

VERMONT ENVIRONMENTAL REPORT

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UNIVERSITY OF VERMONT

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"PLANT A GARDEN, BUILD A HUT AND GET TO KNOW ONE ANOTHER"

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On December 1, 1973, Dr. Martin Johnson, Secretary of Environmental Conservation and a former VNRC Board member, was the guest speaker at the luncheon following the VNRC's Annual Meeting.

Johnson praised the Council for its works and accomplishments during its first decade and said Council members should use them as an inspiration, an impetus and a model for the future. We should continue to move on while recognizing that times have changed.

Johnson reminded those present of the United States' consumption rate of the world's resources. One example cited was that this Country's use of oil has reached the equivalent of 2 Prudhoe Bays per year. By 1980 we will need to find 3 Prudhoe Bays per year to meet the current and escalating demand for oil. The cost of the Alaskan oil to be taken from the North Slope is now 5 times the original cost estimate. It will cost \$6 per barrel at the wellhead, even before it enters the pipeline.

He went on to cite examples of our nation's shortages in many metals and to point out that the amount of solid waste has reached 360 million tons per year -- or 180 thousand tons of cordwood. If that cordwood was put in a line the line would stretch around the earth, to the moon and there would still be 5,000 miles left over.

He further stated we must differentiate between the blessings and curses of technology, development and growth. We must search for self-sufficiency, quality, self-dependency and economic reform.

Johnson stated we must use the same genius that got us into this mess, to get us out of it. We all possess that genius and it is guided by eternally springing hope and idealism. The genius that has us believe one must wear a sheepskin coat, ride a horse and smoke Marlboros to be a man can be used to get us out of our present situation. It is the same genius that has us believe a woman must drink Smirnoff Vodka to be glamorous.

In the future it is your job to set minds straight, Johnson said. He told the one hundred Council members of the natives of New Guinea who sit by the ocean all day waiting and believing there will be a ship that will bring them everything they need. A ship may have come in the past so they are sure it will come again. Johnson went on

PLANT A GARDEN... (con't)

to say that it was the job of those in attendance to tell the natives the ships won't come and that they should plant a garden, build a hut and get to know one another.

FOREST RESOURCE COURSE
TO BE OFFERED

A preview of a course designed to give those without forestry training an introduction to forest resources will be presented at the Pavilion in Montpelier February 13. The lecture, derived from University of Vermont course Forest-105, will discuss forest resources of North America with an emphasis on the northeast and Vermont. Those interested in taking a course of this kind in 1975 are invited to attend this presentation.

MISSISQUOI NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE
NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING REGARDING
WILDERNESS STUDY

A PUBLIC HEARING will be held in the City Hall, St. Albans, Vermont, on February 5, 1974, beginning at 9:30 a.m., concerning a study of the Missisquoi National Wildlife Refuge's suitability for inclusion in the National Wilderness Preservation System.

A brochure containing a map and information may be obtained from the refuge representative, Missisquoi National Wildlife Refuge, Swanton, Vermont 05488.

Individuals or organizations may express their oral or written views by appearing at this hearing, or they may submit written comments for inclusion in the official record of the hearing to the Regional Director, Bureau of Sport and Fisheries and Wildlife, Post Office and Courthouse, Boston, Massachusetts 02109.

CARPOOLING CAN BRING
BIG FUEL SAVINGS

What kind of fuel savings can be realized if the Nation's motorists go to carpooling on a widespread basis? "Substantial," says Secretary of Transportation, Claude S. Brinegar. Noting that the average occupancy rate of automobiles used in urban work trips is now 1.6 persons, Secretary Brinegar said, "If this automobile occupancy rate could be raised to 3.2 persons -- through carpooling -- we would save 20 billion gallons of gasoline annually. Even a very modest increase of from 1.6 to two persons per automobile would save 5 billion gallons of gasoline each year."

Secretary Brinegar pointed out that the motor fuel consumption in the United States during 1973 was around 115 billion gallons for all vehicles or about 900 gallons per vehicle. "Obviously, then, carpooling can make a substantial contribution to our vital fuel conservation program," he said, "and hopefully, it can help us avoid gasoline rationing."

