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**Major Gary Van Horn**  
**February 26, 2002**

Interview conducted by Janet McDonnell  
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NATIONAL PARK SERVICE  
SEPTEMBER 11th ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

Interview with

*MAJOR GARY VAN HORN, USPP*

Conducted by

Janet A. McDonnell, Ph.D.

February 26, 2002

Washington, D.C.

## START OF TAPE

Janet McDonnell: It's February 26th and I'm here in the Main Interior Building with Major Gary Van Horn, the national...

Gary Van Horn: United States Park Police.

Janet McDonnell: Okay, national law enforcement specialist?

Gary Van Horn: Yes, that's my position, national law enforcement specialist.

Janet McDonnell: Okay. How and where did you first become aware of the attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon?

Gary Van Horn: Well, it was shortly after the planes were flown into the World Trade Center. I was in my office in Main Interior on the 7th floor. I can't recall who it was, but someone came down the hallway to my office very excitedly and told me that either a plane or two planes, I can't remember if the person told me both planes had been flown into the World Trade Center or just the one, but that it was on television down in the office.

Janet McDonnell: What were your immediate actions then? What were some of the first things going through your mind that had to be done?

Gary Van Horn: Well, one of the first things that initially struck me was, we've got to get our emergency response team in place in the event that other incidents were going to occur in and around the Washington Metropolitan Area. I went immediately back to my office, got my police radio that I keep in my office and turned that on, and it was very shortly thereafter the plane struck the Pentagon and we were receiving all kinds of reports.

Gary Van Horn: Initially, we tried to establish what could amount to a command center in the conference room on the 7th floor. But with basically everybody going in different directions, it wasn't feasible to establish that kind of an office at that particular point in time. It really needed to be located down lower in this building and all of the appropriate folks had to be contacted in order for them to go there - basically, the command staff of the Department of the Interior and the various bureau heads. So, there was a point in time when that needed to take place.

Gary Van Horn: And then I was very concerned for our monuments and memorials. Being a major with the U.S. Park Police, I went out to my police cruiser and did a very quick inspection of our monuments and

memorials, physically driving to every one of them to make sure that all of our officers were in position in the event we were going to be faced with subsequent attack of some kind. I went by the Washington, the Jefferson, and the Lincoln.

Gary Van Horn: And I actually positioned myself on Memorial Bridge. And the reason I did that was because there was a very suspicious package that was on the sidewalk. It was a box of some kind and some of the contents had partially come out. It was quite suspicious, so I called in a suspicious package and had both ends of Memorial Bridge shut down until we were able to get a canine unit to respond and check that package out. So that took place over probably half an hour or so, maybe 45 minutes, we had to have the bridge shut down and divert traffic. It was on the bridge off of it, and then we had to shut it down at both ends.

Gary Van Horn: Once that was established, once we had officers on the scene and the bridge was secure, I went back to the Department of Interior and at that point in time we had established basically a command center down in the basement at the National Business Center conference room.

Janet McDonnell: When you visited the different monuments and memorials, were you satisfied with what you saw there, the level of security and of awareness?

Gary Van Horn: Yes, I was. There was an immediate response by the U.S. Park Police who provide security for the monuments and the memorials and the downtown core area. The shift commander and the officials responsible for our operations division immediately stripped our districts of any additional personnel that they had available and sent them down to the monuments and memorial area to ensure that we had sufficient protection, and we did. And there was basically a call out to bring in officers on their sign off days and officers who might not otherwise be scheduled to work and had them come in. So, I was happy with the response there. I was satisfied. I knew we had officers responding to the Pentagon. We had a couple of our motorcycle officers over there right after the plane struck the Pentagon.

Janet McDonnell: You mentioned realizing that you, not you personally but the leadership here needed to convene an emergency response team. Are you referring to the Type-1 Team?

Gary Van Horn: No, not necessarily the Type-1 Team.

