

10. PROGRAM: PUBLICATIONS

Since 1982, the NRS Publications Program has documented and publicized the resources of the UC Natural Reserve System by producing and distributing (or providing access to) a variety of printed publications and other communications media, including:

- Transect newsletter
- Reserve brochure series
- Systemwide general and occasional publications
- Media releases
- NRS video series (and NRS film)
- Newspaper and magazine articles
- NRS Systemwide website

These publications and other media, targeted to reach a variety of audiences, raise the profile and status of the NRS, both within and outside of the UC system, attract and inform reserve users, and support efforts to raise the funds needed to expand and develop the resources of the NRS.

Transect Newsletter

The primary objective of the Transect is to provide news of the NRS, describing the research, instructional, and public service/outreach activities being carried out at NRS reserves. An issue of Transect usually runs sixteen pages, and each issue features a combination of the following:

- a column by the NRS director that describes major Systemwide accomplishments and goals or discusses reserve-related intellectual questions of interest to the research and instructional community;
- feature articles that present information about reserve-based research, educational activities, management and monitoring programs; and
- stories that offer information on key reserve staff, major grants to the system or to individual reserve sites, new on-site facilities, NRS grant program recipients, and recent reserve additions, as well as reports on past events and new publications available.

The primary audience for Transect is the field science research and instructional community, including: (1) faculty and students from the University's ten campuses and from other institutions, both within and outside of California; and (2) staff of public and private resource-management programs, such as state and federal agencies, The Nature Conservancy, land trusts and open space foundations, botanical gardens, and other field stations. Many individual readers are current and past reserve users; many others are potential reserve users. Because the primary audience is comprised of members of the research and instructional community, most Transect stories do presume some scientific background; however, it is recognized that every specialist is likely to be a generalist outside of his or her particular field of expertise.

Secondary audiences include: elementary and secondary school teachers, community organizations, educational groups and associations, legislators and

other public officials, neighbors of reserves, developers, writers, members of the general public with an interest in environmental matters, donors and prospective donors, and UC administrators and Regents.

Since its inception in 1982, the Transect had been a biannual publication; in 2002, it became a triannual, issued in the spring, summer (or fall), and fall (or winter) of each year. Approximately 4,300 copies of Transect are mailed to 2,750 records, 1,200 of which are individual recipients who have requested placement on the Transect mailing list. The remaining 1,500 or so records are college and University administrators or graduate students (with some bulk mailings for general distribution) of various departments, largely those related to field sciences, but also humanities and social sciences departments, such as English, visual arts, photography, and performing arts. The majority of Transect recipients are located in California; and, with the exception of 17 international recipients, the rest are scattered across the United States. These distribution figures are typical for any particular Transect issue and have remained more or less constant for the past decade.

All past issues of Transect (beginning with volume 1, number 1, produced in the spring of 1982) are available for viewing, in PDF format, on the NRS website.

Articles are searchable by publication date or by reserve. Collectively, these issues form a thorough and lively organizational history that documents NRS growth and activities over a generation.

During 20+ years of ongoing production, Transect has become the true public face of the reserve system and an effective means of promoting the unique value of this network, giving the NRS an organizational identity whose impact is far greater than what could otherwise be achieved through a casual association of many individual sites administered by eight geographically disjunct UC campuses. The Transect is regularly used to represent the NRS, demonstrating what the reserve system is, why it was created in 1965, and why support of it becomes increasingly important. The Transect is persuasive not only with prospective donors, but also with the NRS's government agency and private organization partners, whose ongoing cooperation is essential to maintaining the world's largest University-managed system of nature reserves. Finally, Transect has shown itself to be an effective way of keeping the NRS's parent institution, the University of California, apprised of its contributions to the University, the state, and — as the NRS mission statement expresses it — “the understanding and wise management of the Earth and its natural systems.”

Reserve Brochure Series

In the early 1980s, the NRS Systemwide office initiated production of a series of detailed brochures, each one containing information about the natural resources and support facilities of a particular individual NRS reserve. These brochures are designed to help faculty and students identify and evaluate field sites; they may also serve as field guides for classes and as site descriptions for research grant proposals.

Because the NRS reserve brochures are all part of a single series, all follow a consistent style and format. However, the breadth of scope, level of detail, and size of press run for each brochure is specifically tailored to fit the needs and potential of its subject site. Text and illustrations reflect the size, diversity of values, type and degree of use (both past and projected), and amount of information available for the reserve. Consequently, the length of a reserve brochure may be as short as four pages (e.g., the Kendall-Frost Mission Bay Marsh Reserve brochure) or as long as sixteen pages (e.g., the Santa Cruz Island Reserve brochure). Each reserve brochure typically offers site specs (administering campus, date established, location, latitude/longitude, USGS map, size, elevation, precipitation, temperatures, topography, habitats, species diversity, databases, and personnel), followed by text that describes the reserve — its history, climate, geology, hydrology, habitats, flora, fauna, facilities, research, instructional, and public service uses, restrictions, and administration. Site and regional maps are included, whenever possible.

Because the reserve brochures are intended to help each reserve signal its availability, the bulk of a site's brochures is sent to the reserve headquarters for distribution (or, alternatively, part of the press run goes to the reserve and part goes to the administering UC campus's NRS office). A limited inventory of reserve brochures is maintained in the NRS Systemwide office in order to fulfill specific mailings of certain publications and to answer individual requests for brochures. All reserves are encouraged to maintain a complete set of brochures for other sites as well as their own.

