

Televisio de Catalunya in Barcelona, Spain is planning a 13-part series called **Biosphere**, to be filmed in biosphere reserves (BRs) around the world. Each 1-hour program will focus on a different biome, using BRs as representative areas of that biome. Altogether BRs from about 20 countries will be featured. The programs will describe each biome's natural condition, its use by people, and its environmental problems, as well as research and education in the representative BRs. Bill Gregg, NPS MAB Coordinator, calls the project "the biggest boost yet for the MAB program." Olympic NP, the Southern Appalachians, and the Noatak National Preserve, representing, respectively, temperate rainforests, temperate broadleaf forests, and tundra communities, are being considered as proposed filming sites. The filming will take place in 1991 and early 1992, for showing in Spain in late 1992.

This ambitious project, expected to cost \$2.2 million for the Spanish version alone, does not end there. Sponsorship is being sought for translation and use in many other countries, and UNESCO-MAB has agreed to assist with worldwide distribution. Coffee-table book versions are planned. Also being considered are interactive videos for use in visitor centers and other such places, and widescreen (I-MAX) film versions. The director of operations of Televisio de Catalunya came through the NPS Washington office in June 1990. Bill Gregg assisted her with planning and other meetings in Washington, which included the Smithsonian Institution, the Discovery TV channel, and public television.

Biosphere was conceived by Ramon Folch, Secretary of the Spanish MAB committee and producer at Televisio de Catalunya. This project follows a highly successful series by this TV station on the Mediterranean basin, showing environments and their human use.

Meeting at Hog Island, VA, Oct. 10-12, 1990, the newly constituted **MAB Biosphere Reserve Committee** began development of an action plan for U.S. BRs. Discussion focused on the mission, statement, goals, and a number of proposed action items.

The October 1990 issue of the **U.S. MAB Bulletin** announced the **U.S. MAB grants for FY 1990**. Among these is the first funded project to be directorate-proposed and carried out by its members to pursue research on the major program area of the directorate. This \$300,000 grant will support the first 2 years of a comparative study by the Temperate Ecosystems Directorate of the effects of surrounding land ownership patterns on the biological diversity and socioeconomic viability of managed and protected land in the Olympic Peninsula and the Southern Appalachians.

One of the principal hypotheses to be tested is that the large blocks of managed privately and publicly owned forest land on the Olympic Peninsula have resulted in landscapes with less ecological connectivity, habitat abundance, and resource stability than the intermixed, comparatively small blocks of public and private land in the Southern Appalachian region.

Another grant of special interest to NPS readers is one for a study of the use of marine harvest refugia as fishery management tools in the Channel Islands NP and BR area (Gary Davis, principal investigator).

The **Mammoth Cave Area Biosphere Reserve** was dedicated Sept. 26, 1990. This event should further strengthen mutual ties between the national park and surrounding lands, the quality of whose surface and subterranean water is so critical for park health. The ceremony was held in conjunction with the Eastern/Southern Regional Heritage Conference of The Nature Conservancy, with Judge David Martin representing the Barren River Area Development district – co-sponsor of the BR nomination. Bob Baker, NPS Southeast Regional Director, and others involved in the BR program. The BR includes Mammoth Cave NP as the core area and the park's 82,000-acre groundwater recharge basin as the transition zone.

A **plenary session on biosphere reserves** was held Oct. 18, 1990, at the symposium on Natural Areas and Yosemite: Prospects for the Future. Bill Gregg, who gave the introductory presentation, reports that a diverse audience of some 250 people showed considerable interest in the BR program. Discussions included the emerging leadership role of California (which now has 8 BRs) in the BR program, and the possibility of establishing a Sierran BR, where a good dialogue already exists between the major public land managers – the NPS and the USFS.

The Government Printing Office (GPO) has made a modest concession on the price of the international **brochure on biosphere reserves**. The price per 100 copies now is \$225. Single copies still cost \$3. Called **Biosphere Reserves**, the brochure may be obtained from: GPO Bookstore, 710 North Capitol St., Washington, DC 20401; (202) 783-3238. New stock number: 044-000-02277. Small numbers of copies of the first edition, which differs only in the omission of about a dozen BRs from the map and list, and a different numbering system for the BR list, can be obtained free from David Figlio, Wildlife and Vegetation Division, NPS, PO Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; (202) 343-8135.

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