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What's Up, Doc? December 1996

Maine Department of Conservation

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What's Up, DOC?



Issue 12

A Newsletter for Department of Conservation Employees December 1996

Commissioner's Column

In November I traveled to the American Southwest in the Four Corners area of New Mexico, Arizona, Utah and Colorado. One of the most stunning places I visited was Mesa Verde National Park. High in the plateau country of southwestern Colorado, Mesa Verde is our nation's first park dedicated to the culture of people, by President Theodore Roosevelt in 1904.

About 1400 years ago - long before any Europeans appeared in America - a group of Indians inhabited the mesas and cliffs of this area for almost 1000 years. They abruptly left the area without leaving a trace and there is only speculation about where they went. Archeologists call these people Anasazi, the ancient ones.

Mesa Verde helped me to see into our past, our roots as Native Americans and Europeans, and to have a perspective on the historical choices we make as we develop our own culture. It is an example on a larger and older scale of why we work so hard to preserve and protect Maine's Historic Sites including the Allagash. It helped me to understand the value of our efforts and why we championed a bond issue to restore certain special features of two of our areas: **Fort Knox and Churchill Dam.**

Mesa Verde experienced a great fire in August of 1996, when nighttime thundershowers sparked a lightning strike that smoldered unseen until the next morning. The conditions were terrible: a drought and excessive heat; abundant fuels and steep slopes; flames over 100 feet in the air; and a fire front that traveled 3-4 miles per hour. The fire was the most destructive in the park's history. Five days later, air tanker crews and 700 firefighters from around the country

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Maine Outdoor Heritage Fund:

Department of Conservation Receives Five Grants

The first round of Maine Outdoor Heritage Fund grants were awarded at December's Board Meeting, where \$1 million in conservation grants went to 24 applicants; DOC received five grant awards totaling \$140,000.

"These awards will further the Maine Natural Areas Program's efforts to update the official rare plant list and contact landowners regarding the presence and conservation of globally imperiled plants and natural communities on private lands in Maine," remarked MOHF Board member and Natural Areas Program Coordinator Molly Docherty.

The remaining three grants were allocated to promote public information efforts: the Bureau of Parks and Land's grant funds the creation of a new brochure format to consolidate information about state parks and public lands; ten brochures are in the planning stages and will be distributed at state parks. The fourth grant provides BPL money to create a multiple use trail manual to aid local volunteer trail groups on the design, construction and maintenance of trails and bridges. The final grant is a snowmobile safety video which will promote personal and ecological safety and will be coordinated between the departments of Conservation and Inland Fisheries and Wildlife.

The third lottery ticket hit stores on December 13 with the premiere of the eagle ticket. The two prior tickets featured a loon and a moose; each ticket has a shelf life of approximately six months.

Grant requests must receive the bureau director's approval, are prepared according to the MOHF format, and require the Commissioner's signature before being submitted to the MOHF board. Upcoming 1997 deadlines for grant requests are February 14 and August 15. MOHF Executive Director Jo D. Saffair's goal is to award grants within two months of each deadline. Contact your supervisor or bureau director for more information. ❖

November Safety Report

- Deb Phillips

The Safety Report for November indicates 1 OSHA recordable injury which resulted in a Total Incident Rate (TIR) and Lost Workday Case Rate (LWCR) of 8.7.

Compared to the Department's Year-to-Date T.I.R. of 5.2 and LWCR of 3.4, our recordables are on the rise.

Remember that SAFETY is a part of everyone's job.

Commissioner's Column

finally contained the blaze at 4,750 acres. This is an example of the conditions that we sent five crews to this past summer. Through bravery and dedication, crews saved the most priceless sites and park facilities. Visitors have a dramatic view of the fire's aftermath driving through areas of severe damage.

Perhaps that will help the public understand that fire is a natural force that can be emulated by controlled burns or through using forest salvage to reduce fuel buildup.

Observing events at Mesa Verde reminded me about the work we do at DOC and the value of our human effort. Even though I was on vacation, the kinds of things I love to do are associated with our natural resources. Sometimes it helps me to step back-away from my own responsibility -to gain perspective. It made me admire the work you all do for Maine.

Ron

Oh, My Aching Back!

How many times have you done this? You've been working at your desk, you stand up, bend over and pick up a box of supplies. It's not a heavy box. In fact, you don't even think twice about it. But the next thing you know, you feel a stabbing pain in your back, probably in the lower portion. This is a very common scenario - and with a few alterations and adjustments in routine - one that could be avoided.

It's About Support

The first thing you have to understand is how your back supports your body's weight. When standing straight, 70-80% of your body weight is supported by your back. That means if you weigh 200 pounds, your back supports 160 pounds.

Bending at the Waist - a No, No!

When you bend at the waist to pick something up, the weight your back supports increases by 6 times. If you weigh 200 pounds, your back is supporting 960 pounds. Add that 30 pound box, (multiplied by 6) and you have an extra 180 pounds to the equation. Now you're looking at 1,140 pounds of stress to your back. Ouch!

