United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
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Policy Memorandum 07-03

To: National Leadership Council

From: Director Mary A. Bomar

Subject: Interim policy pertaining to scientific and scholarly code of conduct, peer review, and information quality correction

The purpose of this memorandum is to alert you to several important policy matters that require our immediate attention. As you know, in 2002 the Service adopted Director's Order #11B: Ensuring Quality of Information Disseminated by the National Park Service. That order was developed in response to the Information Quality Act (aka Data Quality Act) and the implementing guidance issued by OMB and the Department of the Interior. The purpose of the Act and the implementing guidance was to help ensure and maximize the quality, objectivity, utility, and integrity of the information disseminated by the Federal Government. We have more recently been advised by the Department and OMB of the need to adopt additional policies and procedures to supplement what we have already issued.

In particular, we must adopt additional guidance relating to (1) our scientific and scholarly code of conduct, (2) peer review, and (3) how we handle complaints to correct errors in our information. The Acting Associate Director for Natural Resource Stewardship and Science has been assigned lead responsibility to develop the necessary guidance and coordinate with other regional, park, and program managers. The Acting Associate Director has also been tasked with developing interim guidance that can be placed into effect immediately. The interim guidance is attached for your reference. As you will see, the guidance has significant implications for the work we do.

A working group will collaborate on making initial improvements to the interim guidance materials, and I expect the product of that effort to be distributed in mid-March for your review and comment. Following that review process I expect to issue a Director's Order on this topic, to be accompanied by a reference manual containing a greater level of detail.

Attachment