

# SEJ Journal

The Quarterly Publication of the Society of Environmental Journalists

Vol. 8 No. 1

## Media silence on MAI U.S. and Canada uninformed on far-reaching trade pact

By CRAIG SAUNDERS

Picture a roomful of hardcore political punks. A band takes the stage and begins to thrash out its newest song, and as the crowd grows frenzied, the lyrics carry over to where you're watching. They're singing about a new international trade agreement.

Somewhere in Seattle, the hardcore straight-edge band Trial is readying a new song about the Multilateral Agreement on Investment (MAI). This agreement between 29 member countries of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) is so alarming to social activists that even the ever-savvy political punks are up in arms about it.

But if you are the average U.S. or

Canadian citizen, you might not know what the lyrics mean.

Since a draft copy was leaked early last year, opposition to the MAI has been growing in Canada. Anti-MAI rallies are now commonplace events in most major Canadian cities, and political movements against the agreement are springing up throughout the U.S. An attempt at ratifying the agreement in April was postponed for six months. But mainstream American media coverage of the agreement is almost nonexistent.

"The press has been completely negligent," said Chantelle Taylor of Public Citizen, based in Washington, D.C. "They think it's not sexy enough, not timely."

*(Continued on page 20)*

### Corporate financials come under scrutiny

By DONALD SUTHERLAND

A number of corporations are being challenged for financial reports that fail to reveal the total environmental costs of corporate activities. Organizations that are looking into those reports claim they are getting little help from federal financial enforcers.

An attempt by three environmental groups, for example, to have the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) investigate a corporation that failed to reveal its Superfund clean-up costs has so far been met with silence from the SEC.

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### SEJ member reports from Indonesia

## "Trees cannot run from fire"

By HARRY SURJADI

A rainforest is a noisy place. You hear thousands of insects, birds singing, monkeys calling, deer barking, the sound of leaves falling, and wind sweeping through the trees. The trees are green all year. It is always humid, and easy to find clean water.

Therefore I was shocked when I came inside the 198,000 hectares of natural forest of Indonesia's Kutai National Park in East Kalimantan in April 1998 and found it deathly still. There were no sounds of insects, birds, or any animals, only the sounds of my own breath and my heart beating and occasionally a dry twig falling. The area had been on fire two days earlier.

The rainforest had become a dry forest. The forest floor had turned black and hard. Fortunately this was only a ground fire. The big trees still survived, and will produce new seeds, if this forest can survive the next dry season.

Recently I spent 10 days in East Kalimantan in my second visit to cover forest fires. Along the roads were deforested hills and valleys, and smoke everywhere. Kutai National Park has been burning about three months. I spoke to government officers, local people, experts from a local university and from the international group Integrated Forest Fire Management Project (IFFM), and forest guards.

*(Continued on page 23)*

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# SEJ's role recognized

## Grants, partnerships indicate the mission is on track

A few months ago I was forced to critically assess the performance of both environmental journalism and the Society of Environmental Journalists.

This exercise was prompted by the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, which brought together more than a dozen veteran journalists and educators to discuss the state of environmental coverage by the mass media. I fully concurred with three consensus conclusions of this group reached. Those were:

1. The quality of the best environmental coverage in both mainstream and alternative media has been improving in recent years, in part because of the increased number of veteran journalists who have specialized in environmental coverage.

2. The recent increase of "infotainment"-style coverage of celebrities and tabloid topics appears to have put the squeeze on the number of inches and minutes available for environmental news at a considerable number news outlets, particularly in broadcast.

3. A significant obstacle to consistent environmental coverage at many news outlets is the scientific illiteracy of many news executives, who might establish full-time environment beats in flush times when "the topic is hot," but gladly eliminate those positions if the newsroom budget takes a hit. As a result of this cyclical trend, there are periods when there is an increase in the number of inexperienced reporters covering environment part-time, as a portion of their duties.

The Hewlett roundtable was hosted by the University of California-Berkeley journalism graduate school and intended to inform Hewlett Foundation officials about how to improve the quality and quantity of environmental journalism. Hewlett has a growing pool of money to fund environmental journalism programs and organizations, particularly in the Western U.S., but wanted to know where to send its money to get the biggest bang.

I was gratified that the vast majority of the participants, including some who were only marginally aware of SEJ's activities, agreed that the continued existence of a financially-sound SEJ should be

one of Hewlett's priorities. In other words, SEJ is a foundation around which other initiatives can be added, whether those extra programs are provided through SEJ or other respected organizations such as The Radio & Television News Directors Foundation, the Environmental Health Center, Frank Allen's Institutes for Journalism and Natural Resources, or various universities.

### Report from the society's president



By  
Kevin  
Carmody

This approach again matched the vision SEJ's founders held. I still believe SEJ should not ever attempt to carry out all the programs necessary to achieve our mission, which is educating the public on these complex issues by improving the quality, accuracy, and visibility of environmental journalism.

Our organization is best equipped to do certain things—including the national conferences—which only a member-based organization run by journalists could pull off. Call it the integrity factor.

We also are uniquely positioned as an information clearinghouse and a resource for individual journalists and other groups. If a general assignment reporter needs guidance on a particularly complex environmental article, SEJ can direct her to a veteran reporter in another region for discreet advice. If Investigative Reporters & Editors or the Society of Professional Journalists need direction on topics and speakers for the environment panels at their conferences, SEJ is there to help.

Clearly, however, some programs are best accomplished either in partnership

with other organizations or by other groups acting alone. If those programs lead to better environmental journalism and a better informed public, SEJ will fully support those organizations' efforts and their pursuit of necessary foundation funding.

Fortunately, the Hewlett Foundation board did recognize the importance of a vibrant SEJ and in mid-April approved a general support grant of \$175,000 over two years. Hewlett's money, amounting to one-quarter of SEJ's annual budget for two years, comes without any strings attached as to what programs SEJ might want to pursue.

SEJ has been lucky to have found a number of funders with similar hands-off philosophies. The C.S. Mott Foundation was an early source of general support. Now the following foundations have announced two-year grants underwriting programs and services in 1998 and 1999: \$150,000 from the W. Alton Jones Foundation; \$50,000 from the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation; and \$40,000 from the Turner Foundation. The Scripps Howard Foundation has renewed its annual \$5,000 grant of general support, and the George Gund Foundation said yes for a grant of \$26,000, funding SEJ programs designed by and for journalists in Ohio. Finally, the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga and *The Chattanooga Times* are providing goods and services valued at \$60,000 for the 1998 national conference.

The new funding means SEJ likely won't cut staff or programs for the next two years. We may beef up existing programs, such as the Tipsheet, *SEJournal*, or regional conferences, still relying on the many member volunteers who are the heart of the organization. Besides new programs, we might want to invest in employee benefits, so we won't lose valuable staff when we most need them.

In short, nothing is cut in stone. As the board contemplates how these new resources will best serve the organization's mission, it will welcome ideas from members. Please forgive any hint of hyperbole, but this a golden moment in which SEJ again faces nearly insurmountable opportunities. ❖

# SEJournal

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For inquiries regarding the SEJ, please contact executive director Beth Parke at the SEJ office, P.O. Box 27280, Philadelphia, PA 19118; Ph:(215) 836-9970; Fax: (215) 836-9972. E-mail: [sejoffice@aol.com](mailto:sejoffice@aol.com)

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## Classified ads coming to *Journal*

Classified advertising will begin to appear in the 1998 Summer issue of the *SEJournal*. Cost of the ads will be \$5 per line. Subject matter might include job announcements, people seeking positions, employers seeking to fill positions, grant and fellowship deadlines, announcements of events, or equipment for sale. The editor retains the right to reject ads on the basis of unsuitable language or subject matter. Deadlines for submitting ads will correspond to copy deadlines, which are published regularly in the *Journal*. Deadline for the Summer issue is July 15.

## Letters

To the Editor:

With regard to Susan Zakin's article in the Winter 1998 issue, titled "Grazing, it's a jungle in the arid West," I would urge SEJ members to think of grazing the way they think of urban brownfields, or urban transportation, or the risks from eating Louisiana oysters. Like them, grazing is complicated, interesting, and resists reduction to good guys and bad guys.

People like myself and The Nature Conservancy are accused of selling out or of being soft on ranchers, but actually we are the hard-headed ones. We understand that the interior West is balanced between a rural present and becoming yet another homogeneous American suburb—an outer, outer ring of LA. We understand that ranchers own much of the remaining open space in the West and that the best chance for a stable, rural, healthy West lies in accommodations between progressive ranchers and hard-headed environmentalists. We also know that the number of cows grazing on the public land is a fraction of what it once was. If we are interested in saving pristine landscape, we are at least one hundred years too late. But progress is being made, and we have the time to proceed deliberately and sensibly.

