

INTRODUCING A NEW WEBSITE FOR THE USA MAN AND BIOSPHERE PROGRAM (MAB)

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Abstract. In 1970 the United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) established the "Man and Biosphere" (MAB) program. This interdisciplinary program was designed to address the economic, educational, scientific, cultural, and recreational needs of humankind. The United Nations (UN) hopes to improve the relationship between people and their environment by supporting the sustainable use and conservation of biological diversity, and to promote the study of the interrelationships of the human and natural systems of the earth. As is the case with many UN programs, the world's response was rather slow. However, MAB received international attention in 1974 when the USA and USSR gave their support to the program at a summit meeting in Moscow. In a surprise move during the meeting, both nations designated natural areas as biosphere reserves. Due to the political nature and importance of the program, it was the U.S. Department of State that established the U.S. National Committee for the MAB Program. The National Committee is composed of representatives from federal agencies and state and private institutions. The purpose of the committee is to guide the development of national education, research, and training activities. Between 1976 and 1991 the National Committee designated 47 natural regions as biosphere reserves and expanded one reserve in 1996. These natural areas occur in national parks, national forests, coastal regions, grassland, deserts, and many other areas, including Yellowstone National Park, the Coram Experimental Forest, the Beaver Creek Experimental Watershed, and the Aleutian Islands, just to name a few.

Starting in 1996 a misinformed but well-organized campaign alleged that the biosphere reserves (and World Heritage sites) were part of a UN experiment to take control of public and private

lands in the United States. Although the Congressional Research Service found the allegations to be false in a report issued the same year, the result was reduced political and financial support for MAB, and the termination of many reserve activities. This anti-UN campaign is still active today. However, after years of dormancy, the United States rejoined UNESCO in 2003, initiating the renewal of the biosphere reserve program. This renewal included preparations for collaborative efforts with Canada and Mexico and the incorporation of the non-profit U.S. Biosphere Reserve Association (USBRA) to convey factual information about the purposes and activities of biosphere reserves.

In 2004, the MAB National Committee began the process of reconstituting and establishing a new vision for USA MAB, including a new website. The new website, which contains 147 pages (compared to 1 page in the previous site), was developed by the USDA Forest Service Rocky Mountain Research Station in Flagstaff (Figure 1). The site is currently hosted at <http://www.rmrs.nau.edu/usamab/>.

The site offers a general description of the U.S. MAB program, a list of and links to "historical" documents that are relevant to the program, a news bulletin, which among other things lists related upcoming events, a page with related links, an interactive map of all the biosphere reserves in the United States, and a listing of the reserves in alphabetical order. Further, three web pages are dedicated to each biosphere reserve. The first page provides an "overview" of the reserve, giving the location in longitude, latitude, and elevation, year designated, what the major ecosystem type is, who the administrative authority is (including contact information), and related links specific to the individual biosphere reserve (Figure 2). The "general description" page gives a few paragraphs of general information as well as the size of the biosphere reserve (Figure 3). The "conversation activities"

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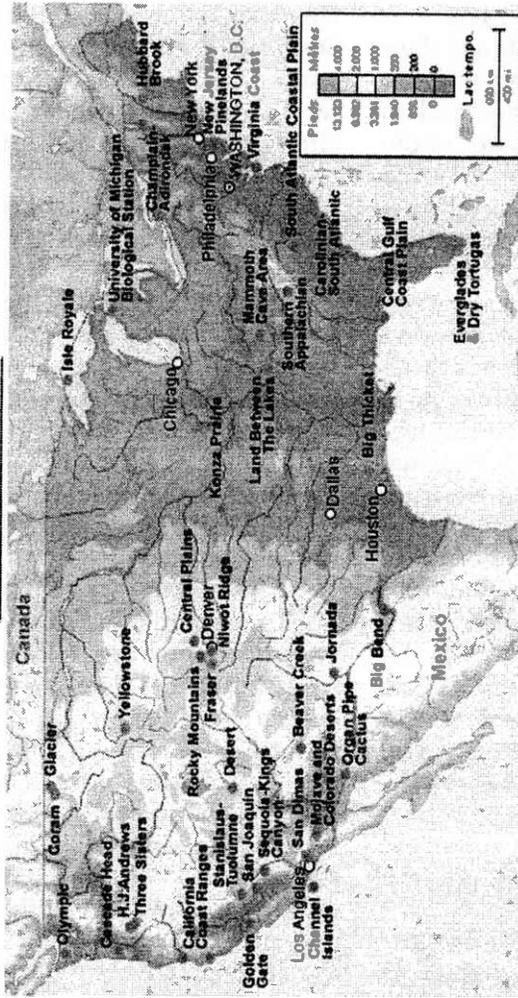


