

Vermont Environmental Report

July/August 1982

A Bimonthly Newsletter Published by the Vermont Natural Resources Council

Vol. 3 No. 4

The Questions We're Not Allowed to Ask

With the Vermont primaries coming up in September, we thought one of the best ways we could be of service to our members and to the general public would be to question candidates for public office on a variety of environmental issues and publish their responses in the *Vermont Environmental Report*.

But before we sent out the questionnaires, we wrote to the Internal Revenue Service to make sure that this activity would not be interpreted as "participating or intervening in a political campaign on behalf of any candidate for public office," which is illegal for tax-exempt organizations. We told the IRS that we planned to send the questionnaire to all candidates for Governor, U.S. Senator and U.S. Congressman for the state of Vermont, that the responses would be printed verbatim with no evaluative statements or editorial comments of any kind, and that our newsletter would state that the Vermont Natural Resources Council does not endorse any candidate or point of view. We felt that the questions, like the issues, are so complex that there are few "right" or "wrong" answers; in fact, VNRC has no official position on most of them.

Nevertheless, two weeks before

our publication date, the IRS notified us that if we conducted our candidates' survey, we "could be construed to be engaging in prohibited political activity which could jeopardize your tax exempt status." There was no explanation -- only a copy of an IRS ruling that said that it is permissible for a tax-exempt organization to survey candidates for public office and publish the results so long as "neither the questionnaire nor the voters' guide, in content or in structure, evidences [sic] a bias or preference with respect to the views of any candidate or group of candidates."

Obviously, we think our questionnaire satisfies these requirements, but because we depend on the contributions of our members (and tax deductibility is an important incentive), we cannot risk the loss of our tax-exempt status. The survey covers critical environmental issues that ought to be addressed by Vermont candidates for public office, however, and we print the questions here in the hope that you will ask them yourselves when you have the opportunity to do so.

The questionnaire used an agree/disagree format, and we planned to give candidates the option of writing a short comment (25 words or less) at the end of each section.

QUESTIONS FOR STATE CANDIDATES

1. Meeting Vermont's long-term electrical demand.

- ___ Vermont utilities may need to build one or more additional nuclear power plants.
- ___ Vermont utilities should build at least one more coal-fired power plant.
- ___ NEPOOL should proceed with planned construction of an extra high voltage power line through northeastern Vermont in order to purchase surplus power from Hydro Quebec.
- ___ Vermont can meet new demand for electrical energy through a combination of energy efficiency and load management and increased reliance on small-scale wind, wood, solar and hydroelectric systems.
- ___ Vermont utilities should exhaust load management and energy efficiency options before investing in any new generation or transmission facilities.

2. Energy conservation and efficiency of use.

- ___ Vermont should expand the Home Energy Audit (HEAT) program.
- ___ The State of Vermont should provide low-interest loans for energy-saving home improvements.
- ___ The Public Service Board should retain seasonal electric rates to discourage the use of electric resistance heating.
- ___ The Vermont Legislature should increase funding for the Vermont Industrial Energy Conservation Advisory Program and the Commercial Energy Conservation Advisory Program.
- ___ The Vermont Legislature should continue to allocate funds for public transportation to make up for scheduled cutbacks in Federal funding.

3. Act 250

- ___ The Vermont Legislature should close the so-called Act 250 "10-acre loophole."
- ___ The Agency of Environmental Conservation should strengthen its role in Act 250 proceedings by routinely conducting site visits and participating in District Commission hearings.
- ___ The Vermont Legislature should aid enforcement of Act 250 by allowing the courts to assess civil penalties for violations.
- ___ The Vermont Legislature should adopt a State Land Use Plan.

(Continued on page eight)



Site of the proposed "Pyramid Mall" in Williston (Photo by James Nassau)

PYRAMID LOSES ANOTHER ROUND

The company that wants to build an 82-store shopping mall in Williston lost another of its nine lives in June when the Vermont Supreme Court rejected its appeal of a lower court decision concerning the legal interpretation of Act 250. The Pyramid Corporation had appealed to the higher court after the Chittenden County Superior Court said that it would consider economic impact on the city of Burlington and other issues in a trial stemming from a district environmental commission decision barring construction of the mall in Williston.

The District Four Environmental Commission denied Pyramid an Act 250 permit in October, 1978, based on the mall's probable effects on Burlington's tax base, traffic congestion beyond Williston, non-compliance with the Williston town plan, and tendency to promote scattered development. The firm appealed to

the Environmental Board and had the case removed to Chittenden County Superior Court. Pyramid asked the court to rule on the relevance of these issues in Act 250 proceedings before initiating a trial-on-the-merits.

In 1980, the court ruled that the first two issues were relevant and said that it would require additional evidence and a new trial on the latter two. Pyramid appealed to the Vermont Supreme Court, but the higher court said that it could not rule on the interpretation of Act 250 "in a vacuum" without a complete factual record of the case.

At press time, the Pyramid Corporation had not said whether it would proceed with a trial in Chittenden County Superior Court. The Vermont Natural Resources Council is assisting a Williston citizens' group opposed to construction of the mall.

QUEBEC WOULD SELL MORE POWER TO NEW ENGLAND

NEPOOL and Hydro Quebec have reached a preliminary agreement on the sale of 690 megawatts of Quebec hydroelectricity to New England utilities by 1996, but at the tenth annual conference of New England Governors and Eastern Canadian Premiers in June, Yves Duhaime, Quebec's Prime Minister of Energy Resources, said Quebec wants to accelerate that proposal and send 2000 megawatts of power to the region by 1992. Duhaime said that demand for power from the massive La Grande hydroelectric facility is less than anticipated, and he is anxious to draft a new agreement with New England states in the next

18 months.

The Vermont Public Service Board completed public hearings last month on a proposal to build a 450kv transmission line through northern Vermont and New Hampshire. When the line is extended south of Comerford Station in Monroe, New Hampshire, it could transport 2000 megawatts of Canadian hydroelectricity to load centers in southern New England. The New Hampshire Public Utilities Commission has already approved a 300kv line, but it questions the need to build a line large enough to carry 2000 megawatts.



Photo courtesy of the Vermont Travel Division

Update: Stream Reclassification

THE OTTAUQUECHEE: "B" OR "C?"

VNRC is one of the parties in a lawsuit over reclassification of a portion of the Ottauquechee River. The Town of Sherburne wants to change the river from Class "B" to Class "C" so that a proposed municipal sewage treatment plant will be able to discharge treated effluent into the Ottauquechee.

The Vermont Water Resources Board agreed to create a Class C zone in 1978, but only for winter use when wastewater production was high and recreational use of the river was low. Now, the town has requested a year-round Class C zone to eliminate the need for expensive off-stream treatment.

The town is also seeking higher priority in the allocation of Federal funds for construction of municipal sewage treatment facilities. The Sherburne plant is currently scheduled for FY83 funding, but at the urging of a fire district serving resi-

dential and commercial developments along the Killington access road, the town has petitioned for FY83 monies.

