

NEEDS FOR TYNDALL R.S. '94

(Send with Kern Trail Crew if no ranger assigned to Tyndall)

Durkee 10/93

The Homelite XL Chainsaw from Rock Creek is at Tyndall. It needs a new chain for a 2 ft. bar. Saw gas and a little bar oil is also there. Make sure someone is in charge of cutting winter fire wood when trail crew comes through. Better yet, it's probably time to start using presto logs there or flying wood in. There's too many stumps in the area and the trail crew has a habit of cutting down standing Foxtail snags for wood.

(2) Generators for Coleman 2 burner stove, Model 413H; Part #426-5621. This is critical, stove leaks badly.

10 Gal. Blazo

1 Roll Duct Tape

5 Rolls toilet paper

NEEDS FOR '94 CHARLOTTE R.S.

10 Gal. Blazo

(2) Generators for Powerhouse Unleaded 428 Stove; Part # 414-5621 or 414B455

Fully charged jumbo "D" O2 cylinder (current one is @ 1300 PSI)

1 Dozen AA Batteries

1 Dozen latex gloves

Military surplus stretcher (if available)

4 new bunk beds (snow survey account) & Plywood to fit over springs. (The existing bunks were made in 1942).

4 new light (hard foam?) mattresses

(2) each Mt. Williamson & Mt. Clarence King Maps (7 1/2 min.)

The Sierra District issued First Aid Kit was left at the station.

Consumables still at Charlotte (1993):

12 Gal. Blazo (5 Gal. is high in paraffin content and does NOT burn well)

20 (at least) large plastic garbage bags

4 rolls toilet paper

10 burlap bags

Plenty of nylon parachute cord

A ton of snow survey food (check with surveyors)

**CHARLOTTE R.S.
YEAR END REPORT 10/16/93**

STATS:

Visitor contacts:	1000
Total Miles:	700
Law Enforcement Contacts	
Citations	4
(Dog in backcountry--2; Fires--2)	
Warnings	55
(weapons--1 [peace officer]; camp on vegetation--15; soap in water--2; litter--3; food storage--15; too close to stream--15)	
Emergency Operations:	
SAR	4
Medicals	3
Fires (escaped campfires)	2

Spring Training:

I think we're overtrained. As well organized as training was last year (and with an especially welcome 2 days at Mineral King!), I am hard pressed to come up with many examples of anything useful we've had over the last decade that I actually draw on when doing my job. I can't imagine us needing more than 3 days of training at most. This would include a yearly 1 day review of some sort of field training--either SAR/rope work, EMS or some necessary resource management training (meadow stuff); an annual chat with the Superintendent and Chief Ranger is always welcome; and a current projects & expectations afternoon from Sierra District staff.

I would modify the pep talk from Parsons, Graber, Werner & Ingram. There's a lot of interesting research being done in the park which never comes out at these talks. They have a habit of talking about their current pet project but with no follow up on previous projects. What's happening with acid rain? the tree ring work being done both on Sequoias and Foxtails & etc? I propose we be given a written review of research projects in progress, what they've discovered and with an option to be given any papers published. The above folks can then give a short talk on what they want to emphasize; what, if anything, they want us to do in the field; and the implications of the research for the future.

We don't need: attending the all-park Squad pep talk; listening to any more cowboys talk about how they've been here since the Pleistocene and how rangers have to be nicer to them because they're persecuted; talks from the Safety Officer have always been of doubtful value. Additionally, a lot of stuff (end of season reports, Sierra District operations) can be condensed into a couple of written handouts. Dave Graber's research projects handout from last season is a good example of how others ought to format things they want us to do: it's concise, gives reasons the projects are important and presents them in order of priority. In fact, it might not be a bad idea to prepare a short "specific projects" notebook for the beginning of training with explanations of what different divisions & people (including Sierra District) want us to do. We could then spend an hour reading through the stuff and ask questions of the

appropriate person when they talk to us. When project type stuff is handed out over the course of training, I find some of it gets lost or scattered.

In short, we should decide on, say, 3 days of District training and choose subjects to be done within that time--NOT keep coming up with subjects so that more time is needed. With Law Enforcement training, District training and EMT refreshers, we're spending almost a month (including travel time) out of the backcountry.

For Law Enforcement training, maybe a session on weapon retention & recovery. Also I think we should buy and receive training in Capstun (see attached note from supplier). We are all pretty marginal in weaponless defense (never enough practice) and have no force options between running and deadly force (I don't think we've been issued Mace in a number of years). An intermediate option on the force continuum would be nice. Also, we ought to set up some sort of option/possibility for some of to do ride-alongs with, say, DFG for a day or so of LE training.

