



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY

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

REPLY TO
ATTENTION OF:

CECW-CO-N

MAR 24 2008

MEMORANDUM FOR COMANDERS, MAJOR SUBORDINATE COMMANDS AND DISTRICT COMMANDS; CHIEFS, OPERATIONS DIVISIONS AND DISTRICTS

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

1. I am pleased to announce the selection of the following members to serve on the inaugural Natural Resources Management Park Ranger Community of Practice Advisory Board. This Board has been established to develop and administer a formal Community of Practice for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Park Ranger, with specific responsibilities and functions as identified in the enclosed draft Charter. Mr. Charlie Burger, Fort 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	Pat Barry
NRM Uniform Program	Jim Runkles
Public/Water Safety Program	Lynda Nutt
Volunteer Program	Carolyn Bauer
Sign Program	Rick Magee
Partnerships	Chris Gallagher
HQ Proponent	Stephen Austin

3. In addition, the following representatives have been selected from each of the Major Subordinate Commands to serve up to a four-year term on the Advisory Board:

NAD	John Cave	Blue Marsh Lake, CENAP-OP-NAB
NWD	John Pasa	Rathbun Project Office, CENWK-OF-RA
MVD	Sandra Spence	Mark Twain Lake, CEMVS-OD-J
LRD	Todd Yann	J. Percy Priest Lake, CELRD-OP-JPP-R
SPD	Carrie Richardson	Hensley Lake, CESPCK-CO-SM
SAD	Scott Strotman	South Atlantic Division, CESAD-PDS-O
SWD	Emily Tennill	Elm Fork Project Office, CESWF-OD-E

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4. The Engineer Research and Development Center will provide technical support to the Board and to the Park Ranger Community of Practice. The Advisory Board will meet during late spring of 2008 to finalize the Charter, prepare a Program Management Plan, and begin serving the Community of Practice. Charlie Burger will be contacting all members to discuss the initial meeting. Mr. Burger can be reached at (817) 886-1567.

5. The USACE Park Ranger will continue to fill a vital role within the Corps as a critical team member and ambassador for the public, our partners and to our agency. I envision an ever-increasing function of the park ranger as we face evolving missions involving our programs and people. The Advisory Board will be committed to insuring that the USACE Park Ranger remains relevant, ready and responsive, and will be appropriately positioned for the future of our organization.

FOR THE COMMANDER:

Encl



MICHAEL G. ENSCH
Chief of 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.

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 and to charter a NRM Park Ranger CoP Advisory Board.

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 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:

- 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.

- The Corps must provide the tools, training, and resources necessary to assure park ranger safety and success. These resources include tools to enhance present learning and future development.
- 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 Park Ranger CoP to prepare future managers and program leaders.
- 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.

E. Membership.

- The Advisory Board will consist of fifteen members plus a Headquarters' proponent and technical assistance from the Engineer Research and Development Center (ERDC).
- Eight 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, Partnerships 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 as much as possible.

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 to develop and maintain an NRM Gateway web-site and other learning tool and information-sharing 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 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.