

# **Protecting Karst Resources Requires an Understanding of Karst Resources**

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## **Abstract**

The authors, along with many of our colleagues, propose that we cannot protect that which we do not understand. An evolving, cooperative graduate education program between Western Kentucky University and the National Park Service continues to develop. This program is providing training to a variety of National Park Service scientists with responsibilities for karst resource management. The program has a long history with the Western Kentucky University Center for Cave and Karst Studies' Mammoth Cave "Summer in the Park" Program, founded by Nick Crawford in 1980 and which continues as an important component of the program today. Simultaneously, since 1990 numerous Western Kentucky University graduate thesis research projects in water quality, air quality, and karst landscape evolution have been completed at Mammoth Cave National Park. More recently, the intensive, yet flexible, graduate programs of David Ek (Fort Clatsop and Chattahoochee River), Joel Despain (Sequoia/Kings Canyon), and Katie Seadler (Mammoth Cave) are serving as models for an evolving program that in the future should expand into other resource management areas as well as serving the needs of resource managers from other government agencies.