VNRC believes that advancing the Sherburne proposal would jeopardize more urgent projects, such as the Williston municipal sewage treatment plant, which is scheduled for FY83. The Council also maintains that the State should demonstrate that it is technically infeasible to dispose of sewage effluent off-stream before reclassifying an up-land stream.

The town of Sherburne argues that if the Ottauquechee is a water-quality-sensitive river, the town should receive higher priority in the allocation of sewage treatment plant construction grants; if the Ottauquechee is not especially sensitive, then the State should allow on-stream discharge of treated sewage wastes.

A NEW RIPPLE IN THE RANCH BROOK CONTROVERSY

A citizens' group known as "RIPPLE" (Regional Impact Pure Water Protective League) has appealed a recent Vermont Water Resources Board decision to the Lamoille County Superior Court. The group objects to the Board's decision to reclassify a portion of Ranch Brook in Stowe to accommodate sewage effluent from a proposed 600-unit condominium development on Mt. Mansfield.

The Water Resources Board maintains that treated effluent from the "Inn at the Mountain" will have "no appreciable effect on the water quality of Ranch Brook or the West Branch." VNRC believes that the Ranch Brook reclassification represents a break with the Board's long-standing policy of refusing to downgrade pristine high elevation streams, and has written a letter to the Board

SORRY ABOUT THAT

We apologize to any of our readers who were offended by the cartoon that appeared on page 2 of the May/June VER ("Vermont: Home of the First Wood-Burning Power Plant in the U.S."). It in no way represents VNRC's position on the forestry impacts of the Burlington Electric Department's planned 50-megawatt wood-fired generator. As always, the opinions expressed by VER contributors -- including cartoonists -- are not necessarily those of VNRC, but in retrospect we believe that the cartoon should have appeared on the "Commentary" page to prevent possible misinterpretation. MM

urging it to reconsider its decision.

Meanwhile, five Stowe developers, including the Mt. Mansfield Corporation, Topnotch, and the Trapp Family Lodge, have organized a separate fire district and are studying the feasibility of building a sewer line and substantially increasing the capacity of the Stowe municipal sewage treatment plant at their own expense.

Ski area sewerage would eliminate the need for the Ranch Brook reclassification, but, as RIPPLE attorney Harold Stevens pointed out, it would also open the door to more intensive development in the Mt. Mansfield area. RIPPLE maintains that the Mt. Mansfield Company has not sufficiently explored alternative sites for on-site disposal of sewage effluent from the "Inn at the Mountain."

RECYCLERS DISSECT "AVERAGE VERMONTER'S GARBAGE"

On September 25th, members of the Board of Directors of the Association of Vermont Recyclers will sort a truckload of garbage in Brattleboro to develop a profile of the "Average Vermonter's Garbage." Ron Perkins, an AVR Board member and President of Waste Control Systems, Inc., will provide the garbage from randomly-selected homes on his regular route in Brattleboro. A series of articles in the organization's newsletter will advise homeowners on the most environmentally-sound methods of handling the different types of waste.

Calendar

Saturday, August 21

Forest management workshop in Randolph. See *Announcements* for details.

Saturday, August 28, 11:00 - 6:00

Vermont Heritage Festival at historic Bent Hill Settlement in Waitsfield, a VNRC benefit featuring music, entertainment, a hearty lunch, hot air balloon and horse-drawn carriage rides, and demonstrations and exhibits of early American crafts. Dick Hathaway's country auction begins promptly at noon. Everyone welcome -- no charge! See page 7 for details.

Sunday, August 29, 1:00 - 5:00

A picnic to benefit VNRC at Harvey and Trudi Carter's home in Bennington, Vermont, including music, dancing, good food and entertainment. \$15.00 per adult (children under 10 free). Make reservations early by calling the Carters at 442-6324.

Saturday, September 11

VNRC/Nature Conservancy Annual Meeting at Middlebury College in Middlebury. Field trips, a business meeting, lunch and a keynote speech by Canadian Minister for the Environment John Roberts (James Watt's Canadian opposite in more ways than one!). Look for your personal invitation by mid-August.

Wednesday, September 15, 9:30 - 4:30

The first of two informational meetings on oil and gas drilling for members of district environmental commissions, regional planners and town officials, at the Cortina Inn in Mendon. The sessions will emphasize the economic, environmental and social impact of drilling in the Green Mountain State. For more information, call Jan Eastman at 828-3309.

Thursday, September 16, 9:30 - 4:30

Second informational meeting on oil and gas drilling at the Radisson in Burlington (see preceding entry).

Saturday, September 18

Forest management workshop in Wolcott. See *Announcements* for details.

Saturday, October 2, 10:00 - 5:00

The Vermont Wildlife Festival, sponsored by the Vermont Audubon Society and hosted by the Otter Creek Audubon Society, will feature 25 exhibits on wildlife themes by conservation groups and government agencies, as well as live animal shows, films, slide presentations and other programs. The setting is Camp Keewaydin on beautiful Lake Dunmore (on state route 53 about seven miles south of Middlebury). \$1.00 per person, \$2.00 per family. If you have questions or suggestions for programs, call or write Wally Elton, Box 695, Middlebury, VT 05753 (388-3942).

Friday, October 8, 10:30 - 2:30

SWEEP (Statewide Environmental Education Program) Meeting at Camp Keewaydin Environmental Center on Lake Dunmore. Call Sally Laughlin at 457-2779 for more information.

Saturday, October 16

5th Annual VNRC/Vermont Law School Environmental Law Conference at VLS in South Royalton. This year's theme is "The Environ-

ment and Equity," and Daniel Mandelker, a nationally-known land use lawyer, will be the keynote speaker. The "early bird sessions," designed to familiarize participants with some of the issues which will be discussed at the conference, will be offered twice during the day beginning at 8:00 a.m. Bring a brown bag lunch or dine at the South Royalton House. Call the Environmental Law Center at 763-8303 for more information.

Announcements

FORESTRY WORKSHOPS

The Vermont Forest Demonstration Project is sponsoring a series of one-day forest management workshops at various locations around the state this summer and fall. Topics covered will vary from region to region, but the following will be included in all sessions: management for timber, fuelwood, sugarbush, and wildlife habitat; marking, marketing, and harvesting timber and fuelwood; timber taxation; and tree identification. For further information and registration forms, write to the Extension Natural Resources Office, 601 Main Street, Burlington, Vermont 05401 or call 656-3258.

TWO NEW NWF PUBLICATIONS

VNRC has extra copies of two excellent new National Wildlife Federation publications. *Shredding the Environmental Safety Net: The Full Story Behind the EPA Budget Cuts* analyzes the EPA's workload and the effects of recent and proposed budget cutbacks. *Acid Rain: What It Is -- How You Can Help!* is a short, readable summary of current research on the effects of acid precipitation with advice for readers on how to help put a stop to it. For copies, send \$1.00 for postage and handling to VNRC, 7 Main Street, Montpelier, VT 05602.



