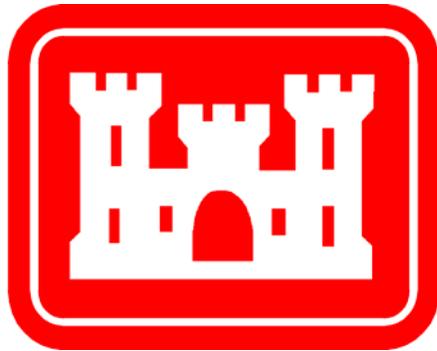


**Project Management Plan (PMP)
Park Ranger
Community of Practice**



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Park Ranger
Community of Practice
9 July 2008

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<u>Appendix No.</u>	<u>Appendix Title</u>
1	CECW-CO-N Memorandum dated 3 October 2007, Subject: “Natural Resources Management Park Ranger Community of Practice Advisory Board”
2	CECW-CO-N Memorandum dated 24 March 2008, Subject: “Natural Resources Management Park Ranger Community of Practice Advisory Board”
3	USACE Park Ranger Community of Practice Advisory Board Charter
4	Park Ranger CoP Advisory Board Members

1. PROJECT SCOPE.

1.1 PROJECT DEFINITION. 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 in the stewardship of Federal lands, waters, and park resources at U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE or Corps) operated and maintained water resources projects. These individuals come from a variety of educational and experience backgrounds and are responsible for duties in from one to several different business lines. This workforce is part of two broader Communities of Practice (CoP): Natural Resources Management (NRM) and Operations. On 3 October 2007 a CECW-CO-N memorandum announced the formation of an Advisory Board to develop and administer a formal Community of Practice (CoP) that serves USACE Park Rangers (Attachment 1). On 24 March 2008, a CECW-CO-N memorandum made initial board appointments and provided a draft charter (Attachment 2). A final version of the charter was adopted by the Advisory Board on 9 July 2008 (Attachment 3).

1.2 OBJECTIVE. The objective of this project is to develop and administer a Community of Practice for USACE Park Rangers. The goal is to provide for a unified and on-going support platform for the USACE Park Ranger. The purpose is 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.

1.3 SERVICES TO BE PROVIDED.

Capable Workforce

- Develop and conduct a comprehensive survey of Park Rangers to assess the current situation on issues including visitor and ranger safety, park ranger staffing levels, training needs and other issues identified by CoP members' feedback.
- Benchmark with other agencies' Park Ranger staffing and training levels.
- Develop a national USACE Park Ranger Training Manual.
- Develop a CoP-based Park Ranger career assignment (developmental) program.
- Develop a Park Manager PROSPECT course for Park Rangers who aspire to be park managers.
- Promote professionalism and efficient use of training dollars by investigating the feasibility of an on-site national Park Ranger Basic Training School that would be regionally accessible.
- Support and promote Park Ranger conferences at the Division, District, and National levels.
- Develop and conduct exit surveys of separating Park Rangers to improve retention efforts.
- Develop guidance for succession planning for replacement of transitioning Park Ranger staff and retention of current staff.

Communication & Knowledge Management

- Establish a Park Ranger CoP web page on the NRM Gateway and encourage its use. It will include features such as a CoP Smartbook and Discussion Forum to provide networking opportunities and to facilitate communication of success stories or solicitation of help in problem solving among Park Rangers. It will also feature methods of archiving such communication and postings to capture institutional knowledge.
- Develop plans and tools to communicate with and educate others about the role of the Park Ranger. This plan will be both internal such as outreach to other Corps elements and Commanders; and external to reach key partners such as congressional representatives and U.S. Attorneys.
- Develop a plan of action to address any barriers to internal or external recognition and support of non-traditional Park Ranger roles across all business lines.

Partnerships

- Explore Park Ranger associations established by others and support the establishment of one for USACE Park Rangers.
- Position the CoP to support beneficial partnerships at all levels, including the capabilities of the Corps of Engineers Natural Resources Education Foundation

One Team: Relevant, Ready, Responsive, Reliable

- Position the CoP to support current and future initiatives such as the USACE Recreation Program Strategy Implementation and the Children and Nature Network.
- Position the CoP to respond appropriately to immediate issues or crises across business lines.

