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Bulletin: Information for Maine Department of Conservation Employees, May 1991

Maine Department of Conservation

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May
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BULLETIN

Information for Maine Department of Conservation Employees

Commissioner's Column

Maine's FY 91 budget was revised in early May to reflect the decline in state revenues which continues as the economy remains slow. The legislation approving the revised budget authorized the two government shutdown days. The legislation provided retirement credit for both the shutdown days and the three furlough days. Credit for the pay and service time for the five days will be included when retirement benefits are calculated. If you have any questions on this, contact your supervisor or call Administrative Services at 289-2211.

For our department, field positions in Fire Control and Parks are deemed to be essential services. Employees in these positions maintain basic coverage during the shutdown days. Spring is a peak fire period, making fire control coverage necessary. Tomorrow's shutdown comes at the start of a long holiday weekend, making it essential to maintain park staff. Many campers will already be in the parks, and staff is needed to respond to emergencies, help protect public safety and protect the state's investment in park facilities. Employees in essential services jobs will be given a day of "comp" time for each day worked during the shutdown.

At this time our department has not been asked to make further revisions to our FY 92/93 budget to reflect the revenue decline. Our proposal remains as it has been discussed with you. The Appropriations Committee will review the FY 92/93 budget in detail during work sessions that are expected to last for several weeks before final decisions are made.

With revenues expected to be tight for the next biennium, the State Budget Office has indicated that spending plans by all departments will be closely reviewed. To conduct our work with lower budgets, it is important for each of us to continually seek ways to achieve savings in our every day work. There are many simple things that each of us can do—eliminate unnecessary trips, car pool, conserve supplies and energy and so on.

I want you all to know that in travelling around the state recently to attend spring meetings, I was very impressed by the level of commitment and energy which was evident. In these times of uncertain budgets and program changes, it is heartening to know that you still care about doing a good job and providing quality service.

A proposal has been suggested to combine the Departments of Agriculture, Conservation, Environmental Protection, Inland Fisheries & Wildlife and Marine Resources into one Department of Natural Resources—a "super agency." The idea has been met with controversy. Many legislators and others express concern that such a major change would result in fundamental changes in the mission of the departments and that it should not be done under the pressure of budget and time constraints. One of the goals is to reduce the number of personnel by having many employees perform the same functions. Another goal is to encourage coordination between departments and programs. This department has done a great deal of that already. Here are just a few examples of what we are already doing:

- sharing facilities between bureaus and other departments, such as in Old Town, Presque Isle, Lamoine and Greenville;
- sharing equipment and major purchases;
- adopting joint enforcement and management agreements between LURC and Forestry, Conservation and Inland Fisheries and Wildlife, DEP and LURC, and between bureaus in the department;
- cross training between bureaus and other departments such as during the Conservation Law Enforcement Academy; and
- coordinating policy issues affecting more than one program with inter-bureau working groups.

The proposal does highlight important points about our programs. Our state-wide operations are highly visible to the public. Public perceptions are often influenced by how we go about our daily business activities. As we begin another field season, please bear this in mind and remember safety, courtesy and quality service to the public.

Ed Meadows

Campground Solid Waste To Be Recycled at Camden Hills State Park

Camden Hills State Park staff will establish a pilot solid waste recycling project this season. A recycling shed has already been built to handle trash sorted according to five recycling categories; newspaper, aluminum cans, and clear, green, and brown glass. Campers will be provided information about the program and encouraged to participate.

The Bureau of Parks and Recreation will continue in 1991 their program to help reduce the amount of solid waste produced at all day use areas. Last year, visitors to state parks and historic sites were asked to observe the carry in, carry out solid waste program. The bureau offers visitors solid waste reduction suggestions for picnics and other outdoor recreation activities. BPR received the Maine Solid Waste Management Agency's first state-wide award for the successful program.

MCC Begins Eighth Year

The start of spring conservation projects on Swan Island near Richmond and at the Maine Geographic Information System in Augusta marks the beginning of the 1991 MCC program.

Five corpsmembers and their team leader are learning carpentry skills while making repairs to buildings at IF&W's Swan Island wildlife management area in the Kennebec River.

Two corpsmembers are being trained in computerized techniques in a joint state agency project. The Department of Conservation's Maine Geographic Information System, the Department of Environmental Protection and the Department of Marine Resources are all cooperating to get natural resource information onto versatile computer maps. Shellfish bed locations and sources of pollution around Blue Hill Bay are examples of the information which will be computerized in this innovative MCC project.

Bob Leso Receives Awards

MFS forester Bob Leso has received two Maine Tree Farm program awards. Bob was recognized during the Maine Tree Farm inspectors spring meeting for professional assistance to Don and Pam Smiley of Farmington, Maine's 1991 Outstanding Tree Farmers. Bob also received an award for his outstanding Tree Farm inspection and certification efforts.

BPR/MFS Conduct School Programs

White pine seedlings are being distributed to 65 schools in recognition of Arbor Week (May 19-25) and the 100th anniversary of the Maine Forest Service in 1991. Forest conservation materials-including a color poster of Maine trees prepared by the Small Woodland Owners Association of Maine with the help of the Maine Forest Service-were also sent to more than 600 schools. Project Learning Tree and Georgia Pacific also contributed to the educational effort coordinated by Don Ouellette.

