Sears Island Cargo Port Proposal Abandoned by Maine's Governor
A Victory for Estuarine and Marine Ecosystems (page 8)

Inside
- New York Governor Ends Salvage Logging in State Forests (page 7)
- Vermont Citizens Forestry Roundtable Builds Bridges with Low Impact Loggers (page 10)
- Bill McKibben on Smaller Local Economies (page 13)
- Citizens Call for Zero Dioxin Discharge in Maine (page 17)
- Love Canal, Dioxin & Rebuilding Democracy - A Conversation with Lois Marie Gibbs (page 20)
- Ban Clearcutting in Maine Referendum - A Special Section (pages 26-31)
The Mud Season: A Time of Renewal and Hope

The poet T. S. Eliot wrote, "April is the cruellest month, mixing memory with desire." But on this glorious April Fool's Day, I celebrate the warming sun, the returning birds, and the budding trees. Patches of snow are shrinking; mud season is in its full glory. For me, this is the true beginning of the new year.

For defenders of the natural and human communities of the Northern Forest region, this is indeed a hopeful time. As these pages attest, talented, dedicated community-builders are working wonders in Northern Forest region during these hope-filled days.

• The defeat of the Sears Island Cargo Port is a victory for marine and estuarine ecosystems and the forests that will not be chipped to fuel the world chip market. It is a great victory for grassroots and mainstream collaboration. It is a set back for growth-at-any-cost (to the public) economic boondoggle.

• The decision by New York Governor George Pataki to reverse a disastrous 45-year state policy on salvage logging in State Forests following a major disturbance such as the storm of July 1, 1995 is a great victory for sensible, scientific wilderness management.

• The recent workshop on Low Impact Forestry, sponsored by the Vermont Citizen's Forest Roundtable drew over 100 participants from all spectrums of the Vermont forestry community. This civil, respectful, and well-informed City Roundtable is pulling folks together to address common concerns ranging from clearcuts and herbicides to establishing a network to assist in monitoring and mitigating low impact forestry find markets. Such collaborative efforts are the antithesis to the polarization practiced by stubborn defenders of the discredited status quo.

• Today, to celebrate the opening of fishing season in Maine, citizens fed up with paper mill discharges that befoul the water, fish, lobsters, clams and the human and non-human critters that eat such toxic fare launched a "Ban Dioxin" campaign. This broad cross-section of the Maine populace is committed to insuring that this is the final dioxin campaign in Maine. It is yet another example of citizens' groups working effectively with a mainstream group—the Natural Resources Council of Maine.

On top of these hopeful developments, of course, is the Ban Clearcutting in Maine Referendum. Although the vote on this citizen initiative is still seven months away, it has forever changed the terms of the debate over forestry issues in Maine. Jerry Bley, an environmental consultant and former member of the Northern Forest Lands Council, is not known for his wild-eyed statements, yet he recently assessed the impact of the Referendum on the timber industry: "They are on the end of life as they know it. And they are correct."

At a Legislative hearing on March 18, Director of the Maine Forest Service, Chuck Gadzik admitted that current forest practices in Maine must be changed. Never before has the Maine Forest Service made such an admission.

The Referendum is shining a spotlight on an industry that has flourished in the dark—in the dark, slippery hallways of the Maine Legislature where industry campaign financing has purchased a loyal and docile majority for decades; and in the dark behind the beauty strips that have, until recently, hidden the incomprehensible forest destruction of the large landowners for decades.

Truth flourishes in the light.

• Clearcuts are ugly because they show ecological destruction, not because they upset our delicate urban aesthetic sensibilities.

• Clearcuts cause unemployment. During a period in which over 2,000 square miles of Maine were clearcut, over 3,000 mill jobs and 40% of logger jobs disappeared in Maine. Woods relating that is tame by Maine standards.

To win the Referendum, citizens in Maine must engage their neighbors in a sustained campaign to make the impact of the referendum on jobs— or is it the impact on profits that has them all choked up?

• People are angry that the corporations buy and sell politicians. They are angered by CEO salaries that would keep a thousand of their neighbors well-fed and clothed. They see through the feel-good TV commercials run by paper companies that forget to show us any stumps.

But, the large landowners and the paper industry won't change their ways without a fight. A poll this winter found that 71% of Mainers support The Ban Clearcutting Referendum. But the timber industry has hired a slick California and Washington DC-based public relations firm to confuse Mainers into thinking that clearing creates jobs and healthy forests.

The industry is fronting a "citizen's" campaign funded by $5-6 million. They want to polarize Mainers in the no-win "jobs vs. environment" scam.

But this timber industry message—that there are no jobs on a healthy planet— is nonsense. Steve Forbes recently thought he could purchase Maine votes with a megabucks campaign devoid of substance and truth content. Maine voters aren't fooled. They were fooled by the "Citizens for a Healthy Forest and Economy" campaign whose message is: "Forest destruction is sustained and beneficial to people and wildlife."

The anti-Referendum campaign is working overtime to portray the Referendum as too extreme, as a bill that will restrict responsible forestry. They don't tell you is that folks like Mel Ames of Atkinson are practicing forestry that grows back a township with forest management regulations that are more restrictive than those of the Referendum.

Pay attention to the industry propaganda. They are full of criticism of those who would protect the forests, but strangely silent on alternative ways to protect the forest and the economy. As Cathy Johnson of the Natural Resources Council of Maine (a group that has not endorsed the referendum— see page 26) told the Waterville Sentinel recently: "Forty percent of harvesting is below the minimum necessary for a continued practice of forestry. We want sustainable jobs based on sustainable resources and a real forest to pass on to our children. If industry has a better idea how to do this, we would like to hear it." The Forum will print any better ideas.

To win the Referendum, citizens in Maine must engage their neighbors in sustained, respectful, informed dialogue. They must expose industry disinformation. And, most of all, they must believe the evidence of their own senses. Clearcuts are ugly. They are biological disasters. Clearcuts are unfair—to wildlife, to future generations of all species, and to the millions of the Maine woods.

An Eagle-Eye View

by Mitch Lansky

At first, I agreed with pilot Rudy Engholm that the clearcuts below us in the hills and mountains of Vermont were "cute" compared to the massive destruction we were used to seeing in Maine. But as I looked across the landscape, I began to see that, perhaps, the damage in this section of Vermont (northeast of Montpelier) was worse than in Maine.

Before the cutting even starts, the landscape is fragmented by roads, villages, developments, farmland, and fields. I could not see large tracts of interior, mature, closed-canopy forests. The heavy cuts (many of which went up the sides of mountains) are thus cumulative damage, chipping away at what little intact forest remains. I could now understand why some Vermonters are so upset at cutting that is tame by Maine standards.

As we crossed New Hampshire into Maine, I was struck by the vastness of the "undeveloped" landscape in Maine. There is truly no place in the East that offers such a wide area with so little population. The mountains, lakes, rivers, and streams of Maine are impressive jewels that deserve a dignified setting. But in many places between the New Hampshire border and Lincoln (where I "deplaned"), the landscape looked familiar as if it had been made and managed as the more "developed" Vermont. And yes, there were clearcuts up the sides of some of the Western Mountains. I saw very few significant stretches of closed-canopy, mature softwood forests. Much of the softwood was in early succession, or was chopped open by repeated waths from mechanical harvesters.

It is sad that for the sacrifice of such a monumental legacy, there have been so few lasting human benefits. As one who lives in one of the little villages that seem so insignificant from the air, it struck me that as this pillage has accelerated the number of jobs has actually declined. The trees are turned into money, and the money goes out of state.

From the air it is obvious. We need wilderness. Where the forest is managed, we need management that maintains the forest as forest. When you look down, you should be able to see an ocean of tall green foliage, not dirt, rocks, and shrubs.

Trees grow to larger sizes slowly. It takes regarding 50 years to make a forest recover from the gashes so visible from the air: That's why it is so urgent to stop further damage. Now.

Illustration Credits
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The Northern Forest Forum is published six times a year by The Northern Appalachian Restoration Project of Earth Island Institute.
Letters

Reader Comments on Threats to Adirondack Wilderness & Wild Forests

Dear Jamie:

I would like to offer some commentary on Peter Bauer's article, "Gov. Patucci Appointees Are Busy Rolling Back Environmental Protection for the Adirondacks," which appeared in the Mid-Winter 1996 (Vol. 4, No. 3) edition of the Forum. Peter provided an outstanding review of the fundamental changes in composition (and recent practices) of the APA Board of Commissioners. The potential repercussions of replacing a majority of the Board with individuals who oppose development and denounce conservation could ripple through to the most remote sections in the Adirondack region. Personally, I am most troubled by the APA now "entertaining ideas about opening up the Wilderness" to float planes (or any other motorized equipment).

Land Classification in the Adirondack Park

This brings me to one statement of Peter's that could be misleading and deter individuals from becoming more concerned about the future of Adirondack wildlands. In the opening paragraph of his article, Peter discussed that approximately 58 percent of the land within the park is privately owned. However, this paragraph mistakenly alluded to the fact that the 42 percent of state-owned lands within the Park were all "protected as wilderness lands." Public lands within the Adirondack Park are classified into nine basic categories (Wilderness Areas, Primitive Areas, Canoe Areas, Wild Forest Areas, Intensive Use Areas, Historic Areas, State Administrative Areas, Wild, Scenic & Recreational Rivers, Travel Corridors). Each designated classification permits varying degrees of recreational use and stipulates different management strategies. These categories of lands—wilderness, primitive, and wild forest areas—account for approximately 99 percent of the state-owned properties. Those categories of public lands are classified as Wild Forest Areas (53%) of all state lands. Designated wilderness areas account for only 18 percent of the state's viewable land base in the northeast quadrant of the Park.

The Forum focuses on:

- The preservation and restoration of the region's biologic integrity;
- The creation of a locally controlled regional economy that is ecologically sustainable;
- Cultural restoration;
- Creation of a democracy that protects the rights of all species and future generations;

We will gladly publish letters and articles submitted to us that promote healthy dialogue, whether or not we agree with the point of view of the writer.

Cordially,

Vernon, NY

John McKeith

The Adirondack Wildlands

Adirondack wilderness areas must be at least ten thousand acres (of contiguous, roadless) land and water having a "primeval Character, without significant improvement." Since the primary wilderness management objective is to "achieve and perpetuate a natural plant and animal community where man’s influence is not apparent," wilderness areas have the most restrictive permissible recreational uses. Although subject to recreational impacts and external environmental influences (e.g. acid precipitation), these areas tend to be the most ecologically intact ecosystems in the Adirondacks. We citizens of New York State should take great pride in the fact that nearly 20 percent of all designated federal and state wilderness east of the Rocky Mountains is contained within the boundaries of the Adirondack Park. Such a distinction does not, however, imply that we should not continue to urge for the expansion of wilderness regions. Only a small fraction of the land base in the northeast quadrant of the Park is designated as wilderness.

There are no minimum acreage requirements for wild forest designation; many wild forest areas tend to be small, fragmented parcels that are scattered throughout the Adirondacks. The Adirondack Park State Land Master Plan defines wild forests as "an area that frequently lacks the sense of remoteness of wilderness... and that permits a wide variety of outdoor recreation," so long as it maintains "an essentially wild character." But the use of ATVs and the maintenance of permanent structures (e.g., dams) and other "improvements (e.g., roads) are permitted within these regions that impinge upon the forest's wild characteristics. These areas—designated primarily for recreational considerations—permit, and often encourage, extensive degradation. These fragmented off-road playgrounds should not be confused with roadless wilderness.

The basic premise for preservation of the Adirondacks and the various land classifications is mostly ecocentric. Wilderness designation implies a somewhat more ecocentric motive; larger areas designated to permit human activities so long as those activities do not trample the larger "community of life" within these regions. Designating "migration corridors" to connect large tracts of wilderness together would be a sign of more biocentric compassion and understanding.

Monitoring the Environmental Backlash

Thankfully, the Residents' Committee to Protect the Adirondacks (RCPA) is committed to maintaining the ecological integrity of Forest Preserve lands, as well as the health and vitality of human communities within the park. Clearcuts and the importation of refuse into the park or the residents. It is now more imperative than ever that ecology-conscious residents from within the Blue Line voice their concerns for continued environmental protection. Hopefully, recent Patuki-Campbell APA decisions will serve to strengthen this coalition of Park residents who decry the environmental backlash being exercised by the "new" APA.

However, we individuals—from both inside and outside the Park—concerned with the future of wildlands in the Adirondack Park should not rely solely on the RCPA and other organizations to monitor the "new" APA ambitions. If we wish to leave our children and grandchildren an inheritance of natural beauty and fragments (hopefully larger fragments) of true wilderness, we have to become more attuned to the Patuki-Campbell APA and make our concerns heard.

Cordially,

Bob Koch

The Drone of Float Planes

Public lands in the Adirondack Park are constitutionally protected to be kept as "forever wild." The protection granted to the Adirondack Park served as the stimulus for the National Wilderness Act, and the unique mixture of public and private lands is now being used as a case study for future international preservation strategies. We should be proud of these accomplishments and strive to continue setting such ecologically conscious examples.

The fact that the Patuki-Campbell APA is even entertaining ideas to permit float planes into designated wilderness areas is a sign of their ecocentric motives and their willingness to undermine a century of responsible stewardship. Aldo Leopold stated that "Recreation development is not a job of building roads into lovely country, but of building receptivity into the still unknown human mind." Wilderness provides the laboratory for future generations to continue building biocentric receptivity. To blatantly discard our inheritance of wilderness remnants would be an injustice to our descendants and the larger biotic community.
Letters to the Editor

If Clearcutting is a Headache, the Referendum Will Cure it with a Guillotine

Dear Sir:

I read your Mid Winter edition with considerable interest, and some alarm. Your own article, "Why I Support the Ban, Clearcutting in Maine Referendum", states (i) the referendum would impose forest regulations "based on science and the principles of Sustainable Forest Council (SFMC) is but a tool of industry and that it is not possible to negotiate with them on industry's own terms." 

The mistakes, and possible distortion, of this referendum refer to Lansky's use of the statements by the authors of the B-line stocking guides, a type of forest regeneration that results. "Individual tree selection...[is]...appropriate for regenerating...intolerant species. Group selection is the removal of trees in groups roughly 1/2 to 2 acres in size. It is especially appropriate where (1) the objective is to maintain up to one-half the regeneration in intolerant or intermediate species. " The chief (shade) intolerant species in northern Maine, by the way, is the Paper Birch. The referendum would ban anyone from opening the forest canopy by more than 1/2 acre. It would, thus ban a large part of harvesting by "group removal" which the authors of the B-line stocking guides say is bluebird. In fact, the damage to wildlife that would probably result from the rules in the referendum will probably be even more severe than that to the diversity of tree species. The one agent that can alleviate this is forest fire. Do you advocate this?

The stocking guides are clearly tools for managing forests as even-aged stands. It is also clear that the even-age management system, as the authors of the guides wish it to be understood, entails, ultimately, removal of all trees of the desired age from the land, whether by clearcutting or shelter wood practice. The authors also make it clear that regeneration on shelter wood cut will favor shade tolerant tolerant trees. Their charts show that in order to regenerate paper birch, clearcutting is preferred...is it?

The stocking guides are not designated as a basis for banning clearcutting. They are, in fact, informational tools for management of even-age stands of forest, with eventual harvest by clearcutting. It is not true, as Lansky claims, that the stocking levels are guides for cutting every 15 years. A stand treated this way would quickly become uneven-aged, and the authors of the Silvicultural Guides were careful to say that stocking guides for uneven-age stands are not at all clear. A Silvicultural Guide for Spruce-Fir in the Northeast, by R.M. Frank and J.C. Bjorkbom (U.S. Forest Service General Technical Report NE 6, 1975) is even more clear on the valid use of the stocking guides. ...For even-age management one picks the trees that will eventually be harvested and removes...i.e., thinning out... the B-level curve on the stocking guides gives one an estimate of a maximum desirable level of tree removal. The Silvicultural Guide cautions the reader not to go to the B level without considering other characteristics of the site. But the thinned site is ultimately to be cleared of all trees chosen for the crop. Lansky's statement that the "cutting observed and recommend as beneficial. The referendum simply redefine a useful uneven-age management practice as clearcutting. Now, how might the proposed regulations harm the wood lands? Let me count the ways... To regenerate non-shade tolerant species of trees on a patch of land, one would like to have some substantial fraction of the patch exposed to direct sunlight for some substantial period of the day, all through the summertime of the year: say 3/4 of the land area in the sun. With the 1/2 acre opening ringed by mature trees, this simply will not happen. The patch will truly be "in a dark wood." There will not be enough sun to permit shade intolerant species of trees like the paper birch to flourish; nor will there be enough sun to permit development of the particular habitat that grows into cleared sunlit areas and their edges, the habitat required to sustain wildlife species, such as the moose and the eust

Browsing moose. Photo © John McKisit

The Northern Forest Forum

Mud Season 1996
Mitch Lansky Responds to Charles Berg

I thank Mr. Berg for the attention he paid to my work (After the Cutting is Done...) and for raising a number of concerns, some of which I do not refer to my writings. The Northern Forest Forum is meant to be a forum where issues can be debated in more depth than would commonly occur in most other media. The following are the major points that I think Mr. Berg is trying to make and my responses to these points.

1. Lansky "implies" that the B-line is the scientific foundation for the referendum. Mr. Berg should be informed that I did not write the referendum and my study wasn’t about the referendum. Furthermore, the referendum is not based on the B-line, except for hardwoods. The minimum stocking levels allowed for mixedwood (75 ft² basal area) and softwood (90 ft² basal area) are on the C-line for stands with a mean diameter of around 8 inches. Stands with less than C-line stocking are considered understocked.

Since my study was released after the referendum was written and the petitions signed, I am at a loss as to how it could be used as a foundation for the referendum. I did not write the study as a foundation for the referendum. As mentioned in the study, it was written in response to a study done by the Maine Forest Service last year.

A more recent publication has been about forestry these days is done so in an atmosphere permeated by discussion about the referendum. If a study contains material critical of the status quo, referendum proponents will use it if a study contains material that makes clearcutting sound good, opponents will use it.

2. The B-line is for thinning even-aged stands—stands which eventually will be cut. In my study I made it plain that the stocking levels I chose apply to both even- and uneven-aged stands. Indeed, for hardwoods, I should have gone to 70, rather than 65 ft² to be more accurate for uneven-aged stands. My study was not intended to use B-line stocking to prove that clearcuts should be banned. It was intended to measure cutting in Maine, whether even-aged or uneven-aged, against silvicultural standards.

3. Lansky claims that the stocking levels are guides for cutting every 15 years. I never claimed that the B-line is a guide to cutting every 15 years. Indeed, in my larger study, I made no mention of 15-year cutting cycles. In my Forum article I did state that cutting cycles could be 15 or fewer years apart. This is based on information from Leak et al which recommends that landowners wait until stands have 30 ft²/m² more than the B-line to ensure a commercial cut down to the B-line. They suggest that since northern hardwoods grow at a rate of around 2 ft²/m² per year, 30 ft² can be reached in about 15 years.

In a chart showing cumulative yields from intensive management, Leak et al show thinning cycles of between 11 and 24 years, depending on diameter and site. The stands are thinned four or five times before the final cut. On good sites the final cut is at nearly 100 years, moderate sites around 120 years and poor sites around 150 years. Apparently the authors of the guide did not share Mr. Berg’s concern that stands “treated this way would quickly become uneven-aged.”