Janet McDonnell: Is there another emergency response team that I don't know? Who makes up that team I guess I'm asking?

Gary Van Horn: Yes, not so much the team as it is the decision makers. The decision makers within the Department of the Interior and the various bureaus needed to get together in a safe environment, one where there was communications, one where they could decide what actions they were going to take, and be coordinated as a group as opposed to certain bureaus doing certain things differently than the group as a whole. That did take place, fairly quickly, despite the chaos that was going on at the time. We had the different bureau heads. I know the Director of the Park Service was there, Fran Mainella, [and] the Assistant Secretary. We had those folks available immediately. Mr. Griles was there. Brian Waidmann. All of the players that needed to be there were actually there to be able to make these decisions and evacuate. I mean we had to decide who was going to be evacuated, what we were going to do for security of this building, how we needed to get people to certain places. Roadblocks were put up around town. We had a major evacuation going on over at the Pentagon. Our helicopter made numerous emergency evacuations of personnel from the Pentagon. Those were the injured persons and the persons who'd already been deceased. So, we had to figure out where we were going to continue with our Continuity of Operations.

Janet McDonnell: At what point then was the department's continuity of operations plan invoked? Or what parts of it, or is there anything you can tell me about the plan that isn't classified?

Gary Van Horn: Yes, I don't know at what level I can discuss what was done and how it was done. But I can tell you in general terms that I was very impressed with how quickly the plan came together and those folks that needed to go to an alternate location got there. The spirit of cooperation and teamwork was heartwarming. It was truly a team effort. We met downstairs in the conference room at Main Interior, decided who needed to be evacuated. The U.S. Park Police responded and made personal evacuations of key staffers. We had police cars that came off of the street, loaded up folks and took them, immediately, to another alternate location. It was decided that the bureau heads and the Department of Interior decision makers would relocate there. We assisted in that.

Gary Van Horn: The director of the Park Service, Fran Mainella, needed to go there and she was brand new at the time. She really didn't know me. The first time she had an opportunity to meet me was in that meeting. And I can recall sitting at the table with her and leaning over and

asking her if she felt that she needed a U.S. Park Police official out there and she said, "Yes, I think I do. I'd like to have one out there." And I said, "Do you have any idea how you're going to get out there?" She said, "No." I said, "I'm taking you."

Gary Van Horn:

She had her privately owned vehicle here and I had, of course, my police cruiser, knowing where we were going. I'd been there several times. I knew she really didn't know how to get there and had no real means by which to get there other than her own personal vehicle. I had her follow me in my police cruiser to her home and we went around roadblocks. Got her to her home, she was able to grab some luggage. I raced home, grabbed some clothing and some luggage. And it's funny. My wife said, "Well, you probably haven't had anything to eat." I said, "No, I haven't." I said, "But make two sandwiches, one for me and one for the director." So, she quickly made two sandwiches. I grabbed those and raced back to the Director's house. She loaded in the car and we were off. And we were up there quickly. And that's when certain decisions and issues were discussed. Steve Griles was leading those discussions.

Janet McDonnell:

Did some of those early discussions involve park closures, the decisions to close parks around the country? I understand that it was pretty obvious about the ones in the Northeast Region. Do you recall any of the discussions about that, what people were thinking?

Gary Van Horn:

Well, you know part of the problem that we had to grapple with, initially, was we really didn't know what was a target. We had a pretty clear indication that economic centers, the World Trade Center, was a target. Pentagon - military target. But we didn't yet know if any of our, what I would consider, precious national icons were ever really on the list. There is certainly probably even more than speculation that the White House was on that list of targets. There's also speculation that other institutions very near to the Main Interior Building here was also on a terrorist short list of targets.

Gary Van Horn:

But I don't think at that point in time we had an understanding of the terrorists' motivation and whether or not they considered something that we would consider precious was on their list. And I refer to such things as the Statue of Liberty, Golden Gate Bridge, the Arch, certain other landmarks and icons that we hold near and dear, Independence Hall, the Liberty Bell, I mean we just didn't know.

