



## **Research/Writing Positions Available for NPS Death Valley/Devil's Hole Pupfish History**

ASEH's Advisory Board on Professional Development and Public Engagement has been seeking opportunities to increase funding for environmental history scholarship outside the university. This year, we hope to offer two positions for environmental history scholars: one for a recent recipient of the PhD and one for a senior scholar.

An agreement with the National Park Service (NPS) has recently funded two positions, which we are now seeking to fill:

- (1) A researcher/writer who received a PhD in 2011, 2012, or 2013 but does not have a position at a university or college. Background in environmental history required. Full time for two years.
- 2) A senior historian to assist in overseeing the research and writing for the project described below. Background in environmental history required. Estimated time: 10 hours/month for two years.

The successful candidates will work with ASEH and NPS staff to complete a history of Death Valley National Park's management and recovery of the endangered Devil's Hole Pupfish (*Cyprinodon diabolis*). The Devil's Hole Pupfish story is unique because it is widely believed that Devil's Hole (located in Nevada) is the smallest vertebrate species habitat in the world. The Devil's Hole pupfish have been listed as endangered species since 1967 and were the subject of a 1976 landmark Supreme Court ruling, *Cappaert v. United States*.

### **NPS Project Description**

An environmental history of the recovery efforts of the Devils Hole pupfish is needed. For more than a decade, the Devils Hole pupfish population has been in a state of decline. In that time, a diverse list of cooperators have made numerous efforts to understand, manage, and reverse this trend. There is an urgent need to compile, collate, and synthesize all the historical, biological, and ecosystem information from these past efforts.

The environmental history will be interdisciplinary in nature and similar to an administrative history: it will document the interactions between humans (interventions, impacts) and the pupfish (ecological systems, biological processes), using a written narrative, photos, maps, and other graphics to illustrate past, current, and future interactions.

At a minimum, the history will include: discovery, identification, inventory, and collection of the pupfish; history and discussion of the legislation establishing protection for the pupfish; history of environmental activism relating to the pupfish; discussion of the conflict between the endangered species act and water rights that affected the pupfish; discussion of those involved with the recovery process and when; analysis of which recovery efforts worked and failed including plans and goals; discussion regarding negotiations and compromises with NPS partners in managing the pupfish.

Numerous oral interviews with all the parties involved and archival searches in pertinent federal, state, local, and private records in numerous states will be made, including: the Desert Fishes Council (created in the 1970s over concern about declining water levels in Devils Hole and subsequent effect upon the pupfish); US Fish and Wildlife Service; Nevada Department of Wildlife; Universities of Michigan and Nevada, Las Vegas.

Project will require travel and will require quarterly reporting to ASEH and the ASEH membership.

## **Funding**

Phase I of this project will include \$35,000 for the researcher/writer position #1 described above (includes money for travel) and \$7,000 for the senior historian position #2 described above. Phase II funding is to be determined later.

## **Schedule**

This two-phase project would begin during the summer of 2013 and will be completed in 2015. The recipients will contract with ASEH.

**To apply for either position, please e-mail the following materials to [director@aseh.net](mailto:director@aseh.net):**

- cover letter clearly indicating which position you seek (research/writer position or senior historian position) and briefly explaining how your research interests relate to this project
- two page c.v.
- relevant writing sample (for research/writer position only), electronic submission only
- names and phone numbers of three references

**Deadline for applications: July 22, 2013. Recipients will be selected and informed by August 12, 2013.**