



THE THIN GREEN LINE

NEWSLETTER OF THE INTERNATIONAL RANGER FEDERATION

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OFFICERS' REPORTS

President's Report

Dear International Ranger Federation (IRF) Friends and Colleagues:

Thank you to Osvaldo Barrasi (Chile/Brazil) for the translation of this report from English into Spanish in the Spanish version of the newsletter.

The beginning of the new year has also been a time of renewed energy for IRF. Vice President Wayne Lotter represented our federation at a meeting in Kinshasa, to raise the voice of rangers in concern for the continued killings of rangers in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). Wayne cut short his personal holiday with family in order to attend the meeting, along with Jobogo Mirindi. Thank you to Wayne for his focus on this issue. Thank you to the member associations and individual members who answered our request for funding assistance, which enabled us to pay for Wayne's expenses and for those of Jobogo Mirindi. (See the "Vice President's Report" section for more details.)

I am pleased that we have reports from Europe and South America this issue. These two regional representatives have been coping with limited Internet access and new jobs, but are available again to do their IRF work. As you will see in Florin's report, the Russian rangers are working with a new partner in preparing a proposal for a regional seminar for late in 2011. Carola is working with Osvaldo Herrera, president of the Chile ranger association. We had a Skype call in February to discuss what the ranger association is doing to establish the job of park ranger in the government. Further news from Florin and Carola are under the "Regional Representative" reports. We welcome them back into the active IRF members.

Young Conservationist Award

This is the fourth time IRF and International Union for Conservation of Nature's (IUCN) World Commission on Protected Areas (WCPA) have selected a recipient of this international Young Conservationist Award. The 2011 recipient is **Héctor Caymaris**, a park ranger in Laguna de Rocha, part of a United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) Biosphere Reserve in Uruguay. He was selected for his outstanding work as the only ranger in the park for years who confronted poachers and illegal four-wheel drive operators. In his early years, there was little government support of his work, and he often had no salary. He continued his work with partners and the community. This resulted in reversing a decline in species at Laguna de Rocha.

His work with the community has dramatically reduced egg poaching. Now, coastal birds have returned to their nests. Poaching of the capibaras (large rodent-like creature) has also declined, and the species has grown. The local community members now appreciate the value of the site and are developing tourism activities. As part of his partner work, he established the Foundation of the Friends of the Coastal Lakes of Rocha and now serves as the executive director.

The runner-up for the award is **Julie Martínez**, an environmental education specialist who works for the conservation non-governmental organization, Paso Pacifico. Her program reaches over 500 students near the La Flor Wildlife Refuge in Nicaragua. Children learn to identify turtle nests, mark them, and return so that they can hold the hatchling in their hands before the little turtles return to the sea. The experience has been vital to show positive alternatives to egg poaching.

An innovative part of her program focuses on changing behaviors by offering to exchange slingshots, used to kill birds, for binoculars to watch birds instead. A student must complete a 5-week curriculum on the natural history of birds before receiving a pair of binoculars and becoming part of Paso Pacifico's bird-watching network. Thus far, 400 slingshots have been exchanged for binoculars. As one reference said, "It is this kind of innovative work that makes Julie's contribution to conservation and Nicaragua so important."

Other candidates in the top tier included Andrew Scanlon of Ireland and Diane Matar, Lebanon.

Thank you to the four reviewers who rated all the applications and narrowed the choices to the top five candidates: Svetlana (Russia), representing IUCN WCPA; Alistair Harris (Scotland), last year's award recipient; Matthew McGettigan (UK), representing IRF member associations; and Elaine Thomas, as the coordinator of the team. Thank you to Cristi Marie Nozawa of BirdLife International and a WCPA vice-chair, who represented WCPA in the final selection process with me.

Thin Green Line Foundation (TGLF)

Executive Director Sean Willmore was in Cambodia in February. Ranger Thon Soukhon (who attended the World Ranger Congresses in Scotland and Bolivia) arranged meetings between Sean and the widow of a Cambodian ranger. The TGLF gave support to Mrs Koe Sai with a donation of a buffalo to help tend the rice crops, a sugar juice machine, and support for her two younger children to go back to school.

As the liaison between TGLF and IRF, I reviewed the TGLF's recently audited financial reports. Then, as directed by the executive committee, I authorized the transfer of half of IRF's Ranger Dependents' Fund, or about £2000, to the TGLF. The remaining amount will be transferred when we complete the memorandum of understanding between our two organizations.

