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Maine Department of Conservation

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Maine Department of Conservation Employee News and Information October 1994

BULLETIN

FORESTRY

GEOLOGY

LAND USE REGULATION

PARKS AND RECREATION

PUBLIC LANDS

Commissioner's Column

The Northern Forest Lands Council has issued its final report for protecting, conserving and enhancing management of forest lands in the northeast. The report includes some notable changes from the draft recommendations which were outlined in the March 1994 BULLETIN. The key changes are summarized in this issue.

The council's work confirmed that many existing public policies (e.g. tax and economic) do not support conservation objectives or encourage the long-term management necessary to sustain the forest resource. In many cases, current policies are contrary to the goals and desires of land managers and the public. For example, taxes on property, income and inheritance can force the premature harvest of forest stands, even though the owner might prefer to grow the trees for a longer period. The council makes many recommendations to reduce these pressures and create incentives to "level the playing field" for land conservation. For example, the council recommends that gains on the sale of land or easements for conservation purposes be excluded from state income tax. This would encourage sellers interested in conserving land for public benefit and reduce the cost of acquisition to the state. In these and its other proposals the council seeks to create incentives for land conservation and management that currently exist for other types of business enterprises, e.g., rental property and tax-advantaged development.

The NFLC officially disbanded September 30 pursuant to its charter from Congress. It will now be up to groups interested in conservation to work together to seek implementation of the recommendations. If implemented, these proposals will make a powerful contribution to the long-term conservation of the forest and all its values. We will continue to work with these groups at the state and federal level to do that.

The information in the report can assist you in your work and I urge you to look for ways the information can be used in all our programs.

This is an especially active period in many department programs. LURC is holding public meetings to update the Comprehensive Land Use Plan. Forestry is reviewing cutting practice rules and the affects of the Forest Practices Act. Public Lands and LURC recently conducted field training and "all staff" meetings. The Bureau of Parks and Recreation and IF&W are sponsoring public meetings on a state boat access plan. Geology participated in the New England Intercollegiate Geological Conference. In these, and in many other efforts, we plan to continue working for enhanced management and conservation of Maine's natural resources.

It will soon be time for the annual MSECCA Campaign. Gale Ross will be this year's department coordinator and I urge you to assist those in need by making a contribution. **Ed Meadows**

TQM News

• Bureau of Public Lands Quality Council members are: Jeffery Bartley, Theodore Bradstreet, Jim Ecker, Thomas Morrison, Delbert Ramey, Patricia Simard, and Steve Spencer. Council members were chosen by their peers to represent the six general classifications of bureau employees, with the director also being a member. The seven members will select an eighth "member-at-large."

• BPL's annual fall training session at Bigelow Lodge in September included one full day on TQM facilitated by DOL trainer Rolanda Klapatch.

• LURC staff have settled on a formula for a total quality management quality council. LURC's council will include representatives from each organizational level and division, including field staff.

• DOC's Intradepartmental Communications Process Action Team asks employees to complete and return the survey they will receive with October 19 paychecks.

DOC People

NEW

Peter Misluk, Environmental Specialist II, LURC

TRANSFERS

Susan Myers, Forest Ranger II to Waldo

Bernadette Thibodeau, Clerk Typist II, to permanent position with Forest Fire Control

RETIRED

Elizabeth Hunt, Rangeley Lake SP Receptionist since 1989

Finding Common Ground: Conserving the Northern Forest

The Northern Forest Lands Council final recommendations are contained in a report titled "Finding Common Ground: Conserving the Northern Forest." NFLC members briefed the governors and congressional delegations from each state prior to public release of the report on September 19.

The council's 37 recommendations are in four areas: Fostering Stewardship of Private Lands; Protecting Exceptional Resources; Strengthening Economies of Rural Communities; and Promoting More Informed Decisions. The council made four new recommendations: that states should assess water quality; that states should establish and fund conservation easement programs; that Congress should authorize and fund Community Financial Development Institutions (a federal economic development program), and that states should expand natural resource education for all ages.

The council also made significant changes to recommendations contained in the draft released last March: urging states to assess current forest practices; calling for increased funding for public land management and acquisition; recommending state-based approaches to conserving biodiversity, stronger state land use planning, and increased educational and technical assistance in the natural resources sector. The changes made those particular recommendations stronger than they had been in the draft.

One of the report's most important messages is that current conservation programs are woefully underfunded. The council makes several recommendations that would strengthen several department programs, most notably those of BPR and BPL.

The final recommendations also contain a plan for action, including a call to establish state-based "Forest Roundtables." The roundtables would work to advocate for and guide the implementation of the recommendations and serve as a state-based forum to continue the dialogue on forest issues begun by the council. A broad spectrum of interests supported such a continuation.

If implemented, the recommendations would assist some programs in the department in carrying out their mission. For example, the "Forest Roundtables" will address many issues of current interest to several bureaus. The department will likely play a key role in the recommended open space and biodiversity assessments. State Coordinator Donald Mansius has already begun to prepare legislation that would implement the council's recommendations.

Donald Mansius (287-4906, or E-mail) has additional information about the NFLC final recommendations. Bureaus have copies of the report.

Conservation Notes

Many current and retired employees attended the Bureau of Parks and Recreation annual picnic organized by BPR's Central Region staff. There was a send-off for long-time Regional Supervisor **Ken Wiley**. After 32 years with state parks, Ken will retire in November and his many friends and colleagues gathered at the picnic to honor him and wish him well.