- Gary Van Horn: So, initially, our response was let's increase our security at all of our areas for general awareness, and there were certain areas that were immediately closed down. It didn't really have a dramatic impact on the function of the facility, visitor centers, things like that, restricted areas that might have been open to the public prior to 9/11, but because of those incidents we chose a safer approach, at least initially, by restricting and/or closing certain facilities.
- Janet McDonnell: I have been interested in the process for determining which parks were at greatest risk and which were in that category of "icon," and I understand that the department actually developed a list in the 1990's and then of course with knowledge through law enforcement agencies, obviously made decisions as a combination of that. Is it your sense that there was something they had to work from initially?
- Gary Van Horn: Well, you know it's interesting, because homeland security provided us a briefing and we had a couple of hours with their folks in discussing what we would consider national critical infrastructure. And we had some icons listed that didn't necessarily strictly meet the definition of a national critical infrastructure. And it was an interesting conversation with those folks because they said, "We see you have things on there that just intuitively need to be on there but yet did not strictly meet the definition of what our folks, meaning homeland security folks, would define as national critical infrastructure."
- Gary Van Horn: And I had a piece that I presented specifically on security at the Statue of Liberty. And I think my argument at the time, and still is, was that what price do you place on the emotional wellbeing of citizens of the United States? And indeed, if something catastrophic, horrific, were to occur at the Statue of Liberty, not only would it have a psychological impact, but indeed it would have an economic impact on the nation as a whole. And that, it's actually more, it transcends the symbol of freedom for the United States. It's a symbol of freedom for the world. So yes, it doesn't specifically meet the definition of national critical infrastructure but in every other sense of the word it is, and intuitively it needs to be listed as one of those icons that need to be protected to the highest level.
- Janet McDonnell: Just to continue along chronologically a bit. The director and other senior leaders, they returned the next day, as I understand it, or maybe even later that night. I'm not sure about that. Can you talk, could we move to the 12th then a little bit? At one point you

indicated that you had some links with the Type-1 team. At what point was the incident team brought in?

Gary Van Horn: Okay. We were up at this other location, and I would like to say for the record the folks at this location were extremely accommodating for the crush of officials who descended on it. And the operation was, in my opinion, very successful. Hats off to Jerry Land and his group. They pulled together the resources necessary for that to be a success, and I personally thanked him in front of the director for his efforts in pulling all of that together so quickly.

Gary Van Horn: The thought then was, look, we've got employees who really don't yet know what to do. Well, how do we get the message out to our employees? Should they come to work? Should they not come to work? Is there still a continuing threat? So, we were in the process of trying to gather intelligence as best we could and get that mechanism kicked into high gear so that we could collect information, accurate information, so that we could make educated decisions.

Gary Van Horn: And I can remember that a lot of folks were prepared to spend the night, at least a night, at an alternate location. And it was quite a distance from here driving there. And I remember having a conversation with the director. In fact, I even whispered in her ear. "I'm fine to drive back. I don't care what time it is. My personal opinion, it would send a great message if you were able to come into work tomorrow at the Main Interior Building." And we discussed that, and she discussed it with other officials at the Department of Interior. And it was actually her call, and after we got a couple of hours into the evening and we got certain things accomplished at the time, she said, "Let's go. We're going to go back."

Gary Van Horn: And we returned that evening and drove back fairly late. And I got her back to her residence and then back in real early in the morning. She made her own way back in. I believe, I'm not sure if she had her driver pick her up or she was able to make her own way in with her own vehicle. But at any rate, we were back in bright and early that morning. And there was still a tremendous sense of unknown, but we had a lot of employees who were here at the time on the 12th.

Gary Van Horn: And I can recall that day being in my office working on, obviously a number of different things all at once, and we had someone who ran down the hallway and said, "Everybody get to the basement. Get to the basement as fast as you can. Just run to the basement."