4. The growth response from thinning is on existing trees, not the ingrowth (the young trees that reach larger diameters). Nowadays in my study I did imply that the growth response from thinning an even-aged stand was in ingrowth. According to the USDA Forest Service, the B-line gives the best growth response for the residual stands. However, if thinnings continue for rotations of one hundred or more years, as recommended by the guides for some site types, one would expect that shade-tolerant species would regenerate and eventually contribute to ingrowth in the stand—i.e., the stand might become uneven-aged.

I do not see that this is a problem. It means that when the final cut happens on the oldest trees, a new crop will be there to fill the space without having to wait another hundred years. With uneven-aged stands, part of the growth response to partial cuts at the recommended stocking levels would be from ingrowth.

5. Lansky does not take into account the need to regenerate shade intolerant species. Mr. Berg spends considerable space on the subject of light needs of intolerant species. My study had almost nothing to say on this subject, except to mention that in partial cuts examined by the Maine Forest Service, the percentage of poplar, a shade intolerant species, actually increased over its representation in the overstory. This is evidence that some of the “partial cuts” were pretty heavy.

Continued on next page
More Letters to the Editor

Dear Editor:

I read with interest your review of Mark Dowie's book, Losing Ground. It is certainly a thorough critique of the mainstream environmental movement. Many of Mr. Dowie's criticisms are quite valid.

However, both Mr. Dowie and the reviewer appear to have elevated grassroots movements to unreachable heights. Mr. Dowie, alas, does not share his readers an honest and critical assessment of grassroots organizing and the frankly sexist and overbearing leadership that it produces.

Like all political struggles, the environmental movement has spawned a variety of tactics and memberships. It may surprise the reviewer to hear that no one person and no single group of people is correct and pure. We are all tarnished and our achievements less than we would like.

Mark Dowie had an opportunity to develop and present a truly refreshing appraisal. Mr. Dowie does not provide that appraisal nor does his writing mainstream environmental groups. Here at the Forum we try to give credit where credit is due. In this issue, we salute the collaboration between grassroots groups and mainstream groups in defeating the proposed Sears Island cargo port. We also introduce the Stop Dioxin Exposure Campaign in Maine that is a collaboration of citizens groups and the Natural Resources Council of Maine. Unfortunately, there are countless examples of bad relations between mainstream groups and grassroots activists in this region and elsewhere, and Dowie has effectively put his finger on many of the reasons.

As you note, sane, and sometimes racist, are indeed problems with some grassroots groups, a reflection, sadly, of the greater society we are trying to change.

On one point, I think you're wrong: I did state that I thought this was one of the most poorly edited books I've ever read.

Ginny McGrath
Montpelier, VT

Editor (& reviewer) responds: You are right that grassroots groups are far from perfect. I did not mean to imply otherwise. I was critiquing the frustrating relationship between grassroots activists and mainstream groups. Here at the Forum we try to give credit where credit is due. In this issue, we salute the collaboration between grassroots groups and mainstream groups in defeating the proposed Sears Island cargo port. We also introduce the Stop Dioxin Exposure Campaign in Maine that is a collaboration of citizens groups and the Natural Resources Council of Maine. Unfortunately, there are countless examples of bad relations between mainstream groups and grassroots activists in this region and elsewhere, and Dowie has effectively put his finger on many of the reasons.

As you note, sane, and sometimes racist, are indeed problems with some grassroots groups, a reflection, sadly, of the greater society we are trying to change.

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—K. Furbish, Maine

We do not think that it is "funny" to make "jokes" at the expense of "rural people." Mitch Lansky's "article" on "humor" ends with a "joke" that implies that rural people are "ignorant" and have "loose morals." We expect an "apology."

—E. and J. Peabody, VT

The article, "The Environment: No Laughing Matter," (Forum, Vol. 4, #2, Winter Solstice 1995), mentions pesticides that render men "impotent." We hope this is not a veiled reference to our product, Tomil™. Numerous tests on our company on mice, rats, guinea pigs, dogs, and monkeys have established that our product has no impact on sexual performance or fertility in these animals.

We feel that articles like Lansky's exploit unfounded fears, based on rumors rather than scientific facts. The public is led to reject legitimate and necessary agricultural tools. If you, or Mr. Lansky, would like to get more information on the subject of agricultural chemicals please contact us at the enclosed address.

—W. Anderson, Union Carbine

I thought Lansky's article about "Age Structure..." was funnier than his article on humor.

—J. Proudly, NH

Our 9-year-old son, Eliot, has been a faithful reader of the Forum for years. He was, as you noted, engaged in counting references in your latest issue, we feel we must cancel our subscription. Such language is not appropriate for what we consider a family publication.

—Mr. and Mrs. H. Pearce, NY

I am an engineering student at the University of Maine, and was interested in the "logic and metaphysics" mentioned in your Winter issue. Where can I purchase LCBs?

—J. Harquart, MB

Lansky Responds

Continued from preceding page

Mr. Berg informs us that "the chief (shade) intolerant species in northern Maine, by the way, is the Paper Birch." Actually, the second most abundant hardwood in Maine is poplar. Number one (and rising) is red maple. In the pre-settlement forest, poplar represented about 2.3% of the trees. This figure was used in 1977 by ecologist Craig Lottimer to suggest that heavy disturbances occurred relatively infrequently.

Due to heavy clears-cutting over the last few decades, there is an over-abundance of young poplar in some sections of the state. One can rest assured that shade-intolerant species will not go extinct in the near future, even if the referendum passes.

It is hard to believe that landowners are clears-cutting over a concern for losing shade intolerant species such as poplar. Indeed, where poplar, pin cherry, gray birch, and other such species regenerate, industrial landowners tend to spray herbicides.

Leak et al (pg. 12) suggest that group-selection cuts of around one-half acre would regenerate to 34% intermediate and 4% intolerant species. Simply because a landowner has ceased to do large clears-cuts does not mean that the wind will stop blowing, that insects will stop chewing, and that fires will stop burning. These are natural parts of the forest cycle and will contribute shade intolerant species wherever they occur.

The referendum would have a devastating effect on wildlife, such as moose and bluebirds, that depend on early succession. Since my study was not about the referendum, but, rather, a score card on forest practices in the state I did not address the hypothetical disaster suggested by Mr. Berg.

The most pressing need in Maine right now is not to create more regener-
Gov. Pataki Stops Salvage Logging on NY State Forest Lands

In March Governor George E. Pataki decided not to allow the destruction of five trees or the removal of fallen timber by contract bidders in the Constitutionally protected Adirondack Forest Preserve. In taking this action, he reversed a 45-year-old policy of salvage logging in the Wild Forests and Wilderness of the Adirondacks.

The Governor's decision follows months of public discussion concerning the fate of thousands of acres of trees felled by a severe windstorm that swept through Upstate New York on July 15, 1995. (See "In the Wake of the Storm—Salvage Logging in the Adirondacks" by Michael DiNunzio, Forum, Winter Solstice 1995, vol. 4, #2, page 5.) The trees in question are part of the Adirondack Forest Preserve, which has been protected by the NYS Constitution since 1894 against logging or destruction.

"Governor Pataki has courageously defended the integrity of the Constitution's 'Forever Wild' clause, said Adirondack Council Executive Director Timothy J. Burke. "This was not an easy decision, given the pressure to salvage trees that some people felt should be cut into lumber and firewood and hauled off of the Forest Preserve for private sale. And it sets an excellent precedent for future decisions about the Forest Preserve."

Following a similar storm in 1950, Governor Thomas Dewey elected to allow the removal of fallen trees from the Forest Preserve. The state's inability to police hundreds of square miles of forest during the removal operations led to abuses, such as the cutting of valuable live trees by bidders who had permission to remove fallen trees only.

"It was District Ranger in the 1950s when Governor Dewey made the decision to allow salvage operations on the Forest Preserve," said Clarence A. Petty, age 90, of Canton, NY. "I don't think he or anyone else knew at the time what a mistake that was. There was really never any good reason for removing the fallen trees. The same is true today. This part of the Park is very wet and fires are extremely rare. The fallen trees will decay and return to the soil from which they came, enriching the forest in the process. Other trees will sprout up in the meantime, I'm extremely pleased to see Governor Pataki erase this black mark in the state's history."

Burke commended the Department of Environmental Conservation and its Commissioner, Michael Zagata, for conducting an "exemplary public process to reach this decision. They took the time needed to hear all of the interests and produced an excellent set of recommendations."

Commissioner Zagata studied a blowdown in Baxter State Park in Maine before reaching his decision. In the Baxter blowdown, half was salvage-logged and the other half was left alone. Later a fire burned both areas. Contrary to claims of the salvage logging boosters, the unsalvaged area fared much better than the salvaged area.

The salvaged area was more open to desiccation due to sun and wind; and small branches left behind after the salvage operations. The fire scorched the soil. In the unsalvaged area, the blown down trees acted to shade the soil, to retard the fire (by retaining moisture) and helped to scatter the smaller branches and away from the soil. The soil of the unsalvaged area was not scorched.

The Blue Line Council and Finch Pruyn, a large private landowner in the Park, severely criticized the Governor's decision, repeating the now discredited claim that salvage logging protects against the danger of fire.

New EPA Study Shows Midwest Still Polluting Adirondacks with Acid Rain

Elizabethtown, NY—Despite the federal government's success in reducing acid-rain-causing pollution nationwide, a new federal report shows that parts of the Midwest are still polluting the Adirondack Park at levels on par with 1980. Long before the first acid rain laws went into effect, the Adirondack Council announced on February 28, 1996.

The study is further proof that the federal government must require specific, new pollution reductions in the Midwest rather than allowing market forces to dictate which parts of the country are cleaned up, the Council said.

The study—"Acid Rain Program Emissions Scorecard 1994"—was conducted by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). It compares smokestack emissions from the nation's 110 dirtiest electric power plants in 1980, 1985, 1990 and 1994.

Adirondack Council Executive Director Timothy J. Burke said: "The new report confirms that states such as Georgia are cleaning up, but states whose pollution falls on us, such as Ohio, are still polluting at about the same level they were sixteen years ago."

"The Adirondacks are still being polluted to the point where lakes and forests are dying," Burke said. "The federal government must require these Midwestern plants to clean up their emissions to the point where the Adirondacks can recover."

Sulfur dioxide was not the only problem for the Adirondack Park outlined in the new study.

"The study also illustrates how the EPA is hurting New York by granting waivers to Midwestern states for smog controls," Burke said. "Nitrogen emissions from power plants in the Midwest are enormous compared to those from New York. The Midwest doesn't have a smog problem because the nitrogen oxides (NOx) are drifting into New York, where they worsen smog in urban areas and worsen acid rain damage in the Adirondacks."

"We join Governor George Pataki in calling for an end to EPA's waivers in the Midwest," he said, referring to the Governor's January 29 letter to Vice President Albert Gore.

In a study released last year, EPA estimated that 43 percent of the Adirondack lakes it has studied will be too acidic to support life by the year 2040 without significant, additional emissions controls in the Midwest. (See "Acid Rain Problem Won't Go Away in Adirondacks" in Mud Season 1996, page 5.)

EPA is hurting New York by granting waivers to Midwestern states for smog controls, Burke said. "Nitrogen emissions from power plants in the Midwest would vastly reduce nitrogen oxide pollution in the Adirondacks and beyond."

The Solomon bill is the best solution for the Adirondack Park and most of the Northeast. It would help states from Virginia to Maine in achieving federal smog standards, avoiding medical costs associated with air pollution and protecting their local economies. "Acid rain is caused when sulfur dioxide and nitrogen oxides are released from smokestacks. The largest sources of these pollutants are midwest power plants that still burn soft coal and have no pollution control devices. The two chemicals mix with cloud water and sunlight and fall to earth in the form of acid precipitation, also known as acid rain."

"The Solomon bill will be the solution for the Adirondack Park and most of the Northeast. It would help states from Virginia to Maine in achieving federal smog standards, avoiding medical costs associated with air pollution and protecting their local economies. It is the best solution for protecting the Adirondacks," Burke concluded.

Highlights: Acid Rain Program Emissions Scorecard

Note: EPA's acid rain program is designed to reduce sulfur dioxide pollution nationwide to 50 percent of the 1985 level.

- A single power plant in Ohio, the Gen. J.M. Covington facility, pumped more than 380,000 tons of sulfur dioxide into the air in 1994, or more than four times the amount emitted by every plant in New York State, combined (9,004 tons).
- New York's total sulfur dioxide emissions in 1994 of 99,004 were down nearly 50% from an all time high of 174,061 in 1985, the year New York's acid rain fell into effect. New York's emissions are now 40% lower than they were in 1980.
- Ohio's total sulfur dioxide pollution emissions were 1.6 million tons in 1994. That was lower than the 1990 high of 1.8 million tons, but still above the 1980 level of 1.58 million tons.
- Kentucky, a significant contributor to Adirondack acid rain, emitted 455,501 tons in 1994, compared to 629,846 in 1985 (a 36% increase).
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Upset in Maine—Sears Island Cargo Port Goes Down the Tubes

by Ron Huber

In a stunning victory for the Northern Forest and Gulf of Maine state government threw in the towel on its two decade-long effort to build a publicly subsidized woodchip and container freight port on Sears Island in upper Penobscot Bay. The port would have been used by Champion International, Bowater and other industrial forest owners to export up to one million tons of chipped Maine hardwoods to mills in Asia and Europe each year, and would have promoted urban and industrial growth in this lightly developed region of midcoast Maine.

Environmental advocates and federal natural resource agencies proved to the rank and file of the US Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE) that the Maine Dept of Transportation's final, "least environmentally damaging alternative" would still cause severe damage to Penobscot Bay's estuarine ecosystem, and that a comprehensive mitigation package to fully compensate the public for the loss of the eelgrass meadows to the steep tidal flats would be required. The minimum cost for such a package took the already soaring prices for the port to nearly 100 million dollars.

Facing a legislature reluctant to float such a massive bond issue before the Maine electorate this November, Governor King made a last ditch appeal to industrial forest owners to shoulder some of the financial burden. Refused, on February 18, 1996, he and his administration shut off the application withdrawal, terminated the state and federal permitting actions in midstream, telling surprised reporters at a hastily called press conference that the project cost "has now basically gotten out of control."

King heaped blame on the Environmental Protection Agency and environmental groups for "rigging the process." The environmental disconnect raised in connection with this project have never passed the straight-face test. "Eeeeeeelgrass!" he exclaimed to the cameras and microphones, drawing the world out in exaggerated mockery. "And not only that, SHADED eelgrass!"

Eeeeeeelgrass! And indeed, this slender subtidal flowering plant was the straw that finally broke the port project's back. In the Gulf of Maine, eelgrass meadows occur offshore sheltered shorelines at depths from 5 to 15 feet below the low tide line. They are a haven for coastal populations of large predators like Atlantic cod, striped bass, haddock and winter flounder, due both to the abundance of prey species that cohabit the eelgrass meadows with them, and their protective and foraging habitat as well.

While it partially recovered, in 1983 eelgrass in the Gulf of Maine began dying off again, disappearing completely from the mouths of the Merrimack River in Massachusetts within two years. Maine's bays presently do not support commercial finfisheries, due in strong measure to declines in this critical juvenile fish habitat.

Agencies Act to Protect Eelgrass

Given eelgrass's acknowledged role in the ecological scheme of things, the Office of Habitat Protection, the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) vigorously opposes all development projects that would significantly reduce already scarce eelgrass in New England. NMFS' habitat staff in its Gloucester office exhaustively reviewed the Sears Island project and, strongly seconded by grassroots activities, urged the Army Corps of Engineers last September to deny the state a Clean Water Act Section 404 permit to destroy and degrade the eelgrass meadows at the port site, located at the middle of the western, sheltered shore of Sears Island.

The US Fish & Wildlife Service and EPA concurred, bringing up as well their position that the effects of woodchip export-oriented logging on freshwater wetlands throughout the Maine Woods should be reviewed under the NEPA process as a significant secondary impact.

In October 1995, Maine's Commissioners of Inland Fish & Wildlife and Marine Resources responded with letters to the Corps strongly disputing the findings of the federal resource agencies. The letters were widely viewed as so badly partisan towards the project that they drew a rebuke from the Corps, which bluntly called the state agency's arguments (that the natural resources at risk were common and the impacts insignificant and unknowable), "misinterpretations of Federal regulations and policy." The state was told to significantly reduce marine and other impacts before submitting its final proposal. This request led to the aforementioned "Least Environmentally Damaging Alternative" which penciled the port's wharf on pilings above the eelgrass.

Expensive Mitigation Plan

In a final federal-state interagency meeting in late February of this year, representatives of the governor and Maine's Dept of Transportation learned from EPA and the Army Corps of Engineers the magnitude of mitigation that the state would be required to carry out to compensate for the projected direct and indirect cumulative damage to Penobscot Bay.

The federal agencies said the state's compensation proposal, which focused on preserving three-quarters of Sears Island as a state park, would only compensate for the port development's destruction of freshwater wetlands and the fragmenting of forest interior dwelling bird habitat on the island. It was noted that eelgrass, like other photosynthetic plants, needs sunlight and would likely not survive in darkness or deep shade underneath the eight-acre wharf, pilings or not.

The federal agencies told the state that these losses and other direct and indirect impacts to Penobscot Bay, including alien species introductions through ballast water discharge by woodchip-loading bulk carrier ships from Asia, would have to be fully compensated for, as well as harm to Penobscot Bay's water quality from regional growth around the new port. Eelgrass replacement runs to more than $100,000 per acre, and the cost of mitigating most other marine impacts was unknown. Twenty-five woodchip ships per year would have collectively discharged 175,000,000 gallons of plankton-rich ballast water from their home ports into Penobscot Bay, with unpredictable consequences. It became evident that the project's cost would rise well above the state's admitted affordability threshold of $70 million, triggering the scrapping of the proposal.

Opposition to Port

Opposition to the port spanned a wide spectrum, from organized labor and Earth First! to Sierra Club, Conservation Law Foundation and a variety of citizens and grassroots groups.

Regional land trusts, including the Isleboro Island Trust, Maine Coast Heritage Trust, and Vinalhaven Land Trust, opposed the port en masse. Noticeably silent during the fray were the Natural Resources Council of Maine, Maine Audubon Society and the Rockland, Maine-based Island Institute (no relation to Earth Island Institute). While NRCC issued an already full advocacy caseload, the board of directors of the Island Institute, ostensibly dedicated to the stewardship of Maine's coastal islands and their natural and human communities, oddly voted not to take a stand on Maine's biggest-ever coastal island controversy.

Citizens' groups on the other hand, loudly opposed the Sears Island port, sponsoring public debates, organizing marches and demonstrations, disrupting the proceedings at the official public hearing on the project, and bombarding the media with press releases, op-eds and letters.

Persistent use of the Freedom of Information Act by Maine Green Julian Holmes brought forth a steady stream of internal memos, electronic mail and interagency letters from the US Army Corps of Engineers, Environmental Protection Agency, and Federal Highway Administration (federal co-sponsor of the port project). Unveiling the bitter struggle between state and federal agencies, the FOIA'd info was rapidly dispersed to activists and Maine journalists, helping dispel the rosy public relations smoke screen...
being laid on by port proponents, and giving formal intervenors like the Coastal Waters Project, Coalition for Sensible Energy, Isleboro Island Trust and others a clear view of the fine points behind the scenes regulatory process between the opposing agency camps.

