

MAB NOTES

1995 BIOSPHERE RESERVE MANAGERS WORKSHOP

By ANTOINETTE J. CONDO

THE BIOSPHERE Reserve Directorate of the United States Man and the Biosphere Program (USMAB) sponsored a biosphere reserve managers workshop held October 29-31 in Washington, D.C. Managers from across the country and representatives from Canada, Mexico, Germany, and Russia participated.

Karen Wade, Harold Smith, and Raymond Dasmann were all honored at the October 30 banquet. Superintendent Wade and staff of Great Smoky Mountains National Park, one of five units within the Southern Appalachian Biosphere Reserve Cooperative, and Superintendent Smith and staff of Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument and Biosphere Reserve were each presented a plaque by Dean Bibles, Chair of the USMAB National Committee, recognizing each site as "1995 outstanding U.S. Biosphere Reserve, a site of U.S. MAB excellence, demonstrating conservation and sustainable development on a regional scale." Bibles also commended Dr. Dasmann for his many years of service to the biosphere reserve program and the Golden Gate Biosphere Reserve in particular.

Guest speakers were John Reynolds, Deputy Director of the National Park Service; Gene Hester, Deputy Director of the National Biological Service; and the Honorable John Fraser, Canadian Ambassador for the Environment. Ambassador Fraser, Chair of Canada MAB; Miguel Equihua (for Gonzalo Halffter), Chair of Mexico

MAB; and Dean Bibles, USMAB Chair, signed a memorandum of cooperation among biosphere reserves of the three countries.

Bibles also announced the creation of a new category of biosphere reserve to be recognized by the USMAB National Committee. The new category is designed to encourage participation in the principles of the biosphere reserve program among those who may not be prepared to join an international program. This designation would not preclude the biosphere reserve from seeking UNESCO recognition at a later time.

Several presentations and working groups addressed electronic communication involving biosphere reserves. John Dennis of the National Park Service, as facilitator with the technical expertise of Brand Niemann and Jennifer Gaines, both of the National Biological Service, explored the UNESCO-MAB Internet home pages. Professor James Quinn of the University of California, Davis, reviewed the MAB Fauna database, the accessibility of biological inventory data on the Internet, the development of the USMAB e-mail discussion group (see following article), and new USMAB project to provide software and technical support to additional U.S. biosphere reserves.

The chairs of the five USMAB research directorates reported on their multiyear research projects and discussed with managers ways to relate research to management needs. Case studies focused on the efforts of agencies, organizations,

and local people to plan and implement the goals of the U.S. Biosphere Reserve Program. The case studies included:

Southern Appalachian Man and the Biosphere Program (SAMAB) by Hubert Hinote of SAMAB;

Sonoran Desert Biosphere Cooperative by Tony Ramon of the Tohono O'odham Nation and Harold Smith of Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument;

Mammoth Cave Area Biosphere Reserve by Jeff Bradybaugh of Mammoth, Cave National Park;

Colorado Rockies Regional Cooperative by Craig Axtell of Rocky Mountain National Park;

Proposed Catskills Biosphere Reserve by Janet Crawshaw of the Catskill Center; Proposed Tijuana Watershed (U.S.-Mexico) by Fred Cagle of Immedsys, Ltd.;

New Jersey Pinelands by Robert Zampella of the Pinelands Commission;

Crown of the Continent Biosphere Reserve (U.S.-Canada) by Brace Hayden of Glacier National Park; and

Proposed Ozark Highlands Biosphere Reserve by David Foster of the Ozark National Scenic Riverways.

Bill Gregg of the National Biological Service reported on the results of a survey of manager perceptions regarding the biosphere reserve program. Managers indicated many benefits from biosphere reserve status, particularly in facilitating ecosystem management (the most significant of the 16 benefits surveyed), promoting public environmental awareness, facilitating research and international cooperation, and addressing regional environmental problems. They cited increased local funding and staffing, more emphasis on long-term ecological research, and expanding local constituencies as the greatest needs for enhancing biosphere reserve activities.

Six working groups recommended ways to implement the goals of the Strategic Plan for

the U.S. Biosphere Reserve Program. These goals focus on communication, education and training, local participation, operational framework, research and monitoring, and filling biogeographic gaps in the network. The summaries of recommendations for the working groups will be available in hard copy from the USMAB Secretariat, and on the USMAB home page:

"<http://www.nbs.gov.nbii/mab/>".

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