The MAB Program United States of America

Welcome to MAB

The MAB (Man and Biosphere) Program is an interdisciplinary research effort directed toward providing information for the solution of natural resources and environmental issues. As an intergovernmental program, MAB presents an opportunity for international cooperation and a focus for the coordination of related programs aimed at improving the management of natural resources and the environment.

Biosphere Reserve Location Map - United States of America



- Home
- Historical Docs
- News Bulletin
- What is MAB
- Reserves
- Related Links

Maps produced using MAPS N' FACTS, The Learning Company software

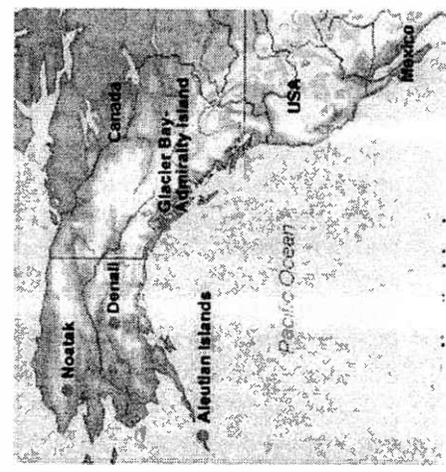


Figure 1. USA MAB Homepage.



The MAB Program United States of America

[Overview](#) [General Description](#) [Conservation Activities](#)

Biosphere Reserve Information Overview

Beaver Creek

Location: 34°32'N; 111°55'W
Elevation: 900 - 2400 m above sea level



- [Home](#)
- [Historical Docs](#)
- [News Bulletin](#)
- [What is MAB](#)
- [Reserves](#)
- [Related Links](#)



Contact address
 Dan Neary
 Beaver Creek Experimental Watershed
 2500 South Pine Knoll Drive
 Flagstaff, Arizona 86001
 United States of America

Telephone
 (1)(928) 556 2176

Fax
 (1)(928) 556 2130

email
 dneary@fs.fed.us

Administrative authorities
 Beaver Creek Experimental Watershed U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service (Concerning National Forest)

Major Ecosystem Type
 Ponderosa Pine Forest/Pinyon Juniper Woodland

Year Designated
 1976

Figure 2. Beaver Creek Biosphere Reserve Overview Page.

Biosphere Reserve Information - General Description

Beaver Creek

- [Home](#)
- [Historical Docs](#)
- [News Bulletin](#)
- [What is MAB](#)
- [Reserves](#)
- [Related Links](#)

General Description

The Beaver Creek Biosphere Reserve and Experimental Watershed is located about 80 km south of Flagstaff in north-central Arizona. The experimental watershed was established in 1956 as a major center for watershed management research within the pinyon-juniper (*Juniperus sp.*) and ponderosa pine (*Pinus ponderosa*) vegetation types and semi-desert shrubs. Beaver Creek has a long history of human influence. Since the late 19th century, the area has had various degrees of modification by man, the earliest being the introduction of domestic livestock. Most of the ponderosa pine area has been logged, which has changed its size and age class distribution. Protection from natural fire occurred since the early 1900's. Pinyon-juniper woodlands were converted for range and water yield improvement in the early 1960's. Today, the main goals of the Beaver Creek Program are to provide land managers with essential information about the biological, physical, social, and economic effects of management practices in the ponderosa pine forests and pinyon-juniper woodlands. Furthermore it aims at predicting, displaying, and evaluating differences among the probable results of management alternatives before actions are initiated.



