

Introduction and Acknowledgments

David Harmon, The George Wright Society, P.O. Box 65, Hancock, MI 49930-0065; dharmon@georgewright.org

THE 2011 GEORGE WRIGHT SOCIETY CONFERENCE ON PARKS, PROTECTED AREAS, AND CULTURAL Sites took place in New Orleans, Louisiana, March 14–18. It was the sixteenth in a series of conferences whose origins date back to 1976. The first US National Park Service science conference was held in New Orleans during the nation’s Bicentennial year; another followed in 1979. Beginning in 1982, the GWS has organized the conferences, expanding them to all kinds of parks, protected areas, and cultural sites. The GWS biennial has become the USA’s largest interdisciplinary conference in the field. It is the only such conference to actively seek participation from across the entire spectrum of disciplines and activities that are necessary for successful protected area management. Attendance at GWS2011 exceeded all past meetings, with over 1,100 present.

This proceedings volume contains more than 60 papers that are broadly representative of those presented at the conference. For the first time, we are publishing it in digital form only. One advantage (among several) is that this has allowed us to publish all graphics in color.

We are indebted to many people for making GWS2011 a success. Samantha Weber has again done a fine job of editing this proceedings volume, and we appreciate her hard work. As always, the Conference Committee labored over many months to shape a large, interdisciplinary program. Chaired by Melia Lane-Kamahele, the committee’s other members were Brad Barr, Carol Clark, Rebecca Conard, Rolf Diamant, Sandee Dingman, Dee Hewitt, Brent Mitchell, Rebecca Stanfield McCown, Stephanie Toothman, Jan van Wagtendonk, John Waithaka, and Robert Winfree. Equally important are our two principal organizational sponsors, both of whom have worked with us for many years: the US National Park Service and the US Geological Survey. This time we were very pleased to add Parks Canada Agency and United South and Eastern Tribes as conference supporters.

Beyond that, the GWS thanks all the people who organized the slate of field trips and the service projects—too many to name individually, but our gratitude is sincere. We also express our appreciation to all the institutions and individuals who helped sponsor the George Melendez Wright Student Travel Scholarships and the Native Participant Travel Grants; here, we particularly thank Gillian Bowser and Sharon Franklet, respectively, for their leadership on behalf of these programs. Beyond this, many others provided assistance on various aspects of the conference, and we extend our sincere appreciation to all of them.

The next conference will be held March 11–15, 2013, in Denver, Colorado.

Citation: Weber, Samantha, ed. 2012. *Rethinking Protected Areas in a Changing World: Proceedings of the 2011 George Wright Society Biennial Conference on Parks, Protected Areas, and Cultural Sites*. Hancock, Michigan: The George Wright Society.
© 2012 The George Wright Society. All rights reserved. Please direct all permission requests to info@georgewright.org.