Ranger Recognition and Remembrances

Congratulations to Justo Jallo Quispe, Peru, who was recognized as "Outstanding Ranger" for his 32 years of work in the Titicaca National Reserve. Today, at age 61, Justo recalls he had to work pro bono between 1981 and 1984, due to a lack of resources, while still patrolling the Lake Titicaca in a reed raft. Now, he commutes in a modern patrol and writes his reports using a computer. When asked why he is still dedicated to this work, he answers without hesitation, "Because I am married to nature, and I still do my job."

We commemorate rangers who have been attacked and injured or killed in the months since the last issue of the **The Thin Green Line**:

In New South Wales, Australia, National Parks and Wildlife Service Officer John Garland, 65, died on February 4, after a tree fell on him in a remote bushfire zone. Mr Garland, a divisional commander and firefighter, was well-respected and liked by his colleagues. He leaves behind his wife, children, and grandchildren.

In Virunga National Park, DRC), six more rangers have been killed:

- January 24 - Rangers Augustin Shamukungu (ranger patrol commander), Yalala Bateterana (field ranger), Magombani (driver), and five soldiers were killed in an ambush.
- January 30 - Ranger Muhindo Mburungani was killed instantly with two bullets through the chest as his unit was ambushed on the Kabasha escarpment to the west of the park. Mastaki, the driver, was seriously injured and died from his wounds.
- February 17 - Ranger Michel Katchupa died when his vehicle carrying 15 rangers from Virunga National Park was attacked outside the park. Another ranger was wounded.

In the USA:

On February 24, Park Ranger Julie Weir was tragically killed in a motor vehicle collision due to icy roads. She had just completed a training course and was on her way to a short assignment in Yosemite National Park before continuing on to Alaska for her new job at Klondike Goldrush National Historical Park. Ranger Weir was transferring from her former position at Independence National Historical Park in Pennsylvania.

Letters from IRF, on behalf of all members, have been sent to the families of these rangers. We will also be sending a letter to authorities about the continued killings of rangers in the DRC. Please keep these rangers and their families in your thoughts. If you know of a ranger death, please send an email to me (IRFdeanne@aol.com) and to Sean Willmore (sean@thingreenline.info). Any information you have on a ranger's death, including contact information, is appreciated by IRF and the TGLF.

Best wishes,
Deanne Adams

IRFdeanne@aol.com

Vice President's Report

Thank you to Osvaldo Barrasi (Chile/Brazil) for the translation of this report from English into Spanish in the Spanish version of the newsletter.

As time continues to seemingly fly by it seems to become increasingly difficult to ensure enough is done before each consecutive edition of **The Thin Green Line** is due. This is particularly a challenge when almost all of us in the organization are employed on a full-time basis, but if each one of us can report at least some progress towards a clear goal for our portfolios during each successive newsletter, then we will be able to make a meaningful difference. Thank you to all who contribute and who are able to report positively and regularly to all of us in IRF.

What news do I have to share since our last communication? Some bad and some good:

Unfortunately IUCN and WCPA have put the Natural Heritage Fund initiative on hold due to internal governance issues. Allen Putney is unable to give an indication of when those issues will be resolved but reported that he will continue to press for a decision and to keep us updated.

As far as progress in working with the IUCN Training Taskforce is concerned, I had a conference call meeting with Nigel Dudley and Eduard Muller using Skype. We plotted a way forward in terms of moving the process ahead as it pertains to working together and involving rangers. A number of agreements were made:

- Prepare some specific proposals and take them forward for discussion at the upcoming WCPA Steering Committee meeting to be held in Switzerland during April 2011. This will include having a basic layout for three levels of protected area management: rangers, park managers, and park system managers.
- Investigate and propose joint venture and funding possibilities and the inclusion of other partners.
- Have the initiative accredited and bring other accreditation/certification initiatives into the group.
- Develop a list of questions in order to get feedback on gaps, etc.***, conduct a survey, and set up Google groups for the above three training components.

**** I'd be very happy to hear your thoughts concerning what the key gaps and needs are in terms of training for rangers, park managers and park system managers? Please give me your ideas on this...*

Continuing along the vein of my favorite topic as far as IRF is concerned, "Projects," I am pleased to report that I was able to present the first draft concept proposal on the envisioned "Rangers Without Borders" initiative to a high-level delegation including government officials, UNESCO, and various others from IUCN, non-government organizations, etc., at a meeting in Kinshasa, DRC, and it was well-received. Juan Carlos Gambarotta continues to be our team leader for "Rangers Without Borders" and has placed an appeal to us all in this **The Thin Green Line** which requires your feedback. Please cooperate with him in this regard.

A scheduled roundtable meeting was held in January 2011 about the previously reported cause of obtaining urgent and tangible support for the rangers working in the world heritage sites within the DRC and the IRF's appeal to UNESCO and others via letter from our president last year. (It was supposed to have taken place in 2007 but the decision had not been followed up on.) The real work, however, remains to be done, but some of the necessary first steps have now been taken to to achieve improvements on the ground. More information on the event and the outcomes thereof can be read elsewhere in this newsletter.