**NOW WHAT?** With a Sears Island port no longer an option, attention has turned to the thorny question of whether efforts should be made to expand Mack Point, a small existing industrial port on Penobscot Bay, to make it possible for modern bulk cargo and container carriers, including woodchip ships, to tie up there. Present facilities on Penobscot Bay are too small to accommodate these ships. While Sierra Club and the Environmentalists support this option, serious concerns remain about the long-term impacts of Ballard water discharging bulk carrier vessel tanks at all, wherever they dock. Estuaries around the globe with woodchip export terminals are experiencing fishkills, toxic red tides and other ecological disruptions.

In addition, because the state withdrew its proposal before the Army Corps of Engineers could rule on whether the National Environmental Policy Act required the state to examine the impacts to the Northern Forest of port-induced export oriented logging, this key question remains unanswered.

## Sears Island and the Challenge of Public Property Rights

_by Ron Huber  
Coastal Waters Project_

In the United States, the Constitution protects American citizens against the taking of their private possessions for the public good without due process of law and fair compensation. However, as the recent Sears Island cargoport decision shows, the reverse is also true. The Constitution, as expressed in the body of federal environmental and conservation law, also protects against the taking of our public property for private good without due process of law and fair compensation.

In this case, following more than ten years of study by some of New England's more eminent marine scientist, the federal government found that this proposed major new port facility on Penobscot Bay in midcoast Maine would have a "tremendous" and "adverse" effect on the productivity of the bay's most important nursery areas for numerous commercially and recreationally sought after fish and shellfish, and their ecological co-habitants. It would also have dealt a blow to the midcoast's multimillion dollar natural tourist economy by promoting the industrialization and urbanization of this great natural wonder of a bay, Maine's largest.

So quite reasonably, the new port's proponents were told they would have to compensate the public for the loss of its public natural resources. And why not? The primary users of the new port would be woodchip exporting industrial forest owners, who wanted the Sears Island port to send THEIR private property overseas for THEIR personal gain.

If they wished to profit by squeezing Penobscot Bay's commercial fisheries, and the economies supported by sport fishing and tourism, Uncle Sam's Corps of Engineers told them, fine. As long as the hit to natural resources vital to thousands of Penobscot Bay-area human and natural residents was compensated for.

But fair is fair, after all. Uncle Sam's EPA and USFWS made displeased rumblings, too, about the effect of woodchip-export oriented clearcutting on the wild residents of the Maine Woods' mosaic of forested wetlands.

Enter Maine's governor Angus King, the last in a line of political boosters willing to sink public money into the project. King got a glimpse of the cost of the productivity of the bay's most important nursery areas for numerous commercially and recreationally sought after fish and shellfish, and their ecological co-habitants.

Enter the acquisition by a $4.5 million bond.

STATE CONSIDERS PROTECTING THE ECOCIAL INTEGRITY OF THE ISLAND INSTEAD OF CHASING FURTHER DEVELOPMENT FANTASTIES. STAY TUNED.

Meanwhile, in New Hampshire, state and federal permits are in, and construction is underway, on an expansion of the New Hampshire state docks in Portsmouth. The enlargement will allow the servicing of bulk carrier vessels, very possibly including woodchip ships. If so, then the Maine Woods may shortly be threatened with wholesale degradation. Stay tuned.

Ron Huber directs the Coastal Waters Project of the Northern Appalachian Restoration Project. He has chronicled the Sears Island drama for three years in the pages of the Forum and is one of the heroes of this successful collaboration between maine citizens and grassroots activists to defend the biological integrity of the upper Penobscot Bay. He can be reached at: CWP, POB 1811, Rockland, ME 04841, 207-596-7693.

## New Marine Mammal Protection Act Undermines the Endangered Species Act

_by Bob Levangie_

In 1972 the Marine Mammal Protection Act was passed to offer some protection for mammals killed in U.S. waters as a by-catch by American fishermen. In May 1994, the act was gutted by mainstream "environmental" groups, hunting lobbyists, aquaculture operators, aquarium owners and fishing industry lobbyists by creating a confusing array of provisions to the Marine Mammal Protection Act then up for reauthorization. The new provisions allow the "incidental" killing of endangered and threatened marine mammals by fishing gear and killing whales for scientific purposes. These acts may be carried out until it can be proven that a particular species as a whole is threatened. Only after that point, is something to be done.

According to National Marine Fisheries figures, there are only about 350 whale remains washing off the eastern seaboard, and marine biologists agree that they will be gone by the turn of the century. Right whales only spotted on three separate occasions during the fall of 1993 (swimming alone) by researchers from Allied Whale near Mount Desert Rock. Mount Desert Rock was traditionally a place noted for attracting many whales because of its deep waters that well up food. Few return there now.

Most "incidental takes" (read "excused killings") of whales in US waters are the result of entanglement with fishing gear such as lobster pot lines and gill nets. As fish stocks dwindle, fishermen use more and more gear to increase their catch, causing excessive gear to clutter up offshore waters making it difficult for animals and boats to navigate. Below the surface in places like Casco Bay, the bottom is a tangled mess of lobster lines. If so, then the Maine Woods may shortly be threatened with wholesale degradation. Stay tuned.

Steve Waterman, a commercial diver from South Thomaston, thinks inediblegradable lobster line should be used since it would decrease whale entanglements by breaking down sooner. Lost filament seems to last forever. Twice in ten years Steve has been called on to free whales caught up in gill net and lobster line. Bob Bernstein, a local whale watch vessel owner, freed a Minke whale last year from the lobster pot line it had become entangled in. According to Eric Hoyt's book Seasons of the Whale (Chelsea Green Publishing, 1990), between 1976 and 1985, more than 300 humpback whales were known to become entangled, mostly in cod traps and gill nets, off Newfoundland. Seventy five of these died.

During the Marine Mammal Protection Act hearings in 1994, the few whale lobbyists that were allowed to testify were distraught knowing that so many powerful corporadoes were there by hunting, aquaculture, and commercial fishing interests to Continued on page 13
Low Impact Forestry: Vermont Forms a New Circle

by Andrew Whitaker

Vermont's forestry community advanced a step or two toward forming a new circle at a low impact forestry forum held on March 13th at the Pavilions in Montpelier. 

Maine's Mitch Lansky addressed the gathering of over 100 loggers, foresters, lay citizens, and government officials on the need for low impact forestry as part of forest preservation strategy. An afternoon panel of loggers from Vermont and nearby New Hampshire extended the theme, explicating the economic pressures bearing on loggers and the forest and the philosophy of a low impact approach. Audience questions also engaged the panel in discussion of possible policy steps forward. The Environmental Air Force was in town for the day, as well, taking several field trips of journalists and government officials aloft for an aerial view of the heavy cutting spreading westward from Vermont's extreme northeast corner.

One observer at the forum, former Northern Forest Lands Council member Brendan Whitaker, said the range of people brought together by the event, hosted and organized by the Vermont Citizens Forest Roundtable, was "unprecedented" in the state and "represented what the Council had in mind when it spoke of forestry roundtables."

Organizers of the forum hoped to challenge the impression that the environmental and logging communities are separated by pursuit of divergent agendas, by giving voice to logging practitioners concerned for the future of their profession and managing for the future health of the woods.

The View from Maine

The thrust of Mitch Lansky's presentation was that, left alone, forests sustain themselves; sustainable forestry on the other hand requires that we develop alternatives to the liquidation forestry which, "so long as it pays well and is legal," will continue. Lansky presented slides of both high impact industrial forestry on paper company lands and low impact forestry on lands of loggers involved with the Maine Low Impact Forest Project.

Lansky developed the case for a closed canopy forestry mimicking as closely as possible the functions of old-growth forests.

Urging that society go beyond "good and bad" in discussing and assessing issues on a rational basis, Lansky noted the key parameters of such an evaluation: intensity and size of cuts, their distribution across the landscape, rotation lengths and such site impacts as soil compaction, rutting, nutrient leaching and soil acidification (caused by whole tree harvesting and acid rain). Lansky also noted the renovation problems created by the elimination of forest interiors, with remnant seed sources relegated to the edges of cuts.

There are three ways society can elect to assure functional, closed canopy forests, Lansky noted: through establishing reserves, longer rotations or low impact forestry. "We probably need all three," he said.

The key elements of low impact forestry, Lansky said, are cutting intensities and patterns that allow forests to develop in complexity and quality; intermediate size and affordable technology; preferably raised on home capital and local manufacture, and minimal trail and yard sizes. Communities dependent on natural resources also need to produce value-added goods, limit imports of raw commodities (logs) and, along with wider society, accept natural limits on consumption.

Vermont Panel

The afternoon panel of practitioners expanded on many of Mitch Lansky's themes, including the need for more cooperative efforts and dialogue. Russell Barnes of Lyme, New Hampshire and formerly of Brownsville, Vermont, said that it is "time to join together to protect the things we all jointly regard."

Barnes, who works with a forester, expressed his view that the lowest impact logging is that which extracts the highest value on the least amount of wood. A minimal cost approach is necessary, he believes, to protect the long term nutrient needs of forest stands. "A load of pulp is just a bag of pennies," he said, "we need to understand our costs of production, leave more of what's there, and extract wood at a profit." He pointed out that the nitrogen and potassium value of a ton of pulp can exceed the market value of the wood.

Former St. Regis contractor Lloyd Gierke of Brunswick, Vermont assessed the current condition of logging in the Vermont's northeast corner as "market driven rather than sustainability driven." He noted water quality assessments in Essex County of 80 miles of impacted waters with concomitant rises in soil and water temperatures—impacts that Gierke predicted would be spreading into other parts of the state.

Dave Bessette of Starkboro, president of the Vermont Forest Products Association, addressed the social pressures driving forest practices. "There is a tremendous lack of education of the general public on what loggers do," he said, and a lack of respect for logger professionalism. "Society, the global market, exerts the pressure," he said.

Looking to Vermont's future, Bessette hazarded that "there may always be landowners subsidizing the tax bills (and) corporate owners protecting assets [but] at the pace we're cutting I wonder who will be subsidizing in the future?"

James Kenary of Sheffield, who runs one skidder, stated that he was motivated to join the panel by his belief that "working on the land is the most important job there is." "I don't want to see logging go the way of commercial fishing," he continued, but "we're all in the squeeze of having to cut more wood than our principles allow." Kenary lamented that production, the amount of wood a logger cuts in a day, is the only standard by which he is judged by colleagues.

Kenary further remarked that loggers are "going to have to regulate ourselves or someone is going to have to regulate us." But, he added, "we're all a part of it, we all have to regulate ourselves" to achieve sustainability. Ethics, he said, "are obedience to the unenforceable" and may only be a long term solution. Kenary's own approach to logging is based on a confession of ignorance: "I try to be as forceable as possible, to leave something of everything behind," he said.

Other elements of low impact forestry mentioned by the panelists were the need to recognize costs of production and see the potential to turn profits on lower volumes, with less residual stand damage resulting. Planning of harvests and smarter felling practices were mentioned, as was the challenge of finding landowners with a stewardship attitude, and of educating the public to the value of "messy" jobs where tops and slash are left in the woods rather than removed.

Panelists also identified several obstacles to wider practice of low impact forestry, including lack of educational opportunities for aspiring loggers and in natural resources generally, bottom line pressures and the drive toward fiber markets with less attention paid to building sawtimber values. Asked if they thought foresters were of value in planning harvests, panel members were generally dismissive of the profession as "riding the gravy train" and being too market oriented.

Conclusion

Organizers of the March 13 forum hope to continue the focus of the Vermont Citizens' Forest Roundtable on fostering low impact forestry. One area the network is investigating and hopes to offer organizational support is the building of a network of loggers practicing sustainable forestry. Such an association would seek to create market incentives such as lower workmen's compensation rates and access to log jobs based on demonstrated, certified sustainable harvesting practices. A longer term objective would be the creation of alternative market structures to link landowner, logger, sawmill and end user in a system that returns more resources to the producers, builds local capital and provides and provides for achieving long term silvicultural goals.

Vermont Herbicide Presentation in June

NOTE: The Roundtable has also been asked by the Vermont Forest Resource Advisory Council to help facilitate an organized response by those opposed to spraying herbicides on paper company lands in the Northeast Kingdom. At this writing, it appears that a national TCAC panel will bear two days of testimony in June at an Island Pond, Vermont location, with about three hours allocated to formal presentations by opponents.

The Roundtable welcomes your participation in this process and will be holding regular meetings throughout the spring in several different locations across northern Vermont. To find out more about any of our events, please contact Roundtable organizer Andrew Whittaker at 802-748-8043 or Barbara Alexander at 802-586-2288.

Clearcut over a wetland on Miles Mountain, Vermont. Note cattails in foreground. Photo © John McKeith
Fewer Compact Discs, But More Music Played by Friends & Family

The following is excerpted from Hope, Human and Wild by Bill McKibben. Copyright © 1995 by Bill McKibben. By permission of Little, Brown and Company.

Smaller Local Economies

...[increasingly, especially among the new breed of younger environmentalists, there are visions; the most compelling is to remake the North American landscape. Vermont environmentalist Andrew Whitaker recently looked ahead seventy-five years into the future of his logging region, toward the day when the woods were not seen as a reservoir for pulp but as the center of a smaller scale, more local economy. "The centerpiece of our new economy is the forest," he writes.

"Small, vertically integrated logging operations have access to a good supply of large timber, which they take from stump to board. Local artisans are a marvelous element of the economy that is now available. In addition, there is a more visible element of the economy than previously, and are able to make a living from the production of custom-built furniture, musical instruments, and so on."

"The distance between that colonial subsistence economy and our present situation—and between our present situation and some future economy—cannot be overstated. What's more, the domination of the global consumer economy makes moving in the direction of something smaller and more local extremely difficult, if for no other reason than that the global economy sets the prices."


"BILL MCKIBBEN IS A NATIONAL TREASURE!"—Rick Bass, author of The Nickel Guys

In The End of Nature, Bill McKibben brilliantly described our onrush toward environmental catastrophe. Now he shows us how nature can make a comeback — and how people working together can make a real difference.

"Bill McKibben has written a book about healing the land as well as our souls."
—Terry Tempest Williams, author of Refuge

"Those who care about the wild earth and its civilized people will greet this book with joy... McKibben lets us understand that in this time of gathering environmental catastrophe, hope is not only necessary, it is also reasonable..."
—David Ehrlich, founding editor of Conservation Biology

The new book by the author of The End of Nature

Caretaker Farm, and it amply demonstrated both the great potential and the deep problems.

Heart songs farm lies outside Groveton, New Hampshire, a paper-mill town where layoffs have been a way of life in recent years. A thunderstorm was blowing in from the ridge of mountains to the east when I arrived. In the dark clarity that preceded the rain, the small spread looked as orderly and abundant as an illustration from a children's book. Michael Phillips dashed about closing the sides of the field tunnel where his softail-tomatoes were already ripe in late July; his wife, Nancy, was gathering flowers from her large garden—armfuls of larkspur and bishop's flower, golden yarrow and baby's breath, which she draped over beams in the house to dry and turn into wreaths. As we sat in the kitchen, speaking loudly over the rumbling thunder, they shelled peas. It was a scene of surpassing rightness.

"I think CSA's are a wonderful thing," Michael said. "Since people invest in advance, when you're growing lettuce you know you have a home for it. It's not like when I was selling to restaurants. After two weeks of baby zucchini they'd want winter squash, and I was, like, 'Winter squash haven't even blossomed yet.' And there's the spiritual aspect, too. Most folks who belong come out for the picking-up-rocks party, or the potato-bug-picking-party. Pretty soon they get into the food."

Phillips says he may not be able to keep the community farm going. There's more money to be made by selling dried flowers to the tourists who happen through; the price of dried statice sold to Bouton's is considerably more elastic than the price of beans sold to neighbors. "But even if I have to shut it down, I'm not going to let my ground grow in. I'll rotate my hay, till it up with a scythe. I'm learning to use a team of horses. When the subsistence economy comes, I'll be ready. Then my work will be valued equally with everyone else's."

Smaller local economies...
Reclaiming a mountain farm after decades of neglect is hard work. But oh what a delight to see sheep grazing in pastures, garden soil richer than the years before, and apple trees finally getting above deer browsing height. The barn that was here at Heartsong Farm in Lost Nation, NH burned down some forty years ago. Last summer we rebuilt it in a way that utilized the resources of this area and deepened our community ties.

We built a traditional post'n'beam frame on a stone foundation, the kind of barn meant to last a couple of hundred years and many generations. The stone work took most of the summer—gathering flat-sided pieces of granite, setting the 18” high forms for yet another course, mixing concrete on site, setting the stones in mortar for strength and beauty. Scott and Helen Nearing’s description of building with stone in Living the Good Life inspired us to tackle the job ourselves. Now we walk through stone archways to feed our animals with a realization of how much any of us are capable if we only try.

The timbers for the frame were cut out down the road on a water powered sawmill. Tom and Harry Southworth specialize in putting together traditional frames at their Garland Mill. The timbers for our understory were milled of hemlock, the main frame and rafters of native spruce. The crew notched all the joints and test fitted each plane of the frame before bringing the timbers to our farm for raising day.

And what a glorious day it was! Close to a hundred friends and neighbors joined with us to erect the bents and lift entire walls in place with ropes, pike poles and human muscle. The day began with a clear deck; by day’s end all the walls were locked together with oak pegs, lofts were decked with hemlock planks, and rafters lifted to the sky. A small spruce was nailed atop the frame to give thanks for a safe work day and the shared spirit of accomplishment. The crew climbed down for a major feast and an evening of fiddle tunes and laughter.

We’re happy to have guests come to the farm for a look at our traditional barn and to discuss building techniques. Just expect to help put in a fencepost or two while we talk! Michael and Nancy Phillips can be reached at Heartsong Farm, RFD 1 Box 275, Groveton, NH 03582.
New Report by Mitch Lansky Documents Substandard Forestry Practices in Maine

Mitch Lansky recently published a 25-page study called "After the Cutting is Done, What's Left?" in which he looked at stocking, percentage of removal, harvest quality, residual quality, and a combination of the above. He further broke this data down by landowner types.

The report shows that the state's Forest Practices Act is not preventing extensive clearcutting, heavy cutting, or highgrading. He concludes that "substandard forestry is occurring in Maine on a huge annual scale.

Relying on data from the Maine Forest Service survey of forest practices from 1991-1993, the report is replete with charts, graphs and spreadsheets, including this table. Anything below the C-line is underecked (lacks sufficient trees in the overstory for a manageable stand). B-line or above meets recommended residual stocking for adequate growth response. In the chart, "ACC" means "acceptable" and "DES" means "desirable". A copy of the full report is available from $$$ paid to Mitch Lansky.

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Russian Nuclear Waste Activist Faces Charges of Treason

Alexander Nikitin, a retired Russian naval officer who has been researching nuclear waste generated by Russia's Northern Fleet, faces charges of treason and the possibility of a death sentence for his activities, undertaken on behalf of a Norwegian environmental group, the Bellona Foundation.

Over the last year the Foundation has had its Murmansk office raided, research materials and office equipment confiscated, and other employees detained and questioned by Russian security officials. The Bellona Foundation has stated that Nikitin was not involved in collecting secret government information and has been verifying information already in public circulation.

Northern Forest Forum readers interested in supporting Alexander Nikitin by writing letters or circulating petitions should contact Jonathan Edwards, Russian Coordinator, Amnesty International USA, POB 38-1504, Cambridge, MA, 02238. Email: jcedwards7572@aol.com. Or phone 617-484-3782.