ENVIRONMENTAL HIGHLIGHTS

Montpelier - The State Agency of Environmental Conservation has drawn up a list of guidelines designed to curb energy waste in construction of single-family homes. The guidelines have been forwarded by the state agency to district environmental commissions for purposes of reviewing Act 250 permit applications. The guidelines include recommended amounts of insulation and other steps which should be followed to save energy.

Jamaica - Two realtors took it upon themselves to tell the Mirl Construction Co. it might have a lot of trouble selling 250 condominium units in the proposed "West River Village" here under current market conditions. They said there is no longer the "lush" market of the past few years, as far as second homes are concerned, and the situation would suggest that there is a near saturation of the market for second homes.

Montpelier - Vermont towns will be forced to spend substantial portions of their state highway assistance funds on building roads because of a major state law scheduled to take effect next July 1. Senator Ogden told the Highway Board at a December meeting that the law doesn't make much sense in view of the energy crisis. The Legislature last session passed the new town highway law which was supposed to: set up a new system for classifying town highways, remove some unused roads from the list of highways that now qualify for state aid, and revise the structure for granting state highway assistance - it came to light at the meeting that one section of the new law will force all Vermont towns to spend a portion of the money they receive for each mile of state aid road on highway construction.

Washington, D.C. - A Supreme Court decision in December limited sharply the ability of environmentalists and others to bring class action lawsuits in Federal courts. The high court ruled that, if the suit involves parties from different states, each individual class member must show damages of at least \$10,000, in order to participate in the suit. The court rejected arguments that class actions should be permitted if at least one of the suing parties can meet the minimum damage requirements. The decision resulted from a suit against the International Paper Company, filed by owners of properties fronting on Lake Champlain in Orwell. They sued on behalf of a class consisting of themselves and 200 property owners and renters around the lake seeking damages for alleged pollution harm to their property.

REMINDER -- UNNEEDED STATE ROADS

The December VER featured an article by Council Chairman Brownell on the often unnecessary "improvement" of old town roads. The article requested that readers send the Council photographs before and after improvements which had a deteriorating impact on the character of the town. To date we have received information on several such "improvements", and would like to hear from you if you know of such situations.

LEGISLATIVE LOG

The following bills reported in the December VER have been referred to committees listed below. For more detail on these bills and legislation held over from the 1973 Session please refer to December report.

<u>NUMBER</u>	<u>SUBJECT</u>	<u>COMMITTEE</u>
S-143	Municipal zoning regulations.	Nat. Res.
S-145	Transfer of Fish & Game Department.	Nat. Res.
H-352	Removal of vehicles from highways.	Judic.
H-358	State acquisition of land in municipalities.	Mun. Corp.
H-363	Interim zoning regulations.	Judic.
H-371	Exempt municipalities from sanitary land-fill requirements.	Health & Wel.
H-388	Penalties -- subdivision regulations.	Health & Wel.

NEW BILLS NOT REPORTED IN VER

<u>NUMBER</u>	<u>PURPOSE</u>	<u>COMMITTEE</u>
S-155 Doyle	To extend time period in which hearings may be held on zoning bylaw revisions.	Govt. Op.
S-164 Ogden	To provide that Highway Board shall not plan, construct, or promote additional four lane highways.	Hwy. & Bridges
S-146 Boylan	To provide that rules designed to control water and air pollution shall be valid only if they are approved by General Assembly.	Nat. Res.
S-169 Gibb	To establish minimum levels of phosphorus in certain detergents.	Gen. & Mil.
H-402 Vance	Revise standards by which Public Service Board determines certificate of public good for construction of new electric gen. or transmission facilities.	Commerce
H-404 Vance	To provide for trapping of Fisher.	Fish & Game
H-416 Meaker	To provide for litter levy for litter removal from roadsides and publicly owned places and to encourage the use of refillable beverage containers.	Nat. Res.
H-436 Allen	To prohibit taking of fur-bearing animals except beaver taken in water.	Fish & Game
H-441 Allen	Require approval of General Assembly before planning or construction of electrical energy plant using nuclear fission.	Nat. Res.

