

NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release, Thursday, Dec. 18, 2008

Efforts recognized with annual awards

The North Dakota Parks and Recreation Department held its annual staff meeting the week of December, 8 where the efforts of staff and volunteers were recognized at the annual awards ceremony.

The Department's highest honor, the **Cal Renner Award of Excellence**, was awarded to long-time employee; Planning and Development Manager, **Jesse Hanson**. He was cited for commitment to excellence in: development of quality, sustainable trails in the state park system; energy efficiency retrofits across the park system, mitigation and rehabilitation efficiencies resulting from flood and storm disasters; and the small "behind the scenes" things often unnoticed by providing for quality infrastructure that serves the public.

Merit Awards:

Dennis Clark – Park Ranger at Icelandic State Park for his transition leadership during the past year.

Kathy Duttenhefner – Natural Resource Program coordinator for developing a series of children's programs at Fort Abraham Lincoln State Park.

Erik Dietrich – Motorized Recreation Coordinator, for his efforts to provide OHV and snowmobile training at the Law Enforcement Academy's Basic Training.

Dick Messerly – manager of Fort Stevenson State Park, for commitment to community service.

Planning Division – for creative efforts in infrastructure development at Sully Creek and Little Missouri State Parks. **Jesse Hanson** and West District carpenter **Jerry Grasl** also received Merit awards for innovative and efficient project results in work at Sully Creek and Little Missouri State Parks.

Online Management System Team – Park Operations Assistant **Karen Assel**, former Information Technology Coordinator **Barb Winking**, Turtle River State Park manager

Steve Crandall and Grahams Island State Park manager **Henry Duray** were cited for their efforts in development and implementation of the Online Management System.

Special Merit Awards:

Jim Wenning – Mercer County Sheriff’s Office employee, for his volunteer work with the Lake Sakakawea State Park Wheelchair Hunt.

Bobby Koepplin – Cass County Rural Electric Cooperative rural development manager, for his contributions in development and promotion of several recreation and tourism initiatives in the Sheyenne River Valley which Fort Ransom State Park, the city of Fort Ransom, the ND Forest Service and the surrounding region benefitted.

Service Awards (years of service to NDPRD):

30 Years: Fort Ransom State Park manager **John Kwapinski**; Turtle River State Park manager **Steve Crandall**; administrative staff officer **Kathy Renner**.

25 Years: Fort Abraham Lincoln State Park manager **Dan Schelske**.

20 Years: Lake Metigoshe State Park ranger **Bill Demming**.

15 Years: Planner **Marc Brown**.

10 Years: Lake Sakakawea State Park ranger **Keith Orth** and GIS specialist **Chris Dirk**.

5 Years: Icelandic State Park manager **Justin Robinson**; Motorized Recreation Coordinator **Erik Dietrich**; and Fort Abraham Lincoln State Park carpenter **Dennis Gores**.