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McKibben

Continued from page 11

makes $15,000 a year growing perennial flowers for the nursery trade on a tiny farm along the Assateague river in the northern Adirondacks. He started growing organic vegetables, but the market wasn't there; still, he continues to plan for the day when his small valley is again self-sufficient: he's driven and walked the ridges, looked at the soil, studied its climate.

"It wouldn't take much land in this valley to produce food for its inhabitants," he says, "you'd only need to use the land that was suitable." Indeed, the Assateague Valley did once feed itself. "But that slowly died. You couldn't make a modern living at it."

What is the opposite of utopian? Let's be extremely realistic, even grim: a community, a region, a nation, a world that paid attention...to limits would mute the horn of plenty, plug up the cornucopia. A community that made environmental sense would not have all the things we have today. In stores would have fewer items, and far more of them would be locally made. Entertainment would have to be more homegrown, too: spare cash for CDs and books and videos and major league baseball tickets would dwindle. The highest-tech health care would simply prove insupportable over time. Electricity would come from local sources—rivers, wind, the sun—and be used more sparingly. Cars would grow steadily rarer, and buses and bicycles more common. It would be poorer.

In certain ways it might be richer, too, of course. Maybe those of us who live in the colder climes would only get bananas, currently America's favorite fruit, on special occasions—but we would have a hundred varieties of apples to choose from, almost year-round. Fewer compact discs, but more music played by friends and family.

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Marine Mammals

Continued from page 9

get a bill passed making it easier for gill and driftnetters. By getting the NRA involved by using the prtvision legalizing US importation of Polar bear parts, it was easy to get the bill passed. The whales many miles away at sea could not know of the hearings that would decide the fate of many of them. There was no crowd of chanting demonstrators outside the hearings, whales did not leave the water, was no media blitz, the people paying the main stream "environmental" groups to push this pathetic bill through were satisfied thinking they had done their part for the environment.

Whale lobbyists say they should have done more, but now it is too late. Every time an endangered or threatened whale died in a gill net, some should have taken legal action. Eleven National Marine Fisheries agents say they should have taken legal action. Eleven National Marine Fisheries agents say they should have taken legal action.

George Mitchell once, and all I could think of was, "shame on you for signing onto the Marine Mammal Protection Act, the whales will never forgive you for that". He doesn't even know the implications of what he signed. He never read my letters or acknowledged a petition I brought to his office. So be it.
Maine Woods Watch

by Jym St. Pierre

The Maine Woods is the greatest remaining tract of the Rockies. However, today this region is under siege. Maine Woods Watch is devoted to documenting the good, the bad, and the ugly affecting the Maine Woods, with an emphasis on opportunities for citizen action to protect and restore the essence of the region, its wilderness.

*Landlovers United: The campaign to build support for the proposal by RESTORE: The North Woods for creating Maine Woods National Park and Preserve has continued to snowball this winter. Well over 15,000 people have signed petitions calling for a feasibility study of the park idea. Presentations have been made to the National Audubon Society, Maine Sporting Camp Association, Maine Appalachian Trail Club, The Wildlife Society and other groups as well as to citizens at local meetings in Dover-Foxcroft, Rockwood and at West Branch Camp. The proposal remains a hot item in the news media too. The Greenvelope Economic Development Committee is hosting a forum on April 27 on RESTORE's proposed Maine Woods National Park and other ideas that might help the future of the Moosehead region. (Contact RESTORE, 7 N. Chestnut Street, Augusta, ME 04330.) Around the world people are discovering or relearning the benefits of nature conservation. Spain and Aruba are the latest examples. Most of the Cantabrian mountains in northern Spain are being converted into Picos de Europa National Park, one of the largest parks on the continent. As part of an $800 million green plan Aruba's Arikok National Park will be expanded over the next three years to cover about one-quarter of the island. After an eight month delay, in January Gov. Angus King issued an executive order creating a Land Acquisition Priorities Advisory Committee. The group is charged to identify types of land that should be of high priority for public conservation acquisition. Two sets of public hearings will be held, the first set this spring. Don't miss your chance to speak for the need for big wilderness. (Contact Mark Desmondt, State Planning Office, 38 State House Station, Augusta, ME 04333.)

*Setting Priorities: The Maine Environmental Priorities Project, an effort started by former Gov. John McKernan to get industry and environmentalists to agree on priority activities for state environmental agencies, in February finally released to Gov. Angus King its review of risks. (Contact MEEP, 17 State House Station, Augusta, ME 04333.) After nearly three years of internal meetings, dozens of public roundtables, piles of white papers, and the expenditure of megabucks, the steering committee was only able to agree that there is high risk to a broad range of environmental issues. MEEP is next supposed to work with state agencies to develop recommendations for risk management strategies based on their first cut effort. It is disappointing but not surprising that the group "was not able to reach consensus on the level of impact of forest management practices on the health of terrestrial ecosystems." The power players may not be able to agree that Maine's forests are being spoiled, but the public seems to understand it well enough. The Secretary of State certified that nearly 55,000 Maine voters signed petitions to put on the ballot the proposed referendum to ban clearcutting and set tougher standards on overcutting in the unprotected half of Maine. The epic battle has been joined by both sides. The opponents, led by the Maine Forest Products Council, have formed a political action committee called Citizens for a Healthy Forest and Economy. So far their focus has been on strategizing with legislators, the governor, labor groups, and the governor's Council on Sustainable Forest Management on how to derail the initiative without incurring the wrath of the people. Governor King himself let slip that a recent poll showed more than 70% of the voters support banning clearcutting and nearly all favor overcutting in the unprotected half of Maine. The battle has been joined by both sides. The opponents, led by the Maine Forest Products Council, have formed a political action committee called Citizens for a Healthy Forest and Economy. So far their focus has been on strategizing with legislators, the governor, labor groups, and the governor's Council on Sustainable Forest Management on how to derail the initiative without incurring the wrath of the people. Governor King himself let slip that a recent poll showed more than 70% of the voters support banning clearcutting and nearly all favor overcutting in the unprotected half of Maine. The battle has been joined by both sides. The opponents, led by the Maine Forest Products Council, have formed a political action committee called Citizens for a Healthy Forest and Economy. So far their focus has been on strategizing with legislators, the governor, labor groups, and the governor's Council on Sustainable Forest Management on how to derail the initiative without incurring the wrath of the people. Governor King himself let slip that a recent poll showed more than 70% of the voters support banning clearcutting and nearly all favor overcutting in the unprotected half of Maine. The battle has been joined by both sides. The opponents, led by the Maine Forest Products Council, have formed a political action committee called Citizens for a Healthy Forest and Economy. So far their focus has been on strategizing with legislators, the governor, labor groups, and the governor's Council on Sustainable Forest Management on how to derail the initiative without incurring the wrath of the people. Governor King himself let slip that a recent poll showed more than 70% of the voters support banning clearcutting and nearly all favor overcutting in the unprotected half of Maine. The battle has been joined by both sides. The opponents, led by the Maine Forest Products Council, have formed a political action committee called Citizens for a Healthy Forest and Economy. So far their focus has been on strategizing with legislators, the governor, labor groups, and the governor's Council on Sustainable Forest Management on how to derail the initiative without incurring the wrath of the people. Governor King himself let slip that a recent poll showed more than 70% of the voters support banning clearcutting and nearly all favor overcutting in the unprotected half of Maine.

Previously proposed have started their own grassroots campaign to public disdain for lousy forestry and ambivalence toward the forest industry. In March, archdruid David Brower toured the state stumpings for fewer stumps. One way has suggested as a theme song for the ban clearcutting variation on a familiar folk tune: "Where have all the spruce trees gone, Gone to pulp mills every one..." (Contact Ban Clearcutting, PO Box 2218, Augusta, ME 04338-9922.) It is spring and the sap is running. Two expensive public relations programs sponsored by the American Forest & Paper Association are saturating Mainers with feel good messages about the forest industry. The Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI) in Maine is being run by consultant Charlie Levesque, former staff director for the defunct Northern Forest Lands Council. So far the SFI program has emphasized TV, radio, newspaper and magazine ads that highlight lots of green sprouts and small paws faster than trees being felled. The second program, called Campaign for the '90s, is aimed at the greater Portland market where the bulk of the state's population lives. It stresses that the thirteen AFP member companies operating in Maine are trying to manage their ten million acres sustainably. The advertising campaigns may backfire. Many folks are asking skeptical about the sights and sounds of timber cuts they have experienced up in the woods which seem to be missing from the commercials.

One of the longest running Off Broadway plays came to Maine again in February when Gov. Angus King put on a theatrical performance of Shakespearean caliber in announcing he was putting planning for the proposed Sears Island cargoport on ice. You knew the plot: selfish environmentalists, in cahoots with federal bureaucrats, block sensible development project. State then ships are converted to serve the needs of the richest shore of the state. That spring, the state's sixteenth century port policy that would have guaranteed Maine would remain a third world economy beyond the millennium, coupled with economies for the island port that never passed the fiscal straight face test.

Earlier this winter a Maine Forest Roundtable was held, like others around the country, "to achieve maximum common ground among the forest industry and the greater community [of people]." The session was lopsided with working forest sympathizers, so it is not surprising the prevailing theme was that Maine's working forest successfully demonstrates the advantages of private (especially industrial) ownership and minimal government regulation. Wilderness values and the public interest finished a distant second. The results were forwarded to the Seventh American Forest Congress which met in Washington, DC, in late February to develop a shared vision and new policy recommendations for our nation's forests. Maine's working forest was touted as a national model, even though it is not working very well.

*Trailing Thoughts: There are now more than 70,000 snowmobilers in Maine, along with plenty from out-of-state, using well over 10,000 miles of trails that crisscross our woods and waters. Some parts of northern Maine have as many or more snowmobile trails as logging roads, and that is a lot. A study underway will better document the economic impact of snowmobiling in Maine, but rough estimates suggest it is more than twice that of snowmobiling in New Hampshire. With several heavy snow periods punctuated with rainy thaws, this winter has been an alternating boom-bust for businesses dependent on snowmobile traffic. Sadly, it has also been a record year for accidents. Over 250 accidents were reported and eleven people died. Drinking and speeding were common, making some weekends around Jackman, Greenville, Millinocket and Portage a frozen hell.

The summer version of snowmobiles, personal watercraft, has generated so much antipathy that the Sportsman's Alliance of Maine is pushing for a complete ban on jet skis on waters in the ten million acres under Land Use Regulation Commission jurisdiction. However, not everyone is addicted to going excessively fast. The Downeast Sled Dog races at Moosehead attracted mushers from across New England, and Jackman is improving local cross-country ski trails for those who want to go slow enough to actually see the woods.

Speaking of trails, the proposed 420-mile International Appalachian Trail extending from Maine to New Brunswick and Quebec continues to move toward reality. About seventy-three miles, mostly in Canada, are usable now. Dave Field, professor of forest policy at the University of Maine and Chair of the Appalachian Trail Conference, reports some interesting US Forest Service recreation projections in the March/April 1996 Appalachian Trailway News: "The ten fastest growing activities in the north-eastern US, up to the year 2040, will include day hiking and backpacking...[The gap between demand for, and supply of day-hiking recreational opportunities in the region will be second only to that for sightseeing."

The Sunrise Trail Coalition is urging that a 100-mile section of rail bed from Ellsworth to Calais be turned into a backcountry ski/float trail. Eventually the trail could be extended south to Acadia National Park on Mt. Desert Island and east to Fundy National Park in New Brunswick. Already there is some competition building with other groups that want to use it for snowmobiling or to revive railroad use of the right-of-way.

Mike Kreppner of Waldoboro, is seeking official recognition for a 700-mile long Northern Forest Canoe Trail stretching from Old Forge in the heart of New York's Adirondack region, across northern Vermont and New Hampshire to the Canadian border at Port Kent, Maine. Kreppner claims the route retraces ways used by Native Americans and early white trappers and...
explorers. The Northern Forest Alliance had planned a trek this summer on the water trail to draw attention to the region’s forest values.

The Maine Trails Coalition, an advocacy group promoting development and maintenance of all types of trails, is pressuring companies to open them that operate, use or maintain trails in Maine. (Contact Mike Gallagher, Bureau of Parks & Lands, 22 State House Station, Augusta, ME 04333; 207-624-6660.)

*Leaves & Branches: A new study by the World Wild Fund for Nature, Bad Harvest, has found that the timber industry is the prime cause of global old-growth forest destruction and the loss of biological diversity. It was previously thought that, on a planet-size stage, the forests were vast. The Northern Forest Alliance is fighting to keep trees from being cut to tree fiber. Industrial scale paper making is a threat to the native forests.

Papermaking is undergoing a revolution that may prove as significant as was the nineteenth century shift from rag to tree fiber. Industrial scale paper manufacturing came to Maine to take advantage of softwood trees from the state’s legendary spruce-fir forests as well as abundant water. The water is still important, but now, with the extensive overcutting of spruce and fir in the past twenty-five years, hardwoods are used. There are fewer softwood trees as well as mills. And genetic engineering may change things even more. For example, Zeneca Limited, a biotechnology corporation, says, “Through biotechnology, the papermaking process can be made more environmentally friendly by significantly reducing the caustic chemicals and energy used during production.” The secret is making it easier to remove lignin from the cellulose in paper pulp trees.

In addition to being smarter about using tree fiber we need to be smarter about using non-tree fiber. Already more than 10% of the world’s paper is made from non-wood sources. American paper companies are lagging behind foreign, especially Japanese, producers, but after years of neglect, the nation is catching up again in the U.S. If we can reduce the pressure on the Maine forest as timber basket and restrain the exploding growth rate of wastepaper paper, there will be a better chance to protect big chunks of the Maine Woods for biodiversity, remote recreation and all other nonconsumptive uses.

A University of Maine study of the widespread dieback of brown ash trees over the past decade has found that the likely causes are weather-related, including spring droughts and excessively wet winters followed by periods of freezing. Brown ash is especially valued by Native American basketmakers.

The Northern Forest Stewardship Act (S.1163 and H.R. 2421), introduced into Congress last fall, would do little more than reaffirm the federal-state partnership to protect wildlands, promote better forestry and strengthen local economies in the four Northern Forest states. However, it remains largely stalled because property rights extremists and some forest industry representatives have been lobbying Maine’s congressional delegation against its key points on the proposal. Conservation groups in the Northern Forest Alliance hope to bring the Act to a floor vote in the next Congress.

RESTORE: The North Woods has proposed that the National Park Service study the feasibility of establishing a 3.2 million acre Maine Woods National Park, shown above. The Park and other proposals for the future of northern Maine will be the subject of a conference sponsored by the Greenville Chamber of Commerce on April 27. Unfortunately, the sponsors refused to invite the Northern Appalachian Restoration Project to join in the festivities to discuss its proposed HEADWATERS Regional Wilderness Reserve System.
and how to ensure good forestry on the and more sensitive forest practices in continues to clash over how to "main­
timbered lands. One fundamental ques­tion, at least, should be put to rest with ment on how big the reserves should be years ago by environmentalists, industry comprehensive plan is in place to more lea der s, public agencies and academics ,tion forms .

The Northern Forest Forum Mud Season 1996

**Still LURC Cling: The Land Use Regulation Commission has heard an earful at hearings around the state this winter on its proposed revised Comprehensive Land Use Plan. Public testimony over­whelmingly got the green light for big wildland areas, but many of the commission members have been antag­onistic toward adopting stronger regula­tions and the reactionary tilt will not improve with the replacement this spring of two of the seven members.**

LURC staff director John Williams deems the want-not tax until the new comprehensive plan is in place to more ahead on the agency's latest round of bureaucratic streamlining. He is pro­cessing its desire to do this without the help by expanding LURC's field offices to six, eliminating more than 25% of the per­mits processed by shifting to a permit­by-area system, many activities, and stripping down the permit applica­tion forms.

**Running with Biodiversity: The Maine Forest Biodiversity Project, a collaborative experiment initiated two years ago by environmentalists, industry leaders, colleges and academies, continues to clash over how to "main­tain viable representatives of existing native species and communities in Maine." There is general consensus the solution is to have a system of coreerves where there is no tree harvesting and more sensitive forest practices in surrounding areas, but there is no agree­ment on how big the reserves should be and how to ensure good forestry on the timbered lands. One fundamental ques­tion, at least, should be put to rest with publication of a new study. The report Biological Diversity in Maine concludes by answering the inquiry. Is there a problem with coreerves in the state that the vement of the effects of forest practices on fish, lakes, fishes, dams and campowners are clas­ching all over the state. Bangor Hydro-Electric Company got a federal court to overturn a directive to build a $32 million fishway intended to bolster fish populations in the Union River. Georgia-Pacific Corporation has upset upstream residents, who are angry about drastic water level fluctuations, by ask­ing the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission to exempt a couple of its St. Croix watershed dams from reflec­tions. The Kennebec Coalition continues to press for removal of the Edwards Dam on the Kennebec River in the face of a new draft environmental impact statement that recommends relicensing the dam to avoid losing the power it gener­ates (which, by the way, amounts to less than one-tenth of 1% of Maine's electricity use). The Fish and Wildlife Service and the Penobscot Indian Nation are pushing for higher minimum flows at several Great Northern Paper dams on the Penobscot River. Downstream, in an effort to avoid litiga­tion, the fight over whether to build the Basin Mills Dam will be prolonged thanks to an agreement by the parties to keep talking rather than to go to court. Last year Fish & Wildlife Commissioner Bucky Owen withdrew support at the last minute for a $5 mil­lion bond issue for fish hatchery repairs. The Sportsman's Alliance of Maine (SAM) was furious, but continued to work with the department to get the bond question on the ballot this year. In February Owen did it again, pulling his support for the bond and sending SAM off the end of the frustration scale. SAM's executive director, George Smith, and Fish & Wildlife's Bucky Owen, who are long-time friends and own neighboring camps, are publicly blaming each other for the mess. Toads, frogs and salamanders may prove to be important indicators of forest health. A three year study by Phillip deMaynard of the University of Maine of the effects of forest practices on amphibians in the Maine Woods shows they could be in big trouble. In clearer areas the study found that the abund­ance of amphibians declines more than two-fold from that found in mature forests. Leaving intact forest habitat as buffers around wet breeding areas and removing less coarse woody debris on harvest sites would help.

Wolves continue to get plenty of attention in Maine. The Maine Wolf Coalition is looking for a community that would be receptive to hosting a center for wolf research and education modeled on the fantastically successful International Wolf Center in Ely, Minnesota. According to Fish & Wildlife Commissionory Bucky Owen, "There's evidence that wolves are migrating this way from Canada." Indeed, a number of knowledgeable people are convinced wolves already are back in Maine, though probably not in self-sustaining populations yet. Though wolves are supposed to be pro­ected under the Endangered Species Act, there has been no enforcement action taken against a hunter who shot a wild wolf in the Moosehead region two and a half years ago. Conservationists believe another critter, the lynx, ought to be protected under the ESA throughout its entire range in the lower 48 states. Experts say probably fewer than 1,000 lynx remain across the species' historic range here, with reproducing populations only in Maine, Montana and Washington. The lynx is being lost to habitat destruction, trapping, hunting and loss of prey base. In April 1994, a petition was filed with the US Fish & Wildlife Service to list the lynx as threatened or endangered. Later that year, after a biological review, the agency said the listing may be warranted. Despite the positive find­ings when things got politically hot after the November 1994 elections, the Fish & Wildlife Service has continued to delay the position the following month. This year, on January 30, two individuals and thirteen groups sued the Fish & Wildlife Service in whether to list the lynx under the Endangered Species Act.

