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Great Plains-Rocky Mountain Division, Association of American Geographers, 1991 Meeting

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GREAT PLAINS-ROCKY MOUNTAIN DIVISION, ASSOCIATION OF AMERICAN GEOGRAPHERS

The 46th annual meeting of the Great Plains-Rocky Mountain Division, Association of American Geographers, drew a record attendance of 270 to Laramie, Wyoming, on September 5-7, 1991. The Department of Geography at the University of Wyoming hosted participants from Alberta, Colorado, Kansas, Montana, Nebraska, North Dakota, Saskatchewan, and South Dakota as well as from many other locations outside the Plains region.

Dennis H. Knight, Professor of Botany at University of Wyoming and a past president of the Ecological Society of America, delivered the keynote address, "Congressional incentives for landscape research." He highlighted landscape-scale geographic patterns and the various mandates in federal legislation to investigate them. He illustrated the implications for ecological processes of sharp land-use contrasts at a variety of spatial scales from fence lines to the Alberta-Montana border.

The main program consisted of 81 papers in 20 sessions representing the full breadth of geographic inquiry. Presentations of particular interest to Plains scholars included: late Quaternary geomorphic evolution of small drainage basins in Kansas (Alan Arbogast, Kansas) and Nebraska (Jeremy Dillon, Nebraska-Omaha); perception of place and employment preferences among university students in North Dakota (J. Eichhorst and Mohammed Hemmasi, North Dakota); incorporation of neighborhood identifiers in the names of small businesses in Denver (Martha Narey, Lowry Air Force Base); adjustments by family farmers in Nebraska to changes in structure of U.S. agriculture (Godson Obia, Nebraska-Kearney); patterns of population change in the 1980s in North Dakota (Mohammed Hemmasi and Devon Hansen); climatic reconstructions from tree rings in the Cypress Hills of Alberta and Saskatchewan (Stephen Porter and David Sauchyn, Regina); water budget climatology of the prairie pothole region of North Dakota (Paul Todhunter, North Dakota); comparison of temperature records at mountain and plains stations in Colorado (Timothy Brown and Roger Barry, Colorado, and Nolan Doesken, Colorado State); water conservation practices used by irrigators in Alberta (David Kromm, Kansas State); and, comparison of policies for prevention of water pollution in the Laramie River basin (William Gribb and Douglas Bryant, Wyoming).

Two special sessions addressed topics of contemporary importance to the Plains. In "The Platte River Basin in Transition," papers by Jay Maher (Central Nebraska Public Power and Irrigation District) on the controversy between water users and wildlife interests regarding the Kingsley Dam, and

by Marc Wilcox (U.S. Forest Service) on Forest Service efforts towards stream channel restoration, set the stage for discussion. The "Buffalo Commons" proposal was the topic of the other session. Karen DeBres (Kansas State) and Mark Guizlo (Michigan State) provided a critical evaluation of the methodology in the Poppers' proposal, Stephen White (Kansas State) reported that patterns of population change in the 1980s in the Ogallala aquifer region indicated stability, and Alec Paul (Regina) summarized the Canadian experience and view with sustainability of the Plains.

A highlight of geography meetings is the field trip program. Participants in Laramie partook of three successful excursions to study the geomorphology and biogeography of the Medicine Bow Mountains, the cultural landscapes (ranches, railroads, and forts) of southeastern Wyoming, and forest practices and resource use. The annual meeting concluded with an outing on the Wyoming-Colorado Railway to a ranch-style barbecue.

The 1992 meeting of the division will be hosted by the Department of Geography at Kansas State University. For information, contact Charles Bussing, Manhattan, KS 66506.

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