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Pacific Southwest Research Station, Albany, CA 94710

Albany Headquarters Gains Tenants

In an effort to make the management of human resources within USDA as much of a priority as are natural resources, the FS and the USDA Civil Rights Committee have entered into an agreement to return the informal EEO complaint process back to the FS. The former Office of Civil Rights Regional Service Centers were shut down as of Sept. 24, and Equal Employment Opportunity employees were moved to several more centralized locations across the country. In California, this meant a move to PSW Albany. And so, as of Oct. 6, the Albany building has some new tenants, members of the Employment Complaints Management Program (ECMP) Service Center.

At present, counselors at the Albany location can be reached by calling PSW's reception desk at 510-559-6300. A separate fax number and TDD line for the group will be forthcoming. A separate mailing address will also be provided at a later date. The ECMP Headquarters office can be reached by writing to Elizabeth Butler, Civil Rights Employment Complaints Management Program, USDA Forest Service, P.O. Box 96090, Washington, DC 20090-6090.

The new agreement is intended to meet the Secretary of Agriculture's goal as articulated in the Civil Rights Action Team Report. The CRAT Report's Recommendation #88 directed that EEO counselor positions, including their resources, must be returned to agencies, with all EEO counselors in full-time civil rights positions.

Initiative to Resolve EEO Complaints

In an effort to resolve EEO complaints against the Forest Service, Chief Mike Dombek and USDA's Acting Assistant Secretary for Administration, Pearlie Reed, have instituted a special, short-term initiative. Employees and others who filed a formal EEO complaint before April 1, 1997, and who have not settled that complaint may be eligible for mediation. Those eligible for mediation should already have received a letter by certified mail explaining this process. If you filed an EEO complaint on or before April 1, 1997, and feel you should be eligible for mediation, but have not received a letter, contact Jeff Knishkowsky in the Civil Rights Implementation Team Office at 202-720-5329 or 202-720-8372 (TDD).

For Your Information is published every other week. Vince Dong (510-559-6324) and Lisa Wolters-Broder (510-559-6327), editors (DG:S27A). Field correspondents: Alfonso Domingo (Hawaii), Brian Boroski (Fresno), Phil McDonald (Redding), Chris Nelson (Placerville), Lola Thomas (Riverside), Bob Ziemer (Arcata).

Buyout Authority Will Not Affect PSW

PSW will not participate in the limited opportunity buyout program, which was recently announced by FS Chief Mike Dombek in a letter to all employees. "The Station is not burdened by either budget or full-time equivalent ceiling constraints at this time, and therefore a buyout here is unnecessary," according to Assistant Station Director Carol DeMuth. A complete copy of the Chief's 20-plus-page letter, along with questions and answers on the buyout, are available on the FS Washington Office's home page at <http://fswweb.wo.fs.fed.us/hrm/buyout.html>.

On the other hand, the Voluntary Early Retirement Authority is still available at PSW to those who may be thinking of retiring but who do not meet the optional retirement eligibility requirements. For information about the Voluntary Early Retirement Authority, contact Keiko Williams in the Personnel Group at 510-559-6365 or by DG at K.Williams:S27A.

November Is Native American Month

November has been designated National Native American Heritage Month. The U.S. Department of Agriculture's theme for this year is "Walking in Beauty and Balance." Employees throughout PSW are encouraged to commemorate the accomplishments of Native Americans, and to participate in special activities both at work and within their communities.

Meetings/Conferences/Seminars

* Enoch Bell, Assistant Station Director, and Francis Fujioka, Fire Meteorology Research Unit, Riverside, attended a futuring fire research session, Oct. 6-8, in Park City, Utah, along with more than 50 other fire managers and fire scientists from universities, interior agencies, NASA, and national laboratories such as Los Alamos and the National Center for Atmospheric Research. A report and Web site on the futuring session will be forthcoming.

* Debbie Chavez, Wildland Recreation/Urban Cultures Research Unit, Riverside, presented two poster papers at the 1997 Society of American Foresters National Convention, Oct. 4-8, in Memphis, Tenn. The first, "Impact of recreation fee implementation in southern California," was coauthored by Robert Gable and Robert Short; the second, "Mountain bike management: forces and solutions," was by Debbie alone.

