

# ***mab notes***

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At the Dec. 18-19, 1986 meeting of the U.S. MAB-8 Directorate on Biosphere Reserves, members rated proposed projects for 1987. Among those receiving the highest ratings, and thus top contenders for 1987 funding through the U.S. MAB Secretariat, were the following:

**Development of a model biosphere reserve.** The program needs an exemplary biosphere reserve that fully carries out the intended functions and objectives as described in UNESCO's 1984 Action Plan for Biosphere Reserves. The Southern Appalachian Biosphere Reserve Cluster (see below), which includes Great Smoky Mountains NP, was recommended as the pilot project site because of its history of MAB activities, the research potential of institutions forming or expected to join this biosphere reserve cluster, and the existing institutional framework for regional and international cooperation. This project was proposed in a 1986 paper by Tommy Gilbert, former NPS MAB Coordinator and now an environmental consultant in Gatlinburg, Tenn.

**Revision of U.S. biosphere reserve selection guidelines.** Such a revision is needed to consolidate separate guidelines for selection and management of inland and coastal areas and to reflect recent U.S. experience and guidance of the Action Plan for Biosphere Reserves and recommendations of the Scientific Advisory Panel on Biosphere Reserves.

**New biosphere reserve nominations.** The Directorate approved the report of a Canadian-U.S. MAB panel for the Lake Forest Biogeographical Province, which encompasses the mixed hardwood forests along both sides of the international boundary from Minnesota to the Maritime Provinces. The report identifies seven biosphere reserves, each consisting of a cluster of nearby or contiguous sites, as suitable for nomination. If administrators endorse the panel's recommendations, Voyageurs NP would be included within a multi-site biosphere reserve also including the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness (Forest Service), Quetico Provincial Park in Ontario, and Isle Royale NP, an existing biosphere reserve. The Directorate recommended that administrators be requested to identify preliminary ways in which they plan to implement biosphere reserve concepts, and that MAB offer to assist in identifying opportunities through workshops, public meetings, or other means.

The Directorate also endorsed the recommendation of a recent MAB panel that the biosphere reserve now consisting of Great Smoky Mountains NP and Coweeta Hydrological Laboratory be expanded to include the Oak Ridge National Environmental Research Park, several North Carolina state parks, Roan Mountain, the Grandfather Mountain area, and parts of the Cherokee, Pisgah, and Nantahala National Forests. This would be called the Southern Appalachian Biosphere Reserve. Administrators of all these sites except Roan Mountain and the National Forest areas have endorsed the incorporation. As of December 1986, biosphere reserves have been designated in 19 of the 25 biogeographical provinces, and 9 of the 13 coastal regions wholly or partially included within the U.S. and its territories.

**Biogeographical classification of coastal/marine areas.** The Directorate endorsed a proposal to develop a pilot, ecologically-based classification of the Caribbean as a model for similar projects else-

where. Such a classification is needed for selection of coastal/marine biosphere reserves.

**Biosphere reserve brochures.** An international BR brochure, funded by UNESCO and U.S. MAB and written largely for public and private agency officials, is nearing completion. New funding is needed for a proposed brochure on U.S. biosphere reserves that would be directed mainly at reserve visitors and BR staff.

**Smithsonian/MAB Biological Diversity Program.** A standard protocol for conducting biological inventories is being developed and pre-tested in Peru. Initial field training workshops to test all aspects of the system will begin in biosphere reserves and other species-rich areas in mid-1987.

**U.S. inventory of macroreserves.** The statewide Florida pilot project is scheduled for completion in mid-1987. The MAB-8 Directorate suggested that the Southern Appalachian region be surveyed next.

**Sonoran Desert BR program.** Efforts are underway to link Organ Pipe Cactus NM, an existing biosphere reserve, with the adjacent Cabeza Prieta Game Range, administered by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, to form a Southern Arizona Bio-

sphere Reserve. Pinacate Natural Park, a contiguous area in Mexico, is a potential future addition. U.S. and Mexican specialists are writing a reference text on the ecological and cultural importance of the area. This is intended to be a catalyst for eventual creation of a transborder Sonoran Desert Biosphere Reserve.

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