

Coalition Hears Call For 'Bridge-Building'

About 300 people attended the 1986 annual meeting of the Greater Yellowstone Coalition May 30 - June 1 at Yellowstone Lake Lodge and heard Bruce Wilcox, Director of the Center for Conservation Biology at Stanford University, call for building bridges across the "built-in chasm between science and land managers" as essential to avoiding a catastrophic loss of biological diversity.

A central theme of the meeting was how to measure, define, and maintain the requirements of viable ecosystems - those able to support vigorous populations of a number of critical indicator species that can adapt to environmental change. Hal Salwasser, Deputy Director of Wildlife and Fisheries for the U.S. Forest Service, called for management action to counter the increasing geographical isolation of populations, a trend associated with high probability of extinction. While it is not politically or economically feasible to set aside sufficiently large areas, Salwasser said, coordinating networks of public lands represents an approach likely to succeed over the long term.

According to conference moderator Peter Brusard, Chairman of the Biology Department at Montana State University, the role of science is to show managers, as accurately as possible, the resource implications of management decisions.

Address of the Greater Yellowstone Coalition is 127 West Main, Box 1874, Bozeman, MT 59715.