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What's Up, Doc? May 1997

Maine Department of Conservation

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What's Up, DOC?

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Issue 5

A Newsletter for Department of Conservation Employees

May 1997

Commissioner's Column

I think I was finally ready to throw off winter's wraps. So I planned a trip to Reid State Park with **Steve Curtis** and Park Manager **Dan Bell** to take a look at their situation with WWII shells and rocket casings that started to show up on the beach. The shells have been there all along but show up from time to time when the beach is heavily scoured by winter and spring storms. Most of the time the ordnances are covered by four feet or more of sand. Unfortunately the trip was scheduled the Friday we had rain and gale force winds on the coast. I don't know that I have ever tightened my parka down so much to keep out freezing rain and driven sand.

The good news was we had the beach to ourselves. If I invite you to the beach -better check the weather before you accept. Remember I also went camping at Cobscook Bay last year in the hurricane....

I also visited the Richmond Boating Facilities with **Bill Cunningham** and **Mark Curtis**. Like myself, I suspect that many of you have never been there.

What an operation--Conservation team quality all the way. Every year they find a way to improve on their product. Next time you use a DOC-built boat ramp; take a good look at how it's built.

April 24th was Bring Your Daughter To Work Day. It was a huge success at DOC with about 30 girls and teenagers attending. We had the largest contingent of any department attending the plenary session with the Governor and state employee women role models.

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Maine Forest Service's 1997 Season Update on Lyme Disease - Rob Pylar and Dick Dearborn

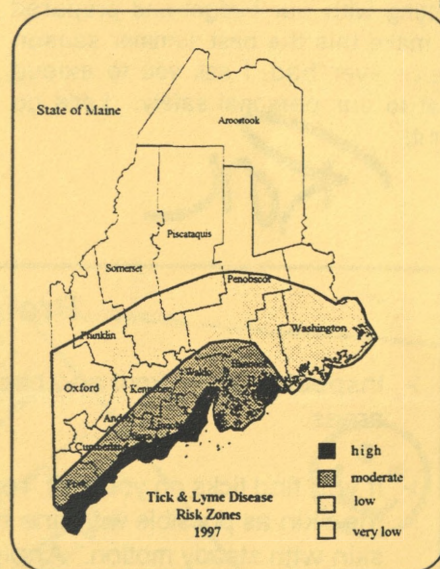
Lyme disease has been a growing health concern among Maine residents whose occupation or recreational interests find them spending time outdoors. Between 1986 and the end of 1996, the Bureau of Health had received reports of 130 cases of Lyme disease determined to have resulted from in-state exposures among Maine residents.

In 1990, reports of disease resulting from human exposure in Lincoln County signaled the northeastward spread of the infection in ticks from earlier identified locations in York and Cumberland Counties. By 1996, studies of ticks and of markers for illness in dogs demonstrated a range which extends eastward along the coast to Hancock County and inland as far as Moosehead Lake. The map to the right shows zones of relative risk for exposure to Lyme disease.

The risk of infection with Lyme disease is seasonal and is based on the feeding behavior of the deer tick, *Ixodes scapularis*.

In late May, nymphs begin their feeding and nearly any vertebrate species is a potential meal. Although the rate of infection in nymphs is about half that in adult ticks, **nymphs are responsible for nearly 90% of human cases of Lyme disease caused by deer**

ticks. This is most likely due to their smaller size, which allows them to more easily escape detection, their greater numbers, and the fact that their meal seeking behavior coincides with human outdoor activity. Adult ticks begin feeding in mid-October and continue while conditions are favorable through April. While temperatures < 45° or snow cover inhibits tick activity, meal seeking adult ticks may be active during winter thaws.



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Commissioner's Column

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We all owe a big thank you to **Pat Bailey** and **Jeanne Knobil** for organizing a great event on really short notice. I also know that they were offered and received help from many others. MFS-Fire Control kicked in big time with ground tours of a helicopter at Smokey's Bolton Hill den.

This day is as good an example as any of the extra effort and volunteerism that DOC employees put into their work every day. Work is really a community that thrives when we put extra of ourselves into it and withers when we withdraw that support. In the end though, it is us that rises and falls on what we make with what we are given. I sense a real team building at Conservation and I see employees driven to provide the highest quality we can for our constituents. Financially we're on firm footing with our budget and prepared to make this the best summer season we've ever had. I ask you to extend that to our personal safety. Let's go for it!