Administrative

- Explore the feasibility of pay-as-you go support for Park Rangers from other business lines.

1.4 KEY PRODUCTS.

- Recommendations based on national Park Ranger survey and benchmarking results..
- Park Ranger CoP web page
- Electronic Smartbook and Discussion Forum
- Park Ranger developmental Career Assignment Program
- Park Manager PROSPECT Course
- Park Ranger Conferences support
- Park Ranger Training Manual
- Park Ranger Basic Training School recommendation
- Park Ranger Succession and Retention Plan
- Improved recognition and support of Park Ranger duties within all business lines
- Park Ranger article as routine monthly feature in Engineer Update publication, demonstrating the CoP's wide range of duties and responsibilities

1.5 AUTHORITY. The authority for this project comes from the HQUSACE Operations Chief and Operations Community of Practice Manager, Mr. Michael G. Ensich who has directed the initiative.

1.6 LOCATION. This project is national in scope.

2. ADVISORY BOARD MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION. The CoP Advisory Board Chair for this effort is Charlie Burger, Acting Chief of Operations in the Fort Worth District.

Attachment 4 lists Advisory Board members and describes the characteristics that uniquely qualify them to serve on this team.

3. CRITICAL ASSUMPTIONS AND CONSTRAINTS.

- Several of the initiatives specified to be undertaken will require some level of funding for success. Examples might be the creation and/or maintenance of a national Park Ranger career assignment program, or a national Park Ranger Basic Training School. Should sufficient funding not be available, these initiatives may be planned but not immediately undertaken.
- This effort is a collateral duty for the CoP Advisory Board Chair and all Advisory Board members. In some cases, this fact may slow progress toward task completion.
- It is assumed that study proposals will be embraced and implemented by district and MSC Operations Division Chiefs.
- The Natural Resource Management Career Development Steering Committee that has been established for many years has developed career materials for all NRM employees. It is assumed that their products may be leveraged in the development of additional career materials for Park Rangers.

4. WORK BREAKDOWN STRUCTURE. Not applicable.

5. FUNDING. Advisory Board Chair and Board members' time and travel (if applicable) will be absorbed by program funding or their local office O&M funds.

6. SCHEDULE.

<u>MILESTONE SCHEDULE</u>	<u>ORIGINAL</u>	<u>CURRENT</u>	<u>COMPLETE</u>
Initial Advisory Board Meeting	7-9 July 2008		7/9/2008
Finalize Charter	9 July 2008		7/9/2008
Develop PMP	9 July 2008		7/9/2008
Send "3-Up 3-Down" feedback format to OPM CoP for completion by temporary Park Ranger staff whose appointments will end before the Gateway version is available	1 August 2008		
Finalize HQ memo for OPs signature that announces CoP launch	15 August 2008		
Brief RLAT/SAT on CoP status	27 August 2008		
Park Ranger CoP Launch Ceremony (Chief of Ops sign PMP) at RLAT	27 August 2008		
Launch Park Ranger CoP Gateway Page	8 September 2008		
Launch Park Ranger Smartbook	8 September 2008		
Deploy initial "3-Up 3-Down" open-ended survey of Park Rangers through Gateway to help gather info for development of comprehensive survey	8 September 2008		
Establish monthly Park Ranger article in Engineer Update	September 2008		
Launch Park Ranger electronic Discussion Forum (launch date contingent upon availability of agency-approved software and process)	1 January 2009		
Position the CoP to respond to immediate issues or crises	On-Going		
Position the CoP to support current and future initiatives such as the USACE Recreation Program Strategy Implementation and the Children & Nature Network	On-Going		
Position the CoP to support beneficial partnerships at all levels including the capabilities of the Corps of Engineers Natural Resources Education Foundation	On-Going		
Develop and conduct a comprehensive survey of Park Rangers to assess the current situation on issues including visitor and ranger safety, park ranger staffing levels, training needs, and other issues identified by the 3-Up 3-Down feedback	1 March 2009		
Benchmark with other agencies with Park Ranger staff	2009		
Develop and conduct exit surveys of departing Park Rangers	2009		
Develop plans and tools to communicate with and educate others about the role of the Park Ranger.	2009		
Support Park Ranger conferences at the Division, District, and National levels.	2009		
Develop guidance for succession and retention planning for Park Ranger staff	2009		
Develop plans and materials for outreach to other Corps elements and Commanders	2009		