VERMONT ENVIRONMENTAL
REPORT

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The "Hows" and "Whys" of Water Conservation



Gunnar Baldwin

It's hard to get excited about the need to conserve water in New England. The region abounds in lakes, streams and rivers, and the cost of water is low. After all, can you buy 1000 gallons of any other beverage for about \$1.00?

But we can -- and ought to -- get very excited about the need to reduce the amount of wastewater entering our septic systems and sewers. A common cause of septic system failure is simple overloading. When too much water enters the septic tank, suspended solids may flow into the leachfield instead of settling into the bottom of the tank. The suspended wastes build up an impermeable mat in the drainage field, forcing sewage effluent to the surface or contaminating a nearby well or stream.

A septic tank on the verge of failure can usually be saved by simply reducing the flow of water. A homeowner who relieves the pressure on his or her septic system by practicing water conservation can offset a tremendous expense with a modest investment. A town that reduces the amount of wastewater entering its sewers through voluntary conservation or the use of water-saving plumbing fixtures not only protects its drinking water supply, but postpones or eliminates the need for new sewage treatment capacity as well as water supply capacity. This can mean considerable savings for the town.

In fact, the economics of water conservation and wastewater reduction are even more exciting than the environmental advantages. There are few other acts of conservation that have three-way cost reduction benefits: first, water not consumed does not need to be pumped, filtered or paid for; secondly, water not consumed does not need to be heated, either in the hot water heater or by being raised to room temperature in the toilet tank or water pipes (a significant source of heat loss which is often overlooked); and, thirdly, water not consumed does not become wastewater or sewage requiring expensive treatment.

DISINCENTIVES AND HIDDEN COSTS

With all these incentives, why aren't we doing more to conserve water? One of the reasons is that water consumption is determined not only by the person whose hand is on the faucet or toilet-flushing lever, but by the engineer who designs these fixtures. Plumbing codes and wastewater treatment system regulations have reinforced the status quo by making requirements that tend to discourage the use of water-conserving devices.

For example, Vermont Health Regulations require that septic system absorption fields be designed

to accommodate a flow of 75 gallons per day per bedroom. These specifications assume the use of standard toilets and showerheads and discourage the designer from specifying water-conserving fixtures and a smaller, less costly sewage treatment system. The Vermont Health Department and the Agency of Environmental Conservation's Protection Division are currently considering a maximum 10% reduction in leachfield area requirements where water-conserving plumbing fixtures are in use.

Also, the real costs of water and sewage treatment -- and, consequently, the economic benefits of conservation -- are often hidden. Until recently, the Federal Government has paid 75% or more of the construction costs of most municipal sewage collection and treatment systems, with the remaining capital costs paid for through local taxes. Water and sewage rates usually reflect only operating and maintenance costs.

"VOLUNTARY" AND "INVOLUNTARY" CONSERVATION

To most people, water conservation means changing one's habits: turning the water off while brushing one's teeth, turning off the shower instead of stepping aside while soaping up, and washing the car with a bucket instead of a hose. We become familiar with many such methods during dry seasons or when the pipes freeze. These voluntary acts can reduce water use by 20 - 30%.

Installing water-saving fixtures can reduce water consumption even further, and this "involuntary" conservation does not require a change of habit.

Since 70% of conventional water use occurs in the bathroom (30% through the shower and 40% through the toilet), it is natural to try to conserve the water used by toilets, showers and sinks first. Conventional toilets and showerheads still predominate in the hardware stores and plumbing supply shops, but new water-conserving fixtures are becoming more available.

Most major plumbing manufacturers in this country now make "water saver" toilets which use 3½ gallons of water per flush compared to 5 - 7 gallons for a standard toilet. These toilets are smaller than the conventional five-gallon flush toilet, but they generally have the same design. Some shallow-trap toilets use between one and three gallons per flush, but new toilets are now available that reduce water consumption to as few as two quarts. A 90% cut-back in toilet water flow translates into a 36% reduction in household wastewater production!



A two-quart toilet can reduce household water consumption by 36%.

Showerheads that atomize the spray into a forceful mist and give a comfortable shower with only about two gallons per minute are commonly available now. This system was designed for the Navy for use aboard ships where the water supply was too precious for the kind of "recreational showering" that some sailors had been accustomed to at home! The atomizing showerhead has become very popular, not so much because it saves water, but because it saves the energy required to heat it. They usually pay for themselves in fuel savings within a few months. Showerheads with flow rates of under three gallons per minute are now required in many areas.

WATER-SAVING TAX CREDITS

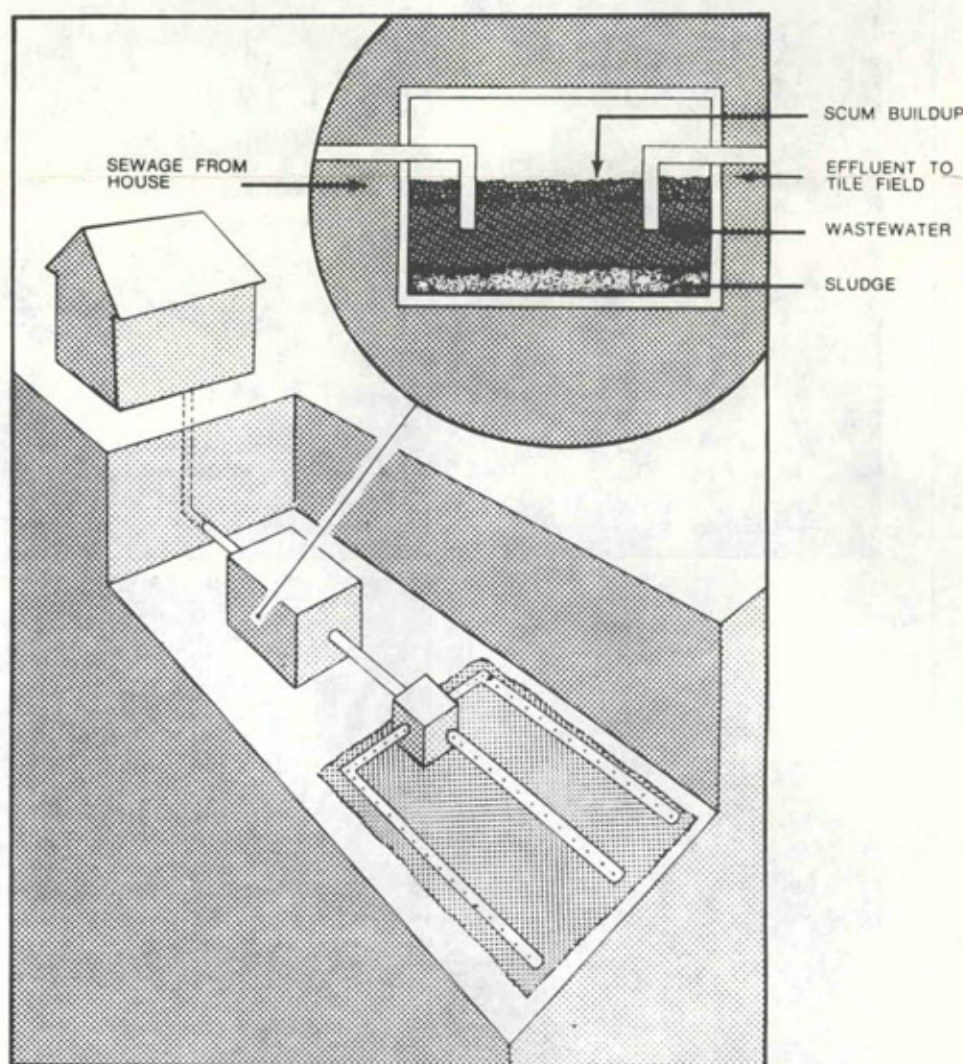
Water conservation might be a better investment for State and local government than new water or sewage capacity. The average family of four can save approximately 36,000 gallons of water per year by installing two-quart toilets, water-saving showerheads and low-flow faucet aerators. If this installation cost about \$1200 per household, and the owners received a 40% tax credit, the \$480 invested by the government would buy 36,000 gallons of water supply and 36,000 gallons of sewage capacity for approximately 1 1/3 cents per