(continued)

Personnelly Speaking

Awards

* Carol DeMuth, Assistant Station Director—Administration, “for the extra effort you provided as Assistant Director for Operations, Planning, and Applications.”

* Rosanne Hunt, Group Leader—Personnel Management, Albany, “in recognition of outstanding work as a member of the Research-Wide Employee Placement Team.”

* Cynthia Jacobs, Administrative Services, Albany, “for your sustained performance as the Director’s Secretary and in carrying out special assignments.”

* Bernadette Jaquint, Albany, “for pioneering the use of the RMIS (new Research Management Information System) and compiling the 1997 PSW Station Report.”

* Sheila Vlach, Personnel Management, Albany, “in recognition of outstanding work as a member of the Research-Wide Employee Placement Team.”

* Keiko Williams, Personnel Management, Albany, “in recognition of outstanding work as a member of the Research-Wide Employee Placement Team.”

* Bob Ziemer, Project Leader—Hillslope Processes/Fisheries Research Unit, Arcata, “for outstanding contributions to the Forest Service Research & Development Strategic Planning Effort.” The certificate was signed by Robert Lewis, Jr., FS Deputy Chief for Research and Development.

Executive Calendar

November 10-14

Salwasser M: Albany; Tu: *Holiday*; W-F: Albany
Aune M: Redding; Tu: *Holiday*; W-F: Redding
Bell (Acting) M: Albany; Tu: *Holiday*; W-F: Albany
DeMuth (Backup) M: Albany; Tu: *Holiday*; W: San Francisco; Th-F: Albany
Ewel M: Costa Rica; Tu: *Holiday*; W-F: Costa Rica
Mason M: Albany; Tu: *Holiday*; W-F: Albany

November 17-21

Salwasser M-Tu: Missoula; W: Spokane; Th-F: Albany
Aune M-F: Redding
Bell (Acting) M-W: San Diego; Th: Sacramento; F: Albany
DeMuth (Backup) M-F: WO
Ewel M-F: Gainesville
Mason M-W: Arcata; Th-F: Albany

(*Meetings, contd.*)

* Debbie Chavez, Wildland Recreation/Urban Cultures Research Unit, Riverside, chaired an educational session and presented a paper, “Outdoor recreation patterns of Hispanic Americans,” at the National Recreation and Park Association Congress, Oct. 29-Nov. 2, in Salt Lake City, Utah. Debbie also chaired a session, “Measurement issues in leisure” and presented a poster paper, “The International Mountain Biking Association: the meaning and influence of social capital,” with Michael Schuett and Steve Hohenhorst.

* Marcia Narog, Prescribed Fire/Fire Effects Research Unit, Riverside, presented a poster paper and published abstract, “Effects of seasonal burning in chamise (*Adenostoma fasciculatum*) chaparral,” coauthored by Tim Paysen, Bonni Corcoran, Dave Weise, and Andi Koonce, at the Conference on Mediterranean Type Ecosystems (MEDECOSVIII), Oct. 18-26, in San Diego, Calif.

* Pat Winter, Wildland Recreation/Urban Cultures Research Unit, Riverside, presented a paper, “Are agencies providing the right message? An examination of normative information in recreation settings,” coauthored by Robert Cialdini, Renee Bator, Kelton Rhoades, and Brad Sagarin, at the Leisure Research Symposium, National Park and Recreation Association Congress, Oct. 31, in Salt Lake City, Utah.

New Study to Link Fire History and Birds

Jenny Rechel and Dave Larson, Prescribed Fire/Fire Effects Research Unit, Riverside, are involved in a long-term study of neotropical migratory birds. The study, which began earlier this year, includes monitoring bird populations in the San Dimas Experimental Forest and in the San Jacinto Mountains. They will compare bird usage of different plant communities, including oak woodland, chaparral, and conifer habitat types. They hope to link bird numbers to fire history, and to learn the effect that burning has on bird populations. This is a cooperative study between PSW, the Angeles National Forest, San Bernardino National Forest, and the California State Department of Fish and Game. Volunteers from the Audubon Society will also participate.

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