

8-1-1990

Bulletin: Prepared for the Employees of the Maine Department of Conservation, August 1990

Maine Department of Conservation

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Recommended Citation

Maine Department of Conservation, "Bulletin: Prepared for the Employees of the Maine Department of Conservation, August 1990" (1990). *Conservation Newsletters*. 18.
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BULLETIN

Prepared for the Employees of the Maine Department of Conservation

August 1990

Commissioner's Column

With field season in high gear, I hope each of you is enjoying Maine's great outdoors. As busy as we are, it is important to have some fun too.

It has been a great summer for DOC programs. We have received many letters and calls of thanks for the work you are doing. It is always nice when people take the time to comment. It is evident the service and quality experience you help provide to users of Maine's forests, parks and lands - and the extra effort you are making is noticed by the public. And they appreciate it.

We also have been receiving favorable news coverage about many department programs including state parks and the trash reduction policy, LURC planning and review, fire control, forest health and disease, the forest practices act, marine geology, MCC, SERVE/Maine, management of state owned land, and other topics. Again, those stories are a credit to the work each of you is doing.

Acquisition of new state lands continues. The Land for Maine's Future Board will purchase 40,000 acres from Diamond Occidental and James River Corporations including 31,000 acres in the Namakanta Lake area and 2,200 acres on the Androscoggin River near Auburn. Last week, the Lands for Maine's Future Board also authorized matching funds to assist the purchase of 100 acres to be added to Bradbury Mountain State Park. Many department employees are key players in this important program.

It has been a safe season so far. Again, please remember safety.

Ed Meadows

Update on Voluntary Savings Program

The Voluntary Savings Program was established to provide flexible work opportunities for employees as well as generating savings. Interest in the program has been strong at DOC. At the end of July, 46 employees were participating in one of the programs. We appreciate the response and hope that the program is working out well for those of you who are participating.

All of the programs except the retirement program are still open to application. If you find that one of these programs fits your needs, you are encouraged to apply. We will continue to make every effort to approve them subject to operational needs. If you have any questions about the program, call Will Harris at 289-2211.

Submarine Research by MGS

The Maine Geological Survey conducted research aboard the Delta submersible in Belfast Bay on July 19-23. Pockmarks, or giant depressions on the seafloor, were observed and photographed. Evidence for gas escape from the pockmarks was found in the form of 2-3 inch diameter gas vents, possibly surrounded by bacterial units. Large quantities of wood fragments found in the muddy pockmarks may be the source of the natural gas. The origin of the wood is uncertain. It may be the product of lumbering in the Penobscot Valley, or the burial of a prehistoric bog several thousand years ago.

Conservation Notes

Woody Thompson (aka Woodrow Thomson, PhD) taught a seminar on tourmaline (Maine's official state mineral) at the University of Maine. Interest in Maine gems and minerals is at a very high level this summer, following last year's discoveries in Oxford County. The Maine Geological Survey's mineral guidebook has sold out again, necessitating a third printing.

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Tom Charles, BPL chief of silviculture, participated in the Cooperative Forestry Research Unit's (CFRU) annual field trip. BPL is a fully cooperating member of CFRU which is the principal scientific forest management research group in Maine.

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A recent cooperative interagency clinic was held at Churchill Dam in the Allagash Waterway. The clinic involved training in Wildlife Immobilization and Handling and was sponsored by Fish & Wildlife and conducted by **Henry Hilton**. In attendance were Rangers from the Allagash Waterway, Penobscot River Corridor and Baxter Park.

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Rangers in the Allagash Wilderness Waterway report that this year's MCC project is working very well and accomplishing a significant amount of work. The MCC crew is tenting along the Waterway as it works on campsite revitalization, boundary line marking, building repair and erosion control. Allagash rangers who have worked with the crew include **Jon Metcalf, Jim Kelly, Pat Reardon, Brady Scott, Larry Nadeau and Tom Coon**.

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The Department's third law enforcement academy will be held September 4 through October 4 in Waterville. Coordinated by **Leslie Wiles and Scott Woodruff**, the academy will be attended by 31 BPR field staff members. MFS personnel will also attend.

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BPR campsite reservation system staff, **Elaine Pepler and Lisa Hunt**, report that with eight reservation days to go, over 5,000 reservations have already been made. This represents the highest number of reservations in the system's three-year history.

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Tom Morrison spoke to the West Branch Region Citizens Advisory Committee on the issue of public access over private lands to get to public lands. The Advisory Committee, which was established to provide guidance to large private landowners in the region, is examining the issue of user fees and gated checkpoints on privately owned lands and roads. Approximately 84,000 acres of public lands in northern Maine are accessible only by crossing privately owned lands.

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BPL is preparing draft management plans for the natural resources of Mackworth Island in Casco Bay. Natural resource management plans will be integrated with plans for the management of the Baxter School for the Deaf and the surrounding area, which are being prepared by a private consultant. The combined draft plan will be presented to a legislatively established advisory committee for review. A final plan will then go to the Legislative Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

Personnel News

Recently Retired - Alvin Lane, Maintenance Mechanic Foreman, Southern Region. Kendall E. Allen, Forest Ranger II, Old Town. Mark LeBlanc, Laborer I, BPR. Roberta Woodbury, Park Receptionist, Lake St. George.

