

Biological Diversity Interpretation Planning Underway

NPS Director Mott decided that biological diversity will be the Servicewide interpretive theme in 1989, and the first major step to make that happen has been taken. At Harpers Ferry, W.V., Jan. 20-22, a committee chaired by Dick Cunningham, Western Region Chief of Interpretation, planned a program of biological diversity interpretation.

The committee reflected the breadth and many dimensions of the issue. It was composed of park, Regional, and Washington office interpreters; representatives from Natural Resources, WASO, and the Harpers Ferry Center; a park resource management specialist; an environmental education expert from Ohio State University; three non-NPS scientists, including two from the 1986 Task Force on Biological Diversity; and representatives from the Smithsonian Institution, USDA Forest Service, and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

The goal of the program, it was decided, will be to "foster public understanding of the value and means of conserving biological diversity." Among the many ideas discussed were a manual for interpreters containing background information and interpretive activities; a central slide repository on biological diversity; and purchase of sets of the Smithsonian traveling exhibit on biodiversity, to which an NPS panel could be added. A coordinating committee on interpretation of biological diversity, consisting of representatives of several governmental and private organizations, was also suggested. An NPS brochure for the public is already in second draft.

Cunningham expects to have the plan in final form by April, and an article on the plan will appear in the summer issue of *Park Science*.

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