gallon. This cost should be compared with financing additional water supply and sewage treatment capacity. Where municipalities are contemplating new construction in either of these areas, the water-saving tax credit should be a very attractive proposition.

The "energy crisis" has made some significant changes in our habits and has produced some promising, new and more appropriate technology. It is not difficult to foresee a "water crisis" that will cause even more significant changes. Although some die-hard auto enthusiasts might disagree, most of us would rather give up our cars than do without water.

A "water crisis" is not inevitable, however. We can reap substantial environmental and economic benefits through "voluntary" and "involuntary" water conservation measures. But we must greatly increase our efforts to educate the homeowner, the planners of water supply and pollution control facilities, the budget committees and the manufacturers who cause the water to flow.

Gunnar Baldwin is the President of Thornton Gore Enterprises, a New Hampshire company that markets flow reduction products and actively supports water conservation through public education.



A TYPICAL SEPTIC TANK

(illustration courtesy of the EPA)

About Those Quakes...

Where were you on the morning of January 9th and the evening of January 18th, 1982?

An article in the June issue of *Appalachia* answers some of the questions we all had in the aftermath of the January earthquakes. Jay J. Pulli, who operates the MIT seismic network, says that yes, January '82 was a period of unusual seismic activity. "However," he says, "in terms of the long historical record of seismicity in New England, the most recent quakes were not surprising. Moderate-to-large earthquakes have struck New England in the

past and will most likely continue to do so in the future."

Hundreds of small faults crisscross the Northeast, and no area is immune to seismic activity. The Lake Champlain Valley is Vermont's most active region, and our only "significant" (5.0 magnitude) earthquake was recorded near Middlebury, Vermont, on April 10, 1962.

The January 9th and 18th earthquakes were centered in western New Brunswick and central New Hampshire. They registered 5.7 and 5.4, respectively.

VERMONT HERITAGE FESTIVAL

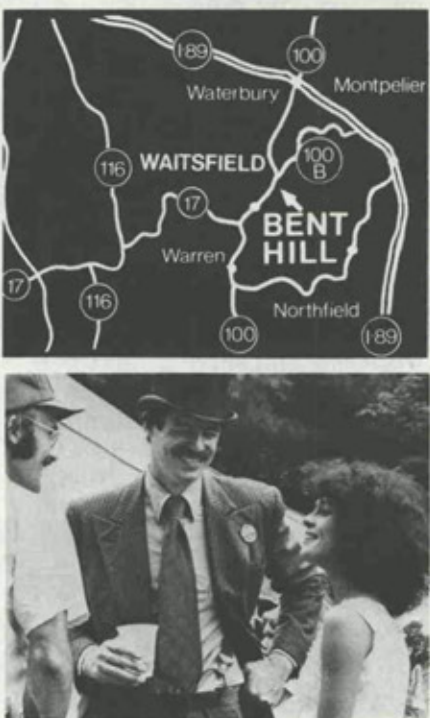
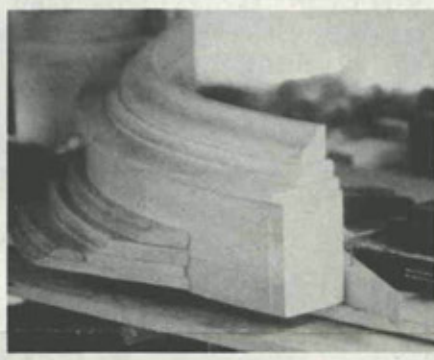
Saturday, Aug. 28 11a.m. to 6p.m.

Waitsfield, on the common of historic Bent Hill Settlement

NOON: AUCTION of contributed art, crafts, merchandise and services

Displays and demonstrations of early American crafts and tools

Music, entertainment, lunch and beverages befitting a FESTIVAL!





Richard Hathaway will auctioneer at the second annual Vermont Heritage Festival at Bent Hill Settlement in Waitsfield, Vermont, on August 28th.

VNRC Fundraiser Set for Saturday, August 28

Over 600 people turned out last August for a VNRC benefit in Waitsfield to picnic, listen to music, pick up a bargain at Dick Hathaway's "country auction," peruse early American crafts displays and demonstrations, and stroll among the lovingly-restored homes at Bent Hill Settlement.

Gregory and Carolynne Schipa of Weather Hill Restoration have graciously offered to host another "Vermont Heritage Festival" this year, and we're hoping for an even bigger turnout.

We were still making plans for the festival at press time, but we can tell you that some of the highlights will include: hot air balloon and horse-drawn carriage rides, Irish music with Bob DeMarko, folk songs by Alice Kinzie and Peggy Vasko's puppet shows. The Black Forest Cafe and Mary and

Vicki Schipa will be back again this year, so you know the food will be fantastic! And we're looking forward to a lamb shish-kebab sponsored by the Vermont Lamb Marketing Association.

Dick Hathaway, who has a talent for tickling your funny bone while he unties your purse strings, will auction off an impressive assortment of donated merchandise and services, including a Jonsereds chain saw, a Stowe ski pass, two woodstoves, a wheelbarrow and much, much more.

So put an "x" on your wall, a smile on your face, a feather in your cap -- and a wallet in your pocket -- and join us at the Vermont Heritage Festival at Bent Hill Settlement in Waitsfield (follow the signs off route 100) from 11:00 - 5:00 on Saturday, August 28th.

Richard Hathaway Auctioneers For Fun and Non-profit

Norma Jane Skjöld

"I always wanted to be a sports announcer," says Richard Hathaway. "I loved the theater and the stage -- words and drama. It's a way of being creative and egomaniacal at the same time."

And that is, more or less, how he's come to be the area's premier special events auctioneer. He does it, he says, for the good time and to help raise funds for organizations "whose aspirations exceed their finances."

He also does it, he says, because he's an accumulator, and if he doesn't auction off his collections now and then, he fears a fate like the one which befell the Collyer brothers in 1942.

