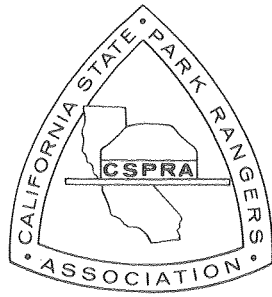


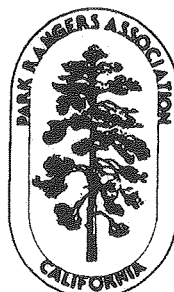
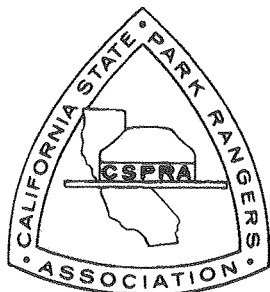
The California Ranger

A JOURNAL FOR PARK PROFESSIONALS



The California Ranger

A JOURNAL FOR PARK PROFESSIONALS



Volume V, Number IX**WINTER 1992**

The Reintroduction of the Female Ranger	Paula J. Jones	pgs. 2-4
NPS 75 th Anniversary Symposium	Broc Stenman	pgs. 5-9
Point...Counterpoint	John Quirk	pg. 10
A Statement to the California Off Highway Motor Vehicle Commision	Steve Kuehl	pgs. 11-12
Response to the Statement Given by Steve Kuehl	John Quirk	pgs. 13-15

The California Ranger is published biannually, every February and August, by the California State Park Rangers Association and the Park Rangers Association of California.

David Brooks—Managing Editor Doug Bryce—Co-Editor Dorene Clement—Co-Editor

ISSN #0891-723X Address all correspondence to California Ranger, PO Box 292010, Sacramento, CA 95829-2010. We welcome the submission of manuscripts and graphics. Articles should be at least 1000 words long and be of interest to California park professionals. Please include a biographical sketch of no more than 100 words. (Articles submitted may be edited with author's approval.) Articles written by others may be edited and reproduced with the author's permission. Reprinted articles must credit original publication.

The Reintroduction of The Female Ranger

Paula J. Jones, SPR IV

The following article was presented in October 1991 as part of a panel discussion on "Evolution of the Ranger" at the 125th Ranger Anniversary

My intent today is to provide a brief history of women "rangers" in the park service along with some of the social issues concerning women during the same time period. Tradition and point of view have much to do with the evolution and acceptance of the "female" ranger. Change has been slow to come.

I don't think there is any denying the very masculine point of view dominant at the turn of the century. As an example:

In 1906, Dr. Dudley Sargent, Physical Director of Harvard University, said sports were harmful to women and cautioned women against playing any contact sports. He said, "Let woman rather confine herself to the lighter and more graceful forms of gymnastics and athletics, and make herself supreme along these lines as she has already done in aesthetic dancing. Let her know enough about the rougher sports to be the sympathetic admirer of men and boys in their efforts to be strong, vigorous and heroic."

That point of view has had long-range impacts. Most of the men and women in this room I'm sure experienced the impacts of that thinking in their own lives. I remember in high school only being allowed to bounce a basketball three times, then having to stop and pass the ball off — above all we were not to sweat.

1918—Clare Marie Hodges was hired by the U. S. Government and appointed as a seasonal national park ranger at Yosemite with duties similar to those of male rangers of that day. Hired the same summer at Mt. Rainier was Helene Wilson. Both of these women filled in for male rangers who had left for military service.

1920—American women won the right to vote (an 81-year struggle to achieve the 19th amendment).

During the 1920s and 1930s, a group of young women naturalists attempted to challenge the all-male tradition of male only naturalists. In 1921, Enid Michael was hired as a summer naturalist at Yosemite. She managed to hold that position seasonally for 20 years. At the termination of her appointment it would be another 20 years before a women naturalist was hired at Yosemite. However, all during the 1920s and 30s, highly qualified women continued to seek positions in the Park Service, though they were not welcomed.

One woman, Ruth Ashton Nelson, concluded after years of unsuccessfully trying to become a ranger-naturalist at Rocky Mountain National Park that, "the best way to get into the park service is to marry a ranger." The reason for that was that some parks paid rangers' wives to perform park services.

The general feeling was that the certain romance and glamour of the position titled ranger was exclusive to males and somehow was lost if a woman occupied the position.