Very sadly, within a few weeks after the meeting was held to make recommendations and agree to a plan for efficient protection of the five UNESCO world heritage sites in the DRC (including the staff who look after them), there were two additional fatal attacks in which several more rangers and accompanying soldiers were killed in Virunga National Park.

Jobogo Mirindi of DRC and I participated in the Kinshasa meeting on behalf of IRF. We are very grateful to all of the following individuals and organizations who kindly contributed to the costs we incurred to be able to do so:

- IRF
- Protected Area Workers Association (PAWA – New South Wales) & a personal donation from one of their members
- Association of National Park Rangers (APNR - USA) & personal donations from some of their members
- Countryside Management Association (CMA - UK) & personal donations from seven of their members
- a personal donation from a ranger in Victoria (Australia)
- PAMS Foundation (Tanzania)

Once all the banking transfer challenges have been successfully dealt with, there will be only a small amount of costs remaining which would not have been covered. Thanks to all of the above sponsors who kindly contributed financially to this joint cause. We, as IRF, shall continue to monitor and remind the appropriate parties of the need to follow up on their commitments to ensure that suitable follow-up actions are taken until the desired outcomes are achieved for these afflicted areas and the rangers who bravely continue to work therein.

My suggested thought for this quarter is: Let's all think of something we can do that will take the IRF and the cause we serve forward at least one little step. Take at least that step before the time you read my next column.

I look forward to reading about what you are doing towards furthering the work of rangers, as well as to hearing some ideas on what we could be doing to achieve better results than we have to date...

D. Wayne Lotter
wayne@pamsfoundation.org

Secretary's/Executive Officer's Report

Thank you to Osvaldo Barrasi (Chile/Brazil) for the translation of this report from English into Spanish in the Spanish version of the newsletter.

It seems like only yesterday that we were wishing each other a Happy New Year. My summer has been a busy one, and I have not progressed as far with the projects that I am working on as I would like. I am continuing to work with Deanne, Wayne, and the rest of the International Executive Committee (IEC) on the work plan for the executive officer. As I mentioned before, this work plan will guide the work of the executive officer over the next two-and-a-half years and help us to build a case to go to other organizations to sponsor such a position in the future. Once complete, we will share this plan with member associations.

I, together with a few other members of the IEC, am also still working on the review of the IRF's standing rules. We hope to present these to the full IEC for a vote in the near future. We will then tackle the statutes so we can present any proposed changes to the World Congress Membership Meeting in Tanzania in 2012. And finally, I am pleased to report that a small team of people has started work on revising the IRF's website. We have been talking about the need to do this for some time now so it is great to have made a start. Stay tuned for updates on this project in future editions of the **The Thin Green Line**. In the meantime, if you have any suggestions, comments, or questions about the website, please e-mail me on irfsec@yahoo.com.au.

As the last edition of this newsletter was being put together, the IEC was voting on applications for regular membership from the Swiss Rangers and from the Alberta Natural Resource Officers Association of Alberta, Canada. I am pleased to announce that these applications have been successful, and we look forward to working with these two associations.

In the last edition of the newsletter I mentioned that we have set up a new mailing list on Google Gmail. We have been using this now for a few months and things seem to be working well. Please help us to keep the mailing list up-to-date by notifying us of any change to the contact details for your association.

Regards,

Elaine
irfsec@yahoo.com.au

Treasurer's Report

Thank you to Rick Smith (USA) and Osvaldo Barrasi (Chile/Brazil) for the translation of this report from English into Spanish for the Spanish newsletter.

During the fourth quarter of 2010, there were no changes from the treasurer's report of the third quarter. However during the months of January and February of 2011, there were two situations that will be reflected in the report for the first quarter of 2011, namely, the representation of the IRF at the UNESCO meeting that took place in Kinshasa and the transfer of the Dependents Fund donations to the TGLF. That report will be in the next issue of **The Thin Green Line**.

João Correia
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Editor's Report

I apologize for the delay in this issue of **The Thin Green Line**. Several difficulties added to the challenge of getting this issue out, including problems with technology and many needs in my professional worklife. In addition, many articles have been arriving past the due dates in recent issues, further adding to the delays.

Therefore, unfortunately, we *will not* be able to accept late articles in the future. Due dates for 2011 follow:

Publication Months	Articles Due by
April - June 2012	May 12
July - September 2012	August 12
October - December 2012	November 12

Since the last issue, we have made progress. This issue will be the first of **The Thin Green Line** in both English and Spanish.

I look forward to your future articles!