They were doing this up and down hallways. So, I went down to the basement to try to figure out what was going on at the time, and that's when all of the employees in Interior were all basically collecting at the cafeteria. And all of the radio communications were jammed. You couldn't get a cell phone signal to save your soul. It just was totally jammed. Everything was jammed.

Gary Van Horn:

Fortunately, I had my Nextel telephone is networked with Park Police officials and I was able to get out. I was able to get out and I was able to find out that the reason we were told to get to the basement as soon as possible was that Mr. Griles, Steve Griles, was speaking to the Secretary, Gale Norton. And she was advised, while she was on the telephone with him, that there was the possibility of a couple of jet liners that were hijacked from Canada that were heading into U.S. airspace not heeding the warning to turn around or to stay back on course. And the fear was they were heading directly here towards Washington. And that, of course, set into motion pandemonium among everyone, all of the employees.

Gary Van Horn:

And I was able to get out on my Nextel phone in order to contact Park Police officials and determine that that information was not accurate. That there was no unidentified or airline hijackings that were perhaps coming toward Washington, and that the Air Force scrambled a couple of fighter jets that went up to ensure that that in fact was not occurring. And I remember Mr. Griles asked me to please stand up on a chair in the cafeteria area and just personally let everyone know who was down there that this information was found to be not accurate, and that we wanted to thank them for their immediate quick response and working together again as a team, to come together. And I think that went very well. I think the employees appreciated hearing that at least we were able to confirm information that we were receiving. But I couldn't contact anybody through my normal cell phone communications. So we were doing our best to sooth over everyone's nerves and Mr. Griles addressed the crowd, and all of the folks, and I believe he said to them that they had an option of staying and working the rest of the day or they could leave, if they felt that they needed to.

Janet McDonnell:

You were also beginning to address security concerns at this building and for Park Service employees at G Street. Is that correct?

Gary Van Horn:

That is correct. We were concerned about employees in general, everywhere. And what we decided we would do, at least initially, we had a couple of Park Police officers come over, one on the C Street side, one on the E Street side, in their police cruisers. And

then what we did, and I wasn't immediately involved in this, it came more from the Department of the Interior Office of Law Enforcement Security, working to get a detail of folks in to provide armed law enforcement security for the building. And that was the same with the dams out west. There was an immediate response of law enforcement to provide that necessary level of protection in the short term.

Janet McDonnell: Back to the continuity of operations plan for a minute. Were you satisfied with the implementation of that? I understand that there are a few things that they're looking at now as a result of what we learned after September 11th. Did it seem to work effectively and smoothly?

Gary Van Horn: Well, in hindsight, initially, it was not a well-oiled machine. It was not something that everybody was aware of. We all knew our roles. We all needed to be done. We all had our own bureau continuity of operations plans that would kick in. That really didn't happen that way. But what you had was a group of, I would say, officials and employees, who were ready to either lead or follow. And a lot of the folks who were leaders were ready to follow and it worked extraordinarily well despite the fact that this had not been rehearsed. It had not been planned for. There was not something that we routinely would go through every couple of years to make sure all of the kinks were worked out of it.

Gary Van Horn: We had some difficulties in the evacuation of certain officials from this building. We had some difficulties in communications. But that was pretty much throughout law enforcement in the government. Communications just basically came to a standstill because of our reliance on cellular communications. It was a real problem. When we were at the alternate site, we were able to use GETS [Government Emergency Telecommunications System] cards which helped us get through on the telephone lines, and that was a big benefit. One of the other things that caused—

Janet McDonnell: But you didn't have that in this building, access to that in this building? Or I guess it's not - it's a card?

Gary Van Horn: It's a card that allows you an access—

Janet McDonnell: So, you could have used it here during that time period. Okay.

Gary Van Horn: We could have. But the nature of the incident on September 12th didn't lend itself to someone getting to a telephone. We all pretty much had to rush into the cafeteria in the basement, and the only

way we were able to get communications, actually, I used my Nextel Direct Connect feature to contact our folks at headquarters and be able to confirm or deny certain information.

