Superintendent's Park Report

Every year the park staff and I like to provide a brief summary of our work on behalf of the American public, including plans for the coming year. Unfortunately, there is just not enough room to include everything nor go into great detail on the subjects we do provide. If you are interested in more information, please contact the park or visit our website: nps.gov/chis.

Interpretation and Education

Accomplishments:
- A National Park Service report shows that in 2010 more than 277,500 visitors spent over $24 million in Channel Islands National Park and the nearby communities. That spending supported more than 300 jobs in the area.
- 497 Parks as Classrooms programs reached out to over 15,000 students.
- Reached nearly 34,000 people in over 100 community programs and special events.
- Bald eagle webcam connected over 160,000 Internet visitors from over 145 countries worldwide who generated over 1.5 million hits.
- Installed a new webcam on Anacapa Island that provides views of seabird rookeries, the iconic Arch Rock, the lighthouse, and the Santa Barbara Channel.
- Expanded Channel Islands Live interactive broadcasts from islands to schools across the country.
- 1,454 volunteers donated 80,394 hours to Channel Islands National Park, which is the equivalent to more than 38 full-time employees. 95 percent of volunteer time was spent providing interpretive opportunities for our visitors and monitoring and protecting our resources.
- Channel Islands Naturalist Corps was named the Take Pride in America Outstanding Federal Volunteer Program award winner. These 140 specially trained volunteers for the park and Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary contributed over 25,000 hours conducting whale watch programs and guided hikes.
- Installed new mainland visitor center exhibits and models, including ADA audio descriptions and two touch screen, interactive exhibits on geology and pygmy mammoths.
- Produced an award-winning new park film and installed new high-definition audiovisual equipment.
- Updated the design of the park website and added over 200 hours of multimedia presentations.
- Designed and installed marine protected area signs at island landings and information signs at three local harbor locations.
- Park stories were carried in 4,932 television, print, and radio media.

Future Plans
- Install new tower ocean exhibits and outdoor, interactive children's area exhibits.
- Design and install new identification and directional signs for the entire park.
- Expand Channel Islands Live interactive programs to reach more schools across the country and eventually the world.
- Improve interpretive services on Santa Rosa Island, including guided tours of the historic ranch.
- Install underwater webcam at Anacapa Island.

Cultural Resources

Accomplishments:
- Archeological research and radio-carbon dating of samples from sites on San Miguel, Santa Rosa and Santa Cruz Islands have yielded dates of 10,000+ years of age, adding to the number of very early occupation sites on the northern Channel Islands.
- A new overview of the park's archeological resources written by eight archeologists addresses both prehistoric and historic archeological resources and research.
- The park has inspected more than 800 archeological sites and evaluated them in terms of their current physical condition and stability.
- A new historic preservation crew is now working for Channel Islands National Park, Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area, and Cabrillo National Monument. The crew has reconstructed the historic wood windmill at Scorpion Ranch on Santa Cruz Island.
- Several planning documents were prepared to help protect the park's archives and museum collections.
- Cataloging of the park's archives, archeological collections, and natural history collections was carried out, making these resources available for researchers.

Future Plans
- Rehabilitation and seismic retrofit of the historic Smugglers Cove ranch house on Santa Cruz Island will begin in 2012.
- A corral complex will be constructed at Prisoners Harbor to help interpret the ranching era on Santa Cruz Island.
- The historic preservation crew will carry out repairs to the historic ranch house, barns, and corrals on Santa Rosa Island.
- Students from University of California, Santa Barbara and Penn State University will conduct an archeological survey of the inland portion of Santa Rosa Island. A San Diego State University archeology professor will conduct a coastal survey of the Santa Rosa Island coastline to locate and record historic Chinese abalone fishing camps.
- The park is researching and writing an administrative history of its designation as a national monument, establishment of the national park, and the its development and management over the past seven decades.
**Natural Resources**