Half of the interior West is made up of federal lands, which means all Americans have an interest in grazing on these public lands. But national involvement carries a responsibility. It doesn't serve anyone to turn Western issues into a cartoon, complete with threatening ranchers and quisling environmentalists. Grazing, logging, and dams deserve the same searching examination members of SEJ would give to environmental issues in their backyards. You didn't get that in your last issue.

—Ed Marston, *Publisher, High Country News*



Ms. Zakin responds:

The lack of depth in Western ranching coverage is exactly why I wrote the article in the winter issue of *SEJournal*.

The Western range is certainly not pristine, although its wide-open spaces may appear that way to newcomers. But that's no reason to keep degrading it. Second, the biggest problem with grazing coverage is the virtual blackout on scientific scrutiny. Why doesn't *High Country News* cover the work of credible researchers like Joy Belsky of the Oregon Natural Desert Association, Stan Smith of University of Nevada Las Vegas, Bob Ohmart of Arizona State University, or Carl Bock of University of Colorado? To ignore the conclusive science on grazing, and to

(Continued on page 17)



## Annual conference at Chattanooga

# Face-lifted city to host SEJ in October

By CHRIS RIGEL

Chattanoogans in the sixties went to work with two shirts, changing into the second around mid-afternoon when soot faded the first to dingy brown.

It is a story in everyone's repertoire, says Jim Kennedy, president of the Chattanooga Area Convention and Visitors Bureau, and not beyond belief when you look at the statistics. The air in 1969 was loaded with over 200 micrograms of soot per cubic meter, far exceeding federal standards. Today it's less than 50 micrograms per cubic meter, which has made breathing easier for everyone, including the SEJ conference team that visited the city in February.

The team, 1998 conference chair Peter Dykstra of CNN; SEJ executive director Beth Parke, conference coordinator Jay Letto, and programs manager Chris Rigel met with co-chair David Sachsman of the University of Tennessee and several Chattanooga professionals and officials for a three-day planning session for the national conference, to be held there October 8—11, 1998.

Throughout the visit, Chattanooga's effort toward sustainability was a clear and recognizable theme. Thirty years ago people were getting sick and moving away. City planners, unwilling to watch the sprawl spiral out from a poisoned and near-dead downtown, began to devise a program of sustainability that has become a model for cities worldwide.

While plenty of work remains in the city dubbed "dirtiest in the U.S." by the Environmental Protection Agency in 1969, successes are evident.

People once held back from the polluted Tennessee River by

a chainlink barrier now enjoy tree-lined river-walks, returning wildlife, and fishing in water so clean that the fish are edible. Growth of the downtown began at Ross's Landing, where abandoned factories and crumbling warehouses were replaced in the early nineties by a riverside park that surrounds a \$45-million-dollar freshwater aquarium and nearby Visitors Center.

Not long after, shops and factory outlets, restaurants, and housing began to fill in the vacant areas. Some buildings dating back to the late 1880s were renovated as part of the city's emphasis on historic preservation. Chattanooga's downtown, a manageable walk, can also be navigated aboard one of its free electric buses.

Once success became evident at the core, plans reached outward to other areas of decay. Just before a demolition crew rolled

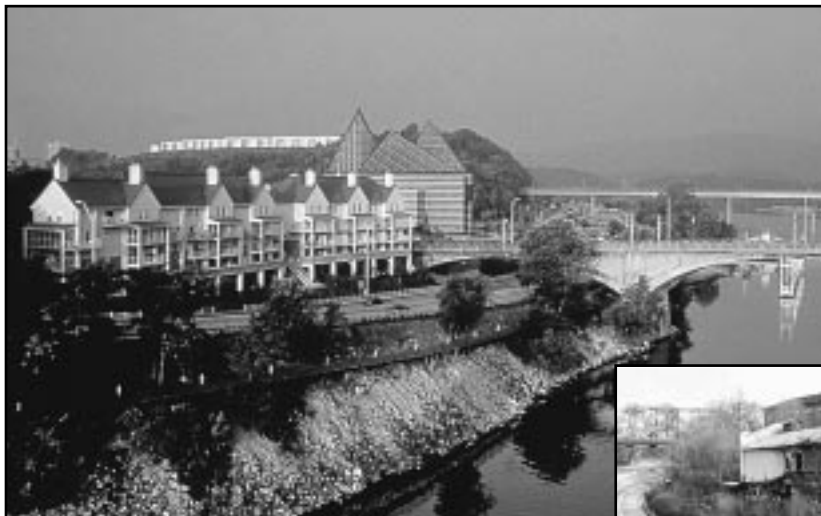
in, the community voted overwhelmingly in favor of restoring a hundred-year-old truss bridge spanning the Tennessee River. The bridge reopened on May 1, 1993, and at just under three-quarters of a mile, is the longest pedestrian bridge in the world.

Other of the city's success stories include the Tennessee Aquarium—site of the Friday evening conference reception—a project that brought 172 full-time and 250 part-time jobs to the depressed downtown area when it opened in 1992. The elaborate architecture and artistic landscaping replaced a visually decadent riverfront. Energy-efficient Tennessee Valley Authority offices, built in the eighties to promote redevelopment of the downtown's south end, are now the workplace for about 3,300. The University of Tennessee at Chattanooga, site of Saturday sessions, contains artificial wetlands that take advantage of the parking lot runoff. The Hunter Museum of American Art, where the conference winds up on Sunday, will give attendees a look at the Tennessee River from the museum's rear terrace.

Field expeditions, annual fare at SEJ conferences, offer close-range scrutiny of the area's environmental threats and initiatives on Thursday, Oct. 8. A full-day forests tour, organized by Andrew Melnykovich of the *Louisville Courier-Journal*, will visit both National Forest and private timberlands, exploring zero cut, clearcut, and all the options and controversies in between. Another full-day tour will offer a look at Tellico Dam and the aftermath of the snail darter saga, first case under the Endangered Species Act (ESA) to reach the Supreme Court. The future of the ESA will also be examined on the tour.

Three half-day tours are also scheduled for Thursday.

*While plenty of work remains in the city dubbed "dirtiest in the U.S." by the EPA in 1969, successes are evident.*



The Riverset Apartment complex (above) with the Tennessee Aquarium visible in the background, expanded available housing in downtown Chattanooga, transforming an abandoned area on the Tennessee Riverfront (right).





## Chattanooga.... (continued)

Chickamauga-Chattanooga National Military Park, site of one of the bloodiest battles of the Civil War, is threatened by development. Conference-goers can also explore the Super-fund site, Chattanooga Creek, dumping ground for industries that long manufactured coke, organic chemicals, wood preservatives, metals, textiles, bricks, and pharmaceuticals. Excavation has shown high levels of coal tar in the creek sediments and indicates a long road to recovery.

Last of the half-day tours will explore efforts toward sustainability in the city's southside. One plan calls for an eco-industrial park that brings companies together in a cooperative waste-to-raw-material loop. "Operations as diverse as microbreweries, restaurants, chicken processing plants, foundries, a trade center, stadium, and residences would share heating, cooling, and water to eliminate all waste," explained David Crockett, city councilman and president of The Chattanooga Institute. Heated water from the chicken processing plant, for example, will be used in a biomass facility that will produce ethanol as well as by an aquaculture business that will raise prawns, salmon, and trout in the downtown area.

A new \$28.5-million stadium brought jobs to the depressed Westside community, where, according to the Chattanooga News Bureau, 20 percent of the residents are on welfare, 20 percent are senior citizens, and the rest are under-employed. The new Max Finley stadium, dubbed "The Max," is designed with a 15-foot below-street-level playing field that keeps the stadium from visually overwhelming neighboring buildings. Plans for heavily-landscaped parking lots call for porous surfacing materials to minimize runoff of non-point pollution into the stormwater system.

So the question—why have a conference for environmental journalists in Chattanooga?—was not a difficult one for Dykstra. "It's the best opportunity SEJ has ever had to have a conference site add to the conference substance."

*Chris Rigel is SEJ's programs and systems manager.*

# River's health debated Words fly at SEJ meeting in New York

By A. ADAM GLENN

One Hudson is on the rebound, flush with fish and bursting with boaters. The other Hudson is a disaster zone, a federal Superfund site suffused with PCBs.

That was the conflicting picture drawn of the vast river ecosystem and its environmental problems at an April 30 debate sponsored by SEJ and the City Bar Association of New York.

The pointed discussion, which drew nearly 100 people to the ornate, 19th-century City Bar headquarters in midtown Manhattan, pitted environmentalist Cara Lee of the watchdog group Scenic Hudson and Melvin Schweiger, who manages the Hudson River cleanup program for General Electric. The two debaters also took some sharp questions from a panel of four environmental journalists and lawyers.

Until the late 1970s, General Electric routinely released PCBs into the river, 200 miles of which was later listed as a Superfund site. A cleanup has been under study by the EPA for more than a decade, but because of new delays this spring, a decision on how to proceed will not come before 1999.