Gary Van Horn: I think the continuity of operations, itself, like I say in hindsight, initially, it was a bit rocky, a little dysfunctional. We didn't have the smooth sort of rehearsed response that you would expect if you had had time to prepare. But despite that fact, I personally feel that it went awfully well, overall. The big picture is it worked efficiently. Decisions were made. Information was flowing between officials of the Department of Interior and throughout the bureau.

Gary Van Horn: The director, the acting director of law enforcement and security, Steve Calvery at the time, unfortunately was stranded out at Klamath Falls, Oregon, so he was pretty much out of communications for a couple of days. I was able to speak to him a few times on the telephone. But he couldn't get a way back, because obviously air travel was pretty much nonexistent for a while there. He couldn't get back on a flight. But he did, eventually, a few days later get back. So, it was a combined effort of a lot of well-meaning, well-intentioned individuals.

Janet McDonnell: And how did that flow of information change when the incident team arrived?

Gary Van Horn: You know, I don't remember the exact day they came in. I remember having discussions with the associate director of operations, Dick Ring. And I spoke with, Dennis Burnett and I spoke, daily. I can't remember when they actually came in.

Janet McDonnell: It might have been the 12th? It was very early.

Gary Van Horn: It might have been - it was early. I just don't remember the exact day or time. It was very early. And that took a lot of pressure off of WASO, I mean our office, because that office itself has pretty much been decimated as far as any sort of staffing support. I mean a lot of times it's Dennis Burnett sitting across the hallway from me, and we're looking at each other going, "It's just two of us. How can we do all of the stuff that needs to be done?" Randy Coffman was fairly recent to the office, and he was a big help.

Gary Van Horn: So the Type 1 Incident Team came in and was quickly able to get established and provide that necessary oversight and staff support that needed to be done, with WASO being so, basically the authority and the law enforcement staffing has been moved out. It's

been decentralized, so we really couldn't get done all that needed to be done at WASO without calling in a Type 1 Incident Team.

Janet McDonnell: What was the process from acquiring intelligence information about threats to parks?

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START OF SIDE B

Gary Van Horn: Well, it's not just the threats to parks, I guess. More than that, actually, it was a generalized feeling that we weren't able to get intelligence information. Certain folks didn't have intelligence mechanism in place throughout the different bureaus, not the least of which was the Park Service. We have interests, as you know, all throughout the country, and it was spotty how we received information. The Office of Law Enforcement Security for the Department of the Interior had someone immediately assigned to the FBI SIAC (sic).

Janet McDonnell: What's SIAC?

Gary Van Horn: Well, basically the...

Janet McDonnell: It's an acronym.

Gary Van Horn: Yes, it's an acronym. Now you're going to ask me what it means. Basically, what it amounts to is law enforcement heads come together at the FBI to share intelligence information. And they routinely get briefings, twice a day, morning and afternoon, on intelligence gathering, information of that nature.

Gary Van Horn: The U.S. Park Police put folks in all of the area, what they call JOCS or SOCS, Special Operation Centers, Joint Operation Centers. We had them with, you know, the FBI, the Secret Service. We put them in the military. We had like 7 or 8 folks, officials who were assigned immediately to these different centers for communicating and sharing intelligence information.

Gary Van Horn: They were all over. And in fact, every day, every morning I would come in and I would contact each one of them by telephone to find out what the latest information they had was. Over at Fort Myer, we had one by the Pentagon, Metropolitan Police Department. We had them all, in all of the different ones that were established for communications. And we shared that pretty well in the Washington Metropolitan area, but we didn't get the top secret or what you call

SCI, Secret Compartmentalized Information, that you would get from NSA [National Security Administration] or the CIA [Central Intelligence Agency]. That information needed to go only to specific individuals, and then it could be reduced down to information that could be shared with others.