1929—Harriet "Petey" Weaver began her career with California State Parks. Although officially titled a recreation leader, she truly was the first female ranger for State Parks. Petey was not only the first, but the only female, and she served the public and parks for 20 years seasonally, ending her tenure in 1950. It would then be another 19 years before women were hired into ranger positions in California State Parks.

During World War II park wives were again compensated for their work at their husband's stations.

In 1964, the Civil Rights Act barred job discrimination on the basis of sex, and in the absence of bona fide occupational qualification required one hiring policy for men and women. However, it was 1969 before females were employed in California State Parks—again only on a seasonal or intermittent basis. About a dozen females were hired into those positions between 1969 and 1971. Paula Pennington and Holly White became full-time in later years and are still state park rangers today.

Throughout this history, the exclusion of women was not based on rational standards or qualifications. Men arbitrarily did not favor the placement of women in

ranger or naturalist positions, and they felt they were right about that.

In March 1972, I was the Department's first full-time civil service applicant to the state park ranger position. In my estimation, William Penn Mott, Jr. was responsible for opening up the ranger examination to bring women into the ranger organization. Neither the Civil Service Commission or Civil Service Employment Association at the time wanted the change. William Penn Mott Jr. got the support of then Governor Reagan.

I'm occasionally asked—what was it like?

For starters, I thought I would share with you some of the news headlines of the time—1972.

Santa Cruz Sentinel—"First Girl Ranger At Big Basin."

Both the San Jose Mercury and Contra Costa Times—"The Ranger Is A Lady," with the Times heading "You wouldn't call her Smokey the Bear in pigtails, but then, how does one address a female forest ranger?"

Sonoma Index Tribune—"State's lone ranger (female) from Sonoma."

Monterey Herald—"Paula's Pretty. And a Park Ranger." That one went on to say "A career breakthrough for women is being pioneered by pert and pretty Paula Peterson."

The real topper was from the Santa Barbara News Press, "Perils of Paula, The Park Ranger."

My first couple of interviews were rudely shocking to a naive young girl just out of college. My parents had never told me there were "boy jobs" and "girl jobs"—

they just said I could be anything I wanted and worked to achieve.

The thought of hiring a woman seemed to make the men nervous at my first two hiring interviews. I was initially intimidated. Imagine their relief when I said, "Perhaps I should marry a ranger rather than try to be one full-time." It wasn't until years later that I learned the historical truth of that comment.

The result of my first two interviews was perfect. I wasn't hired. At my third interview I was hired, and that was perfect too. I started my career in Santa Cruz Mountain, having been hired by Curt Mitchell. Curt didn't act nervous. The support I received that first year at Big Basin from co-trainees, maintenance personnel, supervisors, and employee spouses made me a "lifer."

While I was being trained as a ranger, the Department was trying to figure out what to do with me. There were closed session discussions with "what if" themes... "What if she wants to move/relocate?" "What if she wants to get married?" Perhaps the most vexing problem was the uniform. I started out in a green-line cotton skirt and white blouse and graduated to men's trousers, taken in, resulting in the belt loops being "bumper to bumper" around my waist.

A lot of time was spent dealing with the uniform problem until that point in time that enough women were in law enforcement positions to warrant uniform companies supplying/manufacturing uniforms.

My first five minutes of my experience at Asilomar: I stopped two rangers in uniform just outside the Administration Building and asked if they could tell me where it was that the rangers were meeting for training. They were very helpful

and asked if my spouse would be attending. I said, "No, I was." They both got the most astonished look on their faces (not unpleasant) and exclaimed, "No one told us that!" The old stereotype that women are gossips could not hold a candle to how fast that news was spread.

The next seven women hired didn't stay long for various reasons, each with their own stories. Then came Kate Foley, Kay Schmidt Robinson, Sherrin Grout, and Mary Stokes, as well as Paula Pennington (full time) and female rangers were here to stay.

Recently, I did a comparison of numbers of females in full time classifications, comparing 1972-1982-1991.

	1972	1982	1991
Rgr/Mgr/Supt	1	40 of 514	109 of 591
Lifeguard	0	1 of 24	3 of 31
Maint. Class		43 of 450	91 of 506

Today, as we near the turn of a new century, point of view has definitely changed, and the new tradition of all jobs being open to men and women alike of all races is unfolding.



