

# Biodiversity Training Course

A highly acclaimed interagency training course, "Meeting the Biodiversity Challenge: A Shortcourse for Decision-makers," will be offered again this year by the BLM Phoenix Training Center, Charles Pregler, Wildlife Training Coordinator. Three NPS professionals – David Morris, Assistant Superintendent, Southern Arizona Group; Craig Shafer, Ecologist, WASO, and John Earnst, North Cascades NP superintendent – were enthusiastic in their praise of the benefits after taking the course last summer.

The course was developed by four federal agencies: BLM, USFS, USFWS, and the EPA. Instructors are drawn from around the world – experts active in government, academia, and the private sector. More than 100 top level managers and senior advisors from five major natural resource agencies, GAO, and Canada have attended the four previous sessions.

The workshops tackle such biodiversity preservation problems as human population growth, habitat fragmentation, spread of agriculture into refuges, lack of understanding of what biodiversity means, large federal water diversion projects, exotic species invasions, inadequate information bases, acid rain, defoliation, land ownership patterns, global warming, and more. The lecturers are recognized leaders in both action and theory of biodiversity and are available to help participants after formal class sessions.

But perhaps most important, according to NPS participants in prior sessions, is the interagency give and take – the growing recognition that emerges of how various agencies' problems and perspectives can be coalesced into more effective systems approaches to biodiversity problems. Class exercises emphasized broad-scale regional planning, an area where land management agencies are either playing catch-up or are becoming more aware of the need.

With two more courses being offered this fiscal year (see Calendar on this page), interested persons may contact James Lee, WASO training officer (202) 523-5280 or John Dennis, Chief, Science Branch, Wildlife and Vegetation Division, (202) 343-8128.