"You never heard of the Collyer brothers?" he asks. "Well, they were dead for three weeks before anybody found them, and then there was 140 tons of stuff to haul away."

They were, in other words, savers.

"It's a way of accumulating the past," he explains. "I have an enormous preservational instinct. It's the whole Vermont thing: use it, use it up. Auctions are a splendid way of recycling possessions."

Hathaway collects books, antiques, and prints from Thomas Nast and Winslow Homer, and does lectures on the roots of the collecting impulse.

He is also a professor of alternative education at Vermont College

now, after being a core faculty member of the Adult Degree Program (formerly at Goddard College, now at Vermont College) for 17 years.

His first auction was for the Vermont Democratic Party in 1967 and "just this last month" he's done auctions for Two-Penny Circus, Vermont American Friends Service Committee, Woodbury Associates, American Civil Liberties Union of Vermont and New Hampshire, the Hitchcock Environmental Center in Amherst, Massachusetts, the TLC Childcare Center, Washington County Art Resources Association, and of course, for Goddard College programs.

Since he works without a fee for non-profit organizations which seem particularly worthy to him, he requires that the experience be entertaining. And entertaining it is, with himself at the microphone.

It's also rewarding, he says, when he peruses the donations from merchants for auction.

"Businesses are enormously responsive, extraordinarily generous," he testifies.

In his spare time, Hathaway serves as a movie reviewer and commentator for radio station WNCS, and produces scores of scholarly articles and reviews for everything from *Encyclopedia Britannica* to *Christian Century* to the *Journal for American Historical Print Collectors Society*.

Commentary

Critical Environmental Choices Facing Vermont

Carl Reidel

In the early years of the environmental movement, there were a couple of homely proverbs that conservationists liked to cite to capture the spirit of an environmental-ecological perspective.

The first is that "everything is hitched to everything else." John Muir once said that "you cannot touch a flower without disturbing a star." He was acknowledging our fundamental linkage to the natural systems that shape all life. In a broader sense, this environmental proverb warns us to consider the entire system -- biological, economic, social, cultural and political.

The second, made popular by Barry Commoner, is that "there is no such thing as a free lunch." This is but a practical consequence of the first. Whatever the problem at hand, we must insist that all costs are considered.

One additional proverb, coined by Rene Dubos, is that we must learn to "think globally and act locally." This refines the earlier proverbs by recognizing that local situations must consider global forces.

In a chapter of the book I recently edited, *New England Prospects*, Tom Jorling of Williams College suggests a fascinating way for those of us in New England to "think globally" in terms of our environmental choices. He says that a fundamental way to assess our environmental condition is to consider what he calls our geographic and technological distance from our fundamental life needs. The "needs" he cites are food, water, housing, clothing, energy, materials, and systems of transportation and waste disposal. Drawing on a number of studies, he has estimated the distance in miles that we must reach for each of these needs, comparing 1850 to 1975:

Need at Albany	1850	1975
Food	0-5	1300
Water	0-5	50
Housing	20	750
Clothing	20	1000
Materials	30	1000
Energy	30	500
Transportation	10	500
Sewers/waste	0	200

He adds to this "geographic distance" from our basic needs, the notion of "technological distance." Here he does not offer numbers, but rather a question: "If the technology-based system fails -- for whatever reason -- can the individual provide the life-support need personally, or is it available within the community?" Can the system be fixed if it fails? For Vermonters, that is a very real question. How long can we manage if energy or food supplies are cut off in mid-winter?

Jorling's point is extremely important. We in New England are vulnerable. We are hostage to remote, complex and centralized systems.

Jorling's thesis is a key to getting all our environmental problems "hitched together." Energy, agriculture, acid rain, water and land use issues become parts of a larger puzzle.

When Vermont imports oil from the Mideast and electricity from Quebec, broccoli from California and lettuce from Mexico, lumber from Oregon and Georgia, and machinery from Michigan, we also "import" acid rain, under-utilized forests, abandoned farms, under-employed workers, and high interest rates. When a region rich in natural resources imports 80-90% of its food and timber, we are shipping coal to Newcastle and pollution to Eden.

Let's look briefly at one serious problem: agriculture. You know the dismal statistics. No region of the nation lacks food production, storage and processing capability as New England. We import over 80% of our foodstuffs, pay higher food prices, and see our farms and farmland dwindling.

The national agricultural system is over-extended and disintegrating. In response, the Federal Government is considering substantial changes in price-support structures and agricultural policy generally. USDA is under immense pressure to save Midwestern and Californian agriculture from economic chaos, without the least interest in the future of New England. Support for traditional marketing orders protecting New England's dairy-based farm economy is crumbling.

Put simply, the Federal Government would like to de-couple New England and the Northeast from the national agricultural system and lengthen our geographic distance even more. An imminent disaster for Vermont? Perhaps. But also a rare opportunity for this region, this state, to seize control of its own destiny!

Government -- Vermont's government in league with other states in New England -- must become the catalytic force to create a new structure to replace the soon-to-be defunct national system. That must include development of new marketing organizations, public and private, based on re-defined market regions. It must include major intervention in financial markets to give farmers and agricultural processors access to capital and credit. It must include revitalized educational and research efforts in our state universities to provide the economic information, technological innovation and trained personnel appropriate to our regional needs and natural resource base. In sum, we must devise a comprehensive agricultural policy with a hard-hitting, well-financed strategic plan which harnesses the resources of government, private enterprise and the educational establishment.

I am fully aware that this has been said, in part at least, by the current State administration and some who would like to replace it. But while they argue over who said it first, the fact remains that very little is being done!

I cannot fill in the details of what a comprehensive strategy will require. I am not an agricultural expert or economist, but I can demand that our political leaders mobilize the resources necessary to tackle the job.

(Continued on page 6)

Critical Choices

(Continued from page five)

The argument of the present national administration that we must leave agricultural problems to "the market" is bankrupt. If that attitude had prevailed in education, health care, and energy production, our society would be in shambles. Why agriculture and natural resources? The let-the-market-do-it ideology is not taken seriously by big business, proved by the fact that U.S. corporations have an army of highly-paid lobbyists in Washington seeking government intervention on their behalf. When they argue for deregulation or a balanced budget, it's always to weaken consumer protection and environmental programs, never to reduce subsidies and tax systems that provide Federal regulation of markets on their behalf.

If this state, in cooperation with other New England states, took an aggressive stance in agriculture, I'm convinced that we would soon discover new possibilities in a wide range of other environmental fields. We would, for example, see the wisdom of sound land use planning as originally called for by the framers of Act 250. Call it what you want -- growth planning, resource development, or land use planning -- but the careful planning and management of land is critical to solving a wide range of our energy, agricultural, forestry, water and economic problems. It is essential to gaining control of our destiny at the level of the communities where we live.

I am weary of the worn-out myths used to scare the public and weaken support for regional planning efforts: loss of local control, subversion of individual freedom, economic stagnation, and creeping socialism. The quickest way to weaken local government and rob people of their land values is to yield the right to decide local land management to developers and impersonal corporate interests. The quickest way to scare off responsible industries and developers is to create uncertainty in land development patterns.

