

UNH Natural Resources Professor Receives Fulbright Award

By *Sharon Keeler*
UNH News Bureau

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DURHAM, N.H. -- Barrett Rock, University of New Hampshire professor of natural resources, has been awarded a Fulbright Faculty Scholar grant to teach and conduct research in the Czech Republic, according to the U.S. Department of State and the J. William Fulbright Foreign Scholarship Board.

Rock has been at UNH since 1987, where he is a faculty member in the Department of Natural Resources and in the Complex Systems Research Center of the university's Institute for the Study of Earth, Oceans, and Space. He is an international expert on the effects of air pollution on forest health, and conducts research in New England and in Central Europe.

Rock has an active research program in the Czech Republic, where he assesses forest health using ground-based techniques as well as remote sensing tools flown on both aircraft and from space satellites. The Fulbright award will allow him to spend the academic year in the Czech Republic, where he will teach environmental science courses focused on the use of remote sensing at Charles University and Mendel University of Agriculture and Forestry in Brno.

"I've visited the Czech Republic many times to conduct research, and am excited to be going there to teach," says Rock. "Prague is a beautiful city, and Charles University is the oldest university in central Europe."

Rock taught a course at Charles University before, and was encouraged by the dean of the College of Science to apply for a Fulbright to return. He says students are especially responsive to his teaching style, which uses a more hands-on approach in contrast to a lecture format which is more typical at European institutions.

In addition to teaching and field work, Rock will visit K-12 schools in central Europe that are participants in an international environmental education program he helped developed called GLOBE (Global Learning and Observations to Benefit the Environment). In GLOBE Students learn how to monitor various Earth systems -- such as the atmosphere, hydrosphere and biosphere -- and they learn cutting-edge scientific methods to measure changes relation to air pollution and forest health.

One of Rock's notable professional accomplishments was his 1994-95 role as senior scientist and assistant director of the GLOBE Program in Washington, D.C. Rock developed the hands-on science activities to be conducted by GLOBE students on an international scale. There are now approximately 90 countries and more than 10,000 schools actively involved in the program. GLOBE was patterned after ideas presented by Al Gore in "Earth and Balance."

Rock is one of approximately 2,000 Americans who will travel abroad for the 2001/2002 academic year through the Fulbright Program. Established in 1946 under legislation introduced by the late Senator J. William Fulbright of Arkansas, its purpose is the build mutual understanding between people of the United States and the rest of the world.

Recipients of Fulbright awards are selected on the basis of academic or professional achievement and because they have demonstrated unusual leadership potential in their fields.

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