as well as additional recommendations from the Ad Hoc team follow. One of the goals of the survey initiative was to have an outside

entity take an unbiased look at the Corps Visitor Assistance (VA) Program. The recommendations in the MSU report are based on the extensive experience and knowledge of the primary author, Dr. Charles Nelson. Understandably, this outside entity has offered some recommendations that do not reflect some of the complexities of the Corps VA Program policy. One of the Ad Hoc Team's responsibilities is to review those recommendations within the context and authority of our agency VA Program and suggest responsive actions within that authority.

1. MSU REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS REGARDING "RANGER ALLOCATION OF EFFORT"

Recommendations for Ranger Allocation of Effort

- *Increase time allocation for patrol, environmental stewardship and preventative/educational programs in VA duties, especially during peak recreation season. Perceived need for additional VA employees may be negated if more time is spent on patrol for existing VA employees.*
    - *Use increased patrol time to strengthen ties with visitors, following a community policing strategy of catching problems early and understanding the dynamic of the project's community*
- *Decrease time for computer-based administration and fee collection, as both can be done by others who lack the authority to enforce federal regulations and training to coordinate with local law enforcement*
- *Streamline amount of information requested for shoreline management permits, real estate licenses, etc., and seek ways to allocate those tasks to others that lack the authority to provide patrol services.*

AD HOC TEAM RESPONSE

The Ad Hoc Team concurs with the MSU recommendations for this category, with the exception of the statement, *"May negate perceived need for additional VA employees if more time spent on patrol for existing VA employees."* If current levels of staff spend more time on patrol, some other duties will not be completed.

RATIONALE

The survey results quantify what has been heard anecdotally for years, that Park Rangers are devoting increasing amounts of time to computer-based tasks, and that they perceive that it is at the expense of VA duties.

AD HOC TEAM RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

Develop a multidisciplinary PDT to address this issue, capable of assessing and dealing with it at the grassroots level. This is a complex issue with varied causes and with several potential improvements (i.e., adjusting annual reporting requirement due dates of several NRM programs).

TIMEFRAME TO IMPLEMENTATION

Recommend establishment of PDT as soon as possible. Estimate 3-5 years for full implementation of their work. Park Ranger CoP Advisory Board will champion this effort.

2. **MSU REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS REGARDING "CONTRACTED ENFORCEMENT"**

Recommendations for Contracted Enforcement

- *Make greater/more effective use of contract enforcement at every project with a VA program*
  - *Have an enforcement contract at every project with a VA program*
  - *Eliminate Corps night patrol after midnight and before 6AM and transfer all such duties to contract enforcement*
  - *Clear contractual wording and vigorous contractual administration with a focus on priority violations and patrol procedures tailored to individual Corps projects*
- *Increase emphasis on alcohol/drug enforcement in all enforcement contracts to the point where they are priority violations*
- *Increase the emphasis on visible presence of local law enforcement partners in all enforcement contracts to clearly demonstrate to the public the presence of certified law enforcement personnel at each project*
- *Provide joint training where possible with contract law enforcement and Corps VA personnel on-site by project focused on priority violations and patrol procedures per contract specifications*
  - *Emphasize situational awareness training for Corps VA personnel to limit dangerous encounters that need law enforcement response*
  - *Build contract enforcement officers' confidence in park ranger info/intelligence*
  - *Focus training on joint response to problems that rangers and managers identified in the survey as most frequently threatening Corps employees and visitors:*
    - *Alcohol/drug related issues*
    - *Fights/assaults/disorderly conduct*
    - *Domestic violence*
    - *Traffic issues*
    - *Theft*
    - *Vandalism*

AD HOC TEAM RESPONSE

The Ad Hoc Team only partially concurs with the MSU recommendations. The three items with which we do not concur and why:

a. *Have an enforcement contract at every project with a VA program.* There are both partner and budget issues that make this unfeasible. Some locations for instance do

not have an adequate or available contractor, or the law enforcement agency does not want the administrative burden of a formal agreement although they do provide presence to Corps areas.

b. *Increase emphasis on alcohol/drug enforcement in all enforcement contracts to the point that they are priority violations.* "Presence" rather than "response" is the purpose of Corps Law Enforcement (LE) Agreements. Alcohol/drug enforcement should be the emphasis for law enforcement whether working under an agreement or not.

c. *Increase the emphasis on visible presence of local law enforcement partners in all enforcement contracts to clearly demonstrate to the public the presence of certified law enforcement personnel at each project.* As stated in b. above, "presence" is the purpose of Corps law enforcement agreements.

