

Davidge Opens GWS Conference

Ric Davidge, special assistant to the Assistant Secretary for Fish, Wildlife and Parks, told the opening session of the George Wright Society Conference on Protection of Cultural and Natural Resources:

"If there is any programmatic act that should have absolute academic and professional integrity, it is the National Park Service science program."

Davidge addressed the conferees at their opening session Oct. 18, 1982, in the Department of the Interior auditorium.

"The last real mission statement for science was in Ron Walker's administration," he said, "and it presents a challenge to this Administration. We want to look at the structure of the science program — how it interfaces with management — and how we can better interject science services into resource management."

"The hallmark we are looking for is common sense — good, down-to-earth, feet-on-the-ground activity. I'm convinced we can do a much better job than we're doing now."

Davidge cited the Everglades NP as one of the most threatened parks in the System and said, "Morally, we should be dealing with these problems and the fact is we don't know too much about them." He urged National Park scientists to interface with the science services of other Federal agencies and also state and local agencies that can supply pertinent scientific information.

The Strategy Conference recommendations will be carried in their entirety in the George Wright FORUM.