Biologists have long thought at least 500 interbreeding individuals were needed to keep a species from going locally extirpation. New research reported in the March/April 1996 Nature Conservancy magazine suggests thousands might be needed to ensure long-term survival.

**Politics of Some: Maine's top elected officials have been receiving sizable contributions from interesting sources. Gov. Angus King, for instance, has been raking in forest industry donations. In the last half of 1995 over $100,000 poured into King's political accounts, including $1500 from Georgia-Pacific Corporation, $1000 from Boise Cascade Corporation, and $500 from Georgia-Pacific Paper Co. to help retire his campaign debt. He also pulled in forest industry gifts for his Making a Difference Coalition, includ­ing $900 from Georgia-Pacific Paper Industries, $1000 from James River Corporation's VP Joseph Groz, and $500 each from Champion International Corporation and Greg Cyr of Cyr Lumber in Portage. Jacqueline Hewett, wife of King's chief operating officer, Chuck Hewett, was paid more than $13,000 last year to staff the Making a Difference Coalition, which is expected to be turned into the King reelection political committee. In 1995 the forest industry also invested heavily in the Maine Legislature. The $222,983 spent the industry third place on the list of biggest corporate spenders for state lobbying.

The national League of Conservation Voters has released 1995 congressional ratings. Senator Bill Cohen (R-Maine) was one of six senators to receive a 100% rating from the League. The American Forests,得了 90% , Senator John Chafee (R-Rhode Island) and four others. The New America, which received a C rating. The Southern Maine River and Sugarloaf ski areas are booming, a number of others in Maine are struggling to keep going or to get going. The 10-year long squabble between Saddleback ski area and the National Park Service over protection of the Appalachian Trail has spilled into the Legislature, the Congress and the highest levels of the US Department of Interior. Fewer than three miles remain to be protected in Maine of the famous 2,158-mile long trail. The part that has been close to a res­olution four years ago, but could not agree on a price for nearly 3,000 acres. Now Saddleback says it will not sell the land unless it is willing to donate a Continued on page 31
Groups Support Gov. King's Call for Ending Dioxin Discharges by Maine Paper Mills

Time to Eliminate Dioxin Discharges

On the opening day of fishing season, April 1, citizen groups concerned with fishing, health, the environment, and public interest, warned Mainers about the dioxin pollution from bleaching paper mills—which continues to contaminate our fish and waterways—and they called on the industry to heed Governor Angus King's call to eliminate this pollution.

Although there are other sources of man-made dioxin discharges in Maine, paper mill bleaching is the most obvious threat to fish, lobsters, clams, and anyone who eats them. "We've had over a decade of paper industry footdragging, waffling, and neglect over solving their dioxin problem," said John Dieffenbacher-Knoll of the Maine People's Alliance. "We support the Governor's call for the industry to eliminate their dioxin discharges, and look forward to working with the Administration and the industry to make the goal of dioxin elimination a reality in Maine."

Last September, Governor King told a meeting of paper industry representatives that dioxin contamination in Maine's rivers was "not good" and that they should "get rid of dioxin and stop using chlorine." Dioxin, a by-product of the bleaching pulp with chlorine compounds, is linked to cancer, birth defects, reproductive impairment, and immune system problems in humans. Seven of Maine's largest dioxin-emitting rivers drain into the state's rivers. An eighth, in Berlin, New Hampshire, also discharges dioxin into the Androscoggin River, which has the highest dioxin levels in fish.

Over 60 chlorine-free paper mills, which produce no dioxin, are currently in operation worldwide. Most of these chlorine-free mills, including Louisiana Pacific's San Joaquin mill, are moving to "closed loop" operations—recognizing that "waste equals inefficiency" and that by recycling their bleaching wastewaters and eliminating these discharges to rivers or coastal waters, they improve their competitiveness.

"The hazards associated with dioxin exposure are a serious public health issue, particularly for anglers and Native Americans that consume dioxin-contaminated fish," said Dr. Don Magcioncalda, an Augusta-based cancer specialist. "These unnecessary hazards need to be eliminated."

Unsafe Warning Levels

The group also expressed concerns that the State's current fish consumption warnings for dioxin are not adequate to protect anglers and their families.

"Dioxin is already in our bodies," said Dr. Magcioncalda. "Americans already get a significant dose of dioxin in foods like meat and dairy products. But Maine's health warnings have been developed in a vacuum, ignoring the double-whammy facing anglers in Maine's rivers."

In September 1995, Maine Governor Angus King told the paper industry: "You would make my life much easier if you would figure out how to get rid of dioxin and not use chlorine." (On opening day of Maine's 1996 fishing season, a broad cross-section of Mainers called on the Governor to take action to end dioxin discharges into Maine rivers by paper mills.

When they add the dioxin (in contaminated fish) to what's already in our bodies from other sources."

In addition to exposures from the consumption of contaminated fish, the average American already receives a significant dose of dioxin from a variety of food sources, including meat and dairy products. However, at present, when determining the need for warnings, State health officials consider only the health hazards posed by eating dioxin-contaminated fish—not the combined hazard of adding this dioxin to what has already accumulated in our bodies from other sources.

"The failure of State officials to properly inform people about the hazards they face from eating contaminated fish is inexcusable," said Ron Dupuis of Maine Trout Unlimited. "Warnings need to be up-dated to protect anglers and their families."

Finish the Job of Cleaning Maine's Rivers

"We are here on the opening day of fishing season to be sure anglers and all Maine people know that the fish in Maine's industrial rivers continue to be poi soned," said Mr. Dupuis.

The State of Maine has conducted annual testing of fish for dioxin contamination since 1988 and Bureau of Health consumption advisories have been in effect since 1985. Based on results of testing, health officials currently warn people not to eat fish from almost 250 miles of our rivers, due to excessive contamination from papermills. These advisories warn women of childbearing age to eat no fish, and the general public to eat no more than one fish per month from the Androscoggin River and no more than two fish per month from the Kennebec River below Skowhegan and the Penobscot River below Lincoln.

"While paper industry officials will tell you that their dioxin discharges are non-detectable and that the dioxin comes from incinerators, but State testing shows that fish caught above their mills are safe and their mills are not," said Paul Bisalba of the Penobscot Indian Nation. "The fish don't lie and indisputable evidence won't make the fish below their mills any cleaner. Industry needs to finish the job of cleaning up Maine's rivers by eliminating the discharge of dioxin."

"The Book of Genesis in the Bible tells us that God put humans on the earth 'to till it and keep it.' This makes us stewards of the earth in partnership with God," said Reverend Roger Smith of the Episcopal Diocese of Maine. "We have the technology to produce paper without injuring the earth, animals and humans. It seems to me we have a moral obligation to use that technology."

"There is no controversy over whether or not dioxins are harmful—the debate rages over how harmful they are at what levels," said Sydney R. Sewall, MD, with the Maine Physicians for Social Responsibility. "While science hasn't come to a definitive consensus on the details, the body of evidence points toward the importance of elimination of dioxins as a by-product of industrial technology. Where alternative production methods are available, the choice is clear: dioxins have got to go."

The State Legislative Committee of the Maine Chapter of the American Association of Retired Persons (AARP) declared: "As representatives of the senior population, we strongly urge action by Governor King, who has previously said the paper industry 'should' eliminate their dioxin discharge, but has taken no action to 'ensure' that they do just that!"

The above is based on a press release issued by the zero dioxin discharge campaign. If you or your group wants to become involved, contact: Jay Ritchlin, 271 State Street, Augusta, ME 04330-6690, or telephone 207 622-2178.

Background on Maine's Dioxin Problem & Opportunities for its Solution

Based on a briefing paper prepared by the Natural Resources Council of Maine for the February 10 dioxin workshop.

Summary

• Maine's papermaking rivers, and the coastal waters they drain into, have a dioxin problem that includes fish, lobsters, and clams, and consequently, threatens both human health and wildlife. These rivers also continue to suffer from other issues, such as low dissolved oxygen, turbidity, color, odor, foam, and potential toxicity problems.

• Subsequent to the failed 1992 DEP rulemaking on dioxin (wherein DEP proposed a dioxin standard for the State 38 times less stringent than that recommended by the U.S. EPA), the Department has not adopted a water quality standard and therefore, the State is essentially not regulating dioxin discharges by Maine's bleach craft mills.

• The EPA's Dioxin Reassessment is finding that dioxin is more toxic than previously thought, not less—especially related to the non-cancer hazards of dioxin, such as reproductive, developmental, and immune system effects.

• Proven papermaking technology capable of eliminating dioxin discharges are currently available. "Closed loop" technology, i.e., technologies able to eliminate wastewater discharges from the bleaching process, are actively being developed and implemented. Closed-loop technologies would not only eliminate dioxin discharges in most paper mills, but also significantly reduce discharges of pollutants associated with low dissolved oxygen, turbidity, color, odor, foam, and potential toxicity problems that continue to plague Maine's papermaking rivers.

• The paper mills are not on a path to eliminate the dioxin problem or finish the job of restoring the full value of our papermaking rivers.

Maine Has a Serious Dioxin Problem

• Contamination of fish in Maine rivers by dioxin was identified over a decade ago. The dioxin contamination of clams and lobsters, especially in those inhabiting papermaking estuaries, was found in 1992 and 1993, respectively.

• Currently, fish below 6 of the 7 bleach craft mills in Maine contain dioxin at levels exceeding those presently considered "safe" by the Bureau of Health (the available data on fish below the seventh mill, Georgia Pacific, is inclusive due to their limited nature). Sampling at a number of localities along Maine's coast, particularly in papermaking river estuaries, shows that dioxin levels in lobster tomatelly and clams (in these estuaries) also exceed the safe level.

• Today, dioxin-related fish consumption advisories apply to almost 250 miles of rivers and advisories for lobster tomatelly affect all of Maine's coastal waters. These advisories recommend that women of childbearing age eat NO fish or lobster tomatelly from these waters or not eat the fish that gener­al public severely restrict their con­sumption. Unfortunately, these advis­ories are not well communicated, and many women, especially women of childbearing age, are unknowingly being exposed to dioxin through the consumption of contaminated fish and lobster.

There is also evidence that dioxin is making its way into the food chain and contaminating wildlife in Maine.

Continued on next page
The Science on Dioxin's Health Threats is Compelling

- Though some projected that the EPA Dioxin Reassessment would "validate" dioxin as a public health hazard, the opposite is true—the reassessment has established compelling evidence that dioxin is more toxic than believed previously to the study.
- Dioxin has been upgraded as a carcinogen, putting it in the league of formaldehyde, chlorofom, PCBs, and DDT.
- Dioxin disrupts hormonal, reproductive, and immune systems, and harms the developing fetus at lower levels than previously thought.
- The general public carries an appreciable "background" body burden of dioxin, and both significant cancer risks and adverse non-cancer effects may occur at or near these background levels; and
- Heightened hazards have been identified for certain "high exposure groups, such as Native Americans and recreational anglers.

The "science" of dioxin's wildlife effects is increasingly dubious. The dioxin situation is similar to that of lead, and that problem was only heighted by that of lead, and that problem was only

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1999

• Paper industry, Governor's office, and DHHS Commissioner re¬value dioxin fish consumption warning continued in fishing regulations. Instead of providing specific warning, the new advisory suggests that persons call BOH if they are considering eating dioxin-contaminated fish.

• Despite broad public outcry and opposition from the Bureau of Health, Maine DEP gives in to paper industry pressure and proposes that DEP adopt an "interim" dioxin Quality standard 38 times weaker than EPA standard.

1993

• Paper industry states that it makes no sense to pursue changes in paper making until dioxin health implications are known.

• Stating that he has been convinced by the "considerable evidence of [dioxin's] fairly dramatic health concerns," DEP Commissioner Dean Marriott withdraws the proposed water quality standard for dioxin. BEMP fails to establish an alternative or interim standard, and the state takes the position that it has no standard for dioxin.

• DEP Dioxin Monitoring Program finds dioxin levels measured in fish collected from Presumpscot (below Westbrook), Androscoggin, Kennebec (below Skowhegan), and Penobscot (below Lincoln) rivers.

1994

• DEP begins "Dioxin Reassessment"; a major study of the risks of dioxin.

• Maine Paper Industry Information Office (PIDO) director asserts that "there is growing consensus among health experts that dioxin is less dangerous to humans than previously thought." PIDO declares contaminated fish "safe" and calls upon State to drop fish consumption advisories.

• EPA promulgates regulations in the National Toxics Rule to regulate toxic substances, including dioxin, in waters of all states that have failed to do so. Maine is erroneously not included in the rule because EPA is told by DEP that Maine adopted federal criteria in 1990.

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1995

• DEP Dioxin Monitoring Program finds dioxin levels measured in fish collected from Presumpscot (below Westbrook), Androscoggin, Kennebec (below Skowhegan), and Penobscot (below Lincoln) rivers in 1992 to exceed BOH "maximum acceptable concentrations". Dioxin levels essentially unchanged from 1992 and 1993 monitoring.

• EPV Science Advisory Board (SAB) reviews draft of Dioxin Reassessment. Despite calls for clarification of some issues and further study of others, the SAB supports the EPA's most serious concerns, including that dioxin is a probable carcinogen and can cause important non-cancer effects at exposure levels below those currently in effect. The SAB echoes EPA concerns regarding health risks to fish consumers.

• Over 10 years after dioxin was discovered in fishes from papermaking river estuaries in the Androscoggin River, almost 250 miles of Maine rivers are under fish consumption advisories due to dioxin contamination that advisories of women of childbearing age to eat NO fish and the general public to severely restrict their consumption. Similar warnings apply to the consumption of lobsters taken along the entire Maine coast.

• DEP continues to issue 5-year permits for bleached kraft mills without requiring compliance with dioxin water quality standard.

• A study commissioned by the Casco Bay Estuary Project finds high levels of dioxin in sediments of the Presumpscot River below the Westbrook paper mill and into the Penobscot. The study finds high levels of dioxin in sediments in the Harraseeket area and associates this contamination with dioxin originating from the mills in the Androscoggin and Kennebec rivers.

• Governor Angus King tells paper industry "you would make my life much easier if you would figure out how to get rid of dioxin and not use chlorine."


WildEarth Publishes
Special Issue Dedicated to The
WildlandsProject
The First Thousand Days of the Next Thousand Years: The Wildlands Project at Three, a spe¬cial publication dedicated to The Wildlands Project, is now available from Wild Earth. The Wildlands Project is working to map and implement an interconnected ecol¬ogical network for North America. This publication gives an overview of the projects mapping and reserve design work to date. Published by Dave Foreman and edited by John Davis, Wild Earth is a non-profit conservation quarterly focused on wilderness and biodiversity from an ecocentric perspective, and serves as the publishing voice for The Wildlands Project. Sample copies of this special issue are $3. Subscriptions are available for $15 (Domestic), $17 (Canada), $45 (overseas). Contact: Wild Earth, P.O.B 453 Richmond, VA 23276. Phone: (804) 457-9999.

NH Forest Resources Plan Available
The New Hampshire Forest Resources Plan will be released in April following two years of work by a 24-member Steering Committee that represented a broad cross-section of New Hampshire forest constituencies. The Steering Committee conducted several pub¬lic sessions to secure feedback on both the work in progress and on its draft report. During the process, it created three "Advisory Groups" that examined Forest Resources, Economic and Human issues. The FRP sets forest policy for the state for the next decade. To get a copy of this important document, contact State Forester Jack Sargent, Division of Forests and Lands, Department of Resources and Economic Development, P.O.B 1856, Concord, NH 03302-1856. Tel: (603) 271-2214.

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Melwood 1995 The Northern Forest Forum Page 19
**Love Canal, Dioxin, Environmental Justice & Rebuilding Democracy**

*A Conversation with Lois Marie Gibbs*

**Jamie Sayen (JS):** You have described yourself as a C-average high school student whose goal was to be a modestly successful seamstress or homemaker. You had been working in environmental activism and organizing, and today, nearly 20 years after the crisis at Love Canal in Buffalo, NY, you are one of the most respected and effective organizers of citizens' opposition to toxic materials in their communities. How did you get started, and how do you sustain your effort in the face of hostility from school boards, politicians, industry and other defenders of the powerful?

Lois Marie Gibbs (LGG): In our case, I felt that if I waited for somebody else who was smarter than me or more talented than me to find out what to do about this problem, that I would have lost my children. I was convinced that Melissa was in very critical condition, and it just seemed like every single day Michael would develop a new health problem. I could just watch their physical selves deteriorating in front of me. Just the energy level—at one time the lively, happy, jumping, giggling child was suddenly solemn, sitting in a chair, and quiet.

I gave birth to this child. I was always proud of being one of the ideal mothers. I took them out in the sunshine, and I fed them the right food, and we went for a walk, and they got their naps every day, and all this kind of stuff. I felt as a mother that it really was my responsibility.

When I went to the first door to talk to somebody about the problem—and initially it was to close the 99th Street School, which was the elementary school in the center of the Love Canal dump—I was very scared. I was a very quiet, introverted person, and to go and talk to a stranger at a door was a huge leap for me. So I wrote this little petition, and I went to the first door, and I knocked so lightly—I knew they had a big, heavy door, and I didn’t want to scare them. I knocked so lightly—I knew they had a big, heavy door—that even their dog didn’t bark. And I just stood there, and then walked away, and then ran back to the way home, and said, “This is insane. Somebody else is going to come some day to my house and knock on my door.”

Very soon after that, Michael got sick again with pneumonia. I was sitting in the hospital looking at Michael—his little white face with his little white condensation, and I realized at that point that the reason Michael was in the hospital was because of this kind of stuff. I felt as a mother that it really was enough that somebody answered, and people talked.

It was a big leap for me, and it really was a sense of facing yourself and facing your family and realizing that if people don’t take the first step, no matter how frightening it was—and it was frightening—if you don’t take that first step, if you don’t protect yourself, then no one else is going to do it. . . . Nobody will protect your children and protect your family and your rights and your property more than you yourself. People have to learn to take that first step. It’s scary, but after you take it, it’s not scary anymore.

LGG: It was really surprising because I thought people would not want to talk to me. Ninety percent of our community worked in the chemical industry, so there was a direct interest in this issue.

JS: Just like a mill town in Maine.

LGG: Exactly. The chemical industry owned our town, and talking about them harming our families is not something I thought would be well-received. But quite the contrary happened. People were calling on doors, people were saying, “Gee, I was wondering if anybody was ever going to do something.” It reminded me of the first time I ran back home, waiting for somebody who’s smarter, or better, or knows how to do it.

They opened right up to me and said that their children were sick, and they were sick—men and women alike—and told me some really terrible stories. They would walk me down to their basement to show me the chemicals that came up through their sump pump—which is a hole in the basement floor. They would show me their children and the rashes their children had. They were very open and waiting. They were frightened themselves.

I had two people out of 900 families who said they weren’t interested in talking about it, that they worked for Occidental Petroleum, and that they support what we are doing, but they don’t want to get involved. But even those people weren’t rude; they were just clear about “I’m not going to get involved.”

We pretty much realized that the one husband and the other—mostly men in our community who worked in the plant, understood the toxicity and understood the potential for damage. They somehow justification going into the plant and being exposed for an hourly wage, based on where you worked in the plant, family went to college if you were exposed to more. But they also would never bring their families into that plant. They would never bring their children into any wage—into that plant. So they understood what was OK for them, but not OK for their own mind—whether it was OK or was not OK in reality—was not acceptable for their wife and certainly not acceptable for their children. They did it, too, because I think they were very in tune with chemicals and exposure and health effects because of the very place that they worked.