RATIONALE

The discussion in this section of the MSU report and the survey results make clear one important issue regarding level of authority. There is no justification provided by this report to further investigate change in the role of the park ranger.

The MSU Report seems to reflect some misconceptions about the Corps law enforcement agreement program, authority and purposes. Overall, the Ad Hoc Team agrees that some improvements to the specifications and execution of LE Agreements can be made.

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

a. A policy memo from Chief, Operations, Civil Works Directorate, should be issued as soon as possible that emphasizes the following regarding MSU recommendations:

   i. Encourages the priority use of project level funding to ensure that law enforcement agreements are adequately funded, and assures that from the agency side every effort will be made for available and adequate funds for this purpose. Also emphasizes strengthening and clarifying contract specifications where needed, along with emphasis on ensuring service provider's performance and adherence to specifications through more diligent and effective quality assurance processes. Additionally, address the local definition of "peak recreation season" in the ER/EP to minimize limitations it presents for field offices.

   ii. Eliminates **routine** patrol between midnight and 6 a.m.
      a. Clarifies provision in current ER/EP regarding "Night Surveillance"
      b. References the 9/11 memo and define the difference between it and the ER/EP
      c. References the Appendix G, list of Management Alternatives

iii. Emphasizes that the authority for joint training with contract vendors/law enforcement is already authorized by current ER/EP. Further emphasize that the training presented must be appropriate to our level of authority.

d. The policy memo from Chief, Operations, Civil Works Directorate, should also address the following two additional recommendations from the Ad Hoc committee:

   i. Reemphasizes provisions in ER/EP and stipulate that Park Rangers should patrol alone only with functional **and** adequate communications equipment.
   ii. Reemphasizes the role of the park ranger, and that protection of property is secondary to personal protection

e. Initiates NRM Gateway additions and improvements:

   i. Updates the Law Enforcement Agreement page (currently titled as LE Cooperative Agreements) with additional sample specifications, quality assurance BMPs, success stories, etc.
   ii. Updates the training section of the VA page to include joint training success stories and sample curriculums. Develop a short video clip that can be shared

TIMEFRAME TO IMPLEMENTATION

Recommend HQ policy memo be released prior to 2012 recreation season. Recommend Gateway updates completion within 6-12 months. Park Ranger CoP Advisory Board will champion this effort.

3. MSU REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS REGARDING "CRIME PREVENTION"

Recommendations for Crime Prevention

- *Focus on situational crime prevention t each project with a specific set of improvements developed in cooperation with local law enforcement*
  - *Target hardening and access control to reduce theft and vandalism*
    - *Better locks*
    - *Improved lighting*
    - *Use graffiti barrier on vulnerable surfaces*
    - *More effectively regulate vehicular access*
  - *Target removal to make crime less rewarding*
    - *Remove unnecessary high value targets such as sites where cash may be available*
    - *Better secure necessary high value targets such as maintenance facilities with tools, vehicles and equipment*
  - *Increase risk to potential criminals by increasing eyes and ears*

        - *Strengthen campground host program*
        - *Strengthen Corps Watch program*
        - *Improve natural surveillance at key recreation sites including vegetative management, lighting, etc.*
        - *Facilitate observation of illegal behavior by visitors and law enforcement*
    - *Further restrict primary facilitators of crime/violation such as alcohol and drug use through regulation and enforcement*
    - *Keep areas well maintained*
        - *Repair vandalized facilities rapidly*
        - *Remove graffiti*

AD HOC TEAM RESPONSE

The Ad Hoc Team concurs with the MSU recommendations for this category.

RATIONALE

Crime prevention is always an area where VA efforts should focus.