**Accomplishments:**
- Restored the largest wetland on the Channel Islands located at Prisoners Harbor on Santa Cruz Island. The project, which extends over nearly 60 acres, restores important habitat for wildlife, migratory birds, and native plants.
- Continued to work with partners and the public to remove nonnative iceplant on Anacapa Island. A temporary nursery was constructed and about 9,000 native plants were planted.
- Seabird habitat restoration on Santa Barbara Island and offshore rocks of Santa Cruz Island continued with the planting of over 20,000 native plants.
- The first ashy storm-petrel nest on Anacapa Island was documented. This is another sign of recovery of rare seabirds as a result of the elimination of nonnative rats on the island.
- California common murre chicks hatched on the Channel Islands for the first time since 1912.
- A record number of bald eagle breeding pairs (15) were active on the Channel Islands. Moreover, there were between 60 to 70 resident bald eagles—a sizeable increase since their disappearance from the Channel Islands in the early 1960s.
- For the first time in over sixty years, a bald eagle chick naturally hatched in a remote canyon on West Anacapa Island.
- The recovery of island fox populations on the northern Channel Islands continued. Island foxes were saved from near extinction following an over 90 percent decline due to golden eagle predation in the 1990s.
- Park resource monitoring programs were recognized for over 30 years of research in kelp forests and over 25 years for pinnipeds (seals and sea lions) and rocky intertidal resources. Monitoring also includes sand beach and coastal lagoon, seabirds, landbirds, deer mice, terrestrial reptiles and amphibians, and weather.
- A new sister park partnership was developed between Channel Islands National Park and Isla Guadalupe Biosphere Reserve off Baja California. The two archipelagos are linked ecologically and face similar threats.

**Future Plans:**
- Complete removal of nonnative iceplant and restore native plants on Anacapa Island by 2016.
- Continue habitat restoration on the islands for recovery of seabirds.
- Work with The Nature Conservancy to restore the riparian woodland upstream from the Prisoners wetland through removal of nonnative eucalyptus and planting of native vegetation.
- Continue long-term ecological monitoring programs, ensure baseline ecological knowledge, and analyze ecological trends.
- Work cooperatively with the University of California and California State University to establish a research station on Santa Rosa Island.
- Expand understanding of the effects of the marine protected areas at the Channel Islands.
- Plan for and carry out the 8th California Islands Symposium in October 2012.

**Protection**

**Accomplishments:**
- Acquired new 38-foot patrol vessel using Department of Justice settlement funds from pollution violations. This new boat extends the range of law enforcement and search and rescue to any part of the park.
- Repaired and restored three small, island-based patrol boats to increase marine patrol and search and rescue operations.
- Established and enhanced interagency cooperation for marine resource protection, visitor safety, and homeland security with US Customs and Border Protection; US Coast Guard; National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration; California Department of Fish and Game; and Ventura, Santa Barbara, and Los Angeles Counties.
- Conducted trails assessment for inclusion in the future Backcountry Trail and Management Plan.
- Awarded 10-year concession contract for boat transportation to Island Packers, which has been operating in the park for over 40 years.

**Future Plans:**
- Increase marine boat patrols to enhance marine resource protection, visitor safety, and homeland security.
- Replace food storage lockers and bulletin boards at Del Norte and Anacapa Island campgrounds.
- Conduct cross-training opportunities with other agencies for search and rescue and emergency response.

**Maintenance**

**Accomplishments:**
- Installed a new ADA-compliant trail in the native plant garden at the visitor center in Ventura.
- Installed LED light bulbs in the visitor center in Ventura.
- Remodeled the bathrooms in the Ventura visitor center using recycled materials and low-flow and waterless toilets.
- Installed solar panels that provide 10% of the electricity for the visitor center in Ventura and headquarters building.
- Replaced the staircase on Anacapa Island using a Skycrane heavy-lift helicopter contracted by the US Army Corps of Engineers.
- Replaced and upgraded the solar power system on Anacapa Island that provides all the electricity for island operations.
- Replaced picnic tables on Anacapa Island with 100% recycled plastic tables.
- Replaced the pier on Santa Rosa Island. The pier provides primary access to the island for visitors and safe operations for cooperators, researchers, and employees.
- Replaced solar power system batteries on Santa Barbara and Santa Cruz Islands that provide all the electricity for island operations.

**Future Plans:**
- Replace observation tower elevator at the visitor center in Ventura.
- Complete design of new crane that is planned for replacement in 2015 on Anacapa Island.
- Install new solar power system at Del Norte ranch on Santa Cruz Island that will provide all the electricity needs for operations.
- Complete design for new pier at Scorpion Anchorage on Santa Cruz Island.
- Replace deteriorated wind power generator on Santa Rosa Island.
- Replace deteriorated Anacapa Island dock building.