JS: Do you think, as a general rule—whether a mill town in Maine, or Love Canal in New York, or a chemical town in Louisiana, or an inner city in this country—that your experience is fairly universal? In other words, that people really need to talk, and that what’s been missing is this social structure that supports talk and the people knocking at the door to initiate that talk? Or, do you think people are less open in the extreme case of Love Canal?

LGG: It depends on what has happened in that neighborhood around the industry. For example, if it’s a mill town, then the mill has come and gone. We’re going to go out of business if you raise heck—jobs and environment—and all those seeds were planted very firmly before you went door-to-door, you’re going to have a much harder time getting people to talk. But if those seeds have not been planted yet, I think people will be more open. It really depends on what kind of propaganda has come from the companies and what people see in their own families.

Obviously, in the Love Canal situation, it was extreme. People could look at their children and see the harm. But, when we’re talking about issues like dioxin, I think you’re going to get the same effect that you did with Love Canal in that people will look at their children and say, “Gee, they have asthma;” “Gee, my child had that particular skin disease;” or “My child’s immune system is depressed;” or “My child had that kind of birth defect.” Because it’s out there in such a big way, and in communities that have extraordinary exposure—such as mill towns or down river from the refineries. I think you’ll have the same effect that you did with Love Canal in that people will look at their children and say, “Gee, they have asthma;” “Gee, my child had that particular skin disease;” or “My child’s immune system is depressed;” or “My child had that kind of birth defect.” Because it’s out there in such a big way, and in communities that have extraordinary exposure—such as mill towns or down river from the refineries. I think you’ll have the same effect that you did with Love Canal in that people will look at their children and say, “Gee, they have asthma;” “Gee, my child had that particular skin disease;” or “My child’s immune system is depressed;” or “My child had that kind of birth defect.”

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LGG: The other thing is that most of the men in work in the factories and the mills. When you go door-to-door, nine times out of ten you’re talking to the women. If we remember back in some of the other movements—for example, the mine workers—it was the women who did a lot of the organizing around getting the children out of the mines and supporting the men who were striking. We have to look at that as somewhat of a model.

JS: Can’t the person who’s working in the factory to carry the protest sign all the time. Sometimes we can. But there are other ways to support the factory worker that doesn’t put him or her in a position in which it jeopardizes the family and the family and the family. We still have the idea that the family by itself yet still receive the same endpoint of environmental justice or cleanup or whatever the goal is. If you look at some of the older movements, you see that often times it was the women, the wives, who were really carrying the torch, not because the men didn’t care; it was the awkward position they were in.

JS: When you overcame your initial fears and began going door-to-door knocking, I assume that at that point you were still a real novice and were basically inventing things as you went along. What does someone do when they make that decision? I’m the one who is going to have to go knocking on the doors. I’m the one who is going to have to see that this happens. I have no skills, no experience, so what do I do so that
I'm not wasting everybody's time, my own included? How do I become effective fast?"

LMG: Well it's actually very easy. What I did was a petition; everybody can do some kind of a petition. I talked for two minutes and listened for ten minutes because when you talk for two minutes, and you end with an open question, people will respond to your ten minutes, in which time you could figure out where they're coming from, what their concerns are, and you could tap into that.

JS: Now, when you got the petitions, what did you do next?

LMG: We took the petitions to the State Department of Health, the body that was investigating the Love Canal. We requested that the school be closed. They agreed to do more testing to determine whether the school would be closed or not. They issued warnings that the children should only walk on the sidewalks, and they would be safe if they didn't walk on the grass and all the sort of silly stuff.

But the petitions really weren't for the purpose of moving government. They were a reason to talk to people and listen to people and to get people's names and addresses so that we could begin to build a local community organization.

JS: What was your response to the Department of Health's refusal to act.

LMG: I was so naive. I thought that if I called my congressperson or my state senator and said, "There's 20,000 tons of poison there, and my child is sick and I think it's related to the school,"—because to you I didn't know about the entire community—that he would help me move this child out of the public school into another public school. I was just totally blown away when they said, "There's nothing we can do," or "go bother someone else," or "get out of our face." Instead of going home and crumpling, the way they expected you to, what did you do?

I just got mad. Because my bubble was popped, I just got mad and said, "No, you're not going to get away with this." It is that anger that drove me to do all the rest of the steps. It was that anger that drove me to do the petition; it was that anger that drove me to go door-to-door. Anger in the sense of "I need to do this. These people aren't going to help me; this has really got to be done collectively. We need a larger group."

Once we formed the Love Canal Homeowners Association, those same people who slammed the door and tried to make me go away—which I wouldn't do because I had no choice, my kids would die if I walked away—suddenly paid attention to us when we had an organization, and they wanted to come meet with the core group and the steering group. The dynamics changed dramatically after we had a group together. Suddenly we were important, suddenly we were worthy of talking to.

JS: Did these talks lead anywhere? Did they come to you for the purpose of substantiating this, or did they come to you for damage control talks?

LMG: They came to us for damage control. Every time they came to us they were trying to figure out what we wanted and what was our bottom line.

JS: What was the least concession they could make to you to get you out of their hair?

LMG: Exactly. We didn't know that at the beginning, but then we figured it out in short order. We decided we could play that game too, and we flipped it on them. So they came to meet with us.

We decided we wanted relocation for the entire community. That was our main goal, and underneath that goal there were about 15 subsets that we wanted—health studies, day care out of the neighborhood, things like that. They kept on coming in and giving us this bottom line on our list. They'd cross off the bottom one, but every time they asked us what we wanted we would hand them the list and say, "We want relocation."

Whenever they would give us answers that were non-answers at public meetings—they'd say we don't know about the problem here, we need to get back to you on the problem—we would chant, "We want out." Whenever anybody asked us what we wanted, although we had 16 subsets of goals, we always said and we wanted out. They just kept chopping off from the bottom of the list until finally they got to the top of the list.

JS: That's a form of "grassroots"—bottom up.

LMG: (Laughs) That's right. It was really interesting. We wanted a social services grant because a lot of people were having a hard time psychologically dealing with this threat. "What does this mean for my children?" People couldn't deal with it, they were so frightened. So they gave us a $200,000 grant to have counselors come in and sit with our families. They set up daycares outside of the neighborhood for us for those who didn't want their children in the neighborhood during the daytime when they were doing construction. It seemed like we kept winning all of this stuff just so they wouldn't have to give us the big ticket item, which was relocation of our families.

JS: What finally changed their mind so that they acted to relocate you?

LMG: There were two things. The first relocation came in August 1978 because Governor Hugh Carey was running for re-election, and we made it politically very uncomfortable for him. We followed him all over the state. We were in his face. We held him personally responsible for Love Canal. He made it politically so that the only one who could relocate us, even though Occidental Petroleum was ultimately responsible—and we recognized that and said that in the same breath—New York State could evacuate us and then recoup the money because we didn't have the money to hire the lawyers to do that.

Governor Hugh Carey couldn't handle the fact that we were all over him. When he was running for re-election we decided we wanted to get him, during this election period, to Love Canal. If we could get him into our neighborhood, into the auditorium with the whole media caravan, that we would win because we would have in front of the voters. We were in his face all over the state, and finally he agreed to come and meet with us.

JS: That was one of your demands—come to our neighborhood?

LMG: Yes, it was one of those 16 demands. And then we negotiated with his people to allow us to ask questions. His people said, "No, the Governor doesn't do that. He makes his speech and then he leaves." We finally negotiated so that they would give us one question.

At this point pregnant women and children under the age of two were allowed to be moved at the state's expense. But men and women who were not pregnant and children over the age of two were stuck at Love Canal. It was like the canaries in the mine. The pregnant women and young children.

JS: Get the canaries out and leave the miners?

LMG: Exactly. It took us four days to plant the whole...
thing. We had organized so that we posed a question that would only give us the answer we wanted, and we organized so that I would ask the question. The Governor came, and he stood up on the elevated stage, and he gave this wonderful talk about what a caring governor he was to an audience of about 500.

Then the Governor said, “All right, I’ll take a question now.” We had our people scattered throughout the audience, so every time somebody tried to put their hand up that wasn’t me, someone would grab them and pull their hand down. So all over the audience you’d hear, “uhh, uhh, uhh…” (laughing). And I’m waiting my arm very very distinctively.

JS: And he’s looking everywhere but at you?

LMG: Right. Trying to ignore me out of existence, but it didn’t work. So he called on me, and while I was carrying this sign in Miami? Isn’t Love Canal in New York?” The president would get asked questions about this because it was so bizarre to have such a sign. And because of the pressure on Jimmy Carter, he also came to Love Canal on October 1, 1980 and evacuated the rest of us.

It was a matter of organizing the community, organizing the large community of people outside of the state, outside of the neighborhood, and focusing the attention on individuals who are decision-makers.

Governor Hugh Carey and President Jimmy Carter are the same. They’ve all had it. And they finally had people that didn’t create the problem at Love Canal. But they were the people who could give us what we needed so we used them as the target because they were able to give us what we needed.

Figure 5-1 Daily intake (ug) of Dioxin in Toxic Equivalents

These folks calling me were looking for the same help that I had been looking for when I began. They were asking exactly the same questions that I once asked. I decided that there was a real gap in service-providers. I started CCHW to fill that gap.

JS: After the second evacuation, what did you do? Did you think, “Oh, now I can retire and become a housewife again?” Or were you hooked?

LMG: Well, I was sort of hooked because all during Love Canal people called me up from all over the country and said, “I live in Louisiana. I have one of those things. How do you get action?” There had been nobody there to help me when I began. I had called NRDC (Natural Resources Defense Council). I called EDF (Environmental Defense Fund). I called all the mainstream environmental groups.

These folks calling me were looking for the same help that I had been looking for when I began. They were asking exactly the same questions that I once asked. I decided that there was a real gap in service-providers. I started CCHW to fill that gap. I thought there was a gap around dioxin. If you couldn’t get through with dump sites, then I would go back home and be a mom and do whatever. I never had any idea that it would have expanded to where it is today—we’re working with 6,000 community groups nationwide.

CCHW’s Stop Dioxin Exposure Campaign

It’s real exciting. I’ve traveled to I don’t know how many states—maybe 20. People are really engaged in it. People get engaged about this campaign. I think you saw it here today. People who normally don’t come together, sitting there brainstorming about how do we, as a group, how do we move forward? They genuinely feel like this is something they want to do, and they want to spend time doing it, and they want to work with people they’ve never worked with before. That’s what democracy is all about, and that’s what the campaign is all about. Stop dioxin exposure.

JS: Now suppose that I’m a member of a community group here in Maine or New Hampshire, and we’re fighting dioxin pollution and other organochlorine pollution; and the principal source in this case is a paper mill. What can you reasonably ask of CCHW? What can we reasonably ask of us is for help. We’re willing to do several things. If your group is committed to do a campaign, we will come out and help you one-on-one with your local group, and then help you one-on-one with your state group, and then help you one-on-one with your national group, and that’s what democracy is all about, and that’s what the campaign is all about. Stop dioxin exposure.

LMG: So, basically, the organization just grew out of the need that others had and your decision to provide the services that hadn’t existed for you.

JS: What was your relationship with the other big environmental groups that are also, by-and-large, head-quartered in Washington, D.C.?

LMG: When I first moved to DC, they did not embrace me. Several of them were very upset that I was even there and was beginning CCHW, which set us off on the wrong foot. Grassroots groups and mainstream groups are inherently different to the point where I’m not exactly sure how it is that we ever truly work hand-in-hand on issues. That doesn’t mean they’re evil or not evil. It takes play an important regulatory role, and we play an important role in the decision making process.

But, if you think about the groups in DC, their job—and their goal and their profession, and where we need them, to a certain extent—is working on laws and regulations. When you look at the laws and regulations that you’re looking at controls. How much goes out the stack? How much gets discharged? How much gets spread on the land? How much stuff goes into our
ozone layer? Their work is about getting the best controls to get the least amount of pollution into our environment. To try and stop it. But stop it is it relates to a control mechanism.

Grassroots groups are about prevention. They're about, "Don't have any dioxin." "We're not going to do a risk assessment about dioxin. We're saying zero discharge of dioxin." People are saying, "zero discharge;" "change the manufacturing process;" "change the product line."

When you talk about mainstream and grassroots groups, there's this real inherent goal difference. They're about control, we're about prevention. So when the two groups come together to try to work on something, nine times out of ten they butt heads, and nobody will talk about the differences in their goals. Nobody will raise that as a flag to say, "What they're doing is important, but what they're doing is different."

We're about prevention, and they're about control. There is some room in there for us to work together, but also there needs to be some recognition that although we can still move down the path together, we probably will never be married at the end.

JS: Why can't we reconcile the control/prevention thing? Ultimately, most of the people I've talked with who are involved in the controlling, aren't saying, "We're advocating control because we believe that's what's best for your health or best for the ecosystem. We're advocating it because we've made a political decision that that's the best deal we're likely to get."

LMG: Right.

JS: And, my feeling is that at some point we're going to need a politics that doesn't give us "the best deal we could get," but a politics that gets us the deal we need, and that we are entitled to. My question, then, to the larger group is: "Can't you take the political cover that an angry, informed, and organized grassroots constituency brings, and then do the more technical, legal, legislative, regulatory stuff. Arguing for another kind of state of laws, or arguing over a risk factor of one death in 100,000 or one death in a million?"

LMG: I think there are a lot of obstacles to it because regulations are about control, and that's their job. So if you're talking about regulations being zero discharge, or stopping whatever it is, essentially, the mainstream groups are out of business. If instead of saying solid waste incinerators need bag houses, instead, saying solid waste incinerator should be shut down and here are the reasons why—they can't sell that on the Hill because they're about regulations, and shutting down an incinerator is not a regulation. Shutting down an incinerator is shutting down an incinerator. I don't think you'll ever get the two groups together on that issue because their job is regulation. Regulation is different than prevention.

When you talk about mainstream and grassroots groups, there's this real inherent goal difference. They're about control, we're about prevention. So when the two groups come together to try to work on something, nine times out of ten they butt heads, and nobody will talk about the differences in their goals. Nobody will raise that as a flag to say, "What they're doing is important, but what they're doing is different."

JS: I was under the impression their job was protecting the environment, and there may be times when a regulation will protect the environment, but where that's an inadequate step, it seems to me that they're not doing their job if they settle for that.

LMG: No. Their job is about getting the best possible regulations to protect our environment and public health. That's different from what the grassroots groups want.

I think this is why the grassroots groups are the answer for our abilities to survive in this world. Grassroots groups don't have a job description; they don't fit into a regulatory or congressional or some kind of state-level legislative framework. They can ask for anything. Grassroots groups can actually practice democracy in its truest sense. And they're not guided by all these other social factors and regulatory factors. The grassroot groups can really protect the environment, really protecting public health, then the emphasis has to be at the grassroots level.

These national groups can provide important resources. They have their legal resources that we can pull in. But the answer to stopping pollution does not exist in the national groups. It really exists at the grassroots levels. I think we have to stop wishing that if EDF would only go and say this, or if NRDC would only go and do this. Well, they're not going to. This is our job. We have to do that, and hopefully they won't sell out when the stuff hits. That's where we have to talk with them and be friends with them and work with them in some capacity so they don't sell us down the tubes later.

JS: So that you can have a productive relationship in terms of making use of the resources you need that they can provide—staff scientists, whatever.

LMG: That's right. You have to remember that most of these groups aren't connected with the grassroots at all. Their connection, for the most part, is with what we call "Paper People." They're people who receive direct mail and membership letters. Very well-meaning people, but the folks who are on the receiving end of it are people who have been trained to write checks or fill out surveys. The people who are giving donations to these big groups are not people who are likely to go to city hall and make a stink about something.

JS: They also aren't the people who are at the end of the discharge pipes.

LMG: That's right. And so they have all sorts of different constituencies that they're facing than I'm facing, for example. I have the victims in the street, and I have to look them in the eye and say, "This is what we're about, and this is where we're going." It would be nice if the whole world could work together and hold hands and walk down that path to some kind of salvation, but this is what makes democracy great too. The different people have a different agenda, and they are moving their agendas forward whether we agree with them or not, so I don't think it's so terrible to long as we keep them in line and they keep us in line.

JS: Disagreement, but not undercutting.

LMG: That's right. I think that has to be a rule in both sides—as to them and them to us—so we don't undercut all the work that the other group of people does. We may feel those are only two steps forward, but those are two steps forward, and they are important steps to take.

JS: Basically, your relationship with the big groups is: you'll work with them when you can and try to stay out of their way and vice versa when you can't work constructively.

LMG: I work very little with them. I've really spent almost zero time with the Big Ten groups because my sense is that the answers are the grassroots. I only have a certain amount of time, so I commit my time to building the grassroots, and if I see there's a problem with one of the big groups, I send my grassroots folks after them because who am I to say they took the wrong stand or paper mills? I don't live by a paper mill facility, but there are a whole lot of people who would get really roaring angry if they heard somebody took the wrong position.

My sense is we just communicate who's doing what, and then it's people's responsibility to hold them accountable if they're going off-track or selling them out, or something like that.

JS: Do they ever come to you and say, "Gee, Lois, we really need a grassroots constituency on issue X or issue Y."

LMG: They used to, but they don't any longer because they understand that when they're doing something that makes sense, we'll let people know they're doing that, and when they're doing something that we feel will compromise the prevention agenda at the local level, we won't participate. So much of their work is not about prevention agenda, it's really about control, and so we don't have a whole lot of interaction. Although they would like our mailing list, and they would like our contacts.

The flip side is that when they hold hearings on things, and they need a victim, or they're going to do a lawsuit, and they need to file that lawsuit on behalf of somebody, we'll help them find that somebody, that client. We'll help provide the people who will testify in front of Congress on air pollution or water pollution, or something like that. So we play that role. We don't give them our grassroots constituency because they would just fight. They just would not get along.

JS: Regarding the issue of science, I see us in a kind of a schizophrenic situation. You told us today that, armed with your scientific data, you thought that was going to impress the people in power, and you discovered that it didn't impress them, and ultimately it
Most of the people in the environmental justice movement are people who came to the movement because they felt that they'd been wronged. This is different than folks who are traditionally environmentalists or think of themselves as environmentalists. People in the environmental justice movement feel that somehow, somebody had done something to them they had no right to do. This whole issue of environmental justice has been able to access a population that I believe will rebuild democracy.

LMG: That's the toughest issue because you can't prove it, and I gave up trying to prove it a long time ago—whether it's dioxin, our current campaign, or Love Canal, my first campaign.

JS: Right. Of course, you couldn't vote until 1920.

LMG: First of all—reacting to your "environmentalists" word—most of the people we work with wouldn't see themselves as environmentalists. In fact, I don't see myself as an environmentalist.

Most of the people in the environmental justice movement are people who came to the movement because they felt that they'd been wronged. This is different than folks who are traditionally environmentalists or think of themselves as environmentalists. People in the environmental justice movement feel that somehow, somebody had done something to them they had no right to do. This whole issue of environmental justice has been able to access a population that I believe will rebuild democracy.

Think about the PTA in Texas that went from a local high school chapter to the state PTA and now to the national PTA, taking on this issue of dioxin. PTAs are not environmentalists. They are people who are concerned about their children. That concern as it relates to dioxin—which is our hottest issue—is about milk and their children's food. Children who have learning disabilities because of dioxin exposure.

The environmental justice movement allows you to tap into groups that cross all barriers. That fact that the retired people (AARP) were here today [at the February 10 dioxin workshop in Augusta, Maine]; they're not environmentalists; some of them are, but the organization itself is not. Why are they here, and why are they involved?