CAL RANGER WINTER 1992

NPS 75th Anniversary Symposium

Broc Stenman
Manager
William Penn Mott Jr. Training Center

1991 marked the 75th anniversary of the establishment of the National Park Service. The relatively short existence of NPS was borne out for me by two widely disparate comparisons. First, my father, who is 81, was in the first grade when it was created. Second, the television classic *Star Trek*, which celebrated its 25th anniversary recently, has been in our national consciousness only 50 years less than the foremost national system of parks in the world. Will the national park idea outlive Captain Kirk? This question is only partially facetious in light of the major challenges facing the park service.

In October NPS, along with the National Park Foundation, Harvard University, and the World Wildlife Fund, convened a symposium in Vail, Colorado to consider "challenges and strategies" for the national parks for the 21st century. Approximately 600 attendees, consisting of NPS employees, conservationists, business leader, educators, journalists, and park officials from several nations, met for four days to consider the future of the NPS. Thanks in part to a scholarship from CSPRA, I was able to participate. For four days we met in general and working group sessions to develop recommendations for the park service director.

As those of us in the park profession and anyone who keeps current on the park movement know, NPS is faced with significant organizational and resource-related problems. An August 1991 National Parks and Conservation Association report, "A Race Against Time," outlines five critical issues facing the park service (and many other

resource agencies): (1) decay of park infrastructure, (2) adverse impact of development outside park boundaries, (3) outdated concession policies, (4) staff shortages, and (5) impacts of increased visitation. Copies of the report are available from the NPCA, 1015 31st Street N. W., Washington, DC 20007.

The Vail Symposium was organized into four working groups composed along similar lines: (1) Organizational Renewal, (2) Resource Stewardship, (3) Park Use and Enjoyment, and (4) Environmental Leadership.

Along with a chairperson, each working group consisted of three NPS managers and five carefully selected citizen members. The working groups were formed in the spring of 1991 and each met in extended working sessions before the symposium. Each group prepared a draft report outlining broad organizational and policy problems confronting NPS. These draft reports served as the basis for the detailed discussion and review over the four-day symposium.

It is not possible within this article to review all the major issues and findings of the symposium. The draft report made for fascinating reading and discussion for anyone who works in or cares for our national parks. By the time this article is published, the final working group recommendations will be printed. Even if it is too late to provide public comment before submission to Director Ridenour, I urge you to obtain a copy of the final report and follow its progress over the days and months ahead. Public support will be crucial if its recommendations are to be

implemented. What follows is a synopsis of ideas from the symposium as well as some observations on the symposium process itself.

The major issues identified by the four study groups are outlined below.

Organizational Renewal

The working group on organizational renewal focused on the question of how the structure and administrative systems of NPS can enhance its capacity to achieve its mission of preservation and interpretation of America's natural and cultural heritage.

Problems identified by the work group include the erosion of the traditional culture and sense of family in NPS; increased bureaucratization leading to an organization that is staff- and top-heavy; declining skills and educational level in the workforce; significant weaknesses in the procedures for recruitment, orientation, training, and development; shortcomings in financial management and concession practices; and increasing attempts by political superiors to interfere in NPS operations and personnel practices.

Some of the recommendations for organizational renewal are:

1. Establish a service-wide work force planning program.
2. Start a nationwide recruiting program for professional personnel.
3. Strengthen minority recruitment at schools with substantial minority enrollment.
4. Establish positive education requirements for key career fields.
5. Develop a top-quality orientation program for all new employees.

6. Develop a system to identify, select, and train prospective managers and leaders.

7. Establish career paths for managerial employees.

8. Establish a human resources management board.

9. Introduce internal market incentives into the provision of "support services."

10. Shift senior manager assignments every five to six years.

11. Require all Senior Executive Service positions to have park management or related experience.

12. Reaffirm legislative authority that permits 50% of all entrance fees paid at a park to remain in that park.

13. Improve concessions' management, competition, and accountability.

14. Approve the proposed America the Beautiful Pass which admits holders to all NPS units for an annual \$35 fee.

Resource Stewardship

The resource stewardship study group identified five basic issues critical to protecting resources in National Parks: (1) the ability to protect park resources from external threats and to positively influence compatible land use within regional ecosystems, (2) the ability to identify and understand park resources, (3) the stature and professionalism of research and resource management and their integration into park management, (4) public support for resource stewardship programs, and (5) the processes governing the addition of new areas to the National Park System.