The issue is not whether or not to plan; we are planning whether we like it or not. The question is *who* will plan. Without sound local, regional and state land use plans, the planners will be real estate speculators, energy corporations and Federal agencies like the USDA and the Department of Transportation.

Land use management and planning is an essential key to choosing the alternative path described by Jorling. Of all areas of resource management, the states and local governments of this nation have the primary power to control land use. It is one of the few areas of state and local control left -- a power that the courts have asserted repeatedly rests with the people. We will lose that right if we fail to exercise it.

I have no doubts that if we would act on issues of regional agricultural development and land use planning, most of our other environmental problems could be solved. We would certainly be a long ways toward learning to think globally and act locally. And a decade hence we could look back at the place where the path in the woods diverged, and be able to say we took the one less travelled by and it made all the difference.

Excerpted from an address to the 1982 Annual Meeting of the Windham Regional Planning and Development Commission. Carl Reidel is the Chairman of the Board of the Vermont Natural Resources Council.

Meet the Candidates

VNRC members who attend the 20th Annual Meeting at Middlebury College on September 11th will elect six new directors for the Council. This year the Nominating Committee has proposed a single slate of candidates for four at-large positions on the Board, and five candidates will compete for two directorships reserved for representatives of VNRC member organizations.

At-large

Maurice D. "Red" Arnold
(incumbent)
Whiting

"Red" is a land management consultant and a writer on resource issues. He retired in 1978 after 30 years with the Federal Interior Department and the National Institute of Health. As a planner and executive trained in economics and public administration, he helped change national policies on highway construction, flood control and land protection. He is a director of the New England Natural Resources Center, the Vermont Chapter of The Nature Conservancy, and Elderly Services, Inc. He is also a supervisor of the Otter Creek Conservation District and a member of the Vermont House of Representatives.

Robert S. Gillette
Montpelier

Robert Gillette is the Chairman of the Board of National Life Insurance Company and he serves on the boards of several other companies as well. An MIT graduate in mechanical engineering, Gillette has been involved in ma-

chinery, electronics, granite and financial businesses. In 1976-7, he was Chairman of the Governor's Cost Control Council. He is currently a member of the Vermont Educational and Health Buildings Financing Agency and he is also active in hospital and school associations.

Gillette says he has a "strong belief in protection of the environment" while recognizing that "natural resources must be used with prudence for the good of society." "A reasonable balance needs to be maintained between strictly environmental concerns and those of the extractive, agricultural and resort industries," he says.

Karen Nystrom Meyer
Montpelier

Karen Meyer graduated from the University of Vermont with a BA in geography and political science in 1970. She was Project Director of the Washington County Dental Health Council from 1975-1977 and Executive Director of the Retired Senior Volunteer Program for Central Vermont from 1977-1979. For the past three years, she has

worked as a Congressional Staff Assistant for Representative James Jeffords, where she is responsible for assisting State agencies, communities and organizations in problems relating to Federal programs. Meyer has been appointed to the Vermont Board of Medical Practice and the Advisory Commission to the Vermont Office on Aging. She is also a member of the Association of American Geographers and she serves on the Executive Council of the Lake Champlain Committee.

Carl Reidel
(incumbent)
North Ferrisburg

Carl Reidel is the Director of the Environmental Program, and Sanders Professor of Environmental Studies and Forestry, at the University of Vermont. He is Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Vermont Natural Resources Council, a director and past president of the American Forestry Association, and a former board member of the National Parks and Conservation Association, the Lake Champlain Committee and the Conservation Society of Southern Vermont.

Organizational

Abbott T. Fenn
Middlebury
Vermont Camping Association

Abbott Fenn is Associate Director of Keewaydin Camps, Lake Dunmore, Salisbury, and Director of Keewaydin Environmental Education Center and Keewaydin Wilderness Canoe Trips. He is President of the Otter Creek Audubon Society and Chairman of the Conservation Committee of the Vermont Camping Association. He is also Chairman of the Vermont Audubon Council's first Vermont Wildlife Festival, which will be held at Keewaydin on October 2nd, 1982. Fenn says his interests include "clean water, clean air, acid rain, endangered species, primitive areas, forest utilization, open space, preservation of farmland, and the philosophy of man relative to his use of his environment."

Robert Klein
(incumbent)
Chelsea
Vermont Chapter of The Nature Conservancy

Robert Klein is the Vermont Field Director of The Nature Conservancy. After receiving a BA from Brandeis and a Master's Degree in Environmental Management from Duke University, he was Assistant Director to the (Martha's) Vineyard Conservation Society. He worked as a consultant for the Maine Critical

Areas Project and he taught in UVM's Environmental Program. He was also Director of VNRC's Natural Areas Project, Phases II and III.

Paul F. Martz
Waitsfield
Vermont Conference of the United Church of Christ

Paul Martz holds a Master's Degree in theology from Boston University and has ministered with the United Church of Christ for 12 years in the New Hampshire Monadnock region, eastern Long Island and Vermont. He now serves as pastor to the Federated Church in Waitsfield, Vermont. An avid camper, hiker and canoeist, Martz says his ministry "has afforded me the opportunity to nurture in others an awareness of and appreciation for our natural environment." In his former Long Island pastorate, he and other members of the congregation along with other organizations prevented the erection of a nuclear power generator less than three miles from the church in Jamesport.

Gail Osherenko
Wolcott
Center for Northern Studies

Gail Osherenko is an attorney with many years of experience in environmental law and politics. Before moving to Vermont, she was a legislative assistant for a

member of Congress from California, a staff attorney with the Land and Natural Resources Division of the Department of Justice, and staff counsel to the President's Council on Environmental Quality. Since moving to Vermont in 1980, Gail has worked with VNRC in the battle over the I-93 extension and she has researched wetlands protection for the Vermont Department of Water Resources. She taught environmental law with Darby Bradley at the University of Vermont, and she is currently a member of the professional staff at the Center for Northern Studies.

William Uptegrove
Jamaica
Green Mountain Club

Bill Uptegrove is a retired city planner who lives on an old farm in Jamaica and represents his town on the Windham Regional Planning Commission. He belongs to a number of national conservation organizations and the following Vermont/New England groups: Green Mountain Club (Brattleboro Section), VNRC, Conservation Society of Southern Vermont, Connecticut River Watershed Council, Woodland Owners' Association, Vermont Wilderness Association and Stop Uranium Mining. Bill enjoys backpacking and canoe-camping and believes in "protecting Vermont's most beautiful wild and natural areas."

The Council

VNRC, NATURE CONSERVANCY COMBINE ANNUAL MEETINGS

This year the Vermont Chapter of the Nature Conservancy has planned its annual meeting for the same day as VNRC's annual meeting. Because many VNRC members are also Conservancy members, we've combined forces and planned an all-day double-header for Saturday, September 11 at Middlebury College in Middlebury, Vermont.

