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EDITORIAL

The George Wright Society strategy conference, Protection of Cultural and Natural Resources: A Research and Education Agenda, was held October 18-20, 1982, in the nation's capital and produced two thoughtful sets of recommendations.

The natural science and cultural resource workshops took somewhat different tacks, partly due to limited time and widely separated meeting places. Surprisingly then, upon examination the conference papers appear to represent clearer guideposts than it had seemed likely would emerge.

Some comments on the conference probably need to be made in order to set the papers and recommendations in perspective. First, why was a conference attempted at all in view of the uncertain status of both natural and cultural research projects and the changing context within which they operate today?

The reply, or so it seemed to the Society officers, was that the reasons for posing such questions were in themselves the answer. When the basic systems within which objectives and goals have been perceived and pursued are undergoing dramatic change, the overwhelming tendency is to run for cover and find individual solid ground. But it is at just such times that those who share common goals that they believe to be of overriding human concern will make the extra effort to act in concert.

Systems that are breaking up present the courageous builder with a plethora of material for new structures. Courage alone may preempt the pieces, but any meaningful construct requires a plan; a plan that shows some continuity with a stable past carries the greatest promise for the future.

This was the bedrock on which the 1982 decision was made to go ahead with the conference despite the fact that meetings were becoming harder and harder to arrange and to attend.

The first two Scientific Research in the National Parks conferences, in New Orleans and San Francisco, had been held at three-year intervals, in 1976 and 1979, and had shown promise of becoming tradition-worthy. Three years had passed, and the science represented at the first two conferences still was operating in park settings all over the world. The work being produced was increasingly interdisciplinary in nature and begging for the light that comes from shared knowledge and insights. Even as opportunities for such cross fertilization were being curtailed, the need for establishing such information pathways was intensifying. If a meeting could be arranged for 1982, however tenuous the attendance, the three-year tradition would have been preserved.

The risks were enormous. As Bill Robertson remarked with regard to the handsomely mounted genetics meeting held earlier the same year, "What if we gave a conference and nobody came?" It almost happened, too.

But amazingly, at the last minute, nearly 100 men and women from all over the country dug into their own resources and arrived in Washington. They spent three days listening to papers, engaging in discussions both inside and outside the sessions, and considering the past and future of the enormous body of natural and cultural resources that reside in the world's parks and other protected areas.

Among the participants were George Wright's daughter, Pamela Lloyd, and her daughter, Jean Lloyd. George Wright spent very little time and energy in dreaming. He lived and worked his dream, and the scientific foundation he laid was solid. Today that foundation is ready for a new construct. The natural and cultural scientists who met in Washington discerned two urgent needs—synthesis and outreach. Their call was first of all for better information flows between the cultural and natural scientific worlds. Beyond that, they sought effective use of park resources to inform the public of the value of these resources and of how the fate of society itself is linked to these values and to human appreciation of them.

The two workshops' recommendations follow. They represent an agenda for the next three years and a pattern for building the 1985 conference.

Jean Matthews

RECOMMENDATIONS

From the Cultural Resources Workshop:

The cultural resources workshop group process began with an introduction of the working group members: Douglas H. Scovill, Chief Anthropologist, NPS Washington office; Laura Beaty, National Parks and Conservation Association; Robert J. Kapsch, Chief, Historic American Buildings Survey; J. Revell Carr, Director, Mystic Maritime Museum; Robert Z. Melnick, Department of Landscape Architecture, University of Oregon; Harry W. Pfanz, NPS Retired; Jim Welsh, National Parks and Conservation Association; George Church, Washington's Birthplace, Virginia; Wendy W. Wanchak, National Parks and Conservation Association; Donald C. Jackson, Senior Historian, Historic Engineering Record; Daniel J. Lenihan, Chief, NPS Submerged Cultural Resources Unit in Santa Fe, New Mexico; and Jim Judge, Chief, NPS Division of Cultural Research in Albuquerque, New Mexico.

Identification of the group objective included a discussion of the conference charge by Theodore W. Sudia, former NPS Chief