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Bill Black selected as new Superintendent at Ozark National Scenic Riverways

OMAHA, Neb. – Bill Black, Superintendent at Fort Smith National Historic Site in Arkansas, has been selected as the new Superintendent at Ozark National Scenic Riverways in Van Buren, Mo. Black served in an acting capacity in the position for 4 months earlier this year, and takes the position permanently in mid-summer.

In announcing Black's selection, National Park Service (NPS) Midwest Regional Director Michael T. Reynolds said, "The depth and breadth of Bill's experience both within and outside the National Park Service, coupled with his intuitive understanding of building lasting relationships and partnerships with local, regional, and national communities, organizations, and groups, makes him an ideal choice to lead Ozark National Scenic Riverways."

Black began his NPS career as a seasonal Park Technician at Cumberland Gap National Historical Park in Kentucky followed by a season position at Castillo de San Marcos National Monument in St. Augustine, Florida. His first permanent position was as a Park Ranger in law enforcement at Great Smoky Mountains National Park in Tennessee. Black then went on to become the Administrative Officer at Chickasaw National Recreation Area in Oklahoma and a few years later was promoted into the Administrative Officer and Assistant Superintendent role at Isle Royale National Park in Michigan. His career also included working for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in Florida and Alabama as an Assistant Wildlife Refuge Manager.

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As Superintendent at Fort Smith NHS since January 1992, Black led the park through major rehabilitations, including the planning and development of its visitor center and exhibits. He has also been successful in developing, improving, and maintaining positive cooperative relationships with local, state, and other federal agencies, Native American tribal governments, land owners, and interest groups. Black served an acting assignment in Las Vegas as the director of one of the largest multi-agency partnerships in the country dealing with both federal agencies and numerous interest and support groups in southern Nevada.

“Having served the acting Superintendent detail at the park, I have had the fortune to meet many of the partners and local people that have a special interest in Ozark National Scenic Riverways, and I look forward to working closely with them in the years to come,” commented Black. “I have been very impressed with the truly world class natural resources of the park, including the magnificent springs and the clear free-flowing Current and Jack’s Fork Rivers.”

An Indiana native, Black graduated from Purdue University with a degree in Wildlife Management. Married to Judi, a first grade teacher with the Fort Smith Public Schools, the Blacks have a grown son and daughter.

Ozark National Scenic Riverways was established as the first National Scenic River in June 1972. The 134 miles of the Current and Jacks Fork Rivers provide canoeing, tubing, fishing, and swimming opportunities. Nearly 100 springs pour thousands of gallons of clear cold water into the streams. Ozark culture is preserved throughout the area.

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