Unfortunately, there's still some built-in frustration: you'll be able to select only one of eight fine field trips and workshops, and you'll have to choose which business meeting to attend if you're a member of both groups. In exchange, you get to hear keynote speaker John Roberts, link up with old and new friends from across Vermont, and have only one Saturday (rather than two) of guilt about not getting your wood shed filled.

This year's selection of field trips is one of the best ever, including guided tours of Fort Independence at Orwell and the Dead Creek Waterfowl Area, visits to a self-sufficient solar house in Cornwall and a methane-producing Middlebury dairy farm, a walking tour of Middlebury's historic district, and group discussions led by VNRC Board Chairman Carl Reidel and Land Use Committee Chairman Larry Forcier.

All the field trips begin at 9:30 a.m. and end in time for people to gather at noon at the Middlebury Inn for socializing and refreshments. If you don't connect there with an old conservationist friend you've been trying to get together with, you'll have a chance over a buffet lunch at Middlebury College. Those who prefer to brown-bag it will be welcome to picnic on the College grounds. And, for the anti-social, there will be an excellent new film on acid rain.

At 1:15, VNRC's business meeting will get underway. VNRC members will get an update on current Council programs and activities, hear from Board Chairman Carl Reidel on future Council directions, consider other business, applaud awards, and vote for Board candidates. At 3:00 p.m., both groups will reunite to hear John Roberts, Canada's Minister of the Environment.

A striking contrast to his U.S. counterpart, Canadian Environmental Chief and Minister of State for Science and Technology John Roberts will address acid rain and clean air as crucial international as well as environmental issues.

The meeting will adjourn at approximately 4:00 p.m.

VNRC RE-THINKS FOREST MANAGEMENT ROLE

• Vermont's annual forest growth could be increased from 4.2 million cords per year to 5-7 million cords per year.

• Vermont is currently consuming only 23% of its total annual forest growth, but it is harvesting 84% of its annual growth of saw-log material.

• The demand for wood for fuel, construction materials and paper will continue to escalate and annual consumption could exceed annual growth in 20 years if demand alone determines how much wood is harvested.

All of these conclusions from last year's study of *The Future of Vermont's Forests* point to the need for improved management of Vermont's many small woodlots and greater public awareness of the economic, environmental and aesthetic values of Vermont's forest resource.

The Vermont Natural Resources Council has always had a special interest in the state's forests and is exploring ways to become more involved in promoting forest manage-

ment and planning. Since 1972, VNRC has been the Vermont sponsor of the Tree Farm Program, which recognizes woodland owners who practice sound forest management. But this sponsorship will end in January, 1983, when the Tree Farm Committee aligns itself with the Vermont Timberland Owners' Association.

The change gives VNRC a chance to consider new ways to support forestry in Vermont. Some of these options are being investigated by the Council's Forestry Policy Task Force, which has drafted a VNRC forest policy position for consideration by the Council's Board of Directors at their summer meeting.

Sarah Thorne, a graduate student in the Dartmouth College Resource Policy program is assessing the social and economic feasibility of sponsoring forest landowners' management and marketing associations in Vermont (see Sarah's article on this subject in the January/February '82 VER). She'll complete her study next spring, and we'll keep you posted on her progress in future issues of *The Vermont Environmental Report*.

ENVIRONMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS DON'T MOVE WITHOUT US! APPEAL NAT'L FOREST LEASING

Six environmental organizations have appealed the U.S. Forest Service decision that permits leasing the majority of the Green Mountain National Forest for petroleum exploration.

Speaking for the group, Lowell Krassner of the Vermont Wilderness Association said, "This leasing decision fails to provide adequate protection for all the traditional uses and activities on the Forest. The consequences of the widespread granting of leases received only cursory consideration, and the implications for wildlife, water quality, wilderness, recreation, and scenery need to be given a thorough airing. This is why we are demanding an Environmental Impact Statement."

The terms of the Forest Service decision, released June 30, permit leases on all parts of GMNF, except the Lye Brook and Bristol Cliffs Wilderness Areas. A decision on leases in the Wilderness Areas was deferred for separate review.

"We are particularly disturbed that exploration activities might compromise the character of the Breadloaf and Devil's Den RARE II areas, which we feel should be protected by Congress as Wilderness Areas," Krassner said.

Wally Elton of the Vermont Audubon Council said, "We do not believe that the Forest Service decision is a reflection of the best professional judgement of the GMNF staff. It appears to be the result of policies pushed by Interior Secretary James Watt to open every possible acre to the petroleum interests, regardless of the impacts on the quality and character of our environment."

Organizations joining in the appeal action are the Vermont Wilderness Association, Vermont Group of the Sierra Club, Vermont Audubon Council, Vermont Natural Resources Council, Wilderness Society, and Conservation Law Foundation.

Please let us know if you change your address so that you can be sure of receiving all six timely issues of *The Vermont Environmental Report* and other VNRC goodies. If you move without telling us, it costs us 25¢ to get your new address from the post office and another 37¢ to mail your VER first class. Occasionally, we have to drop people from our mailing list even though they are members in good standing simply because they have moved without notifying us, and they've used up their year's worth of forwarding privileges (the post office knows where you are, but they won't tell us!). So do yourselves and us a favor and fill out this form if you've changed your address recently, or plan to do so in the near future.

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MEMORIAL GIFTS

VNRC accepts with gratitude a memorial gift in the name of Frances Fern from Mr. and Mrs. John Chester Smith of East Hardwick.

WE'RE STILL LOOKING FOR AN EXTRA SET OF WHEELS

VNRC needs an extra car for our busy staff and full complement of hard-working (but generally car-less) interns. If your old car won't bring you the trade-in you want, please consider donating it to the Council. You can deduct the full book value from your income tax and do VNRC a big favor at the same time. Call Seward Weber at 223-2328 if you're interested.

NEWMEMBERSNEWMEMBERSNEWMEMBERSNEWMEMBERSNEWM

We're pleased to welcome to VNRC the following new members who joined us in May and June: Dennis and Janey Malloy; Karen and Bob Burnett-Kurie; Anne Dewitt; Alice DeLong; Robert and Barbara McKay; Kathy and Terry Hoffer; Barbara Walling; Linda and Peter Romans; Mrs. Gerhard Pfeiffer; R.A. Montgomery and S. Gilligan; Kenneth and Dorothy Austin; Roger H. Sternberg; Glen B. Ransom; Dufresne & Henry, Inc.; Andrea Mormile; Mrs. Wesley Calderwood; Virginia Lane; Hugh R. Davis; John O. Gerrish; Capt. and Mrs. F.D. Hamblin; Dr. Robert Zelazo; Silvio Calabi; Frank and Brinna Sands and Family; Elizabeth Hollinshead; David Boyer; Gregory Tefft; Carole Novick; Carol Kennedy; Polly Forcier; Martha Solow; Pierre Gremaud; Mary Bentley; Bill Murphy; Cynthia Chess; Carol Jean Tandy; Mrs. M.A. Hawkins; George and Gail Helmer; Mrs. David M. Keiser; Mr. and Mrs. Seward B. Brewster.