Preliminary recommendations for resource stewardship include:

1. More effectively and positively exercise the authorities parks already possess to deal with concerns that transcend park boundaries.
2. Adopt a new legislative mandate for NPS to clarify its mandate and responsibility to manage park resources in a regional context.
3. Substantially increase the number of resource professionals.
4. More fully use the expertise of resource professionals who work outside the agency.
5. Standardize and base fund resource management programs.
6. Encourage legislation that establishes a clear research mandate for the NPS.
7. Base resource management decisions on the best available scientific research.
8. Promote close ties between cultural and natural resource professionals.
9. Raise the level of professionalism among resource professional and managers.
10. Expand the local, regional, national, and international NPS outreach programs.
11. Strengthen constituencies supporting NPS as a leader in resource preservation.
12. Greatly expand the role of the public in resource stewardship.
13. Base the criteria for the selection of new parks on the resources and themes lacking in the National Park System.
14. Provide for professional evaluation of new areas to ensure they meet criteria for national significance, resource integrity, and feasibility.

15. Work with constituent groups and agencies to protect areas outside the National Park System that may have significant resources.

Park Use and Enjoyment

A half-dozen demographic trends provide the backdrop for the symposium's consideration of park use and enjoyment. According to American Demographics, six major trends for the United States in the 21st century are: (1) everyone will belong to a minority group, (2) the family will be redefined, (3) educational and economic inequalities will increase, (4) full-time homemakers will approach extinction, (5) the retirement population will explode, and (6) big cities will face big challenges of governance and economics.

These predictions suggest that the next 25 years will see dramatic change in park use and enjoyment. Significant shifts in visitation are likely; from eastern to western and southern parks, from summer to other seasons, from back country to front country areas. Visitors will have less time and more demand for information and new experiences. Park-related tourism will gain importance as a local industry, and parks as tools of economic development will have strong political support.

Some of the recommendations offered by the park use and enjoyment work group:

1. Preserve and interpret cultural diversity as significant criteria in the acquisition of new historic and cultural sites.
2. Strengthen technical assistance programs outside park boundaries.
3. Embrace the concept of "partnership parks."
4. Reinforce its role as a world leader in the national park movement by protecting critical world resources.

5. More widely communicate the breadth and value of the National Park System.

6. Embark on an innovative facility maintenance, design, and retrofit program to prepare the "front country" of parks for future visitor needs.

7. Minimize the development of visitor facilities within park boundaries.

8. Commit resources to offering all visitors basic site-specific interpretation.

9. Develop innovative outreach to serve non-visitors.

10. Conduct a systemwide analysis of visitor impacts, including a careful documentation of crowding conditions in parks.

11. Establish a task force to improve the public involvement process.

13. Develop an expanded social science program.

Environmental Leadership

The working group on environmental leadership developed recommendations around five broad issues: (1) establishing a program to promote ecologically and culturally sound management practices, (2) providing leadership in education and interpretation, (3) ensuring professionalism within the park service, (4) establishing a leadership ethic at all levels, and (5) developing cooperative strategies to protect the natural and cultural heritage of the United States.

Recommendations for environmental leadership include the following:

1. Develop and clearly articulate a research program.

2. Create a professional career path for interpretive personnel.

3. Reward creativity and innovation in interpretive programs.

4. Increase the interpretation of major environmental issues.

5. Increase the use of multi-media technology to reach audiences beyond park boundaries.

6. Demonstrate environmental leadership by "leading by example" at all levels.

7. Refocus training programs to ensure that employees are knowledgeable of the NPS mission.

8. Improve communications between all levels and offices of NPS.

9. Structure rewards and incentives so that efforts to carry out the agency's missions are rewarded.

10. Develop an annual legislative program based on field recommendations.

11. Establish a planned rotation system between key field and headquarters assignments.

12. Review the organizational levels between the Secretary and the Director with a view to reducing them.

13. Strengthen working relationships with other federal, state, and local organizations.

14. Establish an interchange program with other resource organizations.

15. Establish a grassroots planning process to identify America's heritage that the public wants to save.

16. Increase efforts to obtain a meaningful Land and Water Conservation Fund appropriation.

Observations

These issues, and certainly many of the recommendations, are not new to the National Parks, or to the California State Parks for that matter. I was favorably impressed with the format and manner in which input was solicited, discussed, and presumably forwarded to the Director of the National Park Service. I think we in the Department of Parks and Recreation could learn significantly from this process, comparing it to some of our more recent planning efforts, specifically the "10 Point Plan." There was a discernible attempt to involve a significant cross-section of park service and park constituency groups in the symposium. Input from outside the park service was encouraged and valued. In addition, skillful and well-organized facilitators added meaningfully to the collection and refinement of the working groups' comments.

