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What's Up, Doc? August 1997

Maine Department of Conservation

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What's Up, DOC?



Issue 8

A Newsletter for Department of Conservation Employees

August 1997

Commissioner's Column

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You never know what you're going to get into: I had planned a day in the field with DOC geologists Steve Dickson and Joe Kelley to observe their craft of sidescan sonar mapping of Maine's coastal seafloor. This is the work that led to the new series of seafloor maps produced by Natural Resources Information & Mapping Center that have been so popular. Instead, Joe and Steve were called upon that day for their internationally-recognized sidescan sonar expertise to help search for a plane with four people aboard that went down off Isleboro. I decided to stay with them. It was a beautiful day to be in the field and I'd still learn about sidescan sonar.

They worked hard all day searching the seafloor for any image that looked unusual-- back and forth in 100 meter increments--going over areas two and three times when an unusual image showed up. In the end, they didn't find the plane and Department of Marine Resources called off the state search. We had put our best people, equipment, and technology to the task for three days. You have to know how badly we wanted to find it.

But the search wasn't all I saw that day. Maine Maritime Academy's electronically-equipped research ship, the Friendship, provided the best electronics technician, pilot and search vessel for the job.

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Geologic Maps - A Window on the Past, a Key to the Future

Robert Marvinney

In a corner of the dimly lit pub, four burly figures hunch over a table and speak in hushed tones. Unfurled before them, with corners carelessly pinned by overflowing glasses of beer, is a tattered and well worn document - a map unlike any they had ever seen before. Rather than showing the mountain ranges and civilized areas commonly represented on maps of the period, the colors and symbols on this map described the rocks. These experienced prospectors knew the rock types they sought and this geologic map would help lead them to that quarry, and, they hoped, their fortunes.

While we cannot be sure how often such a romanticized scene played out in turn-of-the-century America, undoubtedly something like this did occur somewhere as modern geologic map production got under way in the nation. Maine's first geologic map, compiled in 1885 by Charles Henry Hitchcock, measured about 12 by 18 inches and depicted nine generalized rock units in hand-done water colors. We have come a long way since this early effort in terms of both the detail of mapping and our ability to reproduce high-quality maps. However, while the Maine Geological Survey of NRIMC and its predecessors have been mapping since 1837, more than half the State remains to be mapped in sufficient detail to address important societal questions.

What exactly is a geologic map, you may ask. A geologic map depicts the distribution and nature of geologic materials found at or near the earth's surface, and the relationships among those units. Different geologic units (different types of rocks or units of glacial origin which are not yet consolidated into rock) are shown by different colors, patterns, and abbreviations on the map. The explanation which accompanies the map includes brief descriptions of each unit, its thickness, and its age relative to other units on the map. From these maps geologists can reconstruct the sequence of events - the geologic history - that produced the observed types and distributions of units. From these maps, anyone can find a location of interest, match the color or pattern of the geologic unit to the explanation and learn about the rocks underlying that area. Many readers have seen geologic maps on display in our offices or elsewhere and are probably fascinated by their beauty (at least the full color maps!) and complexity. Far from being merely pretty wall hangings or place mats, these maps are serious documents. Each geologic map is based on the detailed geology of individual sites visited by the geologist, and interpreted through the geologist's total experience of education, training, and past mapping.

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Commissioner's Column

The State Police had a diver on board the whole three days who dove into the 100-200-foot deep water anytime an image was strong enough to require visual verification. The Department of Marine Resources had two boats keeping traffic away from the search vessel and helping with buoys, markers, and communication-- and even lunch when searchers got hungry. The Department of Inland Fisheries & Wildlife provided a ready back-up diver if the search turned up something serious. When the ship's computer that interfaces with the GPS and autopilot quit, the Maine Maritime crew brought a new computer out by way of a skiff, and they installed and reloaded all the software in less than an hour.

What I saw that day was five state agencies working as one with tremendous cooperation and focus on the mission, bringing skilled people, boats, electronics, and equipment together. It worked! Maine works! I was proud, and it's one of those good stories about state government and state employees you'll never see in the press. So this is "my chance" to see that the great work that day doesn't go unnoticed.

Ron

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Geologic Maps - a window on the past, a key to the future

Why do we care about geologic maps? Here are a few examples. More than 50% of the citizens of our state get their drinking water from ground-water sources. The quality and quantity of this water is profoundly affected by its migration path from the surface, through soils and glacial deposits, into fractures in the bedrock. Roadways and buildings cannot be constructed without aggregate materials, of which our maps show the state has a fair supply. Geologic maps show where the ground is unstable and are being used by the City of Rockland to identify areas of greatest landslide hazard.

This summer we are conducting mapping of sand and gravel aquifers in the Augusta area, and bedrock and surficial geology in southwestern Maine. These maps will help us find, utilize, and protect the resources we depend on to build our future.