WEAR YOUR HEART ON YOUR BUMPER!

State-of-the-art VNRC bumper stickers. Guaranteed not to melt in the rain. 1001 uses! Avoid costly body work, use them as stocking-stuffers, line your kitchen shelves, roll them up and stuff them with spinach and ricotta. . . Two conservation-minded colors: royal blue and kelly green. Discounts for quantity purchases: 50¢ apiece, 3 for \$1.25, 5 for \$1.50, 10 for \$2.00. Check how many you'd like of each and send your order to VNRC, 7 Main Street, Montpelier, Vermont 05602, or call us at 223-2328.

____ "Lovermont? Join VNRC!! (white on green)"

____ "Conservationists Make It Last Longer" (white on blue)

Name _____

Street or RFD _____

Town or City _____ State _____ Zip _____



Vermont Natural
Resources Council

LOVERMONT?
JOIN VNRC!!

CONSERVATIONISTS
MAKE IT
LAST LONGER.... JOIN VNRC

Questions (Continued from page one)

4. Agriculture

- Executive Order No. 52, which requires that State agencies minimize the impact on farmland of projects involving State funding or planning, should be given the force of law with the potential for court review of agency compliance.
- The Vermont Legislature should create an Agricultural Development Authority to loan money at favorable interest rates to help new farmers get started and to expand existing agricultural enterprises.
- The 10 - 20% of Vermont's land having primary agricultural soils should be "off limits" to new development.
- The State should encourage towns to create agricultural districts and to adopt agricultural zoning ordinances through technical assistance and through the allocation of Current Use, FmHA and Soil Conservation program funds.
- The State of Vermont should invest as much money in the promotion of agriculture as it does in the promotion of tourism.

5. Forestry

- Landowners and the marketplace should determine how and when wood products are harvested and the State should limit regulation to the protection of water quality and the prevention of forest fires.
- The Vermont Legislature should continue to fund the Current Use Tax Program to provide incentives to landowners to manage their woodlands.
- Vermont should expand the County Forester program to provide more management assistance to forestland owners.
- The State of Vermont should encourage the location of more wood-using industries in the state by providing low-interest or government-guaranteed loans through the Vermont Industrial Development Authority.

QUESTIONS FOR NATIONAL CANDIDATES

1. The Environmental Protection Agency

- I support a larger appropriation for the EPA commensurate with its increased responsibilities for controlling air pollution, water pollution and solid and toxic waste disposal.
- I support the Reagan-Gorsuch proposed 11% reduction in Federal funding for the EPA for FY83.

2. Energy

- I support President Reagan's proposal to level-fund public transportation programs for FY83 and to restrict the use of those funds to capital improvements.
- I oppose the Department of Energy's plan to drop minimum efficiency standards for major household appliances.
- I support President Reagan's efforts to revive the nuclear power industry by streamlining reactor licensing and regulation and launching a publicly-funded pro-nuclear advertising campaign.
- I support President Reagan's reductions in Federal funding for energy conservation and solar research.

3. Air

- The Clean Air Act should be strengthened and should include stricter controls on sulfur and nitrous oxide emissions east of the Mississippi.
- The Clean Air Act should be analyzed from a cost-benefit perspective and we should eliminate or modify its provisions when the costs of compliance exceed the economic benefits.
- I support HR5252, which would amend the Clean Air Act to delay deadlines for compliance with health standards, relax auto emission standards and eliminate the "best available technology" requirement for new stationary pollution sources.

4. Agriculture

- I agree with President Reagan's plan to give the Agriculture Secretary the power to lower price supports for agricultural commodities and to let the marketplace determine supply, demand and price.
- Dairy price supports should be maintained at about 70% of parity with periodic adjustments for inflation.
- A regional quota system for milk production should be introduced to discourage over-production and to help preserve New England's small and medium-sized family farms.
- The Federal Government should restrict the importation of cassein in order to encourage the cheese and food-processing industries to use more Vermont dairy products.

The Word From Washington



UNEXPECTED EASY VICTORY FOR ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT

Environmentalists were prepared for a lengthy battle over reauthorization of the national Endangered Species Act, which expires in September, but both the House and the Senate have passed similar bills calling for a three-year extension of the Act. Both bills would amend the Act, but neither would weaken important protective measures. The most significant amendment would speed up procedures for listing endangered or threatened species.

The two bills will be sent to a conference committee, where the minor differences between them will be reconciled before a final version is returned to both houses.

LEAHY LEADS FIGHT FOR INCREASED EPA FUNDING

Vermont Senator Patrick Leahy is leading the fight for increased funding for the Environmental Protection Agency. Leahy and Senator Patrick Moynihan recently sponsored an amendment to the FY83 budget that would increase the ceiling for overall funding by \$300 million, but the amendment lost on a 60-38 roll-call vote. The increases were targeted for hazardous and toxic waste programs, Superfund and state grants.

VNRC, STAFFORD PROTEST LEAD-IN-GAS INCREASE

VNRC wrote to Senator Stafford in June to protest a new policy that would increase the allowable amount of lead in gasoline. The EPA has advised oil companies that the amount of lead that may be legally added to a gallon of gasoline may be rounded off to the nearest tenth of a gram. This effectively raises the limit from .500 to .549 grams -- an increase of almost 10%. The National Audubon Society estimates that the change would add 11 - 15 thousand tons of lead to the atmosphere each year.

Stafford sent us a copy of a letter he had signed along with 11 other Senators urging EPA Administrator

Anne Gorsuch to reconsider the lead-in-gas phasedown. The letter said, in part:

Congress has spoken clearly over the years on the need to reduce the levels of lead in the environment . . . Changing the existing regulatory program to allow an increase in lead-in-gas emissions would be inconsistent with Congressional intent and [would] conflict with the solid body of independent medical evidence warning us of the subtle but serious effects of lead on the health of a significant portion of America's children.

SENATORS SUPPORT TRAIL PROTECTION PROGRAM

25 out of 28 Senators from Appalachian Trail states -- including Vermont Senators Patrick Leahy and Robert Stafford -- have signed a letter calling for a "reasonable level of funding" for the Appalachian Trail Protection Program. The letter to the Subcommittee on Interior, Committee on Appropriations, said that the right-of-way acquisition process is nearly completed and that "significant investments could be severely jeopardized by delays in funding." The letter also emphasized that AT maintenance and stewardship has traditionally been the responsibility of volunteer groups, so that there would be no appreciable increase in Federal maintenance requirements after the project is completed.

ENERGY SECRETARY SAYS ACID RAIN IS GOOD FOR CROPS

According to the May 18th issue of the *Sierra Club National News Report*, Energy Secretary James B. Edwards said after addressing the American Power Conference that he did not want to stop acid rain because "99.9% of all rain is of an acid nature." Edwards added that in some cases, acid rain is "good for crops because the fields are alkaline, and a little acid rain helps to neutralize the soil." Funny, I could swear I saw my neighbors putting lime on their fields!

Vermont Environmental Report

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