Gary Van Horn:

We have and had someone at the time assigned to the Joint Terrorism Task Force of the FBI. But that Joint Terrorism Task Force was not an intelligence gathering mechanism by itself. They were doing other things. They were actively working cases. They were actively working terrorist cases, so they were out in the field. So, expecting that that individual was going to be able to provide us cutting edge information on a regular basis really was not accurate. That was not really their role. And that was a source of miscommunication, I think, between the department and what that person was able to fulfill, the role they were actually able to fulfill.

Gary Van Horn:

Information from the field, meaning out in the parks themselves, pretty much relies on the relationships that are built over time with the local FBI office, Secret Service, and other Federal agencies, as well as state and local. I mean the whole infrastructure of intelligence gathering shifted after September. Much more emphasis has been placed on developing those relationships and having that ability to share information, and the frustration is getting it to state and local folks, or in our case out to the folks who are providing the protection to the individual parks. How do you get it from Washington, D.C., for example, out to where it needs to go? It's great that a bunch of officials and folks in Washington understand it and realize that there's a threat, but how do you actually get it out there quickly, efficiently? And that's still being worked on today because it's still not yet been completely ironed out. Each bureau is working on their own process by which they're going to get information out to the field, but we've come to realize that many of our folks don't have the level of clearances they need to have in order to share this information.

Gary Van Horn:

Another thing we learned was we don't have secure phones for the most part out in the field or secure faxes. And a lot of bureaus are rapidly working to correct that, at least in their key facilities within their regions.

Janet McDonnell:

Just to continue on that theme. I would appreciate hearing your thoughts on what this new homeland security environment means for the Park Service as an agency and what it means for the parks, themselves?

Gary Van Horn: The Park Service, having the largest law enforcement contingent within the Department of Interior, has been asked to do some extraordinary things since September. They've been asked to provide a variety of functions that they hadn't necessarily been asked to provide in the past, at least not certainly at this level. There really isn't another bureau that could step up with a level of expertise and proficiency that the Park Service was able to. They've been asked to immediately respond to dam sites within the Bureau of Reclamation out West and provide a security function for an extended period of time. We're doing that today, and we'll probably end up continuing to do it for some time in the near future here until we're able to supplement or augment that security need.

Gary Van Horn: I think homeland security for the Park Service has meant that we need to think more in terms of how we're going to respond rapidly to several locations with a sufficient number of personnel to provide immediate protection at the request of the President of the United States or our officials within the Department of Interior or our own bureau, the National Park Service. Different threat levels mean certain different things. But we're so decentralized in our own individual parks that outside of a SET team being requested to respond, we're relying on single resources, in other words available rangers that are at different parks. And there's a bit of frustration with our inability to identify individuals who could rapidly respond and at least, initially, provide a needed level of security until they could get augmented or supplemented by others.

Gary Van Horn: If we had to deploy to four, five, six different locations around the country, immediately, we would have to pull on local rangers at that particular area. We'd have to pull on our SET teams, as much as possible, yet be aware we can't strip all of them. We still have to have an available SET team in each region.

Janet McDonnell: A SET team being a Special Events Team?

Gary Van Horn: Special Events Team. Right. The chief rangers pretty much are able to do that, to call up SET teams. Dennis Burnett, as the acting chief ranger, would be able to approve that. We were able to do that, but we would rapidly burn out our SET teams if we relied solely on our SET teams. I think what we need to do is realize that at certain times we're going to need to pull on different resources, other than just our SET teams. And we do realize that now.

Gary Van Horn: We're trying to get a mechanism in place, that we can identify single resources to go to certain locations as a group. I don't think

that's been perfected. I think it is coming along, certainly with reclamation being more self-sufficient here. Hopefully in the near future the need for law enforcement rangers to go to their facilities will be lessened, but that will not lessen our need to have a system in place that we could immediately call up a certain number of trained law enforcement professionals to respond. So, I think we're still working on that and that system has not yet been perfected.