Promotions - Joey Seeley, Assistant Ranger to Park Mgr. I at Nickerson Lake; Patty Cleaves, Park Receptionist to Park Ranger, Aroostook State Park; Karen Stevens, Park Receptionist to Assistant Ranger, Cobscook State Park. Stephen Jacques, Maine Geological Survey cartographer since 1988, to navigational aids foreman with the Bureau of Parks and Recreation.

Transfers - Steve Whipperman, BPR, to Laborer, Forestry. Nancy Beardsley has left the MGS to take an Environmental Specialist II position at DEP in Portland. At MGS, Nancy worked on the Aroostook County pesticide study and the significant aquifer mapping program.

"All My Children" and "Sesame Street" Taped at State Parks

In addition to numerous news stories about the Bureau's carry-in, carry-out policy, state parks have also been featured this summer in some more unusual programs. Reid State Park was the recent site of on-location shooting for the ABC soap opera "All My Children." The ABC crew, which numbered over 50, worked at Reid for three days in July and the resulting programs were aired on *All My Children* July 30 through August 3. All in all, park staff report that this "media event" went smoothly. Bureau staff involved with the project were Steve Curtis, Wimpy Burnham, Scott Woodruff, Dalton Kirk, John Cooke, Samantha Moulton, Georgie Grindle, Ron Shaw and Jim Davis.

A commercial to be broadcast nationally was shot on the Penobscot River Corridor with the assistance of Tim Caverly and Matt LaRoche.

An independent producer, with the aid of John Titus and park staff, filmed a few scenes at Peacock Beach State Park to be part of a production that will be aired on *Sesame Street*.

Recognition Day for MCC Corpsmembers set for August 16

More than 100 Maine Conservation Corpsmembers will be attending the MCC Recognition Day on August 16 at the Maranacook School in Readfield. Corpsmembers from the 21 MCC Teams which have been working on conservation projects around the State will receive Certificates of Accomplishment, see slides of their work projects that were completed this summer and will attend a presentation by Dr. James Parker of Aerie East about Maine's endangered animals.

Planning and organizing the Recognition Day event was one of the many projects undertaken by MCC Intern Dave Gerkins. Dave is a SERVE/Maine Intern who has worked for Ken Spalding as the MCC Director's Assistant for the summer. He will be returning to his studies this fall at Stockton State College in Pomona, NJ where he is an Environmental Studies major. The MCC office reports they would have been lost without him.

News From SERVE/Maine Volunteers

Phil Farr of Holbrook Island Sanctuary signed up 12 SERVE/Maine volunteers this summer to lead interpretive walks, work on the sanctuary's environmental inventory and help with a variety of trail projects.

The Maine Forest Service's Adopt a Campsite program on Moosehead Lake is going well with quite a number of volunteers enrolled. Other Greenville area volunteers are helping BPR at Lily Bay State Park and Mt Kineo, and BPL with campsite maintenance at Sugar Island.

At Camden Hills State Park an amateur astronomer and SERVE/Maine volunteer, Ross Overcash, will be presenting a star identification talk to park visitors on the evening of August 20 with a "cloud" date of August 22nd. Gordon Bell, the park manager says the DOC staff is welcome.

Volunteer Debra Madore has been working with the supervision of Regional Ranger Roddy McLellan and his staff accomplishing maintenance projects at Deboulie Fire Tower.

Rules Regulating Forest Regeneration and Clearcutting Proposed by Maine Forest Service

The Bureau of Forestry held a series of public hearings in August concerning the proposed Forest Practice Act rules. The Act, passed last year by the legislature, directed the department to develop standards regulating forest regeneration and clearcutting. It also expanded the field forester ranks, established a system of notifying the Bureau of Forestry of all harvesting operations, and created the Forest Information Center as a clearinghouse of information about forestry.

The bureau has been working for the past 9 months with a coalition of industry groups, landowners and environmental interest groups to develop these rules. A series of 15 workshops was held state wide to gather public input, and consultations were held with other departments of state government.

The proposed rules identify standards for regeneration which must be met within five years of a timber harvest.

They also specify certain performance standards for clearcutting. In brief, no clearcuts above 250 acres are permitted. For clearcuts greater than 50 acres in size, 1.5 acres must be left adjacent to the harvest area for every acre clearcut. In addition, before creating a clearcut over 50 acres, a landowner must have a management plan prepared by a professional forester and, within 5 years of the harvest, certify that the clearcut has regenerated to the established standards. The objective when developing the rules was to address abusive forest practices while being flexible enough to accommodate legitimate landowner objectives and sound forest management actions.

The rules will be adopted in September but will not take effect January 1, 1991. Throughout this fall, bureau personnel will be working to make landowners, foresters, loggers and other interested parties aware of the rules.

For more information, contact the Bureau of Forestry (289- 2791) or the Forest Information Center (1-800-367-0223).