Lee started off the evening with a bare-knuckled assault on GE, accusing the company of being "in public denial" over its responsibility for the river's pollution, and of conducting a public relations campaign to mislead the public. "The truth is, the water, the fish, the wildlife, the air, the land, and our bodies are all polluted with GE's PCBs," added Lee.

The environmentalist said the best solution to the river's problems would be selective dredging of sediments in PCB hotspots along the waterway. Despite the difficulties of conducting such a massive operation and disposing of the resulting waste, she argued "a state-of-the-art landfill is safer than having PCBs in the river."

Rising to the giant manufacturer's defense, Schweiger denied there was clear evidence PCBs were a human carcinogen or even a health hazard at all. Even if they

were, he suggested, dredging is an unnecessarily risky and time-consuming solution, creating the additional problem of undesirable landfills for the dredged material.

"Dredging is proposed as the right solution for the Hudson by people who have no concept of what dredging is all about," Schweiger argued. A better course, he suggested, would be to cut off at the source any PCBs making their way into the river, and then allowing natural recovery processes to take place, like the burying of contaminated sediment under layers of clean sediment.

Concluded Schweiger: "The robust health of the Hudson is the best evidence that this approach is working."

The debate was organized by the program's moderator and SEJ member Michael Gerrard of the law firm Arnold & Porter, along with help of SEJ board member Ann Goodman and other New York-area SEJ members.

Participating as questioners on the panel were journalists Andrew Revkin of the *New York Times* and James Gordon of the *Woodstock (N.Y.) Times*, and environmental attorneys Edward Copeland of the New York Lawyers for the Public Interest, and Kathy Robb of Hunton & Williams.

*A. Adam Glenn, former co-editor of the SEJournal, is a producer at ABC-NEWS.com in New York. He served on the organizing committee for the debate.*

### SEJournal deadlines

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Send submissions to Noel Grove, editor, [ngrove1253@aol.com](mailto:ngrove1253@aol.com), P.O. Box 1016, Middleburg, VA 20118. Send Green Beat stories to Chris Rigel, [rigel@voicenet.com](mailto:rigel@voicenet.com) or to SEJ, P.O. Box 27280, Philadelphia, PA 19118



# SEJ helps paper grapple with growth

By **STUART LEAVENWORTH**

If ever a town needed a green gumshoe, it is this sprawling vacation mecca on the South Carolina coast.

With entertainment palaces carved out of cypress swamps, and high-rise hotels built on shifting barrier islands, Myrtle Beach would seem a gold mine for an environmental reporter, assuming you had the heavy equipment to do the job. With these challenges in mind, the *Myrtle Beach Sun* invited SEJ board member Mike Mansur and me to visit in January to share some insights on covering the beat.

The *Sun* is a 45,000-circulation daily newspaper, owned by Knight-Ridder, with a local news staff of 14 reporters who cover three fast-growing counties. The paper does not employ an environmental reporter, but it gets a fair amount of environmental coverage from its city and county reporters, who often find themselves writing about the latest water slide or opry house to grace the Grand Strand.

Our one-day session started with midwesterner Mike getting a tour of Myrtle Beach, led by four *Sun* staffers, including metro editor Kent Bernhard Jr. and reporter Katie Merx, who helped recruit SEJ to visit the paper. The tour included the main strip of Myrtle Beach—which boasts one of the world's largest concentrations of putt-putt golf courses—and a swamp transformed into a new Planet Hollywood. It also included a stop at a beachside "swash," where stormwater drains across the town's replenished strand and empties into the Atlantic.

Judging from the clips we reviewed, the *Sun* has written about these issues, often doing longer takeouts on habitat destruction or safety of swimming waters. Some of the stories, however, tended to rely on the "one-side-says-this, the-other-side-say-that" mode of reportage. Mike and I offered some suggestions on assembling facts and finding authoritative sources to develop stories that deal with real problems, not just points of contention.

During the tour, Mike pitched a story on the side-effects of Myrtle Beach's multiplying golf courses. He also suggested some angles on writing about the town's

drinking water, which is drawn from the intercoastal waterway.

Later, Mike met with about eight staff members and discussed different approaches for covering the beat, including narratives and descriptive stories that help reveal "a sense of place."

"I suggested that they not think of the environmental story in the traditional sense—regulators battling local polluters—but in defining, revealing and explaining the unique and beautiful place in which their readers live," he said.

Following lunch, I summarized some of the key sources and resources a reporter can use in covering coastal issues in the Carolinas. That led to a discussion about the difficulties of going beyond "flaks" and talking to front-line officials in regulatory agencies. Mike and I offered some tips on cultivating these sources, and we also discussed strategies on filing Freedom Of Information Act requests and using computer databases for "quick-hit" stories.

Our visit was the second of SEJ's outreach workshops designed to help smaller newspaper and media outlets, and it seemed to be well-received. More than half of the news staff attended either the morning or afternoon sessions. "I think it was one of the best programs of its kind I've seen," said Bernhard, the paper's metro editor, in a follow-up interview in April.

Even so, Bernhard couldn't point to recent stories that have resulted directly from the SEJ workshop. The session generated "plenty of ideas," but reporters have been swamped with other assignments, he said.

"One suggestion I have (for future workshops) is to come up with more small-bite stories that can be done on the environment," said Bernhard, who hopes to add a growth and development reporter to his staff later this year. "In order to get a culture going around the newsroom, we need to start with smaller, more manageable stories."

Overall, I felt Mike and I had some success in generating discussion about environmental coverage and highlighting the possibilities. But, in retrospect, we

probably showed that we are several years removed from the realities of smaller newspapers, where an overworked staff is scrambling to keep up with breaking news and has little time or energy left for enterprise reporting.

For future workshops, I recommend that SEJ do some extra advance work, contact a paper's top management—including its publisher—and show them surveys that conclude that environmental coverage continues to be a top interest of readers.

Clearly, in any media operation, environmental coverage needs to bubble up from the bottom. But it also needs strong advocates at the top.

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*Stuart Leavenworth is growth and development editor at the News & Observer in Raleigh, N.C.*

## Sixth IFEJ conference slated for Sri Lanka

The sixth annual conference of the International Federation of Environmental Journalists (IFEJ) will be held Oct. 19 to 23, 1998 in Columbo, Sri Lanka, with the Sri Lanka Environmental Journalists Forum serving as hosts.

The theme of the event is "Environmental Journalism Beyond 2000: Working Together For A More Sustainable Future." Organizers are the Sri Lanka Environmental Journalists Forum, the Asia Pacific Forum of Environmental Journalists and IFEJ.

The program for the 1998 conference, still being developed, will include workshops on reporting and writing skills, sessions on international and Asian environmental issues, and tours of Sri Lankan environmental sites.

Registration fee for the conference is \$95 in U.S. dollars, which includes all lunches and receptions for the first three days of the conference.

For more about the conference, contact Dharman Wickremaratne at SLEJF@sri.lanka.net or Ph: 94 1 827810, Fax: 94 1 826607, or check IFEJ's web site (<http://www.ifej.org>). New information will be posted as it becomes available. ❖



**Elizabeth Manning** has joined the *Anchorage Daily News* as a general assignment reporter. Before that, Manning spent two years at the *High Country News* in Paonia, CO, then worked her way through California and Oregon before landing in Alaska. She covers mostly "city stuff," but did get to go north for the U.S. Army's cold weather war games when they practiced attacking a plywood village.

**Boyce Rensberger**, a science reporter for *The Washington Post* since 1984, will head the Knight Science Journalism Program at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in Cambridge. One reason for his switch to academia: "I've come to see that the mass media needs to become a lot more sophisticated." Rensberger says he will direct the programs efforts at editors as well as reporters.

Also hoping to help other journalists are **Peter Lord** and **Jackleen de La Harpe**, directors of the Michael P. Metcalfe Institute for Marine and Environmental Reporting at the University of Rhode Island (see page 18). Starting this fall, the institute will offer seminars and other opportunities for journalists to learn about marine and environmental issues. Lord is the environmental reporter for the *Providence Journal* and de La Harpe edits the *Maritimes* magazine at the university.

"I'm not exactly the Texas type," says **Tamar Charry**, back in Philadelphia after a stint in the *New York Times'* Dallas bureau. Now she produces "Greenworks" for Pennsylvania, a cable access program sponsored by the Environmental Fund of Pennsylvania. She says the program, which runs on 70 cable systems across the state, focuses on the "positive side of what's going on in the environment."

**Heather Dewar** did not have to move far for her new job. She is now the environmental reporter for *The Baltimore Sun*. Dewar just wrapped up a three-year stint in Washington, DC, as Knight Ridder's National Correspondent for the environment.

After freelancing for eleven years, **Debra A. Schwartz** has landed a steady job. Schwartz is the new education reporter for the *Pioneer Press* newspapers in Lake County, IL.

At the same time **Kim Motylewski** is

moving into the freelance world. The Cambridge, MA-based writer and producer had been editor of *National Public Radio's* "Living on Earth" since 1991.

