



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
441 G Street N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20314-1000

REPLY TO
ATTENTION OF:

OCT 03 2007

CECW-CO-N

S: 26 October 2007

**MEMORANDUM FOR COMMANDERS, MAJOR SUBORDINATE COMMANDS, AND
DISTRICT COMMANDS; CHIEFS, CONSTRUCTION-OPERATION DIVISION**

**SUBJECT: Natural Resources Management Park Ranger Community of Practice Advisory
Board**

1. I'm pleased to announce the formation of the Natural Resources Management (NRM) Park Ranger Community of Practice Advisory Board. This board is being established to develop and administer a formal Community of Practice for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineer Park Ranger, with specific responsibilities and functions as identified on the attached draft charter. Mr. Charlie Burger, Ft. Worth District Deputy Operations Chief, has agreed to serve as the initial Chair of this board.

2. The Advisory Board will consist of the current program managers and/or committee chairs representing the following national NRM programs:

Visitor Assistance Program	Charlie Burger, Advisory Board Chair
Career Development Program	Marilyn Jones
Interpretation/Outreach Program	Pat Barry
NRM Uniform Program	Jim Runkles
Public/Water Safety Program	Lynda Nutt
Volunteer Program	Carolyn Bauer
Sign Program	Rick Magee
HQ Proponent	Stephen Austin

Per previous discussions with your staff, I request that the above team members be permitted to serve on the board during the same period as they serve as managers or chairs of their respective national programs or committees.

3. In addition, one representative from each of the Major Subordinate Commands will be selected to fill a four-year term on the Advisory Board. Each MSC is hereby requested to submit three nominations (one MSC/District Office NRM employee, one field-level manager and one field level park ranger/NRM specialist) for consideration on the board. A mixture of highly qualified team members from different levels of management will help achieve a proper balance on the board. Please submit your nominations to Mr. Charlie Burger, charles.l.burger@usace.army.mil, by 26 October 2007.

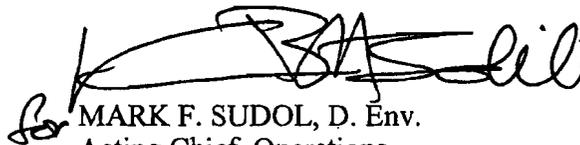
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4. The cost for participating on the Park Ranger CoP Advisory Board will be the responsibility of the local duty station. Maximum use of electronic communication methods will minimize travel expenses.

5. I envision an ever increasing critical role of the Corps Park Ranger in the years to come. Not only has the Park Ranger been a great ambassador for the agency as the Corps "face-to-the-nation", the ranger's job of the future will reflect both the traditional responsibilities plus the added diversity of being an even greater integral part the entire Civil Works mission. Ensuring that the Park Ranger is appropriately positioned for the future will be a key objective of the Advisory Board.

Encl


for MARK F. SUDOL, D. Env.
Acting Chief, Operations
Directorate of Civil Works

(draft)
USACE Park Ranger Community of Practice
Advisory Board Charter

A. **Background.** A Natural Resources Management team began working in 2006 to initiate action in developing a Community of Practice for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Park Ranger. The team established a test Park Ranger CoP web site on the NRM Gateway which states, in part:

Park Rangers are the uniformed team members who perform, manage, or supervise work in the stewardship of Federal lands, waters, and park resources at Corps operated and maintained projects. Functions include park management; natural, historical, and cultural resource management; flood risk management; real property and shoreline management; environmental compliance practices; asset management, visitor assistance; 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 and are the Corps' face to the nation and may be the only contact the public has with the agency.

These pages contain beneficial information for every park ranger, from the new hire to the seasoned veteran, which will help enhance professionalism. You are encouraged to utilize, share and contribute to the NRM Gateway as well as the Operations & Regulatory Gateway - this is your Community of Practice.

In addition, the appropriateness of establishing a Park Ranger Community of Practice has been discussed at the NRM National Conference and at the Recreation/Stewardship Advisory Team meetings. An overall consensus has been obtained to go forward and establish a Community of Practice for the USACE Park Ranger.

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

C. **Purpose.** To implement a plan for program sustainability and ensure that the USACE Park Ranger is appropriately positioned for the future.

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 and shepherd initiatives now and into the future.
- Park Rangers are absolutely essential and the key to the success of the O&M and Civil Works mission and execution for the Corps of Engineers.

- The role of the ranger will continue to expand into non-traditional areas in support of other Civil Works missions such as flood risk management, homeland security, stewardship, environmental compliance, regulatory, asset management and real estate actions.
- It is imperative that the Corps provide as many tools and as much training and guidance as possible for Park Rangers to assure success. These tools should include those to enhance present learning as well as future development, especially in support of other Operations and Civil Works missions.
- As with much of the Federal and Corps workforce, there will be increased attrition in the Park Ranger ranks in the upcoming years. This mandates a program now to prepare future managers and program leaders.

E. Membership.

- The Advisory Board will consist of fourteen members plus a Headquarters' proponent.
- Seven members will represent the current Committee Chair and/or Program Manager from the following NRM program areas: Visitor Assistance, Career Development, Interpretive/Outreach, Uniforms, Public/Water Safety, Signs, and Volunteers.
- An MSC representative from either the division, district or project level.
- Membership terms will be initially staggered from two to four years so that new members can periodically transition onto the board to maintain continuity. New members added at a later date will serve four-year terms.
- Meetings will be primarily virtual in nature; however, periodic face-to-face meetings may be held as necessary in conjunction with other scheduled meetings.

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

- Finalize the Agency Board Charter for Headquarters' approval.
- Develop and present an annual plan of action and new CoP initiatives to the HQ Natural Resources Management CoP.
- Effectively and efficiently deal with issues that arise as a result of ongoing CoP initiatives.
- Support NRM Career Development Committee in maintaining career ladders, training and development actions for Park Rangers.
- Work with ERDC staff regarding Gateway, Groove, and other learning tool initiative progress.
- 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 CoP as a whole.
- Other responsibilities as mutually agreed to by the Advisory Board and Headquarters.
- Advisory Board Chair will provide overall direction and leadership to the Board and will conduct meetings and represent the Board in reporting to the HQ Natural Resources Management CoP.