Figure 3. Beaver Creek Biosphere Reserve General Description Page.

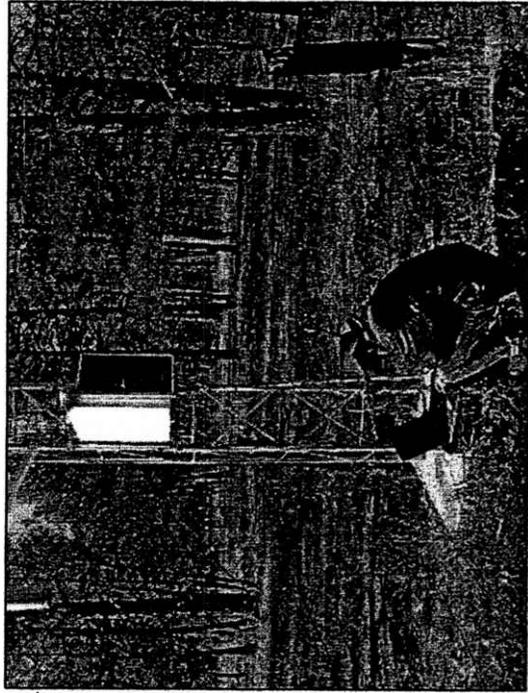


The MAB Program
United States of America

Overview | General Description | Conservation Activities

Biosphere Reserve Conservation Activities

Beaver Creek



- [Home](#)
- [Historical Docs](#)
- [News Bulletin](#)
- [What is MAB](#)
- [Reserves](#)
- [Related Links](#)

Research and Monitoring

Specific research areas include:

- Agriculture
- Biodiversity
- Socio-economic
- Integrated monitoring

Support Biology

Climate Change

05/10/2011 10:00/10/2011 10:00

Sustainability and Communities

Sustainable Development

Education for Sustainable Development

Gateway Communities

International linkages

Figure 4. Beaver Creek Biosphere Reserve Conservation Activities Page.

page offers information about any research and monitoring activities that are conducted in the reserve, as well as information on sustainability of the biosphere and the surrounding communities (Figure 4). It describes what sustainable developments the reserve is involved in, and which steps are taken to provide education on sustainable development. It also provides international linkages, such as to sister biosphere reserves in other countries and continents.

The sister of Arizona's Beaver Creek Biosphere Reserve (see Figures 2-4), which is located in central Arizona, is "La Michilia," which is located in Mexico. Flagstaff, Sedona, Payson, Camp Verde, and Prescott are all considered to be gateway communities to Beaver Creek. Research and monitoring activities in the reserve include surface hydrology, climate monitoring, and old growth/forest research. As mentioned on the website, the Beaver Creek Biosphere Reserve is part of the Coconino National Forest fuels reduction project, which

attempts to protect the national forest and its wildland-urban interface communities from catastrophic wildfires. The reserve is also currently being considered for incorporation into the National Ecological Observatory Network (NEON). Other sustainable activities within the reserve include livestock grazing, hunting, and recreation. The biosphere reserve is also featured on several educational websites and by the School of Forestry at Northern Arizona University for educational as well as research purposes. The Beaver Creek Experimental Watershed has been used to develop watershed standards in the semi-arid Southwest, and short courses in hydrology are available.

Overall, the MAB website is an informative and interactive tool that can be used for educational purposes as well as research. It allows scientists and students alike to see what research is being conducted in other parts of the country and internationally and who is doing what to inform citizens about sustainable development.