AD HOC TEAM RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

a. The policy memo from Chief, Operations, Civil Works Directorate, should emphasize the following regarding MSU recommendations:

    i. Emphasize that the authority for the recommended crime prevention activities exist in the current ER/EP, and again emphasize the Appendix G, list of Management Alternatives
    ii. Emphasize the benefits of the Corps Watch program and require universal implementation

b. NRM Gateway additions and improvements include improved Corps Watch page, with success stories and benefits of the program highlighted

TIMEFRAME TO IMPLEMENTATION

Recommend HQ policy memo be released within 120 days. Recommend Gateway updates completion within 6-12 months. Park Ranger CoP Advisory Board will champion this effort. ERDC will provide Technical Support for Gateway page.

4. MSU REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS REGARDING "COMMUNICATIONS"

Recommendations for Communications

- *Improve communications equipment and capability of VA personnel to use it*

- *Upgrade two-way radios and radio reception on projects*
- *Seek improved cellular service on projects*

- *Increase VA access to law enforcement data (e.g. NLETS, ORI) to obtain criminal histories, wants and warrants*
  - *Consider making such access a condition of a local enforcement contract funds if lacking voluntary cooperation*

AD HOC TEAM RESPONSE

The Ad Hoc Team only partially concurs with the MSU recommendations. The item with which we do not concur and why:

> *Increase VA access to law enforcement data (e.g. NLETS, ORI) to obtain criminal histories, wants and warrants. Also consider making such access a condition of a local enforcement contract funds if lacking voluntary cooperation*
>
> The "wants and warrants" portion of this recommendation is not appropriate for our level of authority. The recommendation to make increased access to law enforcement data a condition of law enforcement agreements is not appropriate and reflects a lack of understanding of our agency policy.

RATIONALE

The need for improved communications emerges as one of the most critical elements in the survey results. This is an area where perhaps the most important improvement can be made to directly enhance Park Ranger safety.

AD HOC TEAM RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

a. Follow up on the status of the White Paper that resulted from the SPD Visitor Assistance review and clarify the steps to be taken for improved communications resources provided by ACE-IT.
b. Establish a NRM Gateway page on "NRM Communications" that includes information from the White Paper processes that were established, and success stories on communications issues to include NLETS and ORI. The SME for that page can assist in following up with submitters of success stories to help monitor how systems are working.

TIMEFRAME TO IMPLEMENTATION

Recommend completion of both of the above within 12 months. CECW-ON (Steve Austin) and Lead, VA Cadre will champion this effort. ERDC will provide Technical Support for Gateway page.

5. MSU REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS REGARDING "VA TRAINING"

Recommendations for VA Training

- *Increased emphasis on VA personnel training with focus on employee safety as recommended by respondents*
  - *Self-defense training less than firearms*
  - *Drug identification, manufacture and distribution*
  - *De-escalation of violence/verbal judo*
  - *Gangs*
- *Use actual project incidents involving VA personnel in training, with a focus on:*
  - *Situational awareness*
  - *Appropriate response including coordination with local law enforcement*
  - *Success stories*

AD HOC TEAM RESPONSE

The Ad Hoc Team concurs with the MSU recommendations.

RATIONALE

Training is one of the significantly improved areas that resulted from the 1995 survey response. Improvements to training are always desirable. The ER/EP currently authorizes training as recommended by MSU. However, the team feels that the survey results indicate that accountability for providing it to all VA personnel is lacking.

AD HOC TEAM RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

a. The policy memo from Chief, Operations, Civil Works Directorate, should emphasize the following regarding MSU recommendations:

   i. The ER/EP currently contains the authority for the recommended training.
   ii. The EP in para. 6-4.d. currently requires accountability for providing appropriate and timely training for all VA personnel.

