

Three BRs Meet To Examine Roles

Three Biosphere Reserves in the northern Rocky Mountains – Glacier NP and the Coram NF in the U.S., and Waterton Lakes NP in Canada – sponsored an August 1989 seminar entitled "Crown of the Continent into the 21st Century: A Perspective Under the MAB Program." The seminar was held to introduce the Man and the Biosphere program to land managers, visitors, the general public, and employees of the three BR areas involved. Biologists, historians, and tourism and development representatives from Canada and the U.S. also attended.

The first day focused on the MAB program and current land management trends in the region. Key-note speaker Bjorn Dahl told how the MAB program works in the Southern Appalachians. Dahl emphasized that key players in the program need to include the states and public as well as federal agencies. Noting that the northern Rocky Mountains has not experienced the serious human pressures the Southern Appalachians has, Dahl expressed his opinion that the 'Crown of the Continent' could be an exemplary MAB area. With the vast relatively undisturbed resources there is an opportunity for research, education, conservation, and sustainable use.

The second day emphasis was on developing understanding of the cultural and biological history and diversity of the area. Curly Bear Wagner, a member of the Blackfoot Tribe, discussed Blackfoot history and culture, and the Indians' philosophies regarding the land. There was also a presentation on man's influence in Glacier NP. Speakers highlighted the biology and management of wolves, grizzly bears, bald eagles, and peregrine falcons, four threatened or endangered species selected because their vast ranges expand beyond the northern Rocky Mountain region. Dick Hutto, a University of Montana professor, addressed biological diversity, ecosystem management, and concerns regarding single species management.

Current trends in resource utilization was the focus of the final day: Trends, and current and future needs for development and tourism in the Flathead Valley.

A common thread in each speaker's talk was that the resources and their utilization must be managed cooperatively in this region. The desire is to maintain biological diversity and integrity in areas such as Glacier and Waterton Lakes NPs and the Bob Marshall Wilderness while we explore resource utilization in adjacent lands. These activities must be coordinated so that man and the natural resources can coexist in the Crown of the Continent.

This seminar serves as the catalyst for future MAB discussions in this area. A meeting of the local land managers is tentatively scheduled for late October or November to develop strategy for arousing interest and support for the MAB program in this area.

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