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Maine Department of Conservation Employee News and Information Bulletin, May 1993

Maine Department of Conservation

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Maine Department of Conservation Employee News and Information May 1993

BULLETIN

FORESTRY GEOLOGY LAND USE REGULATION PARKS AND RECREATION PUBLIC LANDS

Commissioner's Column

As this issue went to the printer, the Appropriations Committee had begun work sessions to discuss department budgets and the recommendations of the standing committees, such as we reported to you last issue. A work session on Conservation's budget had not yet occurred, but may have taken place by the time you receive this. We will provide an update as soon as any significant developments occur.

The governor has proposed a number of bond issues, including \$4.4 million for capital improvements at state parks and historic sites. If approved, funds will be used to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act, the Safe Drinking Water Act and to upgrade septic and water systems. Many legislators have expressed reservations about any bonds this year, but there is some support for these park projects. As with the budget, the Appropriations Committee will make a recommendation to the full legislature on these proposals.

I recognize this is a period of great uncertainty, with both the budget and contract negotiations in process, and that this uncertainty poses difficulty for employees personally and for the management of our programs. We will keep you informed when we receive new information, but as you can imagine, it is not possible to project the outcome of these discussions.

Our transition team has begun meeting to discuss ways we can assist employees during this period. Please share your questions and concerns with representatives of the team—they are there to assist you.

I am also aware that during this period of uncertainty and reduction, you remain committed to our mission of protecting and managing Maine's natural resources for the future and for public use. It is very clear the challenge becomes greater with the cutbacks we are experiencing. Our functions, however, remain critical for the state and I am committed to working strongly on behalf of the needs we have in order to carry out this work. I am confident that together we will be able to meet the challenges ahead.

On May 7 Governor McKernan and the heads of the three employee unions issued a statement of support for a vision for state government. The vision had been developed jointly by leaders of state agencies, union representatives and legislators. At Conservation, copies were provided to management points for distribution to all employees. Contact your supervisor if you did not receive a copy. The statement is an expression of shared values for the way we believe government can function more effectively and provide the best possible services to the public—particularly in light of shrinking funding.

This statement marks only the beginning of the effort to introduce Total Quality Management (TQM) in Maine state government. This, however, is only a first step; employees will be involved when the program begins in departments. Conservation's bureau directors have met once since the statement was released to learn more about TQM and how it could apply to our programs. At this time, we have not initiated the program in our department. Information sessions will be developed for all state employees, but likely will not begin until fall. One of my goals will be to obtain information about TQM for all employees in Conservation as soon as it is available.

We have heard from many of you who are interested and will be providing further information as it is developed.

Ed Meadows

Transition Team To Support DOC Employees

A transition team has been named to support employees affected by budget reductions.

The thirteen members of the team will assist and support employees who have been laid off and employees whose programs have been affected by reductions in staff and other resources.

Information about health and unemployment insurance options, the state job service and job search skills will be provided.

Team members are: Fire Control Division, Dave Wight, 827-6191, and Bruce Small, 657-3552;

Forest Mgt. and Utilization, George Bourassa, 287-2791/4987; LURC, Gloria Allen, 287-2631/4984 and Donna McLaughlin, 287-2631/2632; Public Lands, Steve Oliveri, 287-3061/4912; Parks and Recreation, Phil Mayo, 693-6231/6611, Joe Powers, 764-2040, and Steve Vondell, 236-9545; Geology, Mike Foley, 287-2801/2803; Planning and Program Services, Carol Michel, 287-4903; Commissioner's Office, Gale Ross, 287-4900; and Administrative Services, Will Harris, 287-2215, and Debbie Phillips, 287-4925.

Conservation Notes

Ranger Pilot **Scott Bates** was featured by WVTI-TV of Bangor, during a recent evening news story. The story centered around the skills of the pilots and the role of the aircraft in initial attack, air rescue and the transportation of rangers and fire crews.

Land Use Regulation Commission Enforcement Investigators **Charles Corliss** and **Gordon Moore** have been presenting training sessions on timber harvesting and road and water crossing standards for foresters of various paper and timber harvesting companies in the state.

Park Manager **Phil Farr** and Forest Ranger **Lise Herold** participated in a field day and bike rodeo at Blue Hill Fairgrounds on May 1. The event, attended by over 100 people, was sponsored by the Blue Hill Junior Grange.

As of May 10th, 275 forest fires had been reported, with nearly 700 acres burned. The leading causes of the fires were debris burners and arsonists. The largest fire burned more than 125 acres of young pine on May 2 in Township 19 near Deblois.

District Ranger **Maynard Thornton** of Lee has initiated a program with the vocational students at Penobscot Valley High School. The students have built 20 picnic tables, which will be placed at authorized campsites throughout Penobscot County. The materials were provided by the Fire Control Division with all labor provided free by the students. Thornton said future projects are planned.

John Picher and **Scott Ramsay** of the Bureau of Parks and Recreation recently made presentations at the Maine Land Trust Conference, "Trails, Greenways and Open Space." The conference was sponsored by the Maine Coast Heritage Trust. Scott participated in panel discussions about multiple-use trails and rails to trails programs. John participated in a panel discussion about federal funding sources for trails projects. June 5 is National Trails Day.

Foresters **Walter Gooley** and **Dennis Brennan**, along with Forest Rangers **Claudette Desautels** and **John Leavitt**, and PLT Coordinator **Lisa Knauf**
Continued on back

Conservation Notes continued

participated in the Greater Portland Career Day in April. Over 70 professions were represented and more than 8,000 7th and 8th grade students from 12 schools participated in the day-long session.

