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OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

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INTERIOR SECRETARY UDALL TO HEAD UNITED STATES DELEGATION TO FIRST
WORLD CONFERENCE ON NATIONAL PARKS

For the first time in history, the global role of parks will be the subject of an international parley as the First World Conference on National Parks opens at Seattle, June 30, concluding July 7.

Almost 200 representatives from 63 countries will attend, with Secretary of the Interior Stewart L. Udall and National Park Service Director Conrad L. Wirth representing the United States.

Secretary Udall is scheduled to address the conference, sponsored by the International Union for Conservation of Nature and National Resources (IUCN), on July 4.

Responsibility for organizing the conference has been vested in a unique combination of countries represented in the IUCN, including the United States, Mexico, Thailand, Canada, Kenya, Sweden, South Africa, Sudan, France, Poland, Japan, Vietnam, and Belgium.

Cosponsors include the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) in association with the National Park Service and the Natural Resources Council of America as host-sponsors.

"It is appropriate that this first conference be held in Seattle during its Century 21 World Fair," Secretary Udall said. "For the world that greets the 21st century will be shaped not only by the success or failure of the peacemakers, but by how man uses his great natural heritages."

"Just as the recent White House Conference on Conservation provided us with new impetus to meet this nation's water and land resource responsibilities, so this world conference on parks can remind all of us of other challenges posed by that 21st century, now less than 40 years away.

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"In this country 40 years ago, less than a half million visited our parks annually. This year the figure will be closer to 80 million--a multiplication table that can be applied to all nations confronted with resource responsibilities."

Conference representatives will be taken on a tour of nearby Mount Rainier and Olympic National Parks. Following the Seattle meeting, a number of the foreign participants will visit Yellowstone, Grand Teton, and other national parks.

The conference purpose is to create a more effective international understanding and encouragement of the national park movement on a world-wide basis. Dr. Harold J. Coolidge, general chairman of the conference, declares that national parks have been established in most United Nations member countries, and are internationally recognized as a form of "wise land use indispensable to the cultural, scientific, recreational and economic needs of all nations." Their permanent preservation will safeguard for future generations the characteristic natural beauty, the native flora and fauna and the human history and spirit of each nation, he said.

Attendance at the conference is by invitation. Governments of all United Nations member countries as well as governments having membership in the U. N. Specialized Agencies, and qualified governments of Territories were each invited to send two delegates and additional observers as they considered appropriate. It was recommended that one delegate be selected from among those who have national policy responsibility for parks and reserves, and the other from those who have administrative authority for such areas.

Demonstrating the importance with which this First World Conference on Conservation is viewed in the United States, IUCN has collected almost \$75,000 from private sources to underwrite the conference, and the Senate has passed S. 2164, introduced by Senator Warren G. Magnuson (Washington), appropriating \$50,000 as the United States contribution to the success of the conference.

The conference program provides for a five-day program including: (1) Purposes, Principles, and Policies of National Parks; (2) Scientific, Economic and Cultural Values of National Parks and Equivalent Reserves; (3) Optimum Use of National Parks and Equivalent Reserves; (4) Administration of National Parks and Equivalent Reserves; and (5) International Coordination of National Park and Reserve Programs.

"Appropriately this conference will be held in the United States, where in 1872, Yellowstone, the world's first national park was established, in the words of the Congressional act that created it, 'as a public park or pleasuring ground for the benefit and enjoyment of the people,'" Secretary Udall said. "Today as a nation so often falsely painted as being obsessed by materialism, we can take pride in our leadership in providing opportunities for the significant spiritual and nontangible values which our parks afford."

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