Will these efforts bear fruit? Will we enjoy a viable system of national parks 75 (or 775) years from now? Many in Vail were hopeful and encouraged by "this last best hope" for national parks. Most were also well aware of the immense political difficulties in its implementation. Strong support "for the process" was voiced by keynote speaker Billy Reilly, Lamar Alexander, and Manuel Lujan. Within days of the symposium, the Bush administration turned up the heat on opening the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge to oil and gas drilling.

Even a cursory reading of the daily newspaper shows the growing array of confrontations between preservation and use. The environmental and preservation battles of the '90s will be the most intense this nation has ever experienced. As park professionals we have a stake in the outcome and implementation of the study regardless of which agency we work for. Follow the progress of this report closely. More than ever, we need to participate in public advocacy of the meaning and values of parks.

Selected Reading

Foresta, Ronald A., American National Parks and Their Keepers, Johns Hopkins University Press, 1984.

Hartzog, George B., Battling for the National Parks, Moyer Bell, 1988.

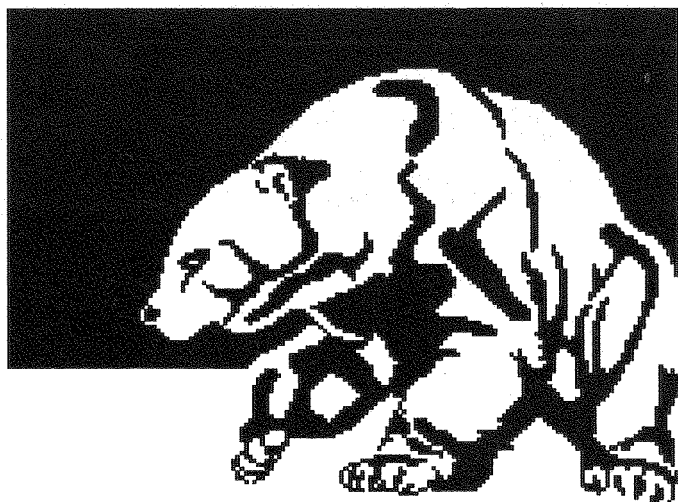
Mckintosh, Barry, Interpretation in the National Parks—A Historical Perspective, History Division, National Park Service, Dept. of the Interior, 1986.

Our Common Lands—Defending the National Parks, edited by David J. Simon, Island Press, 1988.

Runte, Alfred, Yosemite—The Embattled Wilderness, University of Nebraska Press, 1990.

Our National Parks: Challenges and Strategies for the 21st Century, Revised Recommendations of the Working Groups, National Park Service, Dept. of the Interior, November 1991.

A Race Against Time—Five Threats Endangering American's National Parks and the Solutions to Avert Them, National Parks & Conservation Association, Washington, DC, August, 1991.



Point...Counterpoint

John Quirk

Parks are forever. For more than a century rangers have held to this concept unconditionally. Recent years have brought unexpected conditions and outright challenges to this basic concept. As the next century approaches, great vigilance is needed. If parks are to be forever, then the very profession which defines and defends such concepts and conditions must endure and remain undiminished in its capacity.

The celebration of the 125th anniversary of California Rangers was the occasion of an unexpected attempt to diminish their professional role. The challenge came in a presentation to the Off Highway Motor Vehicle Commission. Following are the texts of this challenge and a response subsequently submitted to the Commission.

Statement to the California Off Highway Motor Vehicle Commission Sacramento, CA, October 4, 1991

by
Steve Kuehl, President
California Off Road Vehicle Association

The California Park Rangers, the 125th Anniversary

I guess we'll be hearing a lot about the rangers and their accomplishments this month. That's fine. After all they have quite a history and are deserving of a great deal of praise.

But I am also very concerned about their evolution. Most of us remember our very first visits to the state parks. Back then rangers would stop by your campground and share a cup of coffee, a soft drink, or just a glass of cold water with our families. They'd join us around the campfire, and tell us a little about the area. They were always full of good information on wildlife in the vicinity and the condition of the trails. Maybe they'd even spin a few yarns about the history of the region.

They were not armed then. Their "patrol car" was more often a pickup, usually loaded with shovels, hammers, and such to make repairs to fences, signs, or campfire rings as they conducted their rounds. They didn't have light-bars and dash mounted 12-gauges. They were the wilderness version of the old-fashioned beat cop.