Happy Trails,

Dana M. Dierkes
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European Regional Representative Report

Thank you to Juan Carlos Gambarotta (Uruguay) and Osvaldo Barrasi (Chile/Brazil) for the translation of this report from English into Spanish in the Spanish version of the newsletter.

First of all, I wish each of you a much better new year than the one that has passed. Due to a series of changes at the professional level that occurred in my life, I had no continuity in communicating with colleagues in Europe and beyond, but I hope that this will not be a problem from now on.

Because of the economic and financial crisis, in 2010, most of the European rangers focused their professional activities on a national level, and they had meetings at a local or national level. I hope that a better economic situation in the European states will improve their activities both locally and internationally.

Under the European Commission's (EC's) "Youth in Action Programme," together with the IRF, the Danish Ranger Association, the Romanian Ranger Association, and the Scottish Countryside Association, and the EUROPARC Federation developed a project proposal named "Action for Youth in Parks." The project is seeking better coordination among European rangers to enhance the quality of their work with young people in the domain of environmental education. Specifically, the project aims to organize an exchange of best practices and views between rangers, to improve the quality of Youth Environmental Education in nature-protected areas, and to develop new common projects.

The main activity will be a four-day workshop, which will take place in an environmental education center in Denmark. Twenty-seven participants will attend the workshop, including representatives from national ranger associations, individual rangers, and representatives from national and international networks of European protected areas. Even though the proposal failed to be funded by the EC due to some administrative regulations, the project proposal was recently sent to another source of funding, and our Danish colleagues are also trying to get funds for this project.

Regarding the organization of the 3rd European Ranger Seminar that was supposed to take place in Russia in 2010 and was postponed for 2011, the latest information is the following:

- (1) the location first considered by the IRF and the Russian Ranger Association as a host for the seminar, is no longer possible because of some changes in the parks' management team.
- (2) Our colleagues from Russia recently informed us that they found a new location. There is much enthusiasm from the Samarskaya Luca Park's management team. They will soon be able to send us a program proposal and costs of the seminar.

In order to send all the information about this event in a timely manner and for efficient communication from now on, I kindly ask that all of the European ranger associations send me the most recent contact details for their associations to: florin_hombre@yahoo.com.

In addition, in December 2010, our colleagues from the Ranger Association of Switzerland started the process of joining the IRF. I hope they will continue this process and be present at the next World Congress in 2012.

The executive director of the EUROPARC Federation, Carol Ritchie (c.ritchie@europarc.org) announces the following information:

Nature Scholarship Provides Chances for Young European Conservationists

The Alfred Toepfer Natural Heritage Scholarships 2011 are now open for applications! The award provides three young European conservationists with €3000 to undertake a study visit to one or more protected areas in European countries other than their own. The award is given by the Alfred Toepfer Foundation and the EUROPARC Federation. The deadline for applications is Friday, May 20, 2011. The €3000, donated by the Alfred Toepfer Foundation (D), gives successful scholars the chance to gather experience and strengthen their networks. The scholarships enhance international cooperation and advance the quality, innovation, and European dimension of the management of natural areas, such as national parks. At the end of their study visit, the scholars will produce reports on their findings, which will be shared with practitioners in charge of managing Europe's natural heritage. Applicants must be under 35 and of European nationality. Themes for applications must be connected to the management of natural areas. Applications may be completed online at www.europarc.org. All organizational aspects of the scholarships, including the selection of candidates, are carried out by the EUROPARC Federation. Erika Stanciu, president of the EUROPARC Federation, believes "that the scholarships are a great opportunity for the winners to see how protected natural areas are managed in other parts of Europe. The results of the studies are not only beneficial to the scholars but to the many other practitioners managing Europe's landscapes and wild places."

I think it's a good opportunity for young European rangers to participate in this project.

All the best,

Florin Halastauan
Florin_hombre@yahoo.com

North American Regional Representative Report

Thank you to Osvaldo Barrasi (Chile/Brazil) for the translation of this report from English into Spanish.

I hope everyone had a wonderful and safe holiday season.

- I want to wish Parks Canada and their wardens a happy 100th birthday. In 1911, Canada became the first country to create a national park agency, even before the United States. Parks Canada has more than 40 parks, 165 national sites, and four marine conservation areas including 10 world heritage sites. We look forward to your next 100 years!
- I have been accepted as a member of the IUCN's World Commission on Protected Areas for 2009-2012.
- The United Nations has designated 2011 as "International Year of Forests." In their release, they state, "The world's forests are essential to life in all its diversity and to attaining humanity's biggest goals, such as reducing poverty, curbing climate change and achieving sustainable development. Throughout 2011, the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) and its membership will work towards making sure that forests deliver their maximum potential for human well-being and

biodiversity conservation. “Forests 2011” will be an international celebration of the central role of people in the management, conservation and sustainable development of our world’s forests,” said Julia Marton-Lefèvre, IUCN’s director general. “The air we breathe, the food, water and medicines we need to survive, the variety of life on earth, the climate that shapes our present and future—they all depend on forests. This year - 2011 - must be the year when the world recognizes the vital importance of healthy forests to life on earth – for all people and biodiversity.” Forests 2011 was formally launched at the 9th session of the United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF9) on January 24.