NRS Video Series (and NRS Film)

The NRS Publications Program is working with the UC Davis-based ANR Communications Services Video Production group on a series of half-hour videos designed to increase public awareness of the reserve system. The videos will be broadcast on UCTV, which reaches more than 7 million homes throughout North America via satellite and cable television. Eventually, the programs will be available for viewing through UCTV website's "video on-demand" science topics. Completed videos will also be provided to the NRS Systemwide office to assist NRS fundraising and community outreach efforts.

The first program in this UCTV series will provide an overview of the NRS, its history and its unique status as the world's largest university-managed reserve system. Each of the subsequent programs will focus on the research, teaching, and outreach activities supported by a specific NRS reserve. Programs currently in production will offer portraits of Hastings Natural History Reservation, Sedgwick Reserve, Landels-Hill Big Creek Reserve, James San Jacinto Mountains Reserve, Carpinteria Salt Marsh Reserve, and Coal Oil Point Natural Reserve.

Systemwide General and Occasional Publications

Now and then, the NRS Systemwide office produces generalist publications that announce, describe, and explain the reserve system as a whole. A publication may be created:

- to mark an anniversary and support a fundraising campaign (such as Natural Reserve System / The First Twenty Years, aka the “Twentieth Anniversary Report,” produced in the 1980s);
- to support a specific event (such as the so-called NRS centerfold, a true “occasional publication” distributed at a Natural Areas Association conference luncheon sponsored by the NRS in the 1990s, and a NRS folder produced in the 1990s to attractively contain publications distributed at an NRS presentation to the UC Regents);
- to fulfill the need for a published, overall view of the reserve system (such as the “NRS take-one,” one of the system’s few full-color publications, and the NRS Guide and Site Specs, created to be easily updated and inexpensive to reproduce).

In contrast with Transect and the reserve brochures, the NRS Publications Program’s occasional publications do not represent a continuing effort that requires ongoing commitment of resources. Rather, they are one-time productions designed to meet specific purposes. In addition, occasional publications about the NRS published by campuses are supported in part by the NRS Systemwide office (e.g., *Kenneth S. Norris, Naturalist, Cetologist & Conservationist 1924-1998, An Oral History Biography*, 1999; *Views of a Coastal Wilderness: 20 Years of Research at Big Creek Reserve*, 2001.)

Media Releases

When a major event occurs in the life of the reserve system – for example, the NRS receives a large gift or one of its reserves is employed as the site of significant, long-term research – the NRS Publications Program responds by drafting a media release and forwarding it for distribution to ANR’s Office of Government and External Relations (OGER) and/or UCOP’s Office of External Relations.

The NRS Publications Program may also, on occasion, support campus-based fundraising efforts by writing, rewriting, or editing media releases and similar materials destined for dissemination by the campus.

The NRS Publications Program maintains a list of internal UC writers, editors, and photographers with responsibility for print and electronic media who are likely to welcome the kinds of stories the NRS can provide. These media contacts are sent press packets introducing them to the reserve system and releases and tip sheets succinctly suggesting topics for possible NRS-related stories they might wish to cover.

Newspaper and Magazine Articles

Occasionally, newspapers and magazines publish articles about the UC reserve system, its individual reserves, research conducted on site, and the field scientists, instructors, and students who use the reserves (or even the philanthropists who endow them). Some of these articles are written by Systemwide or campus-based

NRS personnel, then submitted to either UC or external publications. Others are written by UC writers for UC publications, or by external (non-UC) media staff writers for their own publications, or by freelance writers for wherever they can find their way into print.

To the fullest extent possible, the NRS Publications Program supports the writing and publication of articles about the NRS: offering information and data, providing useful contacts, reviewing manuscripts prior to submission, supplying publication-quality images. Giving such support is the best way to monitor and maintain some influence (in the most positive way possible) over what information is disseminated about the NRS; moreover, this approach enables the NRS Systemwide office to quickly derail misinformation before it makes its way into print (where it could be passed along countless times). Moreover, an article written by a staff writer for an external publication is not only likely to be widely read, depending upon that publication's circulation, but also presents a valuable objective perspective.

NRS Systemwide Website

The NRS Systemwide website (<http://nrs.ucop.edu/>) was first launched in the mid-1990s. Time has greatly increased the number and types of materials that this site gives access to; the complexity of architecture required to keep up with its offerings has likewise increased. Nowadays, the website makes available information of interest to many audiences — mainly, reserve users and potential reserve users, members of the general public (educators, legislators, individuals involved in management of natural resources, community organizers, and others), and NRS

personnel (whether in the Systemwide office, on campus, or on site). It seems likely that there is considerable overlap between the audience attracted to the NRS Systemwide website and the audience attracted to the Transect newsletter. In any event, the NRS Systemwide website is a communications medium that may be appropriately considered within the purview of the NRS Publications Program.

It is to be anticipated that the structure, content, and aesthetics of the NRS Systemwide website will change over time. One blessing of the website as a communications medium is that it can be revised as necessary or desirable. The NRS Systemwide website is the only production of the NRS Publications Program that is always a “work in progress,” always “in press.”

Program Staffing

The NRS Publications Program is staffed with:

- Principal Publications Coordinator: Responsible for editing, design, layout, proofing, prepress, printing, distribution (full-time position)
- Senior Science Writer: Responsible for research, writing, graphics (full-time position)
- Administrative Assistant III: Responsible for maintenance of mailing list database, graphics support (part-time dedicated to support of the NRS Publications Program)