**Kellyn Betts** is the new associate editor for the American Chemical Society's *Environmental, Science and Technology*. Her beat is drinking water and environmental technology. Betts had been freelancing for the magazine from Portland, Oregon, but moved to Washington, D.C. after the last editor, former SEJ president

to **John Krist**. The assistant opinion page editor for the *Ventura County (CA) Star* is identifying and writing about examples of resolutions to environmental conflicts across the United States. He is undertaking study as a 1997 Pulliam Fellow, which gave him \$30,000 to support the work. Krist is also author of a new series of guidebooks to national parks and wilderness areas in California, *50 Best Short Hikes in California's Central Coast*, published by Wilderness Press.

**Karl Grossman** is doing the right stuff: he was recognized for covering nuclear power in space devices in his book *The Wrong Stuff: The Space Program's Nuclear*

*Threat*, and in a video, and various articles. Grossman received the James Aronson Award for environmental journalism and inclusion on Project Censored's list of the 10 most-censored, most-under-reported stories in the U.S. in 1997.

**Jonathan Brinckman** can boast. He is the Best of the West for environment and natural resources reporting. His story on salmon restoration efforts in *The Oregonian* captured first place in the Phoenix-based contest, which is run by journalists. Second place went to **Kenneth J. Garcia, Alex Barnum, and Susan Yoachum** of the *San Francisco Chronicle* for their story about the decline of Golden Gate Park. Tied for third place were **Karen Dorn Steele, Spokesman-Review,** and *The Sacramento Bee* team of **Tom Knudson** and **Nancy Vogel**.

In the television category, *KXTV* of Sacramento, California swept the top three spots. **Deborah Pacyna** and **Tony Cisneros** came out on top with "El Niño, Bracing for the Storm." Their colleagues **Sharon Ito** and **Bill Carragher** finished second with a piece about California's Mt. Shasta. **Dan Adams** rounded out the *KXTV* victory with a report on exotic species in Lake Davis.

Write a book? Start a fellowship? Switch jobs? Or know someone who has? Let us know. Send all professional news to: George Homsy. Fax: 617-868-8659. E-mail: <ghomsy@world.std.com>. Tel: 617-520-6857. Mail: Living On Earth, 8 Story Street, Cambridge, MA 02138.

## Media on the Move

Compiled by George Homsy

**Rae Tyson** moved to the National Highway Transportation and Safety Administration.

Speaking of SEJ presidents, the current one, **Kevin Carmody**, has been elected vice chair of the Council of Presidents. Carmody will be the one sitting behind Clinton, making rabbit ears. Seriously, the Council consists of the heads of all the major journalism organizations and is under the wing of the American Society of Newspaper Editors. Carmody and fellow board member **Angela Swafford**, freelance journalist with *Discovery*, have each won a fellowship to study at the Marine Biological Laboratory at Woods Hole in Cape Cod. After spending two weeks working at the labs with scientists on molecular biology, Carmody will head South for two weeks in the Amazon while Swafford will hit the North Slope of Alaska to study global warming effects of animal and plant life on the tundra. A few other SEJ members to be congratulated as recipients of the MBL fellowship: Monica Allen, of the *Bangor Daily News*; Diane Toomey, WUNC Radio; Randy Edwards, *Columbus Dispatch*; and Ralph Haurwitz, of the *Austin American Statesman*.

**Jim Woolf**, the environment writer for *The Salt Lake City Tribune* will spend six months in Ecuador this year working with reporters, editors and students as a Knight International Press Fellow. The program is administered by the International Center for Journalists in Washington, D.C.

Have any examples of non-confrontational environmental solutions? Send them



# U.S. journalists offered travel, reporting grants

Fellowships for traveling to the SEJ annual conference and three \$1,000 reporting fellowships are being offered to working journalists by the Society of Environmental Journalists in 1998.

The national conference fellowships will underwrite travel and registration for events October 8-11 in Chattanooga, Tennessee (see page 4). A limited number of full and partial fellowships will be awarded to U.S. minority, Mexican, and Canadian journalists. Winners will be announced by August 12, 1998.

SEJ will also award three \$1,000 reporting fellowships unrelated to conference participation. Two new \$1,000 fellowships for Ohio journalists—one for a print journalist and another for a journalist in broadcasting—were announced in March by the George Gund Foundation of Cleveland.

Grantees may pursue special, in-depth reporting projects on environmental issues. The funds may be used to underwrite research time, travel, development of specialized graphics, or special expenses of computer-assisted reporting. While publication or broadcast of a finished project is not required, letters of interest and commitment from editors or producers will be strongly considered in applications.

The second annual \$1,000 Rita M. Ritzke Memorial Fellowship for Broadcast Journalists, established in 1997 to assist U.S. broadcast journalists covering the environment, health and science, is offered

again this year. The late Ritzke—who had a strong interest in the environment, science, and quality journalism—was a supervisor in the pathology labs at Milwaukee County Medical Center.

Established with donations from Ritzke's family, the fellowship may be used to underwrite the costs of attending training seminars, national journalism conferences, or university courses that would improve a radio or television journalist's coverage of the environment or health. The \$1,000 award could also be used to defray the cost of a special reporting project. Mary Losure of Minnesota Public Radio was the 1997 Ritzke winner.

Postmark deadline is July 10, 1998 for most of SEJ's fellowship applications; Ohio fellowships applications are due August 10, 1998. Winners will be selected by independent panels of judges coordinated by Kevin Carmody and Marla Cone, SEJ board co-chairs for the 1998 fellowships program.

The number of fellowships awarded in each category is dependent on SEJ program funding applications that are still pending. Contact the SEJ Office at (215) 836-9970 or [SEJOffice@aol.com](mailto:SEJOffice@aol.com) for applications and more information.

Is it worth the call? Texas journalist Larry Lee thinks so. "I wanted to thank you from the bottom of my ink-blotted heart," he wrote after receiving a grant for last year's national conference in Tucson. "It was an unforgettable experience." ❖

## Fellowships offered for international studies

A new four-month fellowship program funded by the Pew Charitable Trusts offers opportunities for U.S. journalists to study international affairs and travel overseas on a reporting project.

The program will bring 14 journalists to Washington annually—seven in the fall and seven in the spring—to study at Johns Hopkins University's School of Advanced International Studies (SAIS). After two months of seminars and discussion, Pew Fellows travel overseas for up to five weeks to pursue an international reporting

project of their choice. They will return to Washington for a final two weeks of seminars and follow-up discussions.

Focus of the program will be on international environmental issues, health and human services, population and migration, refugees and relief assistance, humanitarian and human rights issues, economic development and trade, and cultural and religious changes.

Applicants must have at least three years' journalistic experience. Pew Fellows receive a stipend and free accom-

## SEJ conference plenary speaker leaves NAFTA

Victor Lichtinger, the executive director of the North American Commission on Environmental Cooperation (CEC), and a speaker at SEJ's national conference in Tucson last fall, resigned from his position in February.

The CEC is charged by the NAFTA side agreements to temper the impact of increased trade on the North American environment by facilitating binational cooperation and public participation in the protection of the environment in all three NAFTA countries. Lichtinger spoke at SEJ's opening plenary in Tucson on the subject, "Four Years After NAFTA: Was the Environment Protected?"

An outspoken director of the CEC, Lichtinger had been critical of the three NAFTA countries' compliance with environmental accords. In November, 1997, the CEC released a report stating that the bodies created under NAFTA were not living up to their mandate to protect the North American environment.

In careful, bureaucratic language at the SEJ conference, Lichtinger highlighted the complexity of the relationships between the three countries and championed the idea of the CEC bringing controversies to the table. The official reason given for his move from CEC was his desire "to pursue other opportunities," but those who monitor the organization believe he was forced out because the governments thought he was interpreting the CEC's mandate too broadly. ❖

modations in Washington, plus travel expenses for their overseas project.

Deadline for applications is June 15, 1998 for the program beginning in September. For the program beginning in January 1999, the deadline is October 15, 1998. For more information, contact John Schidlovsky, Director, Pew Fellowships in International Journalism, School of Advanced International Studies, 1619 Massachusetts Ave., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036. E-mail: [pew@mail.jhuwash.jhu.edu](mailto:pew@mail.jhuwash.jhu.edu). ❖





# To err is human, and so journalistic

We strive to be perfectly accurate in journalism, but sometimes it comes out all wrong. Devastatingly, humorously wrong.

GABI (the Grin and Bare It column) put out a call on the SEJ listserv for the worst typos and bloopers that readers could remember. GABI requested that the mistakes be related to the environment, if possible. Apparently, only in environmental journalism are we nearly perfect, except for spelling the word “environmental.” Perhaps the non-environmental bloopers are worth reading as well, just to keep us all on our toes.

► SEJ staff has decided that “environmental” is the most creatively mangled word in the English language. Some recent correspondence arriving in the SEJ mailbox includes: environmental, enviornmental, enbironmental, envirommental, and staffer Chris Rigel’s personal favorite: Society of Iron Metal J, a misnomer that has shown up on SEJ mail from a number of organizations.