Semper presidium,

Jeff Ohlfs

deserttraveler2@roadrunner.com

Oceania Regional Representative Report

Thank you to Juan Carlos Gambarotta (Uruguay) for the translation of this report from English into Spanish.

It was with a sad heart that I learned of the recent death of New South Wales (NSW) National Parks and Wildlife Service Officer John Garland during firefighting operations. We all know that being a ranger is a dangerous line of work, and recent history in NSW suggests firefighting is one of our biggest hazards.

It was also with a sad heart that I learned of another two fatal incidents in Virunga National Park, DRC. Less than one month had passed since the IRF participated in a meeting chaired by UNESCO and the DRC Government with the aim of submitting recommendations and a strategic plan for efficient protection of the five UNESCO world heritage sites in the DRC and the staff who look after them.

Despite the shadow of such news, it has continued to be a pleasure working with the IRF executive, particularly focussing on efforts associated with improving the situation for our colleagues in the DRC and also contributing to the ongoing development of the Rangers without Borders proposal. (On that note, please see the “call for volunteers” from the ever-passionate Uruguayan, Juan Carlos Gambarotta.) Another key project area for me has been the draft Strategic Plan, with a revised draft expected shortly. The revised draft is expected shortly.

As the regional representative, I also play an active role in the Council of Australian Ranger Associations (CARA). CARA has developed improved information flow through the direct sharing of association newsletters and is also developing a coordinated approach to supporting rangers in other countries, with a particular focus within Oceania.

As I end this column, I am again reminded of our colleagues in other parts of the world who have recently suffered from floods – Brazil, Philippines, Sri Lanka, and the UK. I have no doubt there are others.

Tegan Burton

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South America Regional Representative Report

Thank you to Mariana Machicao (Bolivia) for the translation of this report from Spanish into English in the Spanish version of the newsletter.

Dear All,

There have been many changes in my life lately. While I was disconnected from the world for almost four months (with no Internet), Marcelo Segalerba, a good member of the FIG (IRF) has been our contact in South

America. Marcelo helped us very much by keeping in contact with our colleagues - the rangers of South America. *Thank you very much, Marcelo!*

In the previous months, I was recovering from a severe illness and from being unemployed for several months. Then, I moved and changed my address, when I found employment in a stable position at the Reservation of the Biosphere Biological Research Station of the Beni. The reservation, which is also an indigenous territory, is a great new experience at my life, which is completely tied to the ethnic indigenous Tchimane. Some time I will tell you more.

In addition, at this time I have to commit 100% to my work in the reservation to connect with my new life. Another issue is that the city where I live now is small and has many limitations on using the Internet. In the last couple months, we have had serious electrical issues. Once this problem was corrected completely, I returned to our work trying to put my small grain of sand to the national park rangers, our main organization.

I'm asking you to please consider my explanations and my strong commitment to work, since I will now have access to the Internet and phones 80% of the time.

At the same time, I have to thank Marcelo Segalerba, as well as Oswaldo Barassi of Chile (now living in Brazil), who joined the work for this southern region, from another country but with the same energy as in the past. Thank you for the new www.Guardaparquesenaccion.org webpage. It is fantastic and certainly will connect Spanish-speaking national park rangers. Thanks to all those who, with their positive contributions and loyal work, make the FIG grow every day. Thank you very much!

Thanks to Wilder Canales in Peru from the bosom of the FIG for his efforts to be sure his organization achieves support in the professionalization of their members. We had a meeting in November of last year in Lima, Peru, about climate change and Latin American protected areas. It was very motivating, and we wait to be able to coordinate future activities and exchanges to strengthen the ties that join us.

Thanks to Osvaldo Herrera, with whom I spoke last year about how to share our experiences on the process of transforming the structure of the national park rangers of Chile. We offer all of our support to Osvaldo to continue in this process, and we thank you for your work. Always I will be in the fight. This year, we will make this a commitment to action in South America.

Thanks to the national park rangers of Argentina, Chile, Paraguay, and Bolivia, for all those who wrote to me, and those who gave me their support when I was sick and out of work. I won't stop being grateful for them. I am here any time for whatever you need.

