

Margaret “Meg” Hahr

Former Alaska biologist, Margaret "Meg" Hahr, 41, died suddenly June 21, 2009 from injuries sustained in a mountain biking accident near her home in Munising, Michigan.

Meg recently moved to Munising to accept the position as Chief for the Division of Science and Natural Resources at Pictured Rocks National Lakeshore. She transferred from Kenai Fjords National Park in Seward, Alaska, where she served as a wildlife ecologist since 2006. She had been an active member of the Alaska Chapter of The Wildlife Society, running as a candidate for Secretary-Treasurer in 2008.

Meg was born November 19, 1967 in Plainfield, New Jersey. She earned a B.A. in English with a minor in Biology from Rutgers University and a M.S. in Environmental Studies from the University of Montana. Following a Student Conservation Association internship for the Bureau of Land Management in western Oregon, Meg spent two years as an Agroforestry Specialist with the U.S. Peace Corps in sub-Saharan West Africa. While there, she provided technical assistance to rural, subsistence farmers and herders in the areas of rangeland management, soil conservation, reforestation, wildlife conservation, watershed management, and sustainable agriculture.

Meg's employment with the National Park Service began in 1998 as a wildlife technician at Glacier National Park. She conducted a winter distribution and habitat use study of lynx, fisher, and wolverine in Glacier National Park for her Master's thesis through the University of Montana. Meg moved to Alaska in 2002 to manage the wildlife and natural resources program at Klondike Gold Rush National Historical Park in Skagway, Alaska. Her efforts there focused on bear management, habitat restoration, and inventory and monitoring of landbirds, waterbirds, western toads, and forest owls. As the wildlife ecologist for Kenai Fjords National Park, Meg was responsible for designing, implementing, and managing the park's wildlife program. Her efforts focused on seabird monitoring, black oystercatcher research, and brown and black bear management.

Meg had spent only four months in her position at Pictured Rocks National Lakeshore, but she quickly conveyed her skills and abilities not only as a top notch resource manager but as a communicator and supervisor. "The entire Lakeshore staff and the town of Munising are devastated at this loss of such a young, vibrant, capable, and dedicated person," said Superintendent Jim Northup. "The National Park Service has truly lost a leader in her field. We will miss her greatly."

Despite their short time in Munising, Meg and her husband, Sidney Shaw, who is a mental health professional, had become quickly engaged in the social fabric of the community and endeared themselves to many. "Meg was always one to fully engage in the act of living life, and to participate at all levels, at all times," her family recalled. "Her kindness was infectious, and her energy and spirit inspirational. Meg was an accomplished outdoors woman who loved to hike, sea kayak, ski, and snowshoe. She also completed a yoga instructor's course in Costa Rica, and was constantly exploring the outdoors and the world with her husband and friends. She was an amazingly balanced and centered individual who knew how to find and celebrate the joys in life, and who touched all our lives for the better."

Meg is survived by her husband, Sidney Shaw of Munising; her parents, Arthur and Barbara Hahr of Plainfield, N.J.; and her sister and brother-in-law, Nancy and Neil Weidner and their family. Since Meg felt most at home outdoors and believed in the preservation of wilderness areas, a fund has been established with the Nature Conservancy. Donations may be made to this fund in Meg's name at: Nature Conservancy, PO Box 6020, Albert Lea, MN 56007-9824; 1-800-628-6860; account #12005888. — *Gregg Bruff, family, and friends*



Photo by Gregg Bruff