Develop a plan of action to address any barriers to internal or external recognition and support of non-traditional Park Ranger roles across all business lines	2009		
Investigate the feasibility of on-site national Park Ranger Basic Training School	2010		
Develop a CoP-based Park Ranger career assignment (developmental) program	2010		
Develop a national Park Ranger Training Manual	2010		
Explore Park Ranger associations established by others and support the establishment of one for USACE Park Rangers	2010		
Develop a Park Manager PROSPECT course.	2010		
Explore the feasibility of pay-as-you go support for Park Rangers from other business lines	2010		

7. QUALITY CONTROL PLAN AND OBJECTIVES. In order to assure the greatest quality possible for the products produced by this team, the Recreation Leadership Advisory Team (RLAT), Stewardship Advisory Team (SAT), and the NRM Headquarters staff will be afforded an opportunity to review products in draft format.

8. ACQUISITION STRATEGY. No contracts are envisioned for the production of any team products at this time. Should it be necessary to obtain outside services, the team may seek to utilize contracts already established for similar products through the Natural Resource Management Career Development Steering Committee. Establishment of a Park Manager PROSPECT Course will be coordinated with the Huntsville Training Center.

9. RISK ANALYSIS.

- A recognized risk may come from a lack of Advisory Board member support from their supervisory chain. This has been minimized by messages of support for the effort from the highest levels of the organization to the supervisory chain. It can be further reinforced with individual messages or conversations as needed during the process.
- Clarifying and asserting Park Ranger roles in all business lines may be seen as a challenge to other functional communities. Recognizing the importance of our relationships, we must be committed to working hard in building understanding while we develop and assert appropriate roles in a consistent national policy.
- As with any collateral duty, there is risk of either the Chair or Advisory Board members being overcome by the events of their primary job and losing focus on this project. Special assignments by team members will be given only on a volunteer basis which should make the work more interesting. The Chair will be careful not to overwork any one Advisory Board member or special committee. The Chair must also delegate enough assignments to keep from burning out personally.

10. SAFETY PLAN. Not applicable.

11. CHANGE MANAGEMENT. Any changes in mission, scope or schedule will be coordinated by the Advisory Board Chair with the HQ Natural Resources Management (NRM) Chief who is also the NRM CoP Manager, and the HQ Chief of Operations who is also the

Operations CoP Manager. Once approved, such changes will be updated in this PMP and will be coordinated with the Advisory Board.

12. COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY. The customers of this project are the people currently employed as Park Rangers, those who supervise or work with/for Park Rangers, those who benefit from the success of operation and maintenance of Corps water resource developments, the Corps leadership in general, those who aspire to be Park Rangers, and those who aspire to transition from Park Ranger positions to other levels within the agency. While no public involvement strategy is needed, a variety of communication will be held with the RLAT and SAT and Corps leadership in various functional areas and the applicable workforce during the project. Communication methods will include but not be limited to Gateway web site postings, discussion forums, status reports and surveys to solicit feedback or ideas.

13. VALUE ENGINEERING MANAGEMENT. Not applicable.

14. CLOSEOUT. Not applicable.

15. REAL ESTATE. Not applicable.

16. APPROVALS. Consensus regarding the PMP content was gained from the RLAT and SAT and approved by the NRM Chief of Operations on 27 August 2008.

17 REFERENCES.

- USACE 2012, Aligning the US Army Corps of Engineers for Success in the 21st Century (<http://www.hq.usace.army.mil/stakeholders/Final.htm>)
- US Army Corps of Engineers Learning Organization Doctrine (<http://www.hq.usace.army.mil/cepa/learning/lodoctrine.htm>)
- US Army Corps of Engineers Community of Practice Doctrine

18. SCHEDULE DETAILS. See Milestone Schedule chart, paragraph 6 above.

19. OTHER. Not applicable.