In the 1970s they got guns. They became peace officers. Arguably they had to. Society was changing. We were becoming more violent. Being in the wilds meant a possibility of stumbling onto a drug smuggling operation, or perhaps a marijuana plantation or other criminal activity.

But something else changed, and although this week is about celebrating the rangers'

anniversary, we should also reflect on the evolution from the campfire-sharing unarmed naturalist/beat-cop, to the light-bar flashing, riot-gun toting, sidearm bearing, billy-club carrying, modern-day law-enforcement specialist.

Anyone close to the Department will confirm that there is a great deal of concern internally on behalf of the old-line resource managers over this evolution of the Department into a law-enforcement dominated agency.

As users we share the concerns of the old-line resource people, but from a different, and sometimes frightening, point of view.

Gone is the unarmed ranger who would stroll into camp and join a family with that cup of coffee. Today, some, and I stress the **some**, for I have no way of knowing how big a problem it is, but some of today's rangers don't stroll into camp...they swagger...often with hands on their holstered gun.

We have reported dozens of incidents where the rangers have been accused of using abusive language, or even brandishing firearms. In some of these instances, we are somewhat skeptical that we are receiving an unbiased version of what happened, particularly when the incident being reported involved the use of alcohol. On the other hand, the description of so many of these encounters is so startlingly similar, and so many of them took place in front of other witnesses who fully corroborate the account,

we think there is a reason for concern. More than one account have come into our office regarding confrontations with rangers who have drawn their weapons when entering the campground of unarmed families with children obviously present.

Being an off roader in the '90s has caused many an otherwise law-enforcement-sympathetic family to wonder whether the charges of police brutality which have emanated from inner-city ethnic communities since the '60s may not have been exaggerated in the least.

Today we are faced with new concerns by the public with all of our police institutions. We need to be aware that in the great outdoors, the potential for official misbehavior and abuse of authority is far greater than in the populated cities. Certainly there are no convenient apartment balconies from which an observer can videotape a Rodney King type incident. More than likely there will be no observers, because these incidents take place, not in the crowded inner-cities, but in the relative isolation of the forests or deserts.

What we would like to see during this observance of the 125th anniversary of the State Park Ranger force is some thought to making us want to feel comfortable celebrating the 150th anniversary, or even the 130th.

During the '60s there was a popular political movement to require civilian review boards for local police agencies, and to some extent today there has been a resurgence of these demands. Most law enforcement agencies responded by creating "internal affairs" bureaus within the agency to formally review civilian complaints regarding treatment by officers.

We wonder whether some such mechanism shouldn't be formalized within the Department or the Division and publicized to the off roader so that we can put a stop to any abuses of police power which may now taking place, and formalize a process to make

everyone comfortable that such behavior, where it exists, will be punished to the full extent of the law. More importantly we will be able to ensure that the ORV enthusiasts will feel comfort, and not fear, in the fact that their playgrounds are patrolled by gun-carrying peace officers. Preferably internal affairs matters which have been investigated or are under investigation could be discussed with the Commissioners in executive session. General reports on the outcome of these matters should be made a regular part of Commission meetings.

I was around when the park rangers were first given the authority to carry guns in the 1970s. There was a great deal of discussion, even then, about what that would do as far as the friendly image of the park ranger was concerned. When the decision was finally made, there were press releases which were picked up by most of our enthusiast publications. The policy then was that the rangers would have weapons, but for the most part, the public would rarely be aware of their presence. The firearm would remain close at hand, in the truck, unless there was a sign of immediate danger. Go back and look up the official statements on this. It was widely debated, and the policy was widely disseminated in black and white. Within a few years, the light-bars and mounted shotguns appeared. Today, at public trade shows like the SCORE show, park rangers manning the information booths are fully armed. Where is the popular "Smokey the Bear" ranger we grew up with? Does that image have to disappear with the new emphasis on law enforcement? I hope not.

Perhaps this is the year for the Commission to at least study the issue and propose some broad policies regarding ranger/user contacts and relations. We would rather see some serious dialogue in the Commission forum rather than take some of our members' more radical suggestions regarding firearm policies and review boards to the Legislature.