To the Colombian, Venezuelan and Ecuadoran colleagues, once again I invite you to join us in our dream, our "national park rangers' world family." To the Bolivians, who now have a new president of the National Park Rangers' association, congratulations to the new president Santos Nina and lots of luck!

For this and next year, the IRF South American team and I are proposing a national meeting in Brazil of the national park rangers of South America. We have a draft agenda. We will present this initiative to the IRF and ask endorsement for it, so we can work together in a proactive, supportive, tolerant way with much commitment.

I am here for you again!

Ana Carola Vaca Salazar
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NEWS FROM NATIONAL ASSOCIATIONS

England/Wales Countryside Management Association

The Countryside Management Association (CMA) has a membership of 400 and has been operating in England/Wales since 1966. It is the largest organization in England and Wales specifically representing rangers and others involved in the management of both the countryside and urban greenspace.

Over the past few years, CMA has been struggling to bring new blood into the management of the association without much success and has been exploring possible partnership arrangements that would enable the association to maintain a service to rangers, countryside managers, and the rest of its members. Negotiations have now reached a point where discussions with the Institute of Ecology & Environmental Management (IEEM) have resulted in an offer from them for a merger. The terms of the merger were voted upon by CMA members for a final vote at the end of February.

IEEM has a membership of approximately 4,000 ecologists and others involved in the environmental management of the British countryside. If this merger goes ahead, then the CMA name will disappear, and it is expected that IEEM will seek to join IRF.

Roger Cole
Countryside Management Association
rangerroger@hotmail.co.uk

New South Wales - Australia Protected Area Workers Association

Floods, heatwaves, bushfires, cyclones – the eastern seaboard of Australia (and also the west) has seen it all in the last few months.

Fires

After an uncharacteristically quiet summer in bushfire terms, the fires did eventually come to NSW, along with another tragic fatality within the NPWS firefighting team – John Garland, field officer and expert tree feller, died in a tree fall accident during mop-up operations at a wildfire near Cessnock. More information on the accident appears in this news report from the day <http://news.smh.com.au/breaking-news-national/firefighter-killed-by-falling-tree-20110204-1agif.html>. In the words of the director-general of the department, John was one of the true “characters” of the NPWS. Described as “fit as a mallee bull” by his colleagues, he was beloved in his region for his gregarious nature, friendly manner, and kindness to colleagues. He was also an extremely active member in staff activities throughout the region. Above all he was a committed family man and will be especially missed by his wife, their children, and many grandchildren. The thoughts of all of us are with his family at this sad time.

Floods

Also some news from the floods - I asked colleagues in flood-affected areas if they could share some thoughts on the impact of the floods, flood response on our protected areas, and on those who work in protected areas.

Adam Bryce from Mutawinji National Park in western NSW reported:

The park has been extensively damaged by 182mm (or 7 inches) of rain on the 13th of Jan. 2011. It was more rain in a day than we have had in 4 out of the last 6 years. (And I can add that there have been more large rainfall events since then.) All roads within the park have been extensively damaged. The campground had over a metre of water

through it causing damage to park infrastructure and just general clean up. Over

5kms. of boundary fencing has been destroyed. The ranger's house was flooded. A day use area was completely destroyed.

We have had a massive shift in workload, we have sent one staff member to another park as she can't get out to the park while the roads are closed. Other staff has been recording damage to park infrastructure and have started to clean up the campground. The estimated clean up and repair bill is estimated to be in excess of 1 million dollars. Our park is going to be closed for at least a month, and it will be interesting to see if the TMF (insurance fund) will cover our natural dirt roads for repair. AMS (asset maintenance system) is helping in gaining an accurate representation of the labor costs incurred by the flood event.

Louise Feltus in Grafton, on the NSW north coast:

Clarence Valley residents are used to floods... there are extensive levy systems in place and as long as the levy holds...it's ok. Residents generally know what to do. Last flood was in May 2009. After several wet weeks, Russell Wall (our senior field supervisor) said "if we get another 200mm the road is going to be flooded"...and it continued to rain the next day and the day after that. The roads were closed. One of the more recent locals (from Canada) really enjoyed the 'lingo' and fact that the Pacific Highway needed to be closed for about an hour-and-a-half in order to move 500 'head of cattle.'

There were hundreds of large bales of hay floating past FAST with the occasional water dragon perched on top, limes, tyres, even pumpkins! And so much debris! After the floods, there are areas that are just out of Grafton and further downstream towards Southgate where lots of water and mud has been over the road, and the muck has been scraped off with machinery. The farmers have large losses – cane farms, soy beans, and the occasional cow has been found or seen floating past with its feet in the air. Even after the floods, the grass is covered with mud, which can kill the stock. I saw some of the industrial places were also under flood... including the local service station and sawmill at South Grafton.

