

Welcome

Welcome to Chattanooga, Tennessee, and the 14th National Cave and Karst Management Symposium hosted by the Southeastern Cave Conservancy. This is the last symposium of the millennium. In anticipation of both old and new management issues that face professionals in the next century, we have brought to together this year an impressive variety of knowledge and expertise in the business of studying, managing, and conserving the cave resource.

The limestones surrounding Chattanooga have excellent positive and negative examples of management issues affecting caves and karst. We invite you to take advantage of the variety of topics this year and to participate in the workshops and field trips. The symposium offers you a tremendous opportunity to learn

about caves, cave management, and cave conservation. Equally important is the opportunity to meet new people and network with individuals and organizations sharing the same interests.

Please take the time to meet the members of the Southeastern Cave Conservancy and the members of the symposium staff. Our enthusiasm will be evident. If there is anything that we may do to make your stay more comfortable, or help you in any way, please let us know. Again, thank you for coming and have a great time this week.

Mark Wolinsky, Chairman
Geary Schindel, Co-Chairman

Greetings

On behalf of the Southeastern Cave Conservancy, welcome to Chattanooga and the 1999 National Cave and Karst Management Symposium. Many members of the Conservancy have worked long and hard to prepare for your arrival and to ensure that you have a memorable and rewarding experience this week. We are pleased to be your hosts, and will be glad to do whatever we can to assist during your stay. If there is anything you need, please don't hesitate to ask one of the symposium staff or Conservancy members.

The region around Chattanooga is commonly and affectionately known to local cavers as "TAG" — the acronym for Tennessee, Alabama, and Georgia, whose state borders meet at a common point a few miles west of the city. There are more than 12,000 known caves in this region, and most of them are located within a 100-mile radius of that point, as are cities including Huntsville, Chattanooga, Nashville, Knoxville, Birmingham, and Atlanta. This not only accounts for the region's popularity among cavers, but also illustrates the challenges facing all of us who care about caves, their contents, and their inhabitants. How will

we work with cities, industry, politicians, and residents to ensure that their growth and development activities consider the facts of life in one of North America's major karst regions?

Caves are everywhere here. They are in back yards, pastures, parking lots, and on the side of the road. They are under city buildings, schools, houses, roads, and freeways. Everyone knows they are there, but few know much about them. Therein lies our mission, I think. We must work to raise awareness of the value and significance of caves and karst to ensure that growth, opportunity, and development do not come at the expense of fragile ecosystems, historic sites, and underground wilderness.

By hosting this Symposium, the Southeastern Cave Conservancy hopes to promote better understanding of and appreciation for cave and karst management, conservation, protection, and research. We thank you for joining us and for your participation, and we welcome you to the place we love — the place where we live — TAG.

Bill Putnam, Chairman,
Southeastern Cave Conservancy, Inc.

Theme

The theme of this symposium is "Living with Caves and Karst." Many cities in the Tennessee Valley Region will pass into the next millennium with enormous planning problems in a karst region that has seen accelerated rates of residential, commercial, and industrial development. In increasing numbers, municipalities are forced to consider the effects of karst and its fast-moving groundwater in their planning and development. Similar situations exist in many other karst regions across North America.

In this symposium we will highlight impacts and threats to caves and karst in metropolitan areas, consider implications of caves and karst for land use planning and development, and examine strategies and techniques for conservation and management of caves and karst

resources in that environment. The primary impacts on karst resources in the region result from timber harvesting, septic tank degradation, petroleum pipeline ruptures, non-point-source pollution, and industrial discharge. Rapid population growth and residential development in the cave-rich area are also issues. Increases in recreational caving, timber harvesting, and residential development are creating widespread pressure on cave fauna and associated habitat. Similar concerns apply to the many caves containing significant cultural and scientific resources. By focusing on these issues, we hope to foster a better understanding of the challenges of responsible development and growth in karst regions.