Response to the Statement of Steve Kuehl at the California Off Highway Motor Vehicle Commission

John Quirk, California State Park Ranger
October 10, 1991

Recently, after an all-night interagency search, several OHV riders were rescued from remote desert land outside of Ocotillo Wells State Vehicular Recreation Area and brought to the District headquarters. They had run out of gas, had spent an entire day in 108-degree sun, and were without water for over 24 hours. Their ATVs were unregistered. They rode intentionally into fragile, closed areas and caused significant damage. One member of the group had \$20,000 in outstanding warrants from two counties. State Park Ranger John Ruddley and I transported him to jail.

Later that day I found on my desk a copy of Steve Kuehl's October 4, 1991 statement to the OHMV Commission concerning the California State Park Rangers 125th anniversary. Partly from professional pride, partly in defense of a perceived threat, and most assuredly because of the events of that day, I sat down and put these thoughts on paper.

It is certainly not my intent here to deride the OHV public whom I serve. On the contrary, since coming to Ocotillo Wells I have nothing but positive things to say about the people who come here to recreate. I ride these trails myself and respect the interests of organizations such as CORVA. In citing this recent event I wish only to point out that this man was an outlaw who would not have been brought to justice if not for Ocotillo Wells Ranger John Ruddley, an "old-time" ranger, who also happens to function when needed as a "modern-day law-enforcement specialist."

Because of jail overcrowding, San Diego County officers could not arrest this man. As you may have read, San Diego County has several years' backlog of unserved warrants. Because of his authority, John was able to arrest this man and bring him to justice in Imperial County, where outlaws still go jail.

Would Steve Kuehl have rangers, like John, turn in their badges and let outlaws run free?

It is true "there are no convenient apartment balconies from which an observer can videotape" a ranger possible beating a suspect senseless "in the wilds." But is Steve really suggesting that Commissioners should watch closely because vintage 1960 racially motivated police brutality has resurfaced amidst 1990s California State Park Rangers who are singling out off-roader families with children as the focus of their hatred?

Where is this happening? Steve speaks of the "relative isolation of the forest or deserts." I know something of these places. Before coming to the desert last spring, I spent six years as a State Park Ranger in the heart of our coastal redwood forest. Each day I would stop by family campsites and tell "a little about the area...[the] wildlife in the vicinity; [and] the condition of the of the trails; maybe even spin a few yarns about the history of the region." Later, I might greet these same families at my coffee talk, nature walk, or campfire program.

Although I was armed, my "patrol car" was a pickup loaded with tools to make repairs and and open trails closed by fallen trees or

limbs. The truck was equipped with flashing lights, as required by the vehicle code, so I could legally break the basic speed law on the way to saving someone's life. The dash-mounted 12-gauge came out numerous times, but always to enter a dangerous, camouflaged, booby-trapped marijuana garden where an armed suspect might be waiting. I figured I was the modern version of the wild west marshal. I never thought of myself as an old-fashioned city-beat cop, or for that matter, a cop. I thought of myself as a generalist ranger with all the professional skills to do the job.

Presently I serve as Chief Ranger of Ocotillo Wells S.V.R.A. I supervise 5 rangers and the visitor services of 40,000 acres of desert dedicated to OHV use within this Department's jurisdiction. We are the only Department rangers with whom the desert riding public would come into contact. I know of no complaints of citizen abuse. I do know of citizen complaints. For some of these I would refer you to members of the Los Pretots Desert Club and their President, Scott Martin.

State Park Rangers of the desert, the forest, the Division, and this Department at large have the same wide-range training and basic skills. We are all peace officers who have authority throughout the State. We are all interpreters of the environment who present campfire programs, nature walks, and historical talks. We are all resource managers who work closely with research scientists and specialized contractors. We are all property managers who oversee campground operations, concessions, museum collections, real-property records, and boundary delineations. We are all technicians who procure and use a variety of audio/visual, first aide, rescue, firefighting, and other equipment.

In other words, we have not been reduced to "light-bar flashing, riot-gun toting, sidearm bearing, billy-club carrying, modern-day law-enforcement specialist[s]." In response to societal change we have expanded as professionals who, in the words of a corporate attorney who visited with me on the job one weekend, "ought to be paid a lot more money."

As to Steve's concern about firearms, rangers are required to report in writing every time a weapon is drawn. These statistics are tabulated annually and are public record.

There is already a formal mechanism within the Department to deal with abuse of authority. Supervisors, such as myself, are required to accept official complaints for investigation by our internal affairs officers. The complainant is entitled to know whether the complaint has been substantiated. There are prescribed disciplinary actions for State employees which ensure that unacceptable behavior will be punished.

