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Bulletin: Information for Maine Department of Conservation Employees, March 1992

Maine Department of Conservation

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March
1992

BULLETIN

Information for Maine Department of Conservation Employees

Commissioner's Column

Comments and suggestions from employees made during the recent employee meetings were helpful as we work on the budget and legislation, and as we respond to the rapid pace of change taking place within state government.

Many questions have been asked about the so-called transfer of funds from IF&W to DOC in the FY 92 budget amendment made in December. The budget revision simply transferred \$519,000 from IF&W to DOC and simultaneously transferred \$519,000 from DOC to the General Fund. The DOC never had use of the money.

The department did not request this transfer, and we are concerned about the misunderstandings and mistrust caused by the transaction. We are providing correct information to journalists, legislators, and others. I have spoken with Tom Hennessey, outdoor columnist for the Bangor Daily News, and other writers about the issue, and we have written letters to the Maine Sportsman and the Sportsmen's Alliance of Maine. We have urged IF&W to provide information to their employees and others with whom they communicate.

The FY 93 budget proposal includes a provision that the General Fund will repay the \$519,000 to IF&W, if funds are available.

In December, the legislature deappropriated \$681,000 from the Bureau of Public Lands. This reduction occurred as the Appropriations Committee sought ways to pay expenses incurred in fighting forest fires last summer that exceeded funds available for suppression. The department sought a supplemental appropriation to pay these expenses; however, funds were unavailable and the committee endorsed using money in the Bureau of Public Lands account.

That action will create a BPL cash flow problem when seasonal operations and market conditions create temporary imbalances between revenue and expenses. It also means the bureau will be forced to delay or cancel planned investments in the state's public lands to improve roads, public access and improvements in recreational facilities, wildlife habitat and timber management projects. Although the FY 93 budget does not correct the problem, we will continue our efforts to see that it is addressed.

Recent Maine Jobs Commission recommendations included a package of bond issues to make improvements to public facilities and create construction-related jobs. DOC submitted a list of projects totaling \$3.7 million to make needed improvement in our facilities such as water and sewer system replacement, restoration of the Fort Knox roof, replacement of toilet/sanitary facilities, road and parking area improvements, and modification of park facilities to provide better access. A legislative committee decided to endorse only projects that had not been on the ballot last November and those projects that improve municipal facilities rather than state facilities.

The lengthening of days means a new field season will soon begin. Through all the changes we are experiencing, we remain committed to maintaining and strengthening our core functions. As we gear up for the new season, I welcome your comments or suggestions at any time on how we might strengthen our programs or on ways to operate more efficiently.

Ed Meadows

Conservation Notes

Don Ouellette is organizing a PLT conference for workshop facilitators on March 20 at the Moosehead Resort Inn on Big Squaw Mountain. A PLT workshop for teachers is also planned for that day at the Pine Tree State Arboretum in Augusta. •• Copies of the revised Bureau of Public Lands submerged lands rules and policies manual are available from **Matt Bley** at BPL. •• Forest rangers have been training fire personnel this winter in new federally certified courses. The "S" courses conducted this winter provided training for various fire suppression positions such as crew boss or division supervisor, according to **Tom Parent**. The courses are required for in-state as well as out-of-state fire details. •• **Marilyn Daily** has transferred from the Moosehead District to Bolton Hill and is responsible for all storekeeping duties for the Fire Control Division. •• **Leslie Thornton**, assistant regional ranger in Old Town, is recuperating from recent surgery. •• **Joe Kelley** of the Maine Geological Survey gave a talk on geology of the Maine coast to faculty and students at the Maine Maritime Academy. Joe also recently published a paper in *Continental Shelf Research* on the seafloor geology of Muscongus Bay. •• **Woody Thompson** is assisting the Federation of Maine Mineral Clubs in planning the third annual Maine Mineral Symposium, to be held at UMA on the weekend of May 16-17. The program will include lectures, exhibits and field trips. Mineral dealers and a benefit specimen auction will also be featured. Contact Woody (289-7178) for details on the program and registration. •• **Libbey Seigars** reports that the 1992 SERVE/Maine Directory, listing more than 120 natural resource volunteer projects, has been sent to over 1,000 individuals and organizations that expressed an interest in volunteering. If you know someone who may want to volunteer, please have them contact Libbey at 289-4945 to receive a 1992 SERVE/Maine Directory and Volunteer Application. •• **Sandra Peterson** has been promoted to manager of Montpelier State Historic Site in Thomaston. Sandra has worked at Montpelier for five seasons including two as acting manager of the facility. •• A retirement dinner will be held to honor veteran Allagash Wilderness Waterway employees **Norma** and **Brady Scott**. The event will be on April 4, 1992 at the Black Bear Inn at Interstate Exit 51, Stillwater Ave. Contact **Tim Caverly** for more information. •• Former DOC employee **Jim Connors** is a coauthor of *A Guide To Forest Regulations in Maine*. The publication is intended to help forest practitioners find those regulations that apply to their specific operations. Information about laws affecting forestry operations is provided in the eighty-two page guide published by the Margaret Chase Smith Center for Public Policy and the College of Forest Resources at the University of Maine. •• BPR, IF&W and UM Cooperative Extension will conduct four ATV workshops covering club organization, trail development, safety, positive landowner relations, and related topics. Workshop dates are listed on the DOC calendar on the reverse side. Contact **Brian Bronson** at 4958 for more information. •• Four-hundred twenty-seven teachers and scout leaders received Project Learning Tree training during 26 workshops in 1991. Twenty-four new facilitators were trained at PLT's annual conference and PLT facilitators gave many presentations at schools and to other groups to promote teacher workshops.