Nobody’s perfect. Chris remembers the time 100 fliers were mailed out of the office with the following mission statement: “improving the quality, *accr-*rcy, and visibility of environmental reporting.”

► Dave Poulson reports that a small Michigan daily sent a reporter to cover a fire at a farm. The reporter called in the story on deadline and it appeared with a lead declaring that 2,006 piglets died in the fire. The paper played this rural disaster big, much to the later horror of the reporter whose phoned message had been that “two sows and six piglets” perished in the blaze.

► Jeri Lynn Smith recalls a holiday message that went... thataway. Each year the magazine of SUNY College of Environmental Science runs a seasonal greeting in the December or winter issue. Authored by the college president, it usually ends “And a Happy New Year” in rather large type under the accompanying artwork. Some years ago, Jeri says, the president was late with the message, deadlines came and went, and pandemonium reigned. Mysteriously, and perhaps oxymoronically, “Happy New Year” became “Happy New York.”

► Ye editor can sympathize with last-minute haste. Years ago, while night editor for a Kansas daily, he received a phoned-in report right against deadline from a reporter who had been covering the Miss Kansas beauty pageant. As part of the ceremonies the young women had ridden on the requisite convertibles through the streets of Pratt on a sweltering, 100-degree August afternoon. Desperately ye editor batted out a quick headline, stared at what he had typed, then thought better of it: “Beauties parade in heat.” A near miss.

► Headlines can be trouble. Leilani Arris recalls two that belabored the obvious. One appeared in February: “Cold wave linked to temperatures.” Another followed a mining tragedy but ended up sounding like a pre-strike labor demand: “Miners refuse to work after death.”

► Randy Edwards once suffered from too few words.

“Many years ago I was covering a tax levy campaign for a small daily in northeastern Ohio. The city was strapped for funds and had cut its safety forces. In one pre-election story I wrote something like this: ‘If the levy is approved all the firefighters will be re-hired. If the levy fails, two additional firefighters will be laid.’

As you notice, I left off the ‘off,’ and it survived editing. The city manager met me on the steps of city hall the next day with the comment, “The police union filed a grievance. They want parity.”

► In Berkeley, CA, the police department once took a typo beating, according to Merritt Clifton, and attempts to correct it only made matters worse.

On the first day this report appeared: The Berkeley Police Department *defectives* trying to solve the September disappearance of U.C. Berkeley coed Judy Williamson report having no new leads.

Second day: The editors regret our implication of yesterday that there are “defectives” on the Berkeley police *farce*.

Third day: The editors regret our inadvertent implication of the past two days that the Berkeley police force has any *detectives*.

► Merritt also remembers working for the *San Francisco Chronicle* where a certain, earlier headline was legendary. It happened circa June 1971, when offset printing was just being introduced and printers were still a bit shaky about waxing last-minute corrections into the layout. In updating a breaking story about the Teamsters going out on strike, paralyzing the city and forcing a rushed publication to get the paper distributed before picket lines went up, a typo was made in an inch-high headline that obliged someone to strip in a new “T” at the last minute. Unfortunately it was pasted down way too close to the “r” beside it, so the “T” and “r” became an “F”. What had been a banner headline reading “Truckers out on strike!” took on a decidedly editorialized tone that was distributed in some 30,000 copies before anyone caught the mistake.

► Not even spell-check would have caught this one. Craig Saunders remembers a headline from the *Regina Leader-Post*, one of the Saskatchewan’s two larger dailies: “Pope seeks piece.”

► Doug Ramsey has two favorites. One was an AP weather story in the late 1960s that began, “Jack Frost today thrust an icy finger deep into Virginia.”

And another, from a small radio station, heard by Doug in his car late at night: “This just in. The pilot of a Red Chinese MIG has landed in Formosa and defecated to the West.”

Be careful out there folks.

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*If you missed the listserv appeal for humorous typos, bloopers, and errant headlines, or if you recall any humorous stories about the green beat, feel free to submit your entries by e-mail to Noel Grove at [ngrove1253@aol.com](mailto:ngrove1253@aol.com) or by regular mail to same at Box 1016, Middleburg, VA 20118.*

## Grin & Bare It

# How hazardous is diesel exhaust?

By SARA THURIN ROLLIN

A national debate is erupting on the issue of whether the health of the general population is threatened by exposure to diesel exhaust from trucks and trains.

Right now, the two hot spots are in Los Angeles and Washington, D.C. where state and federal government scientists have finished their review and assessment of scientific data. Neither government has yet initiated regulatory controls in response to this health threat.

California Air Resources Board officials have said they plan to rely on U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and existing agreements with transportation industries to find ways to curb emissions. But, in July the California board is expected to authorize the development of control options.

In both cases, the governments' draft health risk assessments reached the same conclusion; diesel exhaust is a potent human carcinogen and poses serious non-cancer threats linked to chronic respiratory ailments, asthma, and allergies.

Exposure of the general population to diesel emissions varies depending on whether the setting is urban or rural. The major source of emissions is from mobile sources—trucks, cars, trains, buses, and ships. Other uses include diesel-powered engines in industrial applications such as construction, shipping, port activity, irrigation, oil drilling, and mining.

The debate about whether environmental (ambient) exposure to diesel exhaust poses a threat to general population is expected to continue for several months and years to come. Due to similar health concerns, diesel emissions in the workplace have been regulated for years.

Unlike most pollutants, there are piles of health effects data on this subject and more being generated. More than 30 epidemiological studies and over 200 laboratory studies exist, according to the draft EPA assessment. Long-term exposure to diesel exhaust is expected to result in an increased incidence of lung cancer and respiratory damage, while short-term exposure may trigger vomiting, lightheadedness, numbness, and irritating effects in eye, nose, and throat. Diesel exhaust is a health hazard

in part because the tiny, sooty particles are small enough to be inhaled.

Some health effect studies have tried to tease out the role of the particulate, gases, and other chemicals to identify which part of the diesel exhaust mixture triggers the observed illnesses. After studying laboratory animals that contracted cancer after exposure to diesel exhaust, scientists think it is the "insoluble carbon core of the particle" that is responsible for triggering the cancer and not the other chemicals that are also present, according to U.S. EPA's assessment.

The panel of scientists that reviewed the California risk assessment voted unanimously to support the cancer finding. Specifically, an estimated 450 people out of 1 million exposed to

diesel exhaust will develop cancer during their life, according to George Alexandref, deputy director for science at California/EPA, Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment.

The consistency between U.S. EPA and Cal/EPA's conclusions is not surprising

because the data are strong, according to Alexandref. "The biggest weakness is the quantification of human exposure in the occupational studies," he said. Alexandref said this is the 23rd air toxics assessment document prepared by Cal/EPA since 1985.

The draft assessments triggered criticism from both industry and environmental groups. Industry says the health threats to the general population are overstated, while environmentalists say people should be warned of the health risks.

In California, a coalition of environmental advocates have initiated what they say will be a series of lawsuits and launched a campaign called, "Dump Dirty Diesel." They claim the government's reported health risks necessitate warning the public about cancer threats as required by the state's toxics law, known as Proposition 65.

Getting a commitment from transportation companies to shift from diesel fuels to cleaner alternatives, such as natural gas and electric vehicles, is their main objective, the Natural Resources Defense Council said.

The decision about whether the health risks merit regulatory controls has to be evaluated against other goals such as fuel efficiency. "The chief advantages of the diesel engine over the gasoline engine are its fuel economy and durability," according to the U.S. EPA. However, they emit more nitrogen oxides and particulate matter than do gasoline engines.

The fuel efficiency and the lower emissions of greenhouse gases in diesel fuels are so attractive that the Energy Department and auto makers have been researching ways to use diesel fuels in certain sports utility vehicles. And, due to changes in engines and emission control technologies since the late 1970s and early 1980s it is likely that the components of diesel emissions are not the same as reported earlier, according to the EPA.

In July, the California Air Resources Board is scheduled to decide whether or not to list diesel exhaust as a toxic air contaminant, which will trigger that state evaluating various control plans. U.S. EPA is not expected to announce whether it will impose emissions control measures for several months. ♦



## Web Resources:

A search for "diesel exhaust & health" on Yahoo! Alta Vista generates hundreds of potential information resources.

Among them:

<http://www.dieselnet.com>

<http://airbis.arb.ca.gov/toxics/diesel/partb.html>

<http://www.nrdc.org>

<http://www.uswa.ca/hs&e/hsdiesem.htm>

<http://www.healtheffects.org/diesum.htm>

## For more information:

California Air Resources Board (916) 322-2990

American Trucking Association (703) 838-1700

Natural Resources Defense Council (212) 727-2700

Health Effects Institute (617) 876-6700

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# Drawing a line on climate control

## When the evidence is ample, why avoid action?

By PAUL RAEBURN

Last October, Exxon's chief executive officer, Lee Raymond, gave a speech at the World Petroleum Congress in Beijing in which he outlined his views on global warming. Raymond's speech served as a nice summary of the views of the global warming skeptics, and it solved a problem we'd been having at *Business Week*.