If a visitor has a legitimate complaint, it should be brought to the attention of the appropriate supervisor. As a supervisor, I would appreciate hearing of any incident where a ranger swaggers into a campsite with hand on holstered or drawn gun, uses abusive language, or behaves other than courteously and respectfully to the visiting public.

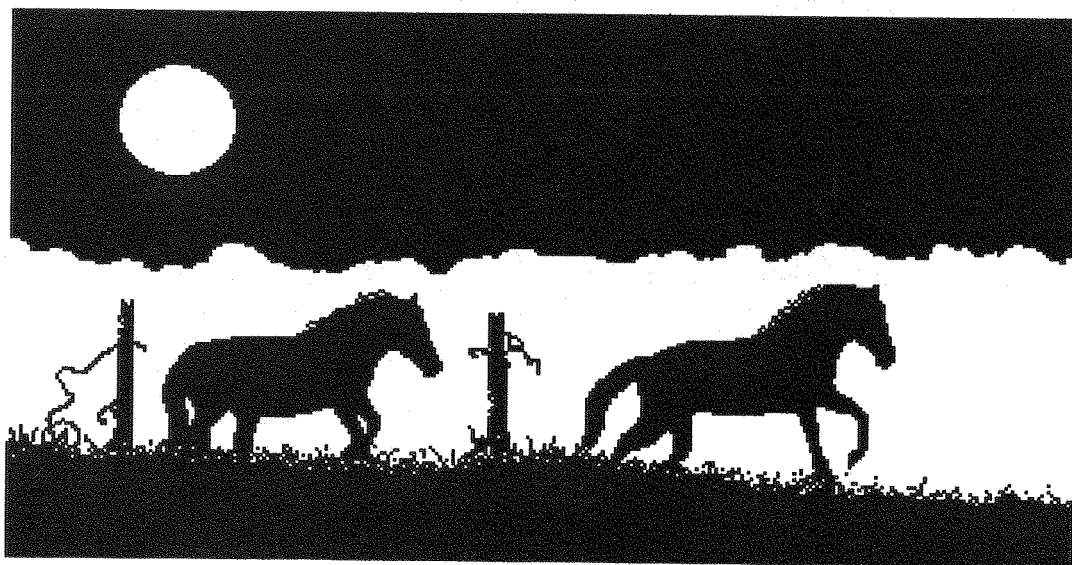
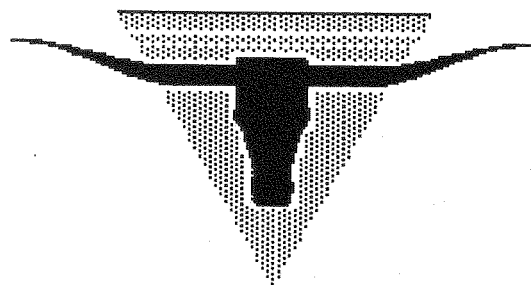
It serves no good purpose to present vague, generalized, unsubstantiated complaints in this forum, especially in prose designed to feed on the frenzy of recent big-city media events. Steve speaks of serious dialogue. We rangers welcome this dialogue. The challenge for Steve and members of CORVA is to work with rangers, individually, as well as through local and Division management. Instead of submitting veiled threats to bring the suggestions of radical members to the legislature, we should be collaborating on matters of mutual concern in need of legislative action.

Within Steve's analogy of 1960s police brutality and the 1990s off roader is both an assertion and a hope. His assertion is that off roaders have a civil right to ride open and free. His hope is that we turn back the clock to a time of less restriction, less regulation, less law enforcement.

There is no going back. The future will bring new technology, more people, and less space wherein we are likely to see more restrictions, more regulations, and more law enforcement. In the OHV Division, we proudly retain the Stetson hat and the traditional ranger image while accepting the added responsibilities of the contemporary peace officer. A law enforcement presence is needed, not only to provide a safe environment for present-day OHV enthusiasts, but also to ensure open-space riding areas for future generations.

In public service at all California State Vehicular Recreation Areas are the highest-educated, most widely trained, and dedicated professionals ever to wear badges, anytime, anywhere.

Rangers may be part cop, but should their service be lost, cops are all that will be left to fill the void.



California State Park Rangers Association
P. O. Box 292010
Sacramento, CA 95829-2010

Bulk Rate
U. S. Postage Paid
Permit Number
43
Elk Grove, CA

To:

BRYCE, DOUG 12/31/99
P. O. BOX 28366
SACRAMENTO CA 95828-0366