Warm Up and Bend at the Knees

The keys to avoid injury are to prepare your body before you lift something and to lift properly. If the load is too heavy, get some help or don't lift it!

- ⊙ Warm up your body before you lift any load.
- ⊙ Stretch your back with upward reaches and continue to loosen tight muscles by gently bending to the side and back.
- ⊙ Let your abdomen, legs and buttocks do the work.
- ⊙ Bend at the knees, with feet slightly spread for balance and stability.
- ⊙ Get close to the item, and grab the load safely with your hands placed under the object.
- ⊙ Keep your head, shoulders, and hips in a straight line as you lift. Do not twist.
- ⊙ Reverse these steps when you set the object down. Move slowly and smoothly without twisting.

More information about safety is available in the Back Care & Safe Lifting, Office Safety and Driving Safety brochures. Contact Deb Phillips at 7.4925 or pick one up off the rack across from the elevator on the third floor at Harlow. ❖

Dear Fellow Employees,

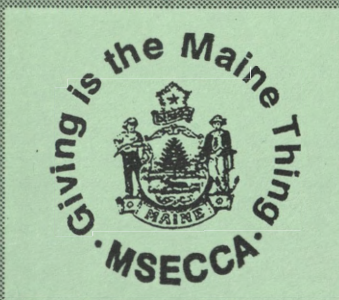
December 1996

It's a special time to turn to family and friends to enjoy and reflect on the meaning of the holidays. My family, Linda, Heather, Mike, and I wish you and your family the joy, comfort, support and friendship embodied in the Hanukkah and Christmas traditions.

May peace and joy be with you this holiday season.

Best regards,
RK

Maine State Employees Combined Charitable Appeals 1996 Campaign



The Department of Conservation's MSECCA campaign exceeded its 1996 goal thanks to the generosity of employees and the hard work of our MSECCA volunteers. The department's \$5,500 target was surpassed, reaching a grand total of \$6,218 in pledges, reports MSECCA Coordinator Gale Ross. DOC's pledges will be added to the state's goal of \$250,000 which according to the latest reports, has hit \$260,000! Pledges are still rolling in and we will know the total numbers at the end of the year.

Congratulations to MSECCA Coordinator Gale Ross and volunteers Dick

Dearborn, Caroline Eliot, Michael Foley, and Leigh Hoar for a successful and well-received campaign.

Our department's total would not have been reached without the hard work, enthusiasm and commitment of our volunteers. Great job!

Gale and the MSECCA campaign volunteers thank everyone who contributed. Donations will help families in our local community, and will make a difference this holiday season and throughout the coming year. ♦

Harlow's On the Move !

People and offices are on the move at the Harlow Building in Augusta and the goal is to locate bureaus on one floor, ultimately making it easier and more efficient for employees to work together. The move should be finished by the end of the year and look for more information in January's newsletter.

Currently, the Bureau of Parks and Lands' move is complete and you can find that information to the right.

When you enter the building, you'll find the greatest change on the 1st and 2nd floors: The Bureau of Parks and Lands and the Computer Group now occupies the 1st floor, and Maine Forest Service is in the process of occupying the entire 2nd floor. MFS's move is targeted for completion by January.

The Off-Road Vehicle Division moved to Room 304, but other than that, no other changes took place on the 3rd or 4th floors.

Phone numbers have remained the same in an effort to facilitate a smooth transition and enable the general public, fellow state employees, and constituents to still have access to Department of Conservation employees.

The Conference Room's temporary location is Room 205, and will be permanently located in Room 211. The sign-up procedure remains the same.

It will take a while to get use to the new location of offices and people and we appreciate your patience during this period of transition. The goal is to kick off 1997 with the move completed! ❖

Bureau of Parks and Lands First Floor 287-3821

North End

Liz Cody, 7.3061
Fax: 287-3823

South End

Ruth Willette, 7.4960
Fax: 287-8111

Room 101:	Charlene Daniels	7.2209
Room 102:	Sheila McDonald	7.4975
Room 103:	Dick Arbour	7.4905
	Tom Driscoll	7.2610
	Richard Hook	7.7282
	Jim Rea	7.2794
Room 104:	Pat Bailey	7.2499
	Cindy Bastey	7.4963
	Tom Cieslinski	7.4962
	John Titus	7.4916
Room 105:	Mike Gallagher	7.2163
	John Picher	7.4970
Room 106:	Carol DiBello	7.4922
	Martha Papp	7.6128
Porch:	Nancy Dodge	7.4952
	Dick Skinner	7.4953
	Steve Spencer	7.4920
	Joe Wiley	7.4921
Room 108:	Ralph Knoll	7.4911
Room 109:	George Hannum	7.4964
Room 110:	Herb Hartman	7.4961
Room 113:	Anne Bills	7.4914
	Steve Oliveri	7.4912
Room 115:	Tom Morrison	7.4717