John Picher has been invited to participate in the Maine Bicycle Council as the department's representative. The Maine Bicycle Council will represent the communities of cyclists, interested support groups, advocates and the state and will offer guidance and support to the Department of Transportation's Bicycle and Pedestrian Coordinator.

State park rangers are busy preparing for the summer season, but their efforts are not focused only on human visitors. **Dalton Kirk** and his staff at Reid State Park have recently constructed and installed nesting boxes for wood ducks and bats. Condos for bats encourage an excellent, natural form of insect control, according to Dalt.

The proceedings from the first annual Munsungen Conference have recently been published. The proceedings contain papers from BPR's **Herb Hartman**, who made a presentation on Maine's forest recreation resource demand, and **Scott Ramsay** who participated in a panel discussion.

The Maine Geological Survey co-sponsored the Fourth Annual Maine Mineral Symposium held in Augusta on May 7-9. Over 200 people from throughout New England attended this educational event to learn about Maine minerals, mining and mineral collecting. The lecture program on Saturday included a guest speaker from the Canadian Museum of Nature in Ottawa, and a talk on the history of the Maine granite industry accompanied by an MGS granite exhibit. On Sunday, three field trips were held to mines in Oxford County. **Woody Thompson** moderated the meeting, and videos of all lectures will be available through the MGS library.

The College Conservation Corps of Maine (CCCM) has been awarded \$617,521 to continue its year round program. The grant was awarded by the federal Commission on National and Community Service. The award was made by the commission after review and evaluation of the CCCM and the three local corps programs, which the Maine Conservation Corps (MCC) funds with the grant. The grant will enable the MCC to operate the second year of its 14 month College Conservation Corps program beginning in June.

Fourteen Kents Hill School students with two supervisors, **Lloyd Hamovit**, lacrosse coach, and Kents Hill headmaster, **Rist Bonnefond**, worked with Park Manager **Stu Wagner** as SERVE/Maine volunteers for the Bureau of Parks and Recreation at Cobscook Bay State Park. This is the second year Hamovit led a group to the park which he hopes to turn into an annual event. In addition to spring cleaning activities and trail maintenance, students will keep journals, make a videotape and use the area as an outdoor classroom to study different ecosystems. More and more high schools, like Kents Hill, are requiring community service activities before graduation. SERVE/Maine helps match them to suitable projects.

College Conservation Corps of Maine participants recently completed a 12-week trail design and development course. The course was instructed by **Lester Kenway** of Baxter State Park and **Jan Saleeby**, former Bureau of Parks and Recreation civil engineer.

Environmental trail design, crew leadership, erosion control measures and multiple use trails were some of the topics covered. Personnel from the Bureaus of Parks and Recreation and Public Lands also attended.

CCCM students will conclude the course with a two-week practical exercise at Baxter State Park. During this exercise, CCCM corpsmembers will receive one week of field training. A new trail, which the corpsmembers helped design, will be cut on Center Mountain during the second week.

Eric Hoar, assistant park ranger in the Allagash Wilderness Waterway, recently received two scholarships from the University of Maine's College of Forest Resources. Eric received both the James C. Durham Scholarship and the Harold Worthen Forest Management Scholarship. The James C. Durham Scholarship is supported with income from the state-owned 105 acre James C. Durham Forest in Northport. The forest is managed by Department of Conservation foresters.

Bigelow Preserve Manager **Steve Swatling** will discuss multiple use management at the preserve during a special television feature scheduled for broadcast by WCSH-TV (Channel 6) on Friday, June 4 at 7 p.m.

Steve was one of five people interviewed for the program which is hosted by WCSH outdoor reporter **Bill Green**. **Duluth Wing**, retired forest ranger and local historian, will also appear during the 30-minute feature.

BPR Poster Contest Awards Presented

The efforts of DOC employees to make the third annual Bureau of Parks and Recreation poster contest a success were rewarded during a lively Hall of Flags award presentation ceremony on May 7.

The fourteen student-artists who created the winning posters received awards and prizes from Governor McKernan during the ceremony.

A large group of family members, teachers, school officials and legislators applauded as each artist came forward to be recognized by the governor of Maine. Proud parents made dozens of photographs destined to become family heirlooms. The presence of TV cameras and a newspaper photographer added to the excitement and enthusiasm.

Governor McKernan, Commissioner Ed Meadows and BPR Director Herb Hartman spoke. Following the presentations, Interpretive Specialist and poster contest organizer Patty Bailey took the microphone to direct a carefully planned photo session.

Steve Curtis, Sally Doyle, Dianna Farnam, Sheila McDonald, Tom Skolfield and Marshall Wiebe also contributed to the '93 contest.

Forest Fire PSA Nominated For Award

A forest fire prevention public service announcement (PSA), produced by WGME-TV of Portland, has been nominated by the station for the Broderson Award. The award, sponsored by the Ad Club of Greater Portland, is given in recognition of the year's most effective public service announcement. This PSA was made with the assistance of the Gray Volunteer Fire Department and depicted the destructive results of burning near homes on windy spring days. This PSA will also be considered for statewide honors next fall. The Broderson Award is given in October.

Timber Plan Praised

A May 4 Waterville Sentinel editorial says the Lowell Timber Associates' plan, recently approved by the Land Use Regulation Commission, "is good news for conservationists and for the state."

"... (The plan) is a first for Maine. The company attempts to balance conservation needs with its need to make a profit on its holdings. And while there are elements of the plan that some conservationists object to, overall the balance appears to have been achieved."

The editorial might well have also recognized the farsighted commission employees who have worked for years to develop and implement this innovative approach to land use planning.