

## The Conference

by GORDON M. HEISLER, and LEE P. HERRINGTON, *Conference cochairmen; respectively research forest meteorologist, USDA Forest Service, Northeastern Forest Experiment Station, Pennington, N. J. 08534; and professor of meteorology, State University of New York College of Environmental Science and Forestry, Syracuse, N. Y. 13210.*

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**T**HIS IS A REPORT on the Conference on Metropolitan Physical Environment, held in August 1975 at Syracuse, N.Y., where some 160 scientists and planners met to discuss the use of vegetation, space, and structures to improve the amenities for people who live in metropolitan areas.

Nearly all the papers presented at the Conference are published in this Proceedings. A few of the papers were invited, but most were selected by session chairmen from abstracts submitted. Some presentations were the so-called "poster papers" that provide ample and easy opportunity for direct communication between the author and people particularly interested in the subject.

The conference was held at the Everson Museum in downtown Syracuse. Financial support was provided by the Pinchot Institute for Environmental Forestry Research, Northeastern Forest Experiment Station, Forest Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture. Facilities, local meeting arrangements, and publicity were coordinated by the State University of New York College of Environmental Science and Forestry, as a continuing education service. The American Meteorological Society published the complete program in their Bulletin, supplied copies for use at the conference, and later published a conference summary in the Bulletin.

The Pinchot Institute for Environmental Forestry Research was established to develop the knowledge needed to solve problems of policy formulation, land planning, and forest and open-space land management in and around metropolitan areas. It conducts an interdisciplinary research program designed to improve urban living conditions through manipulation of urban vegetation systems.

The Pinchot program is a coordinated effort between the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service, Northeastern Forest Experiment Station, and the Consortium for Environmental Forestry Studies, which is an organization of nine northeastern universities and the Forest Service. The Consortium's Working Group on Urban Forest Amenities is one of eight technical groups through which Consortium research is organized.

The scientists in the Forest Amenities Group have strong interests in the meteorology and acoustics associated with trees and forests in metropolitan areas. Through their research, they are searching for ways to design more comfortable urban environments through manipulation of urban forest systems and open space.

Initial studies of the Amenities Working Group indicated a need for exchange of information and cooperation with other disciplines and with people in other roles — managers, planners, and designers of urban spaces. This conference on metropolitan physical environments was planned to help meet that need.

To broaden the scope of the conference, a number of persons outside the

Forest Amenities Working Group were recruited to serve on the conference program committee. The Conference was organized into eight sessions dealing with four subject areas: (1) urban meso- and micrometeorology, (2) acoustics, (3) air quality, (4) and qualitative aspects of metropolitan environments. The word "qualitative" was used to organize discussion related to the esthetics and function of metropolitan spaces, human behavior, planning, and design.

Conference attendees enjoyed several special events. The eminent ecologist, Pierre Dansereau, of the University of Quebec, set the tone for the conference with an inspiring keynote address at the Monday evening plenary session. Dr. Dansereau stressed the importance of viewing environmental problems holistically and described his conceptual model of global resource interrelationships.

The Wednesday evening banquet address by Paul M. Friedberg, director of the Urban Design Program, City College of New York, was both entertaining and informative. Mr. Friedberg dramatically emphasized the importance of considering human needs and behavior in the design of urban parks and outdoor gathering places. During breaks between sessions, walking tours of downtown Syracuse parks and plazas were led by landscape architecture student Margie Gershek.

In publishing these proceedings, it is the intent of the Northeastern Forest Experiment Station to show more clearly the role of trees in the context of the many physical and social variables of metropolitan environments. Although some of the papers do not deal directly with vegetation, all papers do provide valuable background information for the distinctly interdisciplinary concerns of the emerging field of urban forestry.

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## Program Committee

Cochairmen of the Conference were:

LEE P. HERRINGTON, State University of New York, College of Environmental Science and Forestry; and

GORDON M. HEISLER, USDA Forest Service, Northeastern Forest Experiment Station.

Other members of the program committee were:

DONALD D. DAVIS, The Pennsylvania State University (Air Quality Session Chairman).

DAVID DeWALLE, The Pennsylvania State University (Proceedings Editorial Committee).

CHRISTOPHER MACEY, State University of New York College of Environmental Science and Forestry ("Qualitative" Topics Session Chairman).

PAUL MICHAEL, The Pennsylvania State University.

DAVID R. MILLER, University of Connecticut (Proceedings Editorial Committee).

GEORGE H. MOELLER, Northeastern Forest Experiment Station.

THOMAS NIEMAN, State University of New York College of Environmental Science and Forestry.

HARRIET PLUMLEY, State University of New York College of Environmental Science and Forestry.

GERHARD REETHOF, The Pennsylvania State University (Acoustics Session Chairman).

ROWAN A. ROWNTREE, Syracuse University (Plenary Session Chairman).

ELWOOD L. SHAFER, JR., Northeastern Forest Experiment Station.

PETER W. SUMMERS, Environment Canada (Meteorology Session Chairman).