

mab notes

Mammoth Cave NP is now part of a biosphere reserve. The MAB Bureau in Paris approved this nomination on Feb. 8, 1990 along with eight others from seven countries, including newcomer Madagascar. This brings the total to 283 BRs in 72 countries. The other U.S. nomination – Land Between the Lakes in Kentucky/Tennessee – was favorably reviewed but was deferred pending resolution of a boundary issue.

Bill Gregg, NPS MAB Coordinator and a member of the technical committee that reviews such nominations worldwide, comments that "there is almost a revolution in the quality of material and the coordinating mechanisms set forth in the recent biosphere reserve nominations. I'm impressed with the degree of thought that goes into them and the commitments to research, other biosphere reserve programs, and building a coordinating framework. The U.S. nominations no longer stand out as more competitive than the others."

The NPS is well represented, directly or by association, on the **newly established U.S. MAB directorates**. James Allen, North Atlantic Regional Office, is on the Marine and Coastal Ecosystems, chaired by James M. Broadus, Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution. Dale Taylor, Alaska Regional Office, is on the High Latitude Ecosystems directorate, chaired by Patrick Webber of Michigan State University. James Gramann, professor at Texas A & M University and Research Sociologist for the Southwest and Western regional offices, is on the Temperate Ecosystems directorate, chaired by Robert J. Naiman, University of Washington. The Tropical Ecosystems directorate, chaired by Ariel Lugo, USDA Forest Service—Puerto Rico, and the Human Dominated Systems directorate, chaired by Roberta B. Miller of the National Science Foundation, have no NPS members, but all directorates include members with Park Service ties.

Institutionalized regional MAB programs, now a major focus of the U.S. MAB program, are in various stages of development around the country. Many NPS biosphere reserves are components of existing or potential regional programs. Great Smoky Mountains NP provides a home

for the executive office of the **Southern Appalachian MAB Cooperative**, now more than a year old.

Organ Pipe Cactus NM is included in an ongoing study to assess the feasibility of a **Sonoran Desert regional program**. The study is being coordinated by Friends of Pro Natura, an Arizona-based conservation organization. Carlos Nagel, president, reports that they are sending a proposal to U.S. MAB for funding of a "town hall" meeting to be held in the region, probably in spring 1991. Both Mexican and U.S. organizations would discuss the geographical extent of a bi-national regional MAB program, what form the coordinating body would take, and how funding to support this body and its programs would be secured. Nagel thinks that by spring 1991 the chances are good that the Pinacate region, just south of the border, will be a biosphere reserve. That proposal now awaits signature by the Mexican Ministries of Agriculture and Urban Development and Ecology.

The University of Puerto Rico has received a grant to collect information and hold discussions as a preliminary step before conducting feasibility studies for regional programs around **Guanica BR in Puerto Rico and Virgin Islands BR**. Local people, government agencies, and private organizations must all be involved, and "this is turning out to be a longer process than we expected," says Allen Putney of the Eastern Caribbean Natural Area Management Program, which is assisting with the project.

Dave Foster, Research Hydrologist at Ozark NSR and coordinator of an effort to explore possibilities for an **Ozarks regional MAB program**, reported that a contractor was to be selected on February 22 to conduct a feasibility study. The regional program would focus on the Current and Buffalo river watersheds.

A **central Colorado BR complex and regional program** was discussed in Boulder on Nov. 14, 1989 by representatives of NPS, the USFS, the USGS, the National Center for Atmospheric Research, state, county, and municipal offices, the University of Colorado, and private groups. Such a complex would be built around the

existing biosphere reserves: Rocky Mountain NP, Fraser Experimental Forest, and Niwot Ridge in the Roosevelt NF. The conferees identified acid deposition, air quality, fire in the residential/wildland interface, recreation, and water as key regional issues.

Up Glacier way, Brace Hayden, Ecosystem Coordinator, sees promise for regional cooperation in the **upper Flathead River Basin**. The International Joint Commission, in its report on a proposed coal mine in the basin, recommended that governments consider sustainable management strategies in the basin and referred to an earlier proposal by then-Governor of Montana Schweiden for an International Conservation Reserve (ICR) in the basin. Such a reserve would involve parts of Glacier NP, the Flathead NF, provincial forests and parks, and a small amount of private land along the river. It would bring the land managers together to discuss regional issues such as migratory fisheries, endangered species, other wildlife management programs, timber utilization, and oil and gas.

Dr. Robert Naiman, chairman of the MAB Temperate Ecosystems directorate, was scheduled to lead a group of University of Washington scientists, members of the directorate, and representatives from the Southern Appalachian Biosphere Reserve to the **Olympic Peninsula** March 9-11. Their mission: to begin exploring the potential of the Peninsula for building a regional MAB program and to compare it with the socioeconomic characteristics of the Southern Appalachians, where a cooperative MAB program is underway. Management of old-growth forests, maintenance of biodiversity, and management of migratory fish are among the major regional resource concerns. The Peninsula consists largely of Olympic NP and national forest land, though only the park is presently designated as a biosphere reserve.

Copies of the *Proceedings of the Symposium on Biosphere Reserves*, held at Estes Park, CO in 1987, are still available from: Wildlife and Vegetation Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, D.C. 20013-7127. **Napier Shelton, NPS Washington Office**