So this issue about environmental justice, about poisoning people, about poisoning our air and water and putting in jeopardy our future generations, has really mobilized people like nothing before. Rich people, poor people. The other part of it is that there is so much common bond about being poisoned, or possibly being poisoned, or poisoning the environment, that when people sit at the table there's also a sense of equality that you didn't use to see with environmentalists. You had your elite, and then you had your Earth First!ers who were sort of radical guys.

When I was in Louisiana, we sat with members of a poor African-American community that didn't have indoor plumbing in a house of a woman who was earning a living wage, who had had to have cost 80 bucks to serve to this group. But the conversation around the table wasn't that we couldn't talk to the African-American population, but it was like, "OK, what can you guys do?" Hearing from that community said, "We've got lots of people. We can go out and deliver flyers wherever we want. We can't write the flers, because most of us can't read and write, but we can deliver them."

There was this sense of equality. Nobody shamed him because he couldn't read or write. It was like, "OK, this is what you folks can do. What can the African-American community do?"

We have the power people and don't think about equality and access. We have the power and don't think about helping people access to the political arena by those who have a vested interest in making money.

I think science is critically important to our work. It validates our work. It validates what we are saying. But it can only be used as a tool. You can't think about absolute certainty from science is impossible. And science is used in the political arena by those who have vested interests in making money.

But you can't prove, for example, in Tacoma, Washington, where you have these young boys who have been poisoned by dioxin, and they don't have any facial hair or chest hair because they've been so feminized and they have chloracne too, which is a dioxin-related skin disease. Are you going to prove beyond a shadow of a doubt that dioxin did that? No. And you going to make them prove that dioxin didn't do that? No, you can't do that either. But what you could do is use those young men in the political arena to say, "We know dioxin creates hormonal changes. We know that it feminizes men. And we know these men have these problems, and we want you to do something." You just have to use it politically that way.

Science can only be used as a political tool to justify your political agenda. People argue science with regulatory agencies and decision-makers and other scientists, and you could argue till you're blue in the face, but you haven't convinced the regular folks over the other side's scientists. Public opinion is generally on your side, so if you say dioxin creates this problem, and they say it didn't, people are more likely to believe you—the general public—than the other guys. From that point of view, it helps us build our case because people are more likely to believe us, because they can't follow the scientific arguments.

LMG: There's a poll that actually said that. A national poll just recently said the average public believes the "special interest groups". I don't think the kind of work we do of organizing people and helping to provide them with whatever they need to have a strong voice in the decision making of their government and their future.

JS: This is the work you'd like to be doing for a long time to come, or would you rather put yourself out of a job and retire somewhere?

LMG: I like doing this. If I could put myself out of a job that would be terrific. I don't think that's realistic. I'm too old. If I was a youngun', maybe I could do that. But what I would like to be doing, from this day forward is engage people in the democratic process. Get people involved in decision-making that has sense for my children and my grandchildren. Whether it's women's issues or environmental issues, I do a lot of organizing people and helping to provide them with the tools they need to have to be able to make the decisions made about their lives and their community and their government and their future.
Seventeenth Century Abenaki History

by Tom Obomsawin

In this article I would like to review some of the significant events of the 1600s from the perspective of the Abenaki people. It is important to have an understanding of this period to understand why we are in the position we are in today. In 1609 our northern relatives, in what was then called Lower Canada, were approached by a French mercenary named Samuel de Champlain. At first, through the promise of military aid by Champlain, we Abenakis were receptive to the French. It appeared that the French would assist us against encroachments by the Mohawks in Abenaki territory. The French were interested in trading for furs and claiming Abenaki territory.

The French soon introduced Catholic Jesuits into Abenaki villages. Through religious conversion they hoped to secure Abenaki alliances against their traditional enemy, the English. Through trickery and deceit, Jesuit missionaries became respected leaders of our people and promised us riches and power soon afterwards. Some of these Jesuit priests were very creative in their negotiations for beaver pelts. For a fee of 30 beaver pelts, an Abenaki could receive a personal hand written letter and prayer sent to the Pope “for the Indians” by Jesus Christ himself. The Jesuits also acted as middlemen between the King of France and his agents, and most of the Wabanaki peoples. These priests would trade prayers, absolitions, and other ceremonies for skins and furs that could be sold to French fur traders to be made by the French fur trade. Other French merchants traded for alcohol and gunpowder.

The early French settlers very rarely brought their own families with them and instead would often marry our women, becoming part of our communities. One big happy family! By 1660, Sokoki and Penacook refugees had taken shelter in the northern French-controlled Abenaki territory along the Quebec (St. Lawrence) River. Many of the nations in Massachusetts and Connecticut also fled English treachery and took refuge in these mission villages.

By 1675 English encroachment and barbaric maltreatment forced us to defend ourselves and launch a concerted effort to drive the invading English from our homeland. Metacom, known in the English as “King Philip”, led an all-out assault against the Plymouth and Massachusetts Bay Colonies. Most Abenaki groups from the Kennebec and Penobscot Rivers to Massachusetts, Connecticut and New Hampshire joined in the resistance. One in every eleven English Towns was destroyed and one out of every eleven English died during the first winter of our war of independence.

Our effort was unfortunately about 50 years too late. Diseases and massacres had already eliminated nine-tenths of our population while the English population had grown tenfold. We were out-numbered at least ten to one by that time. Our war against the English gave them an excuse to wipe out every native person within their reach—usually women, children, elders and those not involved in the fighting. Time after time innocent people were slaughtered in their sleep, especially those who were in neutral “Praying Towns” (the predecessor to “Indian Reservations”). This served well to weaken our morale.

In August of 1676, Metacom, who was by then out of supplies to carry on the war, was ambushed and shot through the heart by “an Indian” (probably Narragansett) scout under orders of Captain Benjamin Church and his colonial militia. The scout was then ordered to cut off Metacom’s head and quarter him. Our war continued in the Connecticut Valley, New Hampshire, and Maine without Metacom for the rest of the century. After most of our women, children and elders were slaughtered, most of our fighting men retreated to the north. They were called Cowassucks, Mahicans, Pocumtucks, Naugatucks, Sokokis, Penncooks, Cowassucks, Kennebecs, Pikwackets and most of the other distinct family groups who had inhabited the areas now called the States of Massachusetts, Connecticut, and the coastal parts of New Hampshire and Maine. Most of the survivors trekked several hundred miles north to a village called Ansiquecook (later Mission St. Francis and today Ondak, Quebec). Others took refuge at the original Mission Saint Francis located on the Chaudiere River near Quebec City.

After a time of mourning and healing, the Abenakis regrouped and headed back to recapture their former respective territories. Wars, and short periods of peace, were the pattern throughout the remaining 1600s. Time and time again we tried to live in peace with the so-called settlers. The English were not going to be satisfied until they murdered or enslaved each and every one of us.

In 1704, this mission moved to Ansiquecook and changed the name of that village and river to St. Francis. It was during this time that all these groups became known as the Abenakis and also (because of the Jesuit mission) St. Francis Indians.

OK, what has all this got to do with the forest issues of today? Well, let’s consider, for instance, what the conditions of our forests were at that time. Most of Massachusetts and Connecticut as well as southern New Hampshire and Maine were being cleared (clear-cut). Why? Because the English King, through his corporations and agents, were paying big bucks for timber and timber products like ships for his royal navy. This, along with the fur trade, formed the basis for the Colonial economy.

Because building and selling ships to the King was the most profitable industry for the newly formed province of New Hampshire, we Abenakis were doing a wooden ship became the seal and symbol of the State of New Hampshire. In 1691, the Royal Governor of the province forbade the cutting of any pine tree over two feet in diameter. Apparently they were already becoming scarce within the territory under English control. These were all to be saved for the King’s pleasure. A fine of 50 pounds sterling per tree was levied against anyone caught cutting one. One half of the fine went to the King and the other half to the informant.

The 1600s saw the beginning of the deforestation of our country. The deforestation of southern New England had occurred. With all of the catastrophes that befell our people during this period of time the rest of our vast forests were still intact. Our people were still able to prevent further expansion of English invasion into the interior of our country. My next article will recount some of the-catastrophes of the 1700s.

In closing, I would like to address some of the recent commercials that have been flooding the media lately from Champion International. These very unusual commercials in that they are not trying to sell their products. They are instead trying to sell the illusion that “no one cares more for the forests than we do”. They show footage of a small, healthy-looking, uncut forest set aside for public relations purposes in Maine and would have you believe that this is what their “working forests” look like. Well, Champion, you are mistaken. We care more for our forests than you could ever imagine. Even many of your own employees hate what you are doing to our forests. They will not say this openly for fear of losing the only job they know how to do. Things are going to change!
NRCM Will Endorse Clearcut Referendum Unless Stronger Alternative is Enacted by July 1

On March 26 the Natural Resources Council of Maine announced: "NRCM will endorse the citizen initiated clearcutting referendum on or before July 1, 1996 unless a stronger alternative is enacted before that time which is more protective of our forests' ecological and economic future."

NRCM challenged Governor Angus King's Sustainability Council to "bring forth a stronger alternative [to the referendum] to meet the public's requirement for sustainable forest management practices" prior to July 1. "However," the NRCM press release continued, "if these efforts fail, NRCM will support the referendum because the destructive trends in Maine's North Woods can no longer be ignored or tolerated. Paper companies and other large landowners are cutting some of our most valuable tree species faster than they can grow back. Forest jobs have dropped 30% in the past decade, while habitat for plants and animals native to the North Woods for centuries has been destroyed. The overcut land left behind is not fit for hunting, fishing, hiking, snowmobiling or other recreational use."

With its press release, NRCM issued a fact sheet which the Forum reproduces below in its entirety:

The Problem

NRCM believes that action must be taken to repair the damage of past abuse of Maine forests, and to ensure a legacy of sustainable economic potential, ecological integrity and an unimpaired quality of life.

- Too often, clearcutting has become the world's most efficient method of removing the forest, even with the best intentions and regulations or the clearcutting referendum. The damage of past abuse of Maine forests, and to ensure a legacy of sustainable economic potential, ecological integrity and an unimpaired quality of life.

- Clearcut and overcut land is not fit for recreation; few people would choose to hike, snowmobile, cross-country ski, canoe, fish or hunt there.

- Clearcut and overcut land cannot provide a suitable home for many of the habitat needs of Maine's native plants and animals that live in Maine's forest or the people who depend on it for their livelihood or recreation.

- In the last ten years employment in the Maine woods fell by 30%, as loggers were thrown out of work by mechanical tree cutting machines which operate at peak efficiency in clearcuts.

- Trees are being cut faster than they are growing back. 80% of all of the partially cut timberland in Maine left without enough trees to ensure a continuously productive forest. Spruce fir being harvested in Washington County at 3-1/2 times the sustainable rate.

- Value trees are increasingly common in Maine forests. The mix has changed from high value species like spruce and sugar maple, to lower value species like pin cherry, poplar and red maple. The quality of hardwoods in Maine's forest has declined since the last 1950s.

- Clearcuts and overcut lands are not conducive to recreation; few people would choose to hike, snowmobile, cross-country ski, canoe, fish or hunt there.

- Clearcut and overcut land cannot provide a suitable home for many of the plants and animals that live in Maine's forest or the people who depend on it for their livelihood or recreation.

- In the last ten years employment in the Maine woods fell by 30%, as loggers were thrown out of work by mechanical tree cutting machines which operate at peak efficiency in clearcuts.

Anti-Referendum forces allege that photos of clearcuts are 20 years old. This photo of SD Warren Land was taken in 1995 and shows just how industry has clustered cookie-cutter clearcuts since the Forest Practices Act went into effect in 1991. Photo © John Keith. Note, this photo appears on a Sierra Club postcard.

Reality Check Department
Opponents of Clearcut Referendum Exhibit Selective Outrage Over Job Loss, Taxes & Shortfalls

by Jamie Sayen

Opponents of the Ban Clearcutting in Maine Referendum are spending millions of dollars to convince Maine voters that their massive clearcuts improve forest health, create jobs and benefit the tax coffers of the state, and that the referendum will undermine all this good work. The truth is that during the past couple of decades, while industry has enjoyed record profits, it has clearcut over 2,000 square miles of forest, caused massive job loss in the woods and its mills, and contributed to a pittance to the tax coffers of the state and local communities. The legacy of this overcutting is a serious "shortfall" in the most economically desirable tree species. Yet, industry, in a stunning display of hypocrisy, alleges that the Referendum, not its own past and current practices, will undermine the health of the forest and the state's economy. Reminds me of the boy who killed his parents and then threw himself at the mercy of the court because he was now an orphan. Here's how to answer some of the most common accusations levied against the Referendum by its opponents.

MYTH: The Referendum threatens thousands of Maine jobs.

Reality: When the timber industry talks about "protecting jobs" they are really talking about protecting their profits.

- 3,112 jobs were lost in Maine paper mills from 1985-1993.
- Bowater has lost 2,200 jobs in recent years.
- Logging employment has fallen by 40% from 1984-1992 according to the Paper Industry Information Office.
- Raw log exports to Canada and Europe have cost Maine an estimated 2,500 jobs in lost value-added manufacturing opportunities.
- One third of loggers in northern Maine are Canadian citizens.

Comment: This job loss occurred while clearcutting was at its peak. It was caused by the quest of ever greater corporate profits, not by environmental regulations or the clearcutting referendum. Where are the studies that back up the industry myth that protecting forest health is bad for jobs and the economy? It is interesting that the timber industry has failed to raise a public outcry about the very real loss of thousands of Maine forest products jobs caused by industry profit-taking. Apparently industry is only indignant at the hypothetical loss of jobs due to efforts to protect our life support system.

The Ban Clearcutting in Maine Referendum is a jobs bill that will promote more labor-intensive, low-impact forestry, it will promote growth of higher quality sawlogs that will support a for more diverse value-added manufacturing base in Maine.

MYTH: The Referendum will lead to drastic reductions in wood supply.

Reality: The mills in Maine require more fiber than the degraded industrial forests can sustainably supply. The shortfall in spruce and hemlock is already here.
- The 1995 US Forest Service inventory of Washington County found that red spruce was cut at a rate 3.7 times greater than it grew.
- The same inventory found that hemlock was overcut by a ratio of 1.6:1.
- Maine is already a net importer of wood because of the unsustainable, unregulated forestry of the past decades.

Comment: Testimony before the Agriculture Committee of the Maine
Thwarting the Public Interest ~ Public Relations & Clearcuts

by Jamie Sayen

"Groups that can manipulate public policy debates...

—Don Kreis, Maine Times, May 23, 1987

If you thought the timber industry would respond to the Ban Clearcutting in Maine Referendum with a reasoned, honest, fair-minded public debate about important forest issues, you're going to be bitterly disappointed. Under the "leadership" of the Maine Forest Products Council, the timber industry has hired a California and DC-based public relations firm—WWM & Mandabach Campaigns Inc.—to specialize in sleazy, distortion-filled, expensive campaigns designed to defeat citizen initiatives to protect the environment.

WWM & Mandabach (WWM) are strangers to Maine. One of the many anti-nuclear power referendums they helped defeat was the third referendum to shut down Maine Yankee in 1987. The appearance in Maine this year of WWM demonstrates that the Ban Clearcutting proponents are correct in calling this a national issue.

Here's how these high-priced, California distortion artists operate:

Early in a campaign create "grassroots" groups that are really funded by industry. The Maine timber industry has established such a well-bankrolled group: "Citizens for a Healthy Forest and Economy" whose treasurer is William Vail, Director of the timber industry's biggest lobby group—the Maine Forest Products Council.

But WWM's real forte is in the negative campaign ads that will inundate your TV this fall. They are experts at distortion, divisiveness, slander and sleaze. In 1987 the Maine Times described WWM as "The uncontested rent-rooter of the referendum business."

The normally mild-mannered Union of Concerned Scientists attacked WWM ads on nuclear waste disposal as "misleading" and utilizing "poorly-written, ambiguous language." An Oregon newspaper described a WWM campaign that showed police mug shots of the opposition as "major sleaze" even though the paper supported the WWM side.

Initially WWM conduct sophisticated "focus groups" to find out how the public responds to clearcutting and other issues, including the timber industry's "message." They know that clearcutting is unpopular in Maine—one timber industry poll recently found that 71% of Mainers support the referendum. Since their job is to thwart popular will on behalf of their corporate clients, they use these focus groups to discover divisive buzzwords to confuse people about the consequences of the referendum.

Using the focus group information, they help their clients shape an aggressive $5 million TV ad campaign based on distortion and negative sound bites designed to raise unfounded doubts in voters' minds. You can be confident they'll behave the phony "job loss" issue, conveniently ignoring the very real loss of 30% of Maine logging jobs in the past decade and the loss of 3112 mill jobs between 1985-1993.

WWM specializes in local and statewide campaigns. It has worked in virtually every state and usually brings in a national budget of about $5 million. They advertise that they provide "grassroots lobbying services" for clients such as the Edison Electric Institute (a utility lobby in the forefront of denying acid rain is a problem) and WMM, one of the largest solid waste companies and a major polluter, as well as the nuclear power industry.

Expensive PR Campaigns Can Be Defeated

But WWM is not infallible. Although they advertise that they win 90% of their campaigns, their record of truthfulness is not inspiring. They and their clients are vulnerable:

• Do Mainers want to be brainwashed by an expensive PR firm that is based in Washington, DC and California?
• Do Mainers want to believe the distortions of TV ads or will they believe their own eyes when they see the large industrial clearcuts?

• If the timber industry is doing such a good job managing its forests, why do they have to bring in a DC-based carpetbagger to mount a multi-million dollar campaign to convince us of the blessings of their soulless earth industrial forestry? Will the Maine Media report just how much WWM and the Maine Forest Products Council PAC spend to convince you that huge clearcuts create healthy forests and a healthy economy?

• Remember the side that frames the debate on its own terms is the side that wins. The timber industry PAC screams that the Ban Clearcutting in Maine Referendum will cost jobs, even though the real job loss has already occurred due to "downsizing"—corporate greed—and mechanization in the woods. The clearcutters and their public relations hirelings want to distract you from the real issue that industrial forestry has produced unhealthy forests and an unhealthy economy. Industry's message is: "There are no jobs on a healthy planet."

Mainers know that long-term health and economic security depend on healthy forests. They won't fall for expensive media campaigns. They didn't vote for Steve Forbes. They will vote to ban clearcutting to protect jobs and forest health.

Legislature on March 18, Maine Forest Service Director Chuck Gudzick charged the referendum would cause "artificial shortages." Implicit in this comment is the admission that the current overharvesting of the large landowners has produced genuine shortfalls in economic desirability species.

To achieve sustainable harvesting levels, industry must reduce its rate of logging in the Maine woods. Unfortunately industry's response is to import fiber from Canada or Chile, thus degrading this country's forests just as they have devastated the Maine woods.

MYTH: The Referendum will impose new burdens on Maine taxpayers.

Reality: The paper industry and the large absentee timber landowners already impose debilitating burdens on Maine tax payers.
• The large, absentee landowners pay about $0.60 per acre in the 10.4 million acres of northern Maine.
• Corporate income tax is a tiny fraction (about one percent) of the state's General Fund.
• Several paper companies have recently successfully used to decrease property taxes on their mills. Most recently, Champion International, while making record profits, extorted "tax relief" from Bucksport taxpayers.

MYTH: The Referendum would undermine all ongoing cooperative efforts to assure health and sustain our forests.