STOCK CAMPS:

Stock camps in the Charlotte area are located immediately below the Charlotte drift fence; 1/2 mile above the Vidette drift fence right on Bubbs Creek; 1/4 mile above that one is another on the creek and; one at the 10,000 ft. sign on the JMT. Stock have rarely used any camps on the JMT above the upper Vidette drift fence in the last decade.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR '94:

1) One of the reasons Sierra District has such a high return rate for it's rangers is because of the variety of experience in our job. Historically, we've been assigned a new station every 2 or 3 years. This has always meant not only a change of scenery and job emphasis for the ranger every few years but, if a ranger doesn't like a particular area for some reason, s/he knows it will only be for a couple of seasons. There have been a couple of recent cases where rangers are staying at stations for 5 years. This means, of course, that these stations are not available for others to rotate through--significantly shrinking the available pool of stations. This is especially irritating when the station is a desirable one.

It has been suggested that the skills of a particular ranger be "matched" to a particular station. This is a specious argument: we **all** have the same basic skills. Where we sometimes differ is in what each ranger tends to emphasize. Some may pay more attention to rooting out old can dumps or monitoring stock use or watching bear activity more closely. Rotating each of us through any given station every few years benefits that station because of this wide variety of attention paid to particular problems.

It is, of course, impossible for each of us to get a particular station we might want in a time period we want. It is critical, though, that the system be perceived as fair and that all of us eventually be given a chance at working different areas in some sort of reasonable amount of time. This means that, short of some compelling need, no ranger work at a given station more than 2 to 3 years.

2) I don't know if dispersing stock use is still being considered as a solution to perceived overgrazing but, after thinking about it over the summer, I strongly oppose this. It is much better to "sacrifice" a given area (short of critical resource damage) than to spread this damage to pristine or unused areas. Dispersing stock use means more areas aesthetically damaged from grazing and new stock camps. There's a major difference between what might be acceptable when considering only remaining biomass and what is just plain outrageously ugly after even just a few head of stock have savaged an area.

The biomass monitoring as presently designed does not seriously address the problem of esthetics: loss of flowering heads in fall grasses (certainly a desired goal that has NEVER been addressed under any stock plan or monitoring program in the last 17 years); mechanical damage from hoofs breaking sod, scuffing and rolling in camp and on meadows etc.; and the stink of horse piss and manure in camps and meadows. Even one stock party in a new camp effectively destroys that site and, likely, the nearby meadow for the season. As long as we take into account only meadow species grazed by stock and use only range management principles in meadow management, we are still looking at National Park meadows as pastures rather than the complex ecological and aesthetically critical areas that they are.

3) At great risk of hearsay, have parts of the wilderness permit program outlived their usefulness? That is, is it necessary to enter in all the names and addresses and even destinations of everyone who gets a permit? How much are we spending to do this (both money and time) and what are the benefits to the backcountry? What management decisions are made based on such information? Do we exceed the quotas at trailheads often enough to justify all the information asked for on a permit (route, name, address etc.)?

The most important part of permits from my standpoint is the information given to the hiker by the permit issuer. It seems as if we could make it easier on everyone if we no longer took names & routes but just gave an effective minimum impact talk. Every few years we could "ground truth" hiker's routes to see if the quotas are still realistic for given areas (though I suspect a ranger would notice if an area is being overused and would recommend appropriate action even without such checks).

In addition, we spend a huge amount of money with the USFS on the east side and get very little return for it. The people in the Lone Pine office are and have always been, in spite of repeated talks from Alden & Gail, clueless. Almost every citation I've ever given has been to hikers entering from east side trailheads. Also, if we're going to require permits from people, we have the responsibility to make sure they can get them at reasonable times (the Onion Valley ranger, for instance, is only there until 9 AM).

I don't have any solution here, but as budgets become tighter, I think these are areas to look at. Having competent people in the field is far more important to the health of the backcountry than questionable data or uncaring people in offices. Given the current level of service from the USFS, eliminating or reducing the NPS money they get is no longer unthinkable.

4) How about trying to get some military surplus canvas/wood foldable stretchers from somewhere? We don't use them often, but they'd be useful for short transports near a station to a helispot. Also, maybe try to get a nomex flight suit for each ranger to keep at the station from the military as well.

5) We might want to consider coming up with some sort of policy on food caches at ranger stations. It may not be a wide spread problem (and so is worth getting other folks' opinions), but I've had a few instances where food caches have just shown up with no idea of who the person is or when they're coming in. In one case this summer I was expected to hike a food cache up from Bubbs Creek to my station (apparently at the request of a District Ranger for a friend). The person never showed up. Most, but not all, stations have 50 Gal. drums that caches can be stored in. I think that some people (researchers etc.) are unaware that we're not going to hang around a station waiting for them to show up to collect their cache.

6) If we're out of bear boxes, the Center Creek/JMT junction should at least have a 50 Gal. Drum put

there. In addition, the box at the Center Basin trail/JMT junction should be moved about 100 yds. North and to the East side of the trail in duff. (I couldn't find a scout troop to help with that this year).

I repeat my objections to a new box at Wheelbarrow camp (if that's still being considered by anyone): there are only 3 camps at that site. Moving a box up there would radically increase use and destroy the surrounding meadow.

7) Still, one of the best organized seasons in a number of years: resupplies & training went well, equipment ordered always showed up, good follow up on radio messages and requests for information. Thanks to Randy, Eric, Alden, Gail, Robin & Shirley for the support!