Deutsche Welle, a German public television organization, is filming a documentary about U.S. Route One from Fort Kent to Florida. **Jurgen Hecker**, the crew's correspondent, selected Maine's fall foliage reporting system and L.L. Bean for the Maine segment. Forest Ranger **John Leavitt** and Public Information Director **Marshall Wiebe** were videotaped for the production. **Lou McNally**, chief meteorologist at WMTW, provided footage of a Channel 8 foliage report using information collected by the Fire Control Division. The crew also photographed the Maine Publicity Bureau's Foliage Hotline in action and visited Bradbury Mountain State Park.

Allagash Wilderness Waterway employees, former BPR employees, and friends and family gathered at Michaud Farm to honor **Faye Hafford** and the late **Lee Hafford** for their many services to the waterway's visitors, their great interest in preserving the waterway's history, and their extensive knowledge of the area. BPR Director **Herb Hartman** presented **Faye Hafford** with a framed photograph of her and Lee that will be hung in the Michaud Farm ranger headquarters. Michaud Farm Ranger **Dave Milligan** and Park Receptionist **Linda Milligan** did a wonderful job hosting and organizing the event.

The Maine Geological Survey helped lead two earth science field conferences in September. **Joe Kelley**, **Tom Weddle** and **Woody Thompson** led part of the annual staff trip for the Quaternary Studies Institute at the University of Maine. Participants visited coastal sites in Cumberland County that show evidence of shoreline and climate changes ranging in age from modern back to the close of the Ice Age. MGS is contributing to our cooperative study with the University for the EPSCOR global change project.

The broad spectrum of BPR staff talents was evidenced once again at a recent event at Montpelier State Historic Site in Thomaston. **Tim Hall**, regional supervisor for BPR's Central Region, produced, wrote, and directed a program, "Henry Knox in Words

and Music." As if Tim's organizational and program development talents were not enough, he also played trumpet with the Penobscot Bay Brass Quintet, which provided the music. The program, which was co-sponsored by the Friends of Montpelier, was attended by over 50 guests. BPR Resource Administrator **Sheila McDonald** also participated as a reader of some of Knox's letters, which were interspersed in the program with 18th and 19th century music.

The Bureau of Public Lands annual Fall Training session at Bigelow Lodge included First Aid, radio (CB), computer training and a two hour session on upper/lower back injury prevention facilitated by **Patricia Scott**.

Curious spectators at Fort Knox State Historic Site recently may have seen a small backhoe being hoisted on to the roof of the fort by a large crane. The crane and operator, donated by Champion Paper in nearby Bucksport, were helping with a research activity at Fort Knox to understand the fort's roof system and how it can be improved to prevent moisture infiltration that is damaging the fort's masonry. Working with an engineer who is serving as a consultant on the roof restoration project, Fort Knox Ranger **Blaine Winchester** operated the backhoe once it was lifted to the roof, excavating down about six feet to expose the structure of the fort's brick casemates and design of the interior drainage system. Fort Knox Ranger **Dick Robbins** also assisted in the project along with Manager **Frank Appleby**. According to Frank, a group of about twenty-five United Bikers of Maine members worked on a similar project earlier in the summer.

Many MGS staff led or assisted in field trips for the 85th annual New England Intercollegiate Geological Conference in September. According to **Woody Thompson**, the conference is the oldest organization of its kind in the country, bringing together students, faculty, and other geologists from throughout the northeast. The location changes from year to year, but many of the meetings have been in Maine.

The Old Speck Mountain fire tower in Grafton Notch State Park may get a new lease on life thanks to a volunteer effort coordinated by Park Manager **Andy Haskell**. The tower, which affords a spectacular view of the Mahoosuc Range, Mahoosuc Notch, White Mountains, Mt. Washington, Mt. Blue, and Umbagog Lake, was closed in

August because of its condition. When word of the closure was heard, volunteers contacted Andy to offer help. These offers, including services from an engineer and others experienced in structural stabilization, are currently being organized by Andy and Acting Regional Supervisor **Bruce Farnham** in order to re-open the tower to hikers as soon as possible.

The first of seven workshops co-sponsored by the Bureau of Parks and Recreation and the Department of Transportation was held recently in Farmington. The workshops, "Gettin' Theyah Without a Cah," are being held statewide to identify problems and issues related to bicycle and pedestrian facilities and trails. Twenty people, representing cyclists, walkers, snowmobilers, and historic trail interests, attended the workshop. BPR staff **Tom Cieslinski**, **Cindy Bastey**, **Mike Gallagher**, and **John Picher** made presentations on a household survey effort regarding bicycle and pedestrian use patterns and needs, trail inventory work, and funding sources for trail projects. Additional workshops will be held in October and November.

Allagash Ranger **Jim Kelly** and Assistant Ranger **Dean Wiggin** recently found themselves involved in a unique project in the historic tramway area of the Allagash Wilderness Waterway. Two deteriorating locomotives, historic remnants of lumbering operations in the present-day waterway, are increasingly unstable. In fact, BPR staff have been in fear that one locomotive will tip over completely. Faced with that problem, a volunteer designed a bracing system for the unstable locomotive and Jim and Dean worked recently to put the braces in place as a stop-gap measure until other stabilization schemes can be funded.

The Department's fall foliage information gathered by the Fire Control Division has been featured in numerous publications and broadcasts this season. The September issue of *Down East* featured a color graphic of our ten-year record of peak coloration. The Maine Sunday Telegram's Fall Fun Edition also used the information and described state parks where fall foliage viewing was available.

Recently Read

• A primer on forest certification appears in the July/August edition of *Tree Farmer*, magazine of the American Tree Farm System. The article provides the basics on one of forestry's newest concepts and lists certification entities.