Reality: This refers to the industry-dominated Sustainable Forest Management Council which Governor Angus King and the industry claim will solve the problem of unsustainable forestry. See Mitch Lansky's article on pages 28-29 and William Butler's article on pages 30-31 to find out just how remote the chance is that the SFM Council will formulate truly sustainable forest management standards.

MYTH: The Proper venue for forestry reform is the Maine Legislature.

Reality: Industry and its well-financed "friends" in the Legislature have subverted every forestry reform effort for decades. This is why the organizers of the Clearcut Referendum boycotted the March 18 hearing on the Referendum before the Legislature. Also, see "NRCM Will Endorse Clearcut Referendum Unless Stronger Alternative is Enacted by July 1" on page 26 for a rebuttal of this myth.

MYTH: The Referendum will penalize the best land stewards.

Reality: Nonsense. It will penalize the forest liquidators and job destroyers. Labor-intensive, low-impact forestry practitioners will have no problem operating under the Referendum's parameters. Low impact forestry practitioners and their clients will be able to operate. Large, absentee landowners and the timber industry, which has a corporate income tax that is a tiny fraction of the state's General Fund.

MYTH: The photos of clearcuts displayed by the Referendum backers are 20 years old.

Reality: This is totally false.
• Photos used by the Forum and were taken between 1992 and 1995. Most Forum photos were taken the year they were used. The Sierra Club postcards of cookie-cutter clearcuts and the photos in the Clearcut calendar were taken in 1995.
• If the myth is true that these recent photos are of clearcuts executed 20 years ago, then they document public theft.

—Continued on page
Growing Older Stands: Does It Result in Loss of Productivity and/or Income?

By Mitch Lansky

Editor's note: One argument commonly used by those opposed to the Ban Clearcutting in Maine Referendum is that the Maine Council on Sustainable Forest Management (MCSFM) will solve the forestry problem. The MCSFM is a "blue-ribbon" panel created exclusively of Governor King last year. While we would be pleased if the MCSFM came up with substantial recommendations to improve Maine's forest, based on some of the council's draft proposals, we would not bet on it.

Introduction

One of the missions of the Maine Council on Sustainable Forest Management is to maintain a balanced age-class structure of the forest. So far, the council's ideal "rotation age" for this balance has been pegged at 60-80 years. Such a rotation, they feel, would optimize productivity and income. If the whole forest were on an 80-year rotation, there would be more than 200,000 acres a year of clearcuts and overstory removals-twice the current rate.

Another mission of the council is to maintain a balanced array of forest ecosystems and a balanced array of successional stages. According to Lorimer (1977), 84% of the forest in northeastern Maine was older than 75 years, 59% was older than 150 years, and 27% was older than 300 years. Lorimer labeled those stands 75-150 years as "immature climax forests," over 300 as "all-aged climax forests." Later work by Lorimer and Frelich (1994) on virgin northern hardwood forests in Michigan found 70% of the forest had trees older than 130 years, and 21% were "mature" (under 130 but older than 75).

Clearly there is a conflict here. Hardly any of the MCSFM's target forest would be "mature," let alone "uneven-aged climax forest" by Lorimer's definitions. The council's proposed compromise is to redefine "mature" (more than 40 years old or taller than 40 feet) and recommend that at least 50% of the forest be uneven-aged forest. At 40 years, hardwood stands have a mean diameter of between 5 and 6 inches. This may not be quite what the public was expecting.

The council is also recommending that between 5% and 12% of the forest be "late successional." There is a 20% exclusion for "high-yield forestry." The council has made no serious recommendation for reserves (which, presumably, would harbor old growth) even though "high-yield" forestry, according to two council members, Bob Seymour and Mac Hunter, is supposed to "balance out" reserves.

Even though selection cutting can have high yields, the council's definition only includes investment in early-stand management following clearcutting for herbicides, plantations, and pre-commercial thinnings. Ironically, this fiber farming, which the council is promoting, implies that there were 240,000 acres of heavy cuts per year from 1980-1990-more than twice the acreage reported as clearcuts by landowners during the same period.

What is the Age-Class Structure of the Maine Woods?

Council member, Bob Seymour, prepared a graph for the council, showing that the age-class structure of the forest in 1982 was not much different from the MCSFM target in having very little forest area dominated by trees older than 85-years old. Yet, according to the USDA Forest Service inventory, from which Seymour constructed his age-class model, more than half of both spruce-fir and northern hardwood acreage was dominated by trees of sawlog size (9 inches for softwoods and 11 inches for hardwoods).

According to Leah et al. (1987), it takes unmanaged hardwoods 75 years or more to reach 11 inches on the best sites on mid-slope and 100 years or more on poor sites. According to Moyer (1929), a fully-stocked second-growth red spruce stand takes nearly 90 years to reach a mean stand diameter of 9 inches. This means that well over half the forest area in 1982 was dominated by trees older than 85 years.

The council's target rotation would lead to a radically younger age structure than currently exists in many townships. The council's hurdle for improving biodiversity, therefore, could be lower than current ground level. Other townships, however, have been so heavily cut over the last 20 years that landowners would have trouble meeting even the council's low hurdles.

Cutting Rotation 1980-1990

In 1990, the Maine Forest Service commissioned the University of Maine to use satellite photos to classify forest land by timber type and to determine the rate of change of forest to clearcut (James W. Sewall and U of M, 1993). The researchers found 2,425,480 acres that they labeled "regeneration" (Sewall, pg. 7). Some townships were cut so heavily that most of the remaining mature forest was in buffer strips and deeryards.

The researchers determined that it takes around ten years for "regeneration" to appear as closed-canopy forest in the satellite photos (Sewall, pg. 23). This implies that there were 240,000 acres of buffer strips and deeryards-more than twice the acreage reported as clearcuts by landowners during the same period.

The researchers determined that the cutting rate for softwoods/mixedwoods in Aroostook and Washington counties would lead to rotations of only 40 years-half the target rotation of the MCSFM.

Unfortunately, the Maine Forest Service considered much of the University satellite data unreliable. Random sampling, for example, found that "regeneration" stands were stocked with an average of 11 cords to the acre. Since much of the area turning up as "regeneration" on the satellite photos is indeed clearcuts, one can only wonder at the reliability of these samples.

Forest Age Structure Presettlement vs. MCSFM*  

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<th>Percentage in Age Class</th>
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Page 28

The Northern Forest Forum

Mud Season 1996
Mean Annual Increment
Intensively-Managed Hardwoods

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NPV of Hardwood Management
Periodic Thinnings Starting at 5 Inches

IRR of Hardwood Management
Periodic Thinnings Starting at 5 Inches

Conclusions

The case for the long rotation is being reinforced by the realization that management actions taken in the past affect present and future conditions and returns. 

With long rotations, even-aged management would tend to become uneven-aged.

References


Maine Sustainable Forest Management Council Accelerates to Meet (Defeat) Referendum Challenge

by William Butler

On order of Governor Angus King, the Sustainable Forest Management Council has doubled the frequency of its meetings, which now are facilitated by Joe Michaels and Gail Vaillancourt of USFS. The message from Chuck Hewitt, King's staff head, was succinct: "Short, Simple, and Soon." That the public (and the politicians, I might add) need the council's conclusions and recommendations in deciding the anti-clearcut vote is openly discussed.

Legislature Studies Referendum

Interpersed among three council meetings since 22 January were presentations to the legislature by industrial opponents of the initiative to ban clearcutting, followed a week later by sponsors and proponents. Maine's initiative denying clear cutting, to be decided by referendum unless the Legislature adopts it as written, promises to reverse the decline in woods employment. The effect is to replace expensive ($400,000, typically) mechanized cutting and limbing machinery, each of which displaces four or five woodsmen—not to speak of the large number of trees that must be cut to make the payments to foreign industry. This also is leg export. Nor can we neglect their damage to forest and soils.

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After hearing the industry spiel, Sen. Jill Goldthwait, of Bar Harbor, in conducting a public forum in her district. Having heard from a lot of folks who are opposed to the initiative question.

SMF Council—Late February

Meeting in Augusta and Orono in late February, the facilitator announced that, if the council spent more than five minutes per topic, they were falling behind. This they immediately accomplished in arguing the disposition of limbs, branches, and tops. This important point relates to nutrient depletions and is addressed in the anti-clearcut initiative. (I note that the American Pulpwood Association is staging a workshop on Handling Non-marketable Roadside Slash on 4 April.) The implication for roadside de-limbing machines is clear: the difficulty is in returning the residues to the ground where they grow. As Chuck Gadzik tried to build into the BMP or regulation, the residues should be contemplation of defining late-succes sional stands—A- or B-line stocking levels—as part of the biodiversity sub-council's task. At times this discussion went round like a fugue. Chuck Gadzik, head of the Maine Forest Service, allowed that "the few acres (3%) of the forest to which this criterion applies." Mac Hunter, professor of wildlife biology at the University of Maine—"decades before I have to apply." Gadzik to Janet McMahon: "You can grow any product you want in 80 years." Again, Chuck, "Harvest level limited to 40% every twenty years... This will give the public confidence in the good faith of the larger owners, which is not present today." Henry Whiteman of Hancock Timberlands sounded off: "You are bogged in details—sustainability is not quantifiable." (Sounds queer from a forest investment manager?) Forester Gordon Cobb called for a moratorium on cutting Old Growth fragments. Bales: "The accounts are out of whack at the moment so we can do 50% of removals in a closed canopy stand." In an ode to private ownership, SAPPI said "this is not the last council to be." Gadzik threw this in: "Management that mimics natural forest behavior is preferred." Commissioner of Conservation and former International Paper forester Ron Lovaglie said: "Tis a forest excise tax to this idea of late-successional stage.

UMO Professor of Silviculture Robert Seymour produced a discussion paper listing several definitions of "clearcutting," illuminating the ephemeral nature of its logic. As he writes, if clearcuts, however defined, are prescribed by conscientious, well-forested foresters, as a silvicultural argument, constraining them may be difficult; the reasons for constraints lie in non-silvicultural issues. One of his options allows clearcutting by a licensed forester who must certify that all clearcutting is done according to the best management practices or to the satisfaction of the forester. This would not meet specific landowner objectives. These certifications would be "open to public scrutiny." The paper concludes with these recommendations: that clearcuttings are implemented appropriately is arguably a greater concern than clearcutting (however it is defined).

American Pulpwood Association Forum

The American Pulpwood Assoc. Forest Forum in Bangor on 7 March, drew 150 industrial landowners, foresters, and woods contractors to hear only from opponents. Listening to the speakers and the following questions and individual discussions, one realizes that, as Goldthwait predicted, the landowners' approach is emotional, even hysterical. The managed forester accused me of "enjoying every minute," here cheerfully admitted. Charles Fitzgerald, one of the principal organizers of the referendum, asked for the floor for equal opportunity to inform the industry-sponsored group at a future meeting. A film crew working in Maine on the initiative's campaign was barred at the door from recording this event.

Ignoring the anti-trust disclaimer that opens every APA meeting, two of the speakers, after a test of their favorite silvicultural "tool," let slip
a more fundamental reason for their opposition—rise in price of wood. Both Tim and Steve Forbes, a business owner and John Cashwell of Seven Islands called this effect unsustainable. Robbins admitted he would have to pay more for pine logs, but why Cashwell, who purports to own no mills, would object to price increases is not clear. How did this play with the woods contractors attending, or were they falling in line with industry's opposition? One consultant who has two mechanical clearcutters which "replaced 20 skidder crews" told me it would bankrupt them.

SWOAM. The small woodlot owners' group now opposes the bill, by vote of its directors. Some of its chapters are inactive, so the representa- tion is questionable. Even the statement passed admits that though clearcutting may have been over-utilized in past decades, the referendum will immediately problem of its small owners to supply the warm wood-using industries. The problem with this statement is that the ravaging of the small holdings as an heroic meaure- is questionable. In support of its bill, the paper mills is already commonplace

SFM Council—March 18

Eleven days following the APA forum, SFM resumed active discussion, on Monday morning, 18 March. In this abridged session council members tanglesed with the Criterais and Benchmarks in which they frame their work. Ron Lovaglio stressed the importance of maintaining public concern that forest productivity is at, least, stabilized, and that believable data from USFS, and owners of greater than 50,000 acres is essential. Peter Triandafillou, representing James River (with an Old Town issue mill but having sold its woodland to Diamond- Oxy) proposed that the large landowners' data be reviewed by a third party, and not divulged to the public. (One wonders what class of industrial ownership Triandafillou represents—Diamond-Oxy is selling off the lands that formerly fed the mill to all comes, in blocks typically of 3000 acres, immediately subjected to as severe a commercial clearcut as drastic as they please.)

Referendum Myths

Continued from page 27

"repopulation"—raspberries and slash—and argue eloquently for ban- ning clearcuts to protect forest health. Meanwhile, industry has a credibility problem of its own, claiming that forest productivity is at least, stabilized, and that believable data from USFS, MFS, and owners of greater than 50,000 acres is essential. Peter Triandafillou, representing James River (with an Old Town issue mill but having sold its woodland to Diamond-Oxy) proposed that the large landowners' data be reviewed by a third party, and not divulged to the public. (One wonders what class of industrial ownership Triandafillou represents—Diamond-Oxy is selling off the lands that formerly fed the mill to all comes, in blocks typically of 3000 acres, immediately subjected to as severe a commercial clearcut as drastic as they please.)

MYTH: Citizens for a Healthy Forest and Economy is a "grassroots" group.Reality: CHFE is a pseudo grassroots front for industry. See "Publicizing Public Interest—Public Relations & Clearcuts" on page 10 to learn how industry and their public relations firm Winner/Wagner & Mandabach create phony grass-roots campaigns to disguise industry campaigns.

* The Treasurer of CHFE is Bill Vail, Executive Director of the Maine Forest Products Council, the chief lobbying group for the timber indus­ try in Maine.

Maine Woods Watch

Continued from page 15

50 acre easement along the AT and discuss selling the south side of the mountain in exchange for having the trail moved off the ridge and being allowed to further develop the north side. Saddleback officials are lobbying the legislative delegation from the region, the state's congressional rep­ resentatives, and Secretary of Interior Bruce Babbitt to pressure the Park Service into accepting the deal. An ambitious proposal to develop a $7 million ski resort on Lead Mountain in eastern Maine has been scrapped. Champion International, owner of the land, is unwilling to lease, sell or swap the hill because it could threaten efforts to restore Atlantic salmon in the Narraguagus River. The group pushing the ski development has turned its attention to Passadumkeag Mountain.

Maine has less access to natural gas than any state except Hawaii, but with deregulation of gas, and a new major gas projects are competing to put the state in the middle of the pipeline network in eastern North America. A 630-mile underground pipeline from Nova Scotia would traverse the wildlands Down East, while a 250-mile loop through western Maine would connect to Quebec. Both lines are being built as a way to get clean, cheap fuel to the pulp and paper industry.

Transitions: In February, Percival Baxter took it on the chin. Well actually it was a bronze bust of Baxter, the donor of Maine's greatest gift to sports. Standing outside one of its first warm, bright days, it seemed that everyone you had known over twenty years came along, a sign of the great interest in the question. Dale Henderson, the logging contractor who told me he would be bankrupt by the referendum, asked "if you and the Greens would be back next year trying again, if we kill it this time?" I let him know what Ron Lovaglio and Chuck Gadzik had been doing that morning—writing the next Forest Practices Act.

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Atlas of Maine's Public Lands, 1996. Available only with a two-year subscription to The Maine Sportsman, PO Box 910, Yarmouth, ME 04096.


The Ravens by Peter Landesman, Baskerville Publishers, 1995. A novel, based on the recent loss of three dozen Rumford folks on a coastal cruise half a century ago, which brings to page our labor discord, corporate greed and much more.

EVERY PERSON'S NEED

by Michael Phillips

Gandhi said there's enough for every man's need, but not enough for every man's greed. Oft times the Forum tackles that greed, be it dioxin pouring into rivers, trees felling by the acre, or diminishing wildlife habitat. Sometimes the greed disguises itself as property rights or job issues. Activists are then portrayed against greater human values, or worse, as hypocrites busily consuming their share of the pie.

Greed is a necessary evil to address if we're to bring this creation back to balance and practice good stewardship in our enjoyment of the earth's resources. Frankly, it's an overwhelming battle at times, the politics of sanity being far from the minds of those in power. We thought it was time for the Forum to include a look at every person's need as well. We care about the environment, yes, but where do we, the humans, fit in? What do we visualize for a balanced future, and most importantly, how do we begin living it today?

This is an exciting discussion to share with our readers, a downright celebration of the doable.

Here's what we're intending for the "Every Person's Need" section of the Forum. We want reader input: tell us of your lifestyle choices, homestead skills, local economy inspirations and vision ideas. We'll be taking a look at establishing a local currency—the North Woods Dollar—and seeing how a community-oriented cash flow can help us achieve more than those Walmart savings ever will. We intend to identify "Local Economy Towns" throughout the region. In truth, there's only a small percentage of folks both willing and aware to bring about the "small is beautiful" vision of local economy. Far better we succeed in specific towns than see the whole of life dissipated into franchise ugliness. We'll profile small farms and cottage industries that already offer hope of a sustainable tomorrow, and let you know how to make that vital supporting connection. We'd like to create a North Woods Barterer's column where each of us can trade talents and handiwork. Our ultimate goal is to generate enough excitement to weave the struggling threads of local economy into vibrancy. Will you join us?

Inspiring Local Economy

Paul Simon sung of fifty ways to leave your lover. Earth Day eventually brought us fifty simple ways to save the earth. We didn't want to limit the count nor be the definitive source on the possibilities. But say a body did want to go out of his or her way to revive local economy: Where does one start?

- Birthday and holiday gifts can be locally produced. A hand-crafted basket filled with specialty foods will please even the relative who has everything (and probably should have a whole lot less!)
- Never, ever, go into a mall.
- Shoe repair folks may be the last vestige of a well-crafted town, so patch those boots and lift that heel. Purchase well-made footwear in the first place that can be readily repaired.
- Lose the spendthrift instinct. Small local producers can't compete with cheap imports until YOU grasp that there's greater values than pennies saved.
- Want to see value-added forest products industry? Ask a local woodworker to make that table or kitchen cabinet next time you go furniture shopping.
- Buy your food direct from the farm if at all possible, or prompt your grocer to purchase locally. Learn to eat with the seasons... anyone eating fresh green beans in January is not supporting local economy.
- Form a neighborhood "cannery"... who knows, maybe such grassroots efforts will become the regional food centers that once kept our great grandparents fed. Start off simple: freeze some berries, make some pickles.
- Give up the corporate franchise habit. Eat at a Mom'n'Pop diner instead. If the food's a tad bit greasy, make requests. People respond to loyalty and soft-spoken suggestions.
- Support a "local community store" that seeks out and offers local products and services.
- Initiate a food co-op. Regional suppliers can get you started, and you can arrange with local organic growers to provide vegetables and fruit in bulk quantity.
- Special order products from local retailers. Just because you don't see that "baby backpack" on the shelf, doesn't mean it can't be got. Catalog shopping is a double negative: money for both the product and the sales service leave the area. Encourage that seamstress neighbor to custom make clothes by placing the very first order. It'll cost more than an Asian import, but then maybe you can wear the same shirt more than one day in a row!
- Let the wind or wood stove dry your clothes. Dryers rate up there as needless energy consumers. The change saved can be put towards the slightly higher cost of local production.
- Turn off the TV forever. A free mind can think of many more ways to make the earth a better place.