

SOCIETY NEWS, NOTES & MAIL

GWS Celebrates 25th Anniversary in Philadelphia

This year marks the 25th year of the George Wright Society, which was founded August 18, 1980, by Bob Linn and Ted Sudia. The occasion was marked at the GWS2005 Conference in Philadelphia (see next item) during a celebratory dinner. GWS Board member Bruce Kilgore gave a moving remembrance of Society co-founder Bob Linn, who died last fall, and fellow Board member Jerry Emory eloquently summarized the accomplishments of George Wright to remind the audience of the reasons why our society is named for him.

Over 750 Attend GWS2005 Conference

“People, Places, and Parks: Preservation for Future Generations,” the 2005 George Wright Society Conference on Parks, Protected Areas, and Cultural Sites, drew over 750 people to Philadelphia in mid-March for a stimulating week of discussion, debate, and camaraderie. Attendance was close to the record level achieved in 2003 in San Diego, despite very tight travel budgets. Four well-attended plenary sessions, over 130 concurrent sessions, a jam-packed poster and computer demo session, and numerous special events made up the week’s activities. A highlight of the week was the launching of the George Melendez Wright Student Travel Scholarship, which provided assistance that enabled 30 students from under-represented groups to attend.

If you were unable to join us in Philadelphia, you can see what you missed by sending us a check for \$2.00 to cover postage and we’ll be glad to mail you a copy of the 180-page program and abstracts book. A conference proceedings also is in the works.

2005 GWS Board Election: Two Seats Open

Nominations are now being accepted for the 2005 election for the Society’s Board of Directors. Board members Bruce Kilgore and John Reynolds have decided not to seek a second term, and so their two seats are open. We are now accepting nominations from GWS members who would like to be candidates. The term of office runs from January 1, 2006 through December 31, 2008. Nominations are open through July 1, 2005. To be eligible, both the nominator and the potential candidate must be GWS members in good standing (it’s permissible to nominate one’s self). The potential candidates must be willing to travel to Board meetings, which usually occur once a year; help prepare for and carry out the biennial conferences; and serve on Board committees and do other work associated with the Society. Travel costs and per diem for the Board meetings are paid for by the Society; otherwise there is no remuneration. Federal government employees who wish to serve on the Board must be prepared to comply with all applicable ethics requirements and laws; this may include, for example, obtaining permission from one’s supervisor, receiving ethics-related training, and/or obtaining a conflict of interest waiver. The Society can provide prospective candidates with a summary of the requirements.

The nomination procedure is as follows: members nominate candidates for possible inclusion on the ballot by sending the candidate's name to the Board's nominating committee. The committee then, in its discretion, determines the composition of the ballot from the field of potential candidates. Among the criteria the nominating committee considers when determining which potential candidates to include on the ballot are his/her skills and experience (and how those might complement the skills and experience of current Board members), the goal of adding and/or maintaining diverse viewpoints on the Board, and the goal of maintaining a balance between natural- and cultural-resource perspectives on the Board. (It also is possible for members to place candidates directly on the ballot through petition; for details, contact the GWS office.) To propose someone for possible candidacy, send his or her name and complete contact details to: Nominating Committee, The George Wright Society, P.O. Box 65, Hancock, MI 49930-0065 USA, or via email to info@georgewright.org. All potential candidates will be contacted by the nominating committee to get background information before the final ballot is determined. Again, the deadline for nominations is July 1, 2005.

New & Noteworthy

- **NPS retirees issue "Call to Action."** The Coalition of Concerned National Park Service Retirees, which has been vocal and persistent in its criticism of the Bush Administration's policies for the National Park System over the past few years, issued a major report in the fall of 2004 titled "A Call to Action: Saving Our National Park System" that summarizes many of its concerns on privatization, budgeting, and more. In addition, the "Call to Action" lays out some of the organization's ideas on what needs to be done to return the System to what, in its view, is the proper course. The report can be viewed or downloaded at www.npsretirees.org.
- **Pitcaithley speaks about Vietnam memorial.** In January, NPS Chief Historian and GWS President Dwight T. Pitcaithley attended an international conference in Ghent, Belgium, titled "Memory and Identity." He presented a paper on the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, its relationship (physically and emotionally) to other memorials and monuments on the National Mall, and its place in the still-contested memory of the war. Pitcaithley approached the paper from his perspective as a historian and as a combat veteran who served in Vietnam in 1966. He shared the conference session with a representative from the Ministry of Culture, Republic of Vietnam.
- **Harmon to head WCPA region.** In February, GWS Executive Director Dave Harmon was named regional vice chair for North America of IUCN's World Commission on Protected Areas. This is the principal international voluntary network of professionals working in protected natural areas. Harmon will be responsible for organizing the North American roster of volunteers to carry out WCPA's work plan over the next four years. The work plan will draw from actions agreed to at the fifth World Parks Congress (Durban, South Africa, 2003) as well as the recent World Conservation Congress (Bangkok, Thailand, 2004) and the protected areas program of the Convention on Biological Diversity.
- ***The International Journal of Biodiversity Science & Management.*** This newly launched quarterly publishes articles on all aspects of biodiversity, from basic research to

modeling, management and policy. Contributions addressing natural and semi-natural ecosystems, agricultural, urban and forested systems, fisheries, and biotechnology, and particularly those that integrate data across temporal and spatial scales, are welcomed. Articles may be either interdisciplinary or drawn from fields such as landscape ecology, biochemistry, genetics, conservation and development, tourism, participatory management, indigenous peoples and their knowledge, cultural, religious uses and values, trade and environment, and law and policy. Details at www.sapienspublishing.com.

- ***Miller wins NPS award for excellence.*** Abby Miller, the Society's vice president, was recently honored with the 2004 National Park Service Director's Award for Professional Excellence in the field of natural resources. Miller received this major award at a ceremony held at the 2005 GWS Conference in Philadelphia. She was recognized for her career-long contributions to fostering natural resource science and management in NPS, and particularly for her instrumental role in organizing and administering the agency's national program, including the Natural Resource Challenge. Miller, who retired from her post as deputy associate director for natural resource stewardship and science just prior to the conference, will continue her work on the Board. She is serving her second term.