Like many others, we had been planning to do several stories on global warming in the weeks leading up to the United Nations climate conference in Kyoto in December. But we had a problem. Space in the magazine was tight, and we weren't going to get the stories into the magazine unless we could come up with something fresh and original. (I'm sure many others had similar problems.)

Raymond's speech gave us a way out. We decided it would be a good peg for a story reviewing the scientific evidence underlying the climate change debate. More importantly, it would give us a chance to put a hard edge on the story, by taking Raymond to task where we thought he was wrong.

I often find myself urging writers to take a stronger stand in their stories, and this was a chance for me to follow my own advice. I wanted to do a news story, not an opinion piece. But I didn't want the story to stop with Raymond saying one thing and environmentalists saying another. I wanted to do a story that came to some resolution.

I got a copy of Raymond's speech from Exxon, and I pulled out my copy of the 1995 report of the Intergovernmental

Panel on Climate Change (IPCC). Raymond made three points in his speech: First, the world isn't warming. Second, even if it were, oil and gas wouldn't be the cause. Third, no one can predict the likely future temperature rise. Raymond ended his speech with a call for "an open debate on the science, an analysis of the risks, and a careful consideration of the costs and benefits."

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### Viewpoints

is a regular feature offering a forum to those who deal with environmental issues in the media. Opposing viewpoints are welcome.

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Of course, that is precisely what the IPCC has been doing for the past few years—evaluating the science, determining the consequences of global warming, and assessing the costs and benefits of various remedial and preventive measures. So why the call for debate, when one was already under way?

Furthermore, Raymond's three assertions about global warming were all at odds with the conclusions of the IPCC. Raymond had given a strong speech, and I thought it deserved a strong story. I began the story by recapping the key elements of Raymond's speech, and then I wrote: "The call for scientific debate is 10 years too late.... In the past decade, global warming has become one of the most exhaustively debated subjects in science. The result is a solid consensus on the facts. According to the consensus, Raymond's three assertions are wrong."

I didn't want to say Raymond and the scientists disagreed, because I didn't think that was a fair statement of the facts. The IPCC report is the product of one of the most thorough efforts ever undertaken to reach a consensus in science. In many other environmental debates, there is no clear consensus on the science. But that's not the case with global warming. And Raymond's summary of the science was wrong.

Admittedly, there are still many uncertainties in the science underlying

global warming. No one knows for sure how much global temperatures might rise, and the computer models used to predict the temperature rise are not as sophisticated as they should be. Nevertheless, the consensus holds that temperatures have risen, and they are likely to continue to rise. And, in the carefully crafted language of the IPCC report, "the balance of evidence suggests a discernible human influence on global climate." When Raymond said flatly that oil and gas use are not responsible for global warming, he was wrong.

The story went on to examine each of Raymond's points in more detail and to contrast his statements with language from the IPCC report. Exxon initially declined to comment on Raymond's speech. When I finished a draft of the story, I called Exxon again and told them what I was about to say. Three Exxon executives got right back to me on their speaker phone, and we debated the issues. They tried to persuade me to say Raymond disagreed with the IPCC—not that he was wrong. I listened, but I didn't change the copy.

After the story appeared in *Business Week's* Nov. 3 issue, Exxon sent a letter (which we published) saying that "theories about human influence on global climate remain unproven," and that good science "must be grounded in hard analysis and truthful inquiry." I agree on both counts. But neither changes the point of the story: Raymond was wrong about the science. To my mind, that was not opinion—that was a fact that I had established through my reporting. Apparently, at least a few others agreed. The story was one of a package of three *Business Week* stories on global warming that received an honorable mention from the Overseas Press Club in April.

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*Paul Raeburn is Business Week's senior editor for science, technology and the environment, and the author of the book Mars: Uncovering the Secrets of the Red Planet to be published by National Geographic Society in August.*



Author and journalist Paul Raeburn

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# Loving the dump

## *The Meadowlands: Wilderness Adventures at the Edge of a City*

By Robert Sullivan

Scribner, 220 pages, \$23.00

Contrary to the widely held myth, New Jersey natives do not orient themselves solely by turnpike exit numbers and rest stops. But since it seems to amuse the Outsiders, let's just say I'm from Exit 16W, near the Vince Lombardi Service Area. In other words, I grew up on the edge of the Meadowlands, a staggeringly productive wetland cursed by its proximity to New York City.

For nearly two full centuries, the Meadowlands has served as the venue for an unending industrial bowel movement by one of the world's largest metropolitan areas. The eternally burning garbage dumps, blue ribbon-sized mosquitoes, corrupt officeholders who blithely permit God-knows-what to be disposed there, and the occasional gangland slaying have anointed this former ecological wonderland as Ground Zero for the ubiquitous Jersey jokes.

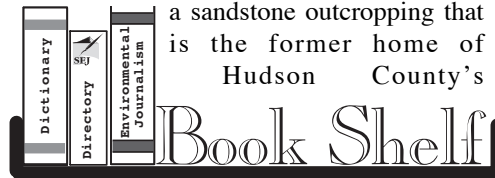
Any parent with a modicum of responsibility would keep a kid like me far away from an environmental minefield like this. Thus, most of us living near there grew up knowing little about the Meadowlands, except that you didn't really want to know what went on there.

Robert Sullivan's *The Meadowlands* is a wonderful account of how the wetland got to be the way it is, before there were stirrings of interest in the area as either a storehouse of nature or as a potential real estate gold mine less than five miles from Times Square. Native Americans who left oyster-shell middens, muskrat trappers, and salt-hay and dairy farmers all had their day on the swampy land, which was also an ancient cedar forest. As villages like Newark grew into nineteenth-century industrial powerhouses, the Meadowlands beckoned as a cost-effective dumpsite for everything from tannery wastes to mercury.

The book benefits from brisk story-

telling: We meet a few old swamp rats, Meadowlands historians, dump impresarios, a single-minded warrior from the Mosquito Control Commission, and other characters that faithfully deliver the desired (and, truth be told, accurate) New Jersey stereotype. The author and a friend traverse the Meadowlands in a canoe with the same spirit that helped Lewis and Clark conquer the Northwest, portaging over exit ramps and trash heaps and getting lost in the midst of a pungent industrial wilderness.

Sullivan gets downright rhapsodic when discussing Snake Hill, a sandstone outcropping that is the former home of Hudson County's



insane asylum. It is the only point in the Meadowlands that is both above sea level and not composed of refuse, asphalt, or structural steel.

Particularly charming are two tales: one about a successful archaeological expedition for the remains of New York's Penn Station, whose marble columns and ornate statuary were bulldozed and exiled to a Jersey City swamp in 1963; and the other of two rival environmentalists battling over who gets principal credit for improving the Meadowlands' health. Each resents the other's efforts, a classic case of Cleanness Envy.

I took personal pleasure in a reference to Tommy Andretta, whose son and I played Little League ball together. Mr. Andretta the Elder is described here and in other accounts as an unindicted co-conspirator in the case of the Meadowlands' most famous alleged resident, the late Jimmy Hoffa.

But the book truly shines in its descriptions of the resiliency of nature. The garbage mountains, some hundreds of feet high, are mostly closed now. Methane is vented to prevent the months-long fires that used to choke North Jerseyans. Nature is re-emerging, and the book's tales of tenacious wildlife underscore the message that natural wonder is available even amid industrial detritus. Shorebirds and salt-and-fresh water fish abound. So do blue crabs, although consuming them would still be inadvisable. The author even encounters a swimmer engag-

ing in a probably unwise act, but one that would have been considered certifiable 30 years ago.

Sullivan's account omits a few important chapters. The Meadowlands has indeed become a real estate gem, with office parks, a stadium, arena, racetrack, and yes, a garbage museum, as drawing cards. But even as the high rises of its economic revival overtake the old swamp, existing neighborhoods in Newark and Jersey City are left to rot only a few miles away. The book could also better underscore its points on ecological revival by greater description of just how bad the toxic dumping was: an early eighties book called *Poisoning for Profit* reveled in detailed accounts of how Meadowlands dumpers deposited a harrowing mix of every toxin imaginable into the porous earth.

If, like me, the Meadowlands are in your blood, you should probably consult a physician immediately. But you should also read this book. For those of you from Other Places, Bob Sullivan's tribute to my old home at Exit 16W, where we honor our late ancestors by allowing them to continue to vote, is a worthy expression of love for an unloved place, with valuable lessons on how even the most relentless assaults on Nature are never fully successful.

—Peter Dykstra

## Future frontiers?

### *Gaviotas: A Village to Reinvent the World*

By Alan Weisman

Chelsea Green Publishing Company  
May 1998

240 pages, Cloth, \$22.95

Having heard Alan Weisman's *National Public Radio* documentary on an experimental village in eastern Colombia, Chelsea Green Publishing Company approached the Arizona journalist to elaborate on the story of this unique working community known as Gaviotas.