b. Create a 10-minute length video of Chief, Operations, Civil Works Directorate, giving overview of survey results and emphasis on training requirements and accountability.
c. Regarding the accountability issue, the Ad Hoc Team recommends creation of a centralized database of Park Rangers for which training accountability is but one benefit. Although the MSU report did not make a formal recommendation about this in the report, it did mention the difficulties our agency experienced in identifying all those working in VA when determining the survey population. The Staffing Analysis PDT separately has noted the difficulties in identifying NRM

personnel who charge to recreation. The centralized database would eliminate the multiple lists of VA staff that never match. It is further recommended that the ERDC Recreation Team take the lead on evaluating development options. Once the centralized data base is established, it is recommended that Mike Ensch issue a separate memorandum requiring its use. The database would include the following fields and functionality:

i. Name, position title, and location per Integrated Manning Document (IMD) sources
ii. Citation authority status
iii. Uniform program status
iv. Required VA training status
v. Email address, used to update Park Ranger CoP mailing lists
vi. Data fields could be updated at any time, but with an annual update required, most likely by the District VA Points of Contract.
vii. The position data could be rolled up to feed staffing information to other databases which need it, such as RecSTATUS Self Assessment, OMBIL (the NRM FTE section), etc.

d. Market and continue to develop exportable training sources, the PROSPECT VA Instructors Cadre will be champion for this effort.
e. Establish a VA Peer Review program to better insure overall VA Program consistency and accountability. Use the Park Ranger CoP Advisory Board in collaboration with VA Cadre to develop the program and recommend the process.

TIMEFRAME TO IMPLEMENTATION

Recommend HQ policy memo be released within 120 days. The video to emphasize survey results and implications should be ready within 12 months and posted on the Gateway. Peer Review process implementation recommended 12 months. The remaining items recommended for completion within 6-18 months. Park Ranger CoP Advisory Board, ERDC, CECW-ON (Steve Austin) and Lead, VA Cadre will collaborate and champion this effort.

6. MSU REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS REGARDING "RANGER HIRING"

Recommendations on Ranger Hiring

- *Hire VA personnel that are physically and psychologically fit for duty to enforce appropriate federal regulations and cooperate with local law enforcement*
  - *Encourage continued physical fitness/health throughout an employee's career in the VA program*
- *Hire VA personnel that have a broad-based bachelor's degree or higher in natural resources, preferably with significant emphasis on outdoor recreation management*

AD HOC TEAM RESPONSE

The Ad Hoc Team concurs with the MSU recommendations.

RATIONALE

Hiring the right persons for VA duties is always a priority. The recommendations for psychological and physical fitness also emerged from the SPD VA Program Study.

AD HOC TEAM RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

a. NRM Career Development Steering Committee (NRMCDSC) and the Park Ranger CoP Advisory Board further investigate issues around physical and psychological fitness as hiring criteria and as condition of continued employment. Provide Chief, Operations, Civil Works Directorate, recommendations as to adoption and implementation.
b. NRMCDSC should continue to produce enhanced recruiting methods/tools to ensure that all new hires have the proper credentials to adequately perform park ranger functions.

TIMEFRAME TO IMPLEMENTATION

Recommend implementation of recommendations from the NRMCDSC and Park Ranger CoP Advisory regarding physical and psychological fitness within 3 years. NRMCDSC recruiting efforts are ongoing. Park Ranger CoP Advisory Board and NRM Career Development Steering Committee will champion this effort.

7. MSU REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS REGARDING "RANGER ROLES AND UNIFORM"

Recommendations on Ranger Roles and Uniform

- *Interpretive messages at every project should clearly spell out to visitors the role of Corps park rangers*
- *The uniform needs to reflect the roles of VA personnel, not just enforcement of federal regulations*
  - *The Corps should work across the VA community to define and design a uniform that reflects the VA role and authority*
- *The appropriate code of federal regulations and partnering with local law enforcement should be enforced*
- *If a law enforcement contract is in place, local unit contract enforcement should be emphasized through interpretive and other communication*

AD HOC TEAM RESPONSE

The Ad Hoc Team concurs with the MSU recommendations with the exception of the following:

a. Additional clarification from Dr. Nelson will be required to fully comprehend what is meant by "The enforcement of the appropriate code of federal regulations and partnering with local law enforcement".
b. No wholesale uniform design change proposals or actions are recommended at this time.

RATIONALE

The Ad Hoc Team's review of this report concludes that these two important issues are clear:

a. The role of the Corps Park Ranger will remain intact with no changes
b. There is no consensus for change to the uniform. The Ad Hoc Team believes that the current uniform does properly reflect the Park Ranger role. It is the federal NRM uniform typical of other federal land management agencies. Some other agencies are getting into more risky roles with this uniform (for instance NPS in drug enforcement), and public perception over time may require another look at this issue in the future.