Ron

Preparation

- Wear light colored clothing to make crawling ticks visible.
- Ticks crawl up. Tucking pant cuffs into socks and tucking shirts into trousers reduces access to skin under clothing.
- Use repellents containing DEET in the absence of protective clothing. It is not considered necessary to apply repellents to face or hands.

Lyme Disease Update

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The most distinctive early symptom of Lyme disease is a localized skin rash. This rash, which occurs in 60% of cases, appears at the site of the tick bite. It begins as a small red raised spot which over time enlarges in a ring-like fashion with clearing of the skin in the center (bull's eye rash). The rash appears within the first month after the bite, usually within seven to ten days. Whether or not the rash appears, other early symptoms include malaise, fatigue, fever, headache, stiff neck, muscle aches, joint pain, and swollen lymph nodes which may last for several weeks or more in untreated patients. Treatment at this early stage is a course of oral antibiotics.

For further information or tick identification, please contact:

Maine Lyme Disease Project
Maine Medical Center Research
Institute
125 John Roberts Road, Suite 5
South Portland, ME 04106-3295

Insect and Disease Laboratory
50 Hospital Street
Augusta, ME 04330

Protection

- Inspect yourself, front and back, for ticks after being in endemic areas.
- If you find ticks on yourself, remove them by grasping as close to the skin as possible with fine tweezers and pulling away from the skin with steady motion. Apply a topical antibiotic to the site. Wash hands carefully after contact with the tick.

Attention Deer Hunters:

- Deer hunters should be aware that for up to 4 days after their host has expired, deer ticks may detach and drop to the ground. Hanging the deer over a large container of water to which a small amount of detergent has been added will help prevent the establishment of a colony of vector ticks in your backyard.
- Wear protective gloves while dressing the deer to prevent contact between infected tick tissue and cuts or other open wounds on the hands, and wash thoroughly afterwards.



Burn, Baby Burn

Six Maine Forest Service employees recently participated in a Prescribed Burn Course in the Finger Lakes National Forest in Watkin Glen, N.Y. The two-week session allowed the employees a first hand opportunity to burn 228 acres of wildlands which is part of a wildlife habitat preserve. Those attending were Forest Rangers; **David Wight, Russ Beauchemin, Gregg Hesslein, Keith Smith and Rick Henion.** Also participating was Communication Technician **John McKormick.** **Dave Wight** was the Incident Commander for the field exercises.



Swap or Sell?

Do you have items you'd like to swap with or sell to fellow DOC employees? If so, e-mail me, Susan Benson, a brief description of the item(s), the asking price, your name and phone number.

For June's newsletter, please have the information to me by Friday, May 23.

Promotions/New Hires

Gerald "Jay" Hall has been promoted from a forest technician to a forester and is assigned to the Bureau of Parks and Lands Downeast District office in Jonesboro.

David Lombard has been hired as a forest technician assigned to the Bureau of Parks and Lands Eastern region office in Old Town.

David Irving has been hired as a forest technician assigned to the Bureau of Parks and Lands Northern region office in Ashland.

Surfing Cyberspace

Check out - the updated Maine Forest Service pages at:
<http://www.state.me.us/doc/mfs/mfshome.htm>.
or go to DOC's Home Page, and click on Maine Forest Service.

To access direct deposit information and download the Authorization Form, visit:

<http://www.state.me.us/ac/dirdep.htm>
or start off at the Maine State Home Page, go to State Agencies, click on Accounts and Control, and go to Payroll Options.

Retirements

Jim Mangin is going to retire from state service. He has worked for the Department of Conservation for approximately 10 years. Now finally he is counting down the days, hours, minutes, and even the seconds.

Jim started at DOC in 1987 as a Snowmobile Program Coordinator. Highlights of project work include: Squaw Mountain, Mt. Blue, Duck Lake and Allagash trail creation and development, White Mountain National Forest trail relocations, Eagle Lake locomotive project, and the Beddington bridge replacement.

His last day with the Department of Conservation, Off-Road Vehicle Division, Snowmobile Program, will be MAY 30. Good luck, Jim! We'll miss you!

DOC Anniversaries

15 Years

Mark J. Berube
Alan M. Johnston
John S. Knight
Janet Mangion
Robert L. Ripley

20 Years

Charles L. Clukey
Carol H. DiBello
Dawn Edgerly
William A. Elliot
Timothy Hall
Stephen H. Vondell
Ralph H. Wilkinson

25 Years

Raymond Lamont

30 Years

Thomas Skolfield