

MAB Notes

A personal communication from Ric Davidge, Special Assistant to the Assistant Secretary for Fish and Wildlife and Parks at Interior, to the Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for International Organization Affairs, played a key role in the decision of the State Department to maintain the Man and the Biosphere (MAB) Secretariat at State, despite a decision to discontinue funding for the U.S. National Commission for UNESCO.

Davidge's letter set forth attributes of the MAB Program that "give it a special potential to promote more effective international cooperation at lower cost than possible through other means." He listed these attributes as (1) established international reputation, (2) unbiased approach, (3) catalytic role, (4) emphasis on initiatives by individuals, (5) high voluntarism, and (6) continuity.

An up-to-date on MAB activities, from William P. Gregg, Jr., MAB Coordinator for NPS, WASO, includes the following:

Nomination of the world's first multiple-site Biosphere Reserve, in the coast redwoods region. The proposed California Coast Ranges Biosphere Reserve consists of six sites, under administration of the NPS, the USFS, the BLM, the California State Parks and Recreation Department, and The Nature Conservancy. It would protect examples of most of the representative ecosystems of the region and provide opportunities for cooperation and a full range of baseline and experimental research activities. Decision is expected in April 1983 by the International MAB Bureau;

Endorsement of Death Valley and Joshua Tree National Monuments as parts of a California-Mojave Desert Biosphere Reserve, by a selection panel chaired by Dan Cheatham of the University of California Natural Areas system;

Pending nominations (approved by MAB in 1982 but not yet designated by UNESCO) of Apalachicola River Unit of the Florida Biosphere Reserve, the Congaree Swamp National Monument, and the New Jersey Pinelands Unit of the Atlantic Coastal Plain Biosphere Reserve. Action on these nominations also is expected in April;

Expected recommendation later in 1983 by a bi-lateral U.S. - Canada selection panel of Biosphere Reserve sites in the Sitkan Biogeographic Province of Southeastern Alaska and western British Columbia;

The planned dedication in May 1983 of the Virgin Islands NP Biosphere Reserve, to be followed by two MAB workshops on conservation of biological diversity in small Caribbean Islands and the establishment and use of marine reserves;

The on-going ethnobotanical survey of the Great Smoky Mountains NP Biosphere reserve. The first survey of the cultural significance of the flora protected in a major national park soon will begin, under a contract with Tennessee State University through the Historically Black Colleges program;

The continuing program of cooperation between the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. on selection and use of Biosphere reserves. Ray Herrmann (Water Resources Lab at Fort Collins), Susan Bratton (University of Georgia CPSU), and Bob Stottlemeyer (Michigan Technological University CPSU) were among the U.S. delegation that visited several Soviet Union Biosphere Reserves in October 1982.

In addition, Gregg reports that copies of the comprehensive bibliography and history of scientific activities at the Great Smoky Mountains Reserve are available from him, Special Science Projects Division, NPS, Department of the Interior, Washington, D.C. 20240. Additional projects now underway, or soon to be, are at Big Bend, Channel Islands, Organ Pipe Cactus, Waterton Lakes-Glacier (in cooperation with MAB Canada), Isle Royale, and Virgin Islands NPS.