JOINT RESOLUTIONS

J.R.S. 26 Ogden	That a joint committee be appointed to conduct an inquiry into all aspects of the state highway program and program financing...	Hwy. & Bridges
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PEOPLE IN THE NEWS

VERMONT ARCHITECT CHAIRS
NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION

Vermont architect Robert A. Burley of Waitsfield has been appointed chairman of the Commission on Environment and Design of the American Institute of Architects. As chairman of the AIA's largest commission, Burley heads a group of 650 architects and consulting members serving on its committees and task forces.

Issues under continuing study by the Environment and Design Commission range from energy conservation to state and federal land-use legislation and natural resource management.

VNRC CHAIRMAN CITED

Jonathan Brownell, chairman of the board of directors of the VNRC, was honored at the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's New England Citizen's Briefing on December 13 in Cambridge, Massachusetts. Brownell received an award of appreciation for his work with the Council, particularly in the land-use area.

BOARD RESIGNATION

Shelburne architect, Jerald Leimenstoll; and Director of CSSV, John Stevens, have submitted resignations from the Board of Directors of the VNRC.

EASTERN WILDERNESS

The Senate Interior Committee has reported S-316, the Eastern Wilderness Areas Bill, to the Senate floor. It will be referred to the Senate Agriculture Committee of which Senator George Aiken is the ranking Republican member. The bill designates two Green Mountain National Forest areas -- Lye Brook and Bristol Cliffs -- as instant wilderness areas and although it includes provisions for study areas, no Vermont areas are so designated. The bill is considered by wilderness advocates to be a very good bill and one which the Agriculture Committee ought to approve without major changes.

Those interested in a comprehensible summary of the entire eastern wilderness situation can obtain a copy of the Interior Committee's Report No. 93-661 (December 20, 1973) by writing Senator Aiken's office. Senator Aiken in his capacity on the Agriculture Committee will be interested undoubtedly in learning Vermonter's views on S-316.

The Council needs a four-drawer letter-size metal filing cabinet. If anyone has such an item in reasonably good condition and would like to donate it to the Council, we will arrange for delivery. Please call Seward Weber.

SKI AREAS FACE CRISIS

The early pioneers of the Vermont ski industry were not only blessed with plentiful snow, but also were wooed by state and local officials anxious to boost a declining rural economy with out-of-state dollars. Gradually this favorable picture changed and the industry now is confronted by problems unanticipated in the early years of winter recreation.

Environmental groups joined by federal and state officials have become increasingly concerned about the impact of new and expanding ski areas on the fragile ecology of the higher elevations. Inhabitants of rural towns have begun to feel a loss of identity in the mushrooming growth that has taken place in and around their villages. Rural landscapes gradually came into the path of the out-of-state developers, prompting legislators and government officials to take strong action to protect the resources of the state from exploitation. The red carpet, once rolled out to the promoters of the ski business, has been gradually rolled up.

And now on top of this, and after several disappointing seasons (and what appears to have been a disastrous Christmas-New Year's period) comes the energy shortage with no sign of short-term abatement. How many setbacks can the industry take, and what is being done to soften the blow of the current crisis?

According to Joe Parkinson, Executive Director of the Vermont Ski Areas Association, if the unavailability of gasoline inhibits travel to the state, Vermont's fragile economy could deteriorate to a recessionary level. Parkinson, who strongly believes that each state should be allowed to regulate gasoline station closing hours in order to protect its basic industries, emphasized that in states geared to recreation, constraints on out-of-state travelers will multiply the economic dilemma far beyond what statistics might indicate. He feels that almost every segment of Vermont's economy will be affected, at least indirectly, including the banking industry which has substantial commitments to winter recreation.

Parkinson said that the ski industry asks no special favors from the state whether it be a relaxation of environmental regulations or exemptions from any hardship borne by other industries or citizens of the state. Ski operators, he explained, have embarked upon their own energy conservation plans which include decreased snow-making operations. (According to statistics published by the Vermont Agency of Development and Community Affairs, only 12 of Vermont's 42 areas make snow and less than two percent of the average area's power use goes into snow-making operations. The entire ski business, according to the report, accounts for only four tenths of one percent of Vermont's total oil and electrical consumption.)