Weisman's intimate narrative explains how Paolo Lugari and his hand-picked co-founders launched Gaviotas in 1971, on the premise that with world populations surging, people must start to learn to live sustainably in even the world's harshest regions. Since then, they've turned this barren, rain-leached savanna into a thriving community with a hospital

Books reviewed in the *SEJournal* can be ordered from the SEJ Store at <<http://www.sej.org>> at steep discounts from list prices.



**Gaviotas windmill**

and many technological innovations, including prototype windmills, irrigation systems, submersible water pumps, and solar-powered appliances. The community's designs, which were not patented so they could be used freely, have won national and international prizes, and

have been copied around the world.

By eavesdropping on conversations among the design engineers, chemists, teachers, inventors, and assorted tinkerers who comprise Gaviotas, Weisman lets readers participate in the struggles and failures these dreamers undergo. Here they run a pine resin tapping operation and prospect for other useful plants. Keeping pace too are the former street children who have become trained employees of Gaviotas's solar water heater and bicycle industries. These labors are carried on, virtually uninterrupted, in the midst of a violence-plagued country and intermittent funding crises.

Weisman doesn't shy away from describing Gaviotas's fiascos and failures, interviewing people who left as well as champions of the project such as novelist

Gabriel Garcia Marquez. The success of the book lies in Weisman's ability to tell Gaviotas' tale as a personal story, and not as a textbook case history.

There are few maps or photos, but by letting us come to know the villagers, there's plenty in *Gaviotas* to inspire more first-hand reporting about this community of active visionaries.

—Julia Madeson

## Mimicking Bashers

### *Tracking the Charlatans*

by Edward Flattau  
Global Horizons Press, 1998  
296 pages, Paper, \$15.95

No more whining about how nobody wants to publish your book. SEJ member and environmental columnist Edward Flattau tackled that problem head-on, and published *Tracking the Charlatans* himself, as Global Horizons Press.

The best thing about being your own publisher is that you can say exactly what you want, and Flattau wastes no time getting there. "Personal resentment was a catalyst for my writing of this volume," the book's first sentence reads. "It took a while, but the recent spate of grossly slanted books, newspaper articles and broadcasts that typecast activists such as myself as environmental wackos waging war against God and country finally got under my skin."

Flattau then goes on to bash the bashers, taking on a roster from Julian Simon in the 1970s through Ronald Reagan in the 1980s to Michael Fumento and Rush Limbaugh. For those who weren't cover-

ing the environment during those days, *Tracking the Charlatans* provides a discussion of the controversies over the risk or safety of dioxin, Alar, chlorine, and global warming, and an introduction to the major players on both sides. But in his zeal, Flattau ends up committing the same sin he accuses the "charlatans" of: bashing without substantiation.

For instance, he accuses Limbaugh of manipulating quotations from E.O. Wilson's 1993 *New York Times* op-ed. But the examples Flattau cites aren't quotes, just typical Limbaugh rants, including one in which the radio commentator (correctly) notes that the scientist doesn't mention God.

Flattau energetically defends his fellow environmentalists and praises their many achievements. But readers seeking a sober analysis of how both anti-enviros and environmental groups bend science to serve their political aims will have to look elsewhere.

—Nancy Shute

### Viewpoints Correction:

A one-word error in the opening paragraph on page 11 of the "Viewpoints," 1998 Winter edition of *SEJournal*, alters the meaning of a sentence.

The sentence should read: "Environmental' journalism, whose incredible Baby Boom wax has made its practitioners somewhat insular to the need for such introspection, may *now* (instead of "not") be confronting a Gen X wane of equal proportion." *SEJournal* regrets the typographical error.

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# Troll for copy in new marine law

## Tough mandates in Sustainable Fisheries Act

By KRISTIN MERRIMAN-CLARKE

A new emphasis on marine habitat protection, a crackdown on overfishing, and less fox-in-the-hen-house behavior by regional fisheries management councils are among the get-tough provisions of the Sustainable Fisheries Act (SFA) a revamped federal law managing U.S. marine fisheries.

“What this will mean ultimately is the stability of our fisheries,” said Rolland Schmitt, director of the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), which must implement the complex legislation. “There may be short-term pain for fishers, but in the long term there will be a much healthier atmosphere. This is a more businesslike approach toward fish management.” The revised act goes far beyond its predecessor, the 1976 Magnuson Fisheries Conservation and Management Act, which sought primarily to remove foreign fishing vessels from U.S. waters.

Since then the steady decline, even devastation, of many U.S. marine fisheries has continued. Last year NMFS announced that of 275 identified fish stocks, scientists knew the population status of only 157. Of the latter, 36% were overfished, 44% were fully utilized, and 20% were under-utilized.

Meanwhile, public demand for fish has continued to grow rapidly. The sustainability of fisheries also has serious

economic implications. In the U.S. mid-Atlantic region, for instance, commercial fishers landed \$450 million worth of fish in 1996. On the Atlantic Coast, recreational anglers spent more than \$300 million annually on bluefish alone. And despite an unprecedented amount of funding and effort devoted to recovering collapsed cod and groundfish stocks in New England, no scientist yet will predict with confidence that these fisheries will rebound.

Where are the stories?

The SFA reflects the growing maturity of fisheries science and the management



profession. For example, the act now recognizes the importance of protecting essential fish habitat (EFH), the waters and substrate needed by fish to spawn, breed, feed, or mature. Inclusion of this provision was a major victory for conservation and fishing groups, but the development of criteria to help define and protect EFH has caused serious conflicts with timber and water development interests fearful of limits on activities in wetlands and other habitat.

In addition, members of some regional fisheries management councils are openly opposing federal intervention in “their” fisheries decisions. Although the SFA does try to reduce the conflicts of interest on regional councils, many of which have members either directly involved in or strongly sympathetic to commercial fishing interests, conservationists do not think it went far enough. These issues are expected to rise to a head as the October deadline nears for the councils to have revised every fisheries management plan to comply with SFA’s directives.

Another breaking story relates to the act’s mandate for scientists and fishers to minimize mortality of non-targeted fish, known as bycatch. A national bycatch reduction plan was supposed to have been

ready in March but, at press time, has yet to be released. “Everyone recognizes that bycatch is a major concern,” said Terry Garcia, assistant secretary of commerce for oceans and atmosphere. “We’re well along the road to completing a national bycatch plan.” Part of the problem is that adequate scientific data, funding, and standardized monitoring of bycatch either do not exist or are inconsistent, so estimates of discards remain “highly variable,” according to Larry Crowder of Duke University’s Marine Laboratory.

However, a technical paper published by the Food and Agriculture Organization in 1994 estimated that an average 27 million tons of fish are discarded each year in global commercial fisheries. Confirming the magnitude as well as the ecological and economic impacts of bycatch and associated mortality are among NMFS’s priorities, Garcia acknowledged.

Meanwhile, environmental and sport-fishing groups have united to increase pressure on scientists and commercial fishers to further reduce bycatch, especially in fisheries that could harm endangered or threatened marine animals such as the shrimp trawl fleet’s well-publicized killing of sea turtles in the Gulf of Mexico. In a reversal of the more traditional process of science prodding policy making, SFA is pushing scientists to develop new fishing gear types that reduce bycatch and harm to habitat; explore innovative management techniques such as establishing protected marine reserves; and refocus management research, particularly on human dimensions issues such as the effect of recreational anglers on marine fish populations.

While the law is considered the strongest legislative tool ever given to fisheries professionals, many observers consider the details of implementation to be the most formidable challenge and the most interesting story.

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*Kristin Merriman-Clarke is editor of Fisheries magazine for the American Fisheries Society. She may be reached at [kclarke@fisheries.org](mailto:kclarke@fisheries.org).*

### Contacts:

**Gary Matlock**, director, NMFS Office of Sustainable Fisheries, for the agency perspective. (310) 713-2334

**Paul Brouha**, American Fisheries Society, for the scientific perspective. (301) 897-8616, ext. 208; e-mail: [pbrouha@fisheries.org](mailto:pbrouha@fisheries.org).

**Marine Fish Conservation Network**, a coalition of 100 environmental and fisheries organizations coordinated by Tonya Dobrzynski, American Ocean Campaign, for the environmentalist perspective. (202) 544-3526

**National Fisheries Institute**, seafood industry perspective. (703) 524-8880

# Library of medicine has more than medicine

By PHILIP WEXLER

The National Library of Medicine (NLM), which holds five million items, is the world's largest biomedical library. As one might expect, its collection encompasses the health sciences in a very broad sense. Secondary fields of interest include chemistry, physics, botany, and zoology. Among the many important but lesser-known branches of the NLM is its Toxicology and Environmental Health Information Program (TEHIP), which has been engaged in the collection and dissemination of computerized information related to hazardous chemicals, toxicology, and the environment for over 30 years.