DOC Anniversaries

25 Years

Frederick Todd

30 Years

Ronald Wright

35 Years

John Hinkley

Legislation Affecting DOC

Shippen Bright

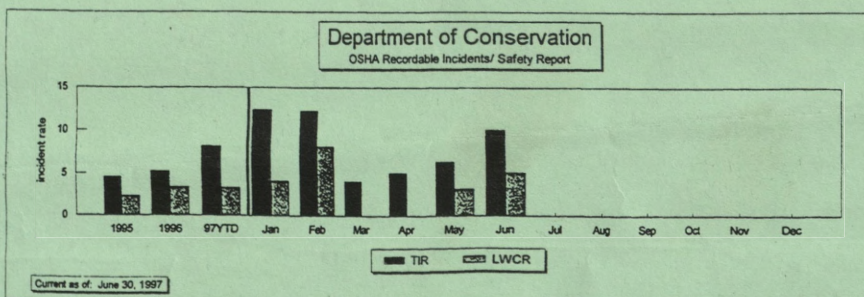
Now that the Legislature has adjourned, we are seeing the dust settle on what the first session of the 118th Legislature accomplished. A number of bills directly affected DOC. A sample of the bills are:

- ✓ LD's 397 and 1167 significantly strengthen timber trespass and timber theft laws and will make it easier to prosecute these violations. The Maine Forest Service worked very closely with the District Attorneys in crafting these laws to ensure that Prosecutors had the tools to go after timber thieves and trespassers.
- ✓ LD 651 strengthens the arson laws to make it a more serious crime.
- ✓ LD 6 now makes it clear that a County Commissioner or Municipal official may serve on the LURC Commission.
- ✓ LD 1034 requires notification to LURC of lots created through "two in five" provisions or other legal means of dividing lots without LURC approval.
- ✓ LD 1166 requires that four of the seven LURC Commissioners be residents of the LURC jurisdiction (the previous requirement was two).

The bill provides a two year period to accomplish this.

A number of other bills that would have affected the Department were defeated. These included the "wildlands bill", which would have set 4.5 million acres of LURC jurisdiction off limits to any development and a bill to require LURC to expand its permitting process for land management roads.

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Legislation Affecting DOC

Seventeen bills were carried over to the next session. These bills will have a significant impact on DOC if passed. Most of the bills deal with forestry issues such as forest practices, logger licensing, and the Tree Growth Tax Law. The disposition of many of these bills hinges on the outcome of the November referendum on the Forest Compact. Parks and LURC each have bills carried over as well.

This summer will also see the work of a study group to look at the issue of Forest Ranger safety and the issue of whether or not to arm Forest Rangers. This is an important issue that needs to be resolved and one that concerns many people. In addition, **Chuck Gadzik** will chair a sunrise review panel to examine the need for a logger licensing program.

Our next legislative milepost will be sometime in October when the Governor's office will require us to submit any legislation that we want to introduce in the second session. The 118th is expected to take their seats on Wednesday, January 14—but let's think about enjoying this great summer weather rather than next January!

The Mouse is Here...

Plans are progressing at Cobscook Bay State Park for a filming project this summer with a Disney Channel production team. Cobscook is one of several locations being used this summer for a film about a Maine summer camp, to air on TV sometime in the future. Rumors that park staff are all wearing mouse ear hats have proven to be false.

Employee Recognition

We need your help! There are three awards that we need your nominations for. Two are for employees and one is for a "Special Teamwork Award".

For Employee Awards:

The department wants to recognize an outstanding employee and an outstanding manager for our department's "**Employee Service Award**" and "**William Twarog Memorial Manager of the Year Award**". These folks will be recognized by the Governor at the Annual Employee Recognition Day sometime in September. We need your nomination for each of these categories.

The criteria for the "**Employee Service Award**" and "**Manager of the Year Award**" are quite flexible with 5 suggested areas (in no order of importance) for you to consider. They are:

There is no formula or weighting given to any of the above general areas. Each nomination will be considered on its own merits.

You may nominate one individual for each of the two categories—please don't send in multiple nominations for each of the categories.

- Service to Agency
- Service to public
- Record of career growth and development
- Volunteer service
- Such other information as the nominator deems important

The nominees will be reviewed by the Lead Team and chosen based on the merits of each individual nomination.

For the Teamwork Awards:

The purpose of this award is "to recognize the joint efforts of two or more state employees in implementing programs or projects which improve services".

The criteria used to judge the nominations are (in no order of importance or weighting)

There will be extra consideration given to those projects that required teamwork with another agency.

Please send your nominations to Gale Ross via e-mail, phone at 287-4900, or memo to 22 SHS, by Friday, August 22.

The nominees will be reviewed by the Lead Team and chosen based on the merits of each individual nomination.

- project impact/ effectiveness
- degree to which teamwork contributed to success
- efforts which exceed job expectations

Check out the Insect & Disease Management Division's updated Web page at:

<http://www.state.me.us/doc/mfs/idmhome.htm>