The industry spokesman said that it was logical that north central ski areas, because of their distance from large metropolitan centers, would suffer most from any gas shortage. He stated that the industry as a whole was developing plans to use mass

SKI AREAS FACE CRISIS (con't)

transportation more in the future of Vermont skiing. This would include increased AMTRAK schedules, major car pooling efforts, ski buses, and the use of school buses on the local level.

Killington already has a comprehensive transportation program in operation and the three major ski areas in the Mad River Valley have set up a crash program called "Front Desk" which is designed to transport skiers from large metropolitan areas by bus, take care of lodging and related needs, and provide all necessary transportation to and from areas.

It is still too early to assess the impact of the energy shortage on Vermont's ski industry. Even under normal circumstances, profit is limited by the short season and less than dependable snow conditions. If the gas shortage compounds the problems of the industry this year, and it looks like it already has, the outlook for the future could be bleak (and that may be putting it mildly). Take Hans Thorner, for example, owner and operator of Magic Mountain, a small, well run area in South Londonderry. He has put more than everything he has in his area and is still struggling to rectify extensive damage from the June flood. Now, he faces the prospect of a doubtful season. How many problems can he overcome?

AVAILABLE PUBLICATIONS

The following publications, reports, studies, and pamphlets are available from the VNRC. Most all are free, except number 8. Please request by title.

1. Minutes of VNRC 1973 Annual Meeting, December 1, 1973.
2. "Energy Conservation in the Home: It's Up to You." (Available in quantity from the Environmental Program, Bittersweet House, University of Vermont, Burlington, Vermont 05401).
3. A Selection of Books Relating to the Environment. A listing of publishers or distributors of 124 environmentally related books, pamphlets and films. October, 1973.
4. "Report on Problems in the Practice of Environmental Law in Vermont," by Judy W. Walke. August, 1973.
5. VNRC Statement to Federal EPA on Policy for Regions with Superior Air Quality. October, 1973.
6. "Protection of Natural Areas in Vermont," a report of the Vermont Cooperator (VNRC) in the New England Natural Areas Project. October, 1973.
7. "Population Policy for Vermont," by David B. VanVleck with assistance from a VNRC study committee.
8. "Vermont's Environmental Education Resources." Inventory of 150 school, university and college, private and governmental organizations involved in environmental education. Topics described include: person to contact; objectives of the program; resources available; activities and evaluation of the program. May, 1973. Cost--\$5.00.
9. "How You Can Become a Tree Farmer." American Forest Institute, June, 1973.
10. "People on the Land: Settlement Patterns for Vermont." Prepared for the Vermont State Planning Office by Robert Burley Associates, June, 1973.

THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONNAIRE WAS DISTRIBUTED AT THE 1973 ANNUAL MEETING. WE WOULD APPRECIATE ANSWERS TO THESE QUESTIONS BY READERS WHO DID NOT ATTEND THE DECEMBER MEETING. RESULTS WILL BE PUBLISHED IN A FUTURE VER. PLEASE RETURN TO VNRC.

Monthly, the Vermont Natural Resources Council publishes its newsletter, The Vermont Environmental Report. The Report is mailed to members, the media, libraries and Senate and House members. In order to aid us in maintaining the quality of the Report, we would appreciate your answers to the following:

1. Do you read the Vermont Environmental Report?
 Each issue Occasionally Not read
2. Are you satisfied with the quality of the Report?
 Excellent Good Fair Poor
3. How often do you think the Report should be published?
 Monthly 6 times a year Quarterly
4. Do you consider the Report an important part of your membership?
 Yes Not significant
5. What type of news do you find most informative?
 Council activities Environmental Highlights
 Legislative Log Combination of all three
6. What type of articles do you enjoy and find most informative?
 Short In-depth
7. Any comments not covered?

Signature (optional)

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Address Correction
Requested