

# Seventh Biennial Scientific Conference Sets Attendance Record

On October 6–8, the park hosted the Seventh Biennial Scientific Conference on the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem. This year's theme was *Beyond the Arch: Community and Conservation in Greater Yellowstone and East Africa*. The conference, which included a world-class slate of keynote speakers, including Dr. Richard Leakey, surpassed all previous Biennial Conferences in attendance, with 188 pre-registered participants and attendees, and several walk-up registrants.

Paper and panel presentations included discussions of local ranchland dynamics (i.e., social, economic, and land use change); national policy and the rights of local peoples; conservation trends in both East Africa and the GYE; environmental perception and imagery; comparative ecosystem analyses; and

the sometime collision of conservation efforts and cultural agendas.

The primary theme that emerged from the roughly 30 papers and seven keynote lectures presented was the question

of whether conservation efforts are most effectively directed from the national or local scale. A variety of opinions and reasons were expressed throughout the three days, sometimes leading to heated debate. Overall, the assembled group seemed to generally conclude that national-scale conservation works best in some situations, and should be maintained as such, while community-based conservation efforts are most appropriate in other situations. Improved collaboration

between national and local efforts was widely advocated.

The conference attracted speakers and attendees from across the U.S., and from Africa as well. Other keynote speakers included Drs. Dan Flores, A. B. Hammond Professor of History at the University of Montana, who delivered the Aubrey Haines lecture, "What We've Learned About Nature from the National Park Idea"; A.R.E. Sinclair, professor of zoology and Director of the Centre for Biodiversity Research at the University of British Columbia, who delivered the Superintendent's International lecture, "Understanding Ecosystem Processes for Conservation and Management"; Charles Preston, Founding Curator of the Draper Museum of Natural History; Lee Talbot, Professor of Environmental Science, Inter-

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Samson Lenjirr, of Kenya's Narok Council, spoke in a session on African Conservation Trends.



Jeanette Wolfley, Shoshone-Bannock Tribes, and Drusilla Gould, Idaho State University, were part of a panel on conservation agendas and indigenous peoples.



Dr. Doug Smith receives the 2002 NPS Director's Award for Natural Resource Management. From left, Smith, Dr. Lee Talbot, and John Varley.



Dan Flores, A.B. Hammond Professor of History at the University of Montana, presented the Aubrey Haines Lecture.

national Affairs, and Public Policy at George Mason University; Steven Sanderson, President and CEO of the Wildlife Conservation Society; and Robin Reid, systems ecologist for the International Livestock Research Institute.

On October 7, John Varley and Dr. Talbot, who was a co-author of the Endangered Species Act, formally presented Doug Smith with the 2002 NPS Director's Award for Natural Resource Management. Doug won the award last spring, but it had yet to be given to him, and the conference's A. Starker Leopold Banquet seemed an apropos venue. The award presentation was followed by the A. Starker Leopold lecture, delivered this year by Dr. Richard Leakey, who spoke about his experiences in both conservation efforts and the dangerous business of oppositional politics in Kenya.



Dappled in the autumn sun, the conference's seven keynote speakers are pictured here with Yellowstone Center for Resources Director John Varley. From left, Drs. Lee Talbot, George Mason University; Robin Reid, International Livestock Research Institute; Steven Sanderson, Wildlife Conservation Society; Dan Flores, University of Montana; Charles Preston, Draper Museum of Natural History; (John Varley); A.R.E. Sinclair, University of British Columbia; and Richard Leakey, of Nairobi, Kenya.