Janet McDonnell: Do you see any changes in the training itself or just the mechanism for identifying and deploying, for want of a better word, these people?

Gary Van Horn: Well, there's a training issue here, and it's also an issue of sufficient numbers of personnel. I think we had, for lack of a better phrase, a rude awakening when it came to September. We didn't realize - I personally did not realize the extent to which we were desperate for law enforcement personnel, law enforcement rangers. We're short. And that hits home. And it really hits home when we're at a peak time of the year when we need all of our folks out protecting our parks, being there with the public. And then to add on top of that a need for an immediate response by a significant number of personnel, it really drains us pretty sufficiently. And then we also had the Olympics, as you know, during this month and that's been another big pull on our personnel.

Gary Van Horn: My fear is that you're going to take hard-working dedicated folks and burn them out. And we have several incidents of that occurring where folks, they're just burnt out. I don't have a handle on the effect that that has had on families or on relationships, but I know it has to be a strain. When mommy or daddy is gone for an extended period of time, you know, it's tough on spouses and children.

Janet McDonnell: Well, just to wind down. Do you have any other thoughts on what we could have done better, what the Park Service might have learned about how to respond to national emergencies in the future? You've touched on some of these as we've gone through here, but I wanted to see if there was anything else.

Gary Van Horn: Well, I sort of hit the topic with a glancing blow and I'd just like to just, as I have this opportunity, I feel compelled to say that I really strongly believe that the chief rangers out at each individual region need to have the authority and the ability to call up law enforcement rangers for an identified need on short notice, without having to go through a number of different levels in order to get that approval. I mean it's great that we have a system in place

where we're looking for volunteers locally, and then we spread it out and go a little more broadly to try to find folks who are willing to do an assignment or participate in a detail.

Gary Van Horn: But when there's a crisis, we really don't have time to do all of that. We need to have someone pick up the telephone and have a certain number of folks identified in a variety of different parks and give the order. We need to, that direct line authority in terms of a crisis where we don't have time. We don't have time to make sure everybody is comfortable with this. We don't have time to get the permission or four, five, six, ten people. We have to give direction immediately. Let's get those folks where they need to go, right away, and then we can figure out how we're going to handle it on a longer-term basis.

Gary Van Horn: A direct line of authority within law enforcement, at least during times of emergency, is so needed. We were struggling there for quite some time with trying to locate folks to go to the different dam sites and come to here, the Department of Interior building. And then the whole issue of them needing to be deputized, it was a real struggle for us to get folks. And I think it would benefit the Park Service greatly if we all realized that during times of crisis, that's a needed function. And the folks that need to be able to put that in place are the chief rangers out in the region, with the approval and oversight of the chief ranger himself or herself, here in Washington, D.C.

Janet McDonnell: Is there anything that you're particularly pleased about in the response, that you consider particularly successful? It sounds like the implementation of the plan that first day was pretty successful. I just wondered if there's anything else that, maybe even on a personal level, that you find the most personally gratifying aspect of it? I mean, what worked really well?

Gary Van Horn: A lot of things worked really well. I think the thing that makes me most proud, when I think back on it, is the sense of unity that I saw. It was not a fragmented, you know, "We're not going to do that. We're going to do this." "Well that's not the way we do things. We do things this way." And, "We're going to go and do our own thing." It truly was a group of fairly new decision makers within the Department of Interior. I mean we have a whole new group of very important folks who are fairly new to their position. And I was surprised at how quickly they came around to understanding the function of law enforcement and what we could do to assist and how we could provide what they knew needed to be done.



Gary Van Horn:

And despite the rough start with Park Service being requested to go in so many different directions all at once it seemed like, those folks, law enforcement rangers out there doing the job, sacrificing their personal life, have done so unselfishly and that's really gratifying.

Janet McDonnell:

Okay. We'll just stop there.

END OF TAPE