Maine's first state park and historic site poster contest attracted 232 entries from grades K-12. The artists depicted their favorite things to do at Maine's state parks and historic sites. Contest winners will receive free use of state parks for themselves and their families according to Pat Bailey who organized the project for the Bureau of Parks and Recreation.

GIS Mapping Proposal Developed

A state natural resource agency working group is developing a geographic information system mapping proposal as a first step in meeting Northern Forest Lands Council goals in Maine. DOC employees involved are Tom Charles, Forestry & Public Lands; Tom Cieslinski, Parks and Recreation; Bob Marvinney (project leader), Geology; Fred Todd, LURC; Dan Walters, DOC/GIS; and Henry Whittemore, Public Lands. Representatives from IF&W, SPO and OCP are also involved.

BPR Conducts Spring Training

The Bureau of Parks and Recreation has been conducting its spring training program for field management staff. The Allagash Wilderness Waterway rangers met in Waterville to receive CPR, maintenance management, and time accounting training. In addition, sessions were conducted with LURC and Warden Service staff in the Allagash area to discuss interagency procedures and cooperative procedures.

The state park and historic site management staff met in Gilead at the National Guard facility. Topics, which included presentations by several bureau and departmental staff, covered budgets, administrative and personnel procedures, training, time accounting, operations and policy update, MCC and SERVE/Maine, sexual harassment, maintenance management, and rules and regulations.

SERVE/Maine Volunteers Protect Endangered Birds

Fourteen SERVE/Maine volunteers will be helping BPR, Maine Audubon, and the Inland Fisheries & Wildlife Endangered Species Program protect piping plovers and least terns this year. The endangered birds nest at only six sites in the state including the beaches at Reid and Popham Beach State Parks.

During a recent training session for the volunteers, Dalton Kirk, manager at Reid, and Pat Bailey, BPR interpretive specialist, presented information about the park system and the best techniques for positive interaction with the public. Audubon staff provided information about the birds and training on monitoring techniques. The volunteer park naturalists will be keeping an eye on the nesting sites and helping educate the public about the best ways for humans and birds to share the beach.

Bureaus & Divisions Cooperate to Provide Fire Control Assistance

The Fire Control Division (FCD) is training employees from other bureaus and divisions in the basics of forest fire suppression. The training is part of forest fire assistance agreements between the FCD, other forest service divisions, the Bureau of Public Lands and the Land Use Regulation Commission. Workers from field and office are being trained to size-up fires, plan a fire attack and to use equipment safely. About 35 people trained under the agreement will receive basic forest fire equipment including hand tools and back pumps. The trainees will be available to assist forest rangers in assigned fire control districts and will be called into action according to fire danger and activity.

James Durham Scholarship Awarded to Ritchie Hafford

The annual James Durham Scholarship was awarded to Ritchie Hafford at ceremonies held at the College of Forest Resources, University of Maine. Ritchie is the son of Maine Forest Service employees Verley and Calvin Hafford of Lee. The \$1,000 scholarship is made possible by proceeds from the Durham Demonstration Forest managed by the Forest Management and Utilization Division. The scholarship is awarded annually to a son or daughter of a MFS employee attending the College of Forest Resources.

Conservation Notes

•• **Steve Dickson** staffed a Maine Geological Survey exhibit at Audubon's Earth Day program. •• **Woody Thompson** spoke at the second annual Maine Mineral Symposium at UMA. •• **Tom Weddle** arranged a display of cleavelandite in Brunswick. The mineral is named for Parker Cleaveland, former Bowdoin professor and famous early American mineralogist. •• **Amy Frescoln** represented LURC at the annual spring meeting held by Central Maine Power Company and the White Water Rafters Association at Forks Plantation. •• LURC enforcement investigators **Don Cote, Charles Corliss, Kim Lynch and John Adamson** provided on-site instruction in "Best Management Practices" and Land Use Regulation Commission regulations and guidelines to timber harvesting and associated land management field crews. •• **David Mercier**, former DOC growth management planner, is LURC's new resource administrator. •• **Pat Bailey** presented BPR's "Explore the Shore" school program at the annual meeting of the Maine Environmental Education Association at the College of the Atlantic. •• **Kim Lynch, Don Cote and Jim Jacobsen** presented LURC's enforcement and permitting procedures to Allagash Waterway staff at the Maine Criminal Justice Academy in Waterville. •• **Steve Oliveri** presented a workshop on submerged lands and harbor management during the annual meeting of harbor masters. •• PLT Coordinator **Don Ouellette** reports a record 16 PLT workshops "on the books" during the first half of the year.

Help Save Money & Energy

The state's annual bill for heat and electricity is approximately \$9 million, underlining the importance of individual efforts to save energy and reduce costs. For example, at the end of the work day offices should be properly "turned off." Here are some things that need to be shut down at the end of each day. Why not develop a checklist tailored to your office or post this list near the exit.

END OF WORKDAY ENERGY CHECKLIST
Turn off all lights, copy machines, computers,
monitors, printers, fans, air conditioners and
coffee makers.