AD HOC TEAM RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

a. Continue routine interpretive efforts regarding role of the Park Ranger, and continue to share the role of the ranger in routine public contacts. Create an interpretive program on role of the ranger for and/or share on the Interpretive Services and Outreach (ISOP) Gateway page any established programs suitable for inclusion on in the ISOP Toolbox.
b. Continue annual uniform reviews by the Uniform Committee, and continue to make minor uniform changes so that items such as polo shirt and ball caps are available for duties appropriate to more casual version of the uniform.

TIMEFRAME TO IMPLEMENTATION

ISOP Toolbox additions are recommended within 12 months. Interpretive efforts are ongoing. Uniform reviews and minor changes ongoing. Program Manager, Interpretive Services and Outreach and Chair, Uniform Committee will champion this effort.

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20314-1000

AUG 19 2011

CECW-CO-N

MEMORANDUM FOR CHIEFS, OPERATIONS AND NATURAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT, MAJOR SUBORDINATE COMMANDS AND DISTRICT COMMANDS, AND OPERATIONS PROJECT MANAGERS

SUBJECT: Revised Charter - Natural Resources Management (NRM) Park Ranger Community of Practice (CoP) Advisory Board

1. The NRM Park Ranger Community of Practice Advisory Board recently updated its original Charter. The revised Charter, dated 17 June 2011 (Enclosure 1), significantly reshapes the Board's membership structure to include two Park Rangers from each Major Subordinate Command, as specified below.

a. Paragraph E. Advisory Board Membership - Each Major Subordinate Command (MSC) will have two representatives who are field-level NRM team members authorized to wear the Park Ranger uniform and whose primary duties involve Park Ranger programs.

- The first representative, typically serving a 4-year term, will be a GS-09, or above, Park Ranger (functioning as a Park Ranger, not as an Operations Project Manager or Park/Resource Manager) with at least 5 years of Corps experience, and a broad background in Park Ranger programs.

- The second representative, typically serving a 3-year term, will be a GS-04/05/07/09 Park Ranger with less than 5 years of Corps experience at the time of their appointment. This individual will have demonstrated the capacity to consistently, effectively, and professionally execute Park Ranger programs. (Pacific Ocean Division may elect not to select a second representative.)

b. Paragraph F. Functions - Facilitate communication and education of others about the roles of the USACE Park Ranger through internal and external outreach. A Corps-wide competitive process will be established to select one Park Ranger to participate in the annual Pre-Command Course at HQUSACE.

2. The current Board membership will remain in place until the revised membership structure becomes effective on 1 February 2012. The revised membership roster (Enclosure 2) indicates the number of positions that will be vacant as of 1 January 2012. Next month, we will make a formal request of all MSCs to nominate a representative(s) to fill their respective vacant position(s) on the Board.

3. Last year, we announced the first Park Ranger participation in the Pre-Command Course at HQUSACE. Based on very positive course feedback, this year Kayl Kite, Park Ranger, Nashville District, participated in the course and, once again, new Commanders were very interested and engaged in understanding the Park Ranger's role in the context of the Corps overall mission. Beginning in FY12, we will make a formal request of all MSCs for nominations offering this unique opportunity to all Corps Park Rangers.

4. I'm excited about the Advisory Board Chair's vision and plan to restructure the Board's membership. I believe it will ensure that the Board is fully prepared to meet the many dynamic challenges the NRM Park Ranger CoP will experience in the future. The diagram provided (Enclosure 3) demonstrates how the Board will function after its reorganization. I'm also very pleased with the Board's progress on several very important projects, including the Park Ranger/Visitor Safety Survey and the Visitor Assistance Program Management Survey. I look forward to examining the results and final report which will assist us in improving our Visitor Assistance Program. We anticipate releasing the final report no later than 15 September 2011. Questions related to the Park Ranger CoP Advisory Board should be directed to Mr. Freddie Bell, via email at Frederick.b.bell@usace.army.mil, or at 615-822-4846.

3 Encls

MICHAEL G. ENSCH
Chief, Operations
Directorate of Civil Works