Gary Morse Selected for Safety Award

The American Pulpwood Association (APA) has selected Gary Morse to receive the H.H. Jefferson Memorial Safety Award. The award recognizes individuals who have made significant contributions to logging safety.

According to the APA's Bob Meyer, Gary 's enthusiasm and commitment to logging safety has been a key to successful APA logging safety education efforts. Gary has helped organize many logging safety workshops and has developed safety instructional materials for the North Woods Safety Foundation and the Maine TREE Foundation's Certified Logger Program. He is the author/editor of numerous articles on logging safety for private publications and for publications of the Maine Forest Service.

Gary is currently vice-chair of APA's Safety and Training Committee, a founding member of the North Woods Safety Foundation board, and a member of the Certified Logger Program's certification board.

Gary will be honored at the American Pulpwood Association's spring meeting scheduled for May 20-22, 1992 at the Black Bear Inn, Stillwater, Maine.

Northern Forest Lands Update

Senators Cohen and Mitchell have announced they will not endorse the draft "Northern Forest Lands Act of 1991." The legislation would have established the Northern Forest Lands Council (NFLC) as a multi-year program. Last October, Governor McKernan suggested that the senators examine alternative ways to carry out the program under currently existing authority, rather than create separate, new federal legislation. Through existing programs, the council can continue without new legislation if Congress provides funding. Funds are available for the council to continue its work for another year.

The council is a voluntary partnership between Maine, New Hampshire, New York and Vermont with the U.S. Forest Service, landowners and conservation interests. The purpose is to provide a forum to discuss recommendations on how to improve public policies which affect ownership and use of forest land. Some current public policies, especially at the federal level, are disincentives to long-term land management. Efforts to improve these policies which affect forests are important since Maine's future depends on maintaining sufficient forest resources to sustain its economy, as well as maintaining opportunities for public recreation and wildlife management. The NFLC will establish citizen advisory committees in each of the participating states.

Helicopters Loaned to MFS

A Maine Forest Service flight crew of ranger pilots Randy Billings and Otis Gray and aircraft mechanics Ray Hichborn and Robert Irvine traveled to Fort Rucker, Alabama last week where they accepted delivery of two surplus UH-1H Huey helicopters.

The aircraft are on free loan to the forest service for forest fire control work including water dropping and initial attack. The aircraft will be ready for the 1992 fire season. Their acquisition brings the total number of helicopters available to the MFS for firefighting under the Federal Excess Property Program to six.

The H model Hueys can carry 13 firefighters or 350 gallons of water. Although the flight hours for non-fire control activity are limited under the terms of the state-federal agreement under which the aircraft are made available. Maine Forest Service helicopters have assisted during emergencies including the evacuation of victims of avalanche and flood, and for search and rescue.

Caroline Pryor Nominated to LURC

Caroline Pryor of Southwest Harbor has been nominated by Governor McKernan to serve on the Land Use Regulation Commission. She is vice president of the Maine Coast Heritage Trust and has extensive experience in land conservation, land use planning and creating voluntary partnerships with private landowners. The nomination requires the approval of the legislature.

MCC Seeking Team Leaders

The MCC is looking for team leaders to supervise spring and summer projects. Spring projects begin early in April and team leaders are still needed for projects located at Aroostook State Park in Presque Isle and at the Good Will-Hinckley Home in Fairfield.

The MCC has approved 27 projects for the summer and is seeking team leaders for 14 of those projects around the state.

MCC conservation team leaders are working supervisors of a team of 4-6 young workers ages 14-21. Most positions last 9 weeks and require commuting to the job site. If you know of anyone interested in becoming an MCC team leader please contact Ken Spalding at 289-4931.

Grants Promote Tree Planting

Maine cities and towns are again eligible to receive federal cost share funds towards the cost of purchasing and planting trees on public property.

Under the Small Business Administration's Natural Resource Development Program administered by the MFS, communities may apply for up to a \$7,200 match in federal funds to purchase and plant trees. In 1991, grants totaling \$72,030 were awarded to sixteen Maine towns. The awards are expected to generate \$144,060 in business activity for nurseries, arborists, contractors and local garden shops.

The deadline for applying for 1992 grants is Friday, March 13, 1992.

MFS Alerts Towns to Hemlock Looper Problem

The Maine Forest Service has provided updated information about hemlock looper populations and options for controlling the insect to municipal officials. The forest service letter to towns indicated that looper populations have risen dramatically since 1988 and that the insects had caused heavy defoliation on 225,000 acres of forest in central and coastal areas. Town officials were invited to contact the MFS for additional information and technical assistance.

MARCH						
SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
1	2 LFMF Board Meets	3 March BULLETIN copy due	4	5	6	7
8	9	10 SCORP TG Public Use/Pri. Land/ Bangor	11 Payday BULLETIN distributed	12 SCORP TG Availability of Land /Orono	13 SBA Tree Planting Program Deadline	14 ATV Workshop Portland
15	16	17 SCORP TG Water Access SAM/Augusta	18 SCORP TG Trails-Augusta	19 LURC Meets in Augusta	20 PLT Workshop Squaw Mt.& Augusta	21 ATV Workshop Farmington
22	23	24	25 Payday	26	27 Proposed legislative adjournment	28 ATV Workshop Orono
29	30	31 April BULLETIN copy due				
APRIL						
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8 Payday BULLETIN distributed	9	10	11 ATV Workshop Presque Isle