Several of our reserves are wetland areas and need floods periodically. Other areas, which are not so low and are in ridge country, have sustained significant damage to tracks and trails...This has a particular impact for access when there are fires later in

the year. We were hoping some of the pigs that have been enjoying the Everlasting Swamp weren't good swimmers – either way we have a shooting plan in place for the ones who could swim.

As soon as we could get out there without causing more damage, we were out there digging the drains and encouraging the water to go where we wanted it...off the tracks! I now understand what the 'Mighty Clarence River' means...in its glory!! So much and so fast.

Holly North reported that . . .

Here on the coast between the Queensland border and Coffs Harbour, major roads have been cut but only a few communities have been evacuated, all in the Clarence River catchment. The coastal rivers and reserves were spared the bulk of the severe weather, which hit southeastern Queensland. This severe weather dumped a heap of rain into the headwaters of the Clarence River, which runs all the way from the Queensland border down to Grafton and out to the sea at Yamba. The flooding in the lower Clarence was quite predictable as a result since the origin was the upper Clarence. The wetland and river systems are getting a good flush out sorely needed after a 10-drought cycle.

The Kyogle to Tenterfield part of NSW got hammered, and parts of Kyogle township

were evacuated. The Kyogle parks were all closed, and NPWS staff has been working their way through and reopening roads and camping areas and walking tracks.

My parks in the Richmond River floodplain in the low lying coastal flood forests between Ballina, Casino and Woodburn (between the Pacific Highway and the Summerland Way) get backed up with flood water from the Richmond, which will lie around in the swamps and take months to drain out. I went to survey Bungawalbin NP for flood damage the other day and nearly had to walk home, got severely bogged. Think I'd better exercise patience and wait 'til the land will allow me in.

Most of the coastal camping areas have remained open, again due to the bulk of the rain hitting further inland and further north in SE Qld. Health issues for both park staff and park visitors are at increased risk of mosquito borne diseases such as dengue fever and Ross River fever, and the chance of anaerobic waters discharging from floodplain swamps killing fish and spreading botulism in birds that eat the dead fish. Fish kills are caused by accelerated oxygen depletion from decomposing vegetation in flooded waterways. Botulism can blossom in the decomposing fish carcasses, poisoning sea birds including gulls, terns, pelicans, sea eagles, kites and ospreys. (Note: This hasn't happened yet. We are anticipating this issue due to hot weather since the rains stopped).

In this strong La Nina cycle we are also anticipating more subtropical depressions, cyclonic weather events in which high surf can combine with flooded rivers, and/or king tides to eat away the coastline. Again, this hasn't happened yet this year, but the current weather patterns make the likelihood of such events high. In the May 2009 "East Coast Low" (what the federal govt calls cyclones south of a certain latitude), we lost 50 metres of coastal dunes and vegetation in Bundjalung NP.

Where Have the Rangers Gone?

The NSW's 2009-10 Annual Report for the Department of Environment, Climate Change & Water, the overarching organization within which the NSW NPWS sits, reported that the number of ranger positions in the department in June 2008 was 293. In 2009, it was 303. Then, in 2010, it dropped to 273. These positions work within teams of other field-based staff to protect and manage the 6,763,629 hectares of terrestrial reserved land (or 8.44% of the land area of NSW) and 345,100 hectares of marine parks (or 34% of NSW waters). The bare numbers portray a worsening position and remind us of the need to continually fight for the preservation of our workforce.

Tegan Burton
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SPECIAL REPORTS

A call for volunteers

Long ago a big country of the Northern Hemisphere launched a call: Hunt! Fish! Live in a cabin! Be a ranger!

I suppose the call was successful in inspiring young people to enlist as a park ranger, because apart from what was chosen as a "hook" to attract people, they had good conservation practices and that country still hosts all its carnivores ... which as we know is a fact which speaks a lot.

Well, some of you may be aware that IRF wants to launch a program, which by now is called "Rangers Without Borders (RWB)." The discussion is going on but some things are at the core of the idea. What we need to know now is:

- How many rangers think that he or she would *seriously* enlist in the RWB Program?

- Since the idea was spoken to the first friends, many rangers have said: “That is a very good idea,” but so far I do not know if anyone has the will to become a part of the corps of rangers that would make RWB something real.
- Provided the cost of transportation from your country to the destination national park under risk is covered by IRF, that you could stay in the position for at least 20 days, and that the park authorities provide the types of accommodations local rangers enjoy/suffer, would you join a call like the following?

Travel to a foreign country and work FREE (as a volunteer) in a protected area, which has been declared a world heritage site! Work side-by-side with local rangers to protect endangered animals, plants, and landscapes!

Be proud of having risked your life in the company of local rangers to show the world that rangers are a real family and that we rangers care about wildlife protection at all times!

Please let me know if you would enlist.

Juan Carlos Gambarotta (Juca)
juancagambaro@gmail.com

Advance Notice – World Ranger Day Logo Competition

Thank you to Osvaldo Barrasi (Chile/Brazil) for the translation of this report from English into Spanish.

July 31st is World Ranger Day. It is the day we commemorate the many rangers killed or injured in the line-of-duty. It is also the day we celebrate rangers and the work they do to protect the world’s natural and cultural treasures.

The International Ranger Federation would like a special logo to publicize World Ranger Day. A competition for members to design this logo will be held prior to World Ranger Day 2011. The details will be announced shortly, so stay tuned.

Meeting in Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of Congo

On Jan. 14, 2011, the city of Kinshasa in the DRC played host to a meeting chaired by UNESCO and the Government of the DRC with the aim of summarizing and submitting recommendations and a strategic plan for efficient protection of biodiversity in the five UNESCO world heritage sites in the country.

The main objective of the strategy focused on finding a long-term solution for the following problems:

- * Illegal occupation by local residents in the park
- * Illegal exploitation of the natural resources
- * Insecurity inside and outside the park
- * Ignorance of the value of natural world heritage
- * Killing of wildlife and park rangers in the field

A speech by UNESCO Director-General Ms Irina Bokova emphasized illegal oil exploitation that is being planned for Virunga National Park.

IRF was also invited to submit recommendations and to give a brief speech to the audience. It was a stressful and a rushed time, with the speech and recommendations having to be completed very hastily with short notice of meeting requirements, procedures, and opportunities. However, it was also a rewarding time, and we believe it was a landmark opportunity, not to be missed, for IRF and the rangers in DRC. Following this successful and long overdue meeting, the challenge has shifted. We need to follow up appropriately to build on the foundation that is now finally in place to ensure the necessary practical results are achieved and maintained.

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Jobogo Mirindi (IRF National Representative DRC) - jmirindi@yahoo.com
Tegan Burton (IRF Regional Representative Oceania) - pawa_nsw@hotmail.com

VIIth World Ranger Congress

Thank you to Rick Smith (USA) and Osvaldo Barrasi (Chile/Brazil) for the translation of this report from English into Spanish.

The VII World Ranger Congress (WRC) will be held in Tanzania from November 4-9, 2012. The venue will be Ngurdoto Mountain Lodge, which is situated close to Arusha National Park, in northern Tanzania. It is also close to Kilimanjaro International Airport. The Congress Organizing Committee is in the process of finalizing the theme for the event in collaboration with the WRC steering committee. More information will be disseminated regularly as the details are finalized and registration opens. Should you wish to be placed on the mailing list for the VIIth World Ranger Congress please send an email to TanzaniaWRC@gmail.com.

Krissie Clark, WRC Local Organizing Committee
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CALENDAR OF UPCOMING EVENTS

2011

- May 4-7 National Association for Interpretation, International Conference, Gamboa Rainforest Resort, at the Chagres River and Panama Canal, Soberania National Park Rainforest, Panama
www.interp.net.com/ic/
- July 31 World Ranger Day - IRF member associations, protected area agencies, individual rangers, sponsors, and the public are invited to create or join in events and activities that recognize the work of rangers across the globe.
www.int-ranger.net/whatsnew.html
- October 10-15 Ranger Rendezvous, Williamsburg, Virginia, USA
www.anpr.org

2012

- November 4-9 VII World Ranger Congress, Ngurdoto Mountain Lodge, in northern Tanzania, Eastern Africa. For updates, send an email to TanzaniaWRC@gmail.com.

MEMBER DIRECTORY

The following is for quick reference only and does not include the names of individual ranger associations. Where more than one name is listed for a given nation, it is because there's more than one ranger association in that country. For a complete list, please contact Elaine Thomas, IRF secretary, at the address below.

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¹ National

² National

³ State - California

⁴ National

⁵ State - California

⁶ National and State (Northern Territory)

⁷ State (New South Wales)

⁸ State - Queensland

⁹ State – South Australia

¹⁰ State - Tasmania

¹¹ State - Victoria

¹² State – Western Australia

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2010	Alasdair Harris	UK/Madagascar	al@blueventures.org
2008	Edwin Sabuhoro	Rwanda	
2006	Christian Teran	Ecuador	

¹³ International Union for Conservation of Nature

¹⁴ World Commission on Protected Areas

¹⁵ Fauna Flora International

¹⁶ Great Apes Survival Project (UNEP)

¹⁷ International Centre for Protected Landscapes

¹⁸ Royal Society for the Protection of Birds