TEHIP's activities have resulted in a formidable array of publicly accessible databases, some covering toxicology and environmental issues in general terms and others focused in areas such as carcinogenesis, risk assessment, and toxic chemical releases. Environmental journalists can use these databases to get story ideas, scientific background to a story, or factual/numeric data with which to build a story.

TEHIP's major bibliographic files, containing literature references largely to scientific and technical journals and often including abstracts, are TOXLINE and its companion backfile of earlier literature, TOXLINE65, with over 2.5 million citations combined. TOXLINE is compiled by merging other databases or portions of them, referred to as subfiles, with subject matter covering the pharmacological, biochemical, physiological, and toxicological effects of drugs and other chemicals. Among TOXLINE's subfiles are NLM's own Toxicity Bibliography, Toxicological Aspects of Environmental Health compiled by BIOSIS, Riskline from the Swedish National Chemicals Inspectorate, and sections of the American Society of Hospital Pharmacists' International Pharmaceutical Abstracts. TOXLINE is usually searched by chemical or subject. Searches can also be limited by author names, dates, journal titles, and languages.

CHEMID is TEHIP's chemical pointer and nomenclature file. It contains synonyms, Chemical Abstracts Services Registry Numbers, molecular formulas and other identifying information on chemicals. Each chemical record notes what other NLM files and selected non-NLM resources contain information on the chemical. Another useful feature known as SUPERLIST, identifies regulatory and other lists on which a chemical may be cited. Among these lists are the California List of Chemicals Known to Cause Cancer or Reproductive Effects, the Ozone Depletion Chemicals List, the EPA Pesticide List, the NTP Carcinogens List, and the SARA ATSDR/EPA Priority List.

TEHIP's TOXNET system contains a wide array of additional databases, foremost among them being HSDB (Hazardous Substances Data Bank). This file of over 4,500 chemical records is peer reviewed by a Scientific Review Panel of toxicologists, industrial hygienists, environmental professionals, physicians, and other scientists. Some 150 data elements falling into the following ten broad categories define the scope of the file. They are: substance identification, manufacturing/use information, chemical and physical properties, safety and handling, toxicity/biomedical effects, pharmacology, environmental

fate/exposure potential, exposure standards and regulations, monitoring and analysis methods, and additional references.

The TOXNET system also makes available files from other government agencies. One of these is EPA's IRIS (Integrated Risk Information System) containing information in support of cancer and non-cancer human health risk assessments. Oral reference doses, inhalation reference concentrations, and cancer unit risks are provided, as are EPA's carcinogen classifications. EPA also provides TOXNET with TRI (Toxic Chemical Release Inventory). The TRI series of databases contains information on the estimated quantities of hazardous chemicals released to the environment and transferred off-site for waste treatment, plus data related to source reduction and recycling. Rounding out TOXNET's coverage are databases on carcinogenesis (from the National Cancer Institute), mutagenesis, developmental and reproductive toxicology, genetic toxicology, and the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health's (NIOSH) Registry of the Toxic Effects of Chemical Substances (RTECS) database.

Currently, registration is required to use TEHIP's toxicological databases. One can set up an account online and/or access (with a TELNET application) the databases through the World Wide Web by going to <http://sis.nlm.nih.gov/tehip1.htm> and clicking on "Accessing TEHIP Online Databases."

TEHIP is quickly moving to provide free access to its databases through a graphical World Wide Web search interface, as NLM has already done with its MEDLINE file. A Web search interface to the TOXNET files will soon undergo beta testing and is expected to be available by year's end. Check <http://sis.nlm.nih.gov/tehip1.htm> periodically for news about this and other activities of TEHIP.

Journalists who need medical information should explore NLM's many other databases, especially MEDLINE, perhaps the world's most extensive series of files covering the literature of biomedicine. MEDLINE is free on the World Wide Web via two interfaces—Internet Grateful Med and PubMed, the latter also offering access to selected publisher Web sites for retrieval of the complete text of articles, usually for a fee. NLM also makes available databases on HIV/AIDS, biotechnology, health services technology/administration/research, and historical prints and photographs. For descriptions of NLM's many activities and programs, see the NLM home page at <http://www.nlm.nih.gov>. For more information about NLM's TEHIP Program, contact: Toxicology and Environmental Health Information Program (TEHIP), National Library of Medicine, 8600 Rockville Pike, Bethesda, MD 20894. E-Mail: [toxmail@tox.nlm.nih.gov](mailto:toxmail@tox.nlm.nih.gov) Web: <http://sis.nlm.nih.gov/tehip1.htm>.

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*Philip Wexler is a Technical Information Specialist in the Toxicology and Environmental Health Information Program of the National Library of Medicine, where he has worked for 20 years.*

# Reporters charge owners attempted cover-up

Both print and broadcast reporters in recent months have claimed the owners of their media have attempted to cover up the airing of sensitive stories about environmental hazards. In one case two reporters have filed suit against the company they said dismissed them for continuing to pursue their stories. In another, the editor of a small paper says she was forced to leave her job and feels the stand she took blacklisted her from securing another job in the area.

Television reporters Jane Akre and Steve Wilson filed suit against *Fox Television* in early April, charging that they were ordered to broadcast misinformation about a controversial hormone they discovered in milk.

Akre and Wilson say their journalistic investigations while reporters at a television station in Tampa, FL, had pointed to the presence of BGH or Bovine Growth Hormone in virtually all the milk in Florida and much of the nation's milk supply. The hormone is sometimes injected by dairy farmers to induce added milk production in the animals.

The substance was approved by the Federal Drug Administration as an animal drug in 1993 over objections from many independent scientists who contend use of the hormone poses serious health risks to milk drinkers. The drug has been linked to breast, colon, and prostate cancer, a concern that has led to bans and lack of government approval throughout Europe and in Canada.

Akre and Wilson claim in their suit that when they prepared to broadcast their findings they were asked by the Fox-owned station where they worked in Tampa to rewrite their report, including material that was demonstrably wrong to soften the issue and downplay any possible consequences. The suit charges that when they refused, they were each offered cash settlements to leave the station and keep quiet about the hormone and the cover-up.

They refused the offer, claiming their own information was well-documented. After numerous rewrites on the hormone story over a period of nine months and disputes over what information should be telecast, the reporters were dismissed from their jobs on December 2, 1997.

In Maine, the editor of a small weekly newspaper says that her investigations into deaths of employees at a local paper mill led to harassment and dismissal. The editor and writer, Terrilyn Simpson, published more than 30 articles over a two-year period about employee deaths and numerous illnesses allegedly related to chemical exposure at the local mill of Champion International Paper. For her articles she received award recognition from the Maine Press Association and the Maine Labor Group on Health.

When the small newspaper she edited was closed down by its owners, Courier Publications, Ms. Simpson says she was offered a position with the newspaper chain and time to work on an overview of

the chemical exposure case. Although her investigations on the case continued, her stories were never published. She says she was forced to leave her job and then found that her role in the investigation made it impossible for her to secure employment in the area. She now plans to publish a book on her experiences.

On May 11 Ms. Simpson was the 1998 recipient of a \$25,000 PEN/Newman's Own First Amendment Award. PEN American Center is a literary organization dedicated to defending freedom of expression. Newman's Own, founded by actor Paul Newman, produces all-natural food products and donates after-tax profits to educational and charitable causes.

—Noel Grove

## Study finds owls didn't nip jobs

By CHARLES LEMKE

Environmental regulations aimed at protecting old growth timber and the spotted owl in the northwestern U.S. did not cost logging jobs as predicted, according to a study by a rural sociologist at the University of Wisconsin.

In fact, the opposite was true, says Bill Freudenberg of the university's College of Agricultural and Life Sciences. Logging jobs in the Pacific Northwest actually increased in the period between the passage of the Wilderness Protection Act in 1964 and 1993.

In the late 1980s logging interests made dire predictions of what would happen if protecting the spotted owl kept them from cutting the little remaining old-growth timber. They called for the repeal or at least amendment of the Endangered Species Act. There were claims that the cost of lumber would rise to preclude single family home ownership, and that logging jobs would be lost and the lives of logging families in the Pacific Northwest would be disrupted.

Freudenberg said debates over environmental regulations have spiked three times: in 1964 when the Wilderness Protection Act was passed; in 1970 with the first Earth Day celebration; and during the spotted owl era. Searching employment figures from the U.S. Department of Labor and the state employment agencies of Washington and Oregon, Freudenberg said, "We found no

statistically believable evidence of a 'spotted owl effect' on logging jobs, and no evidence of an 'Earth Day effect.'"

Both nationally and in the Pacific Northwest, he said, the greatest drop in timber employment occurred from 1947 to 1964, a time of great economic growth, growing timber harvests, and a general absence of what the industry considered "unreasonable environmental regulations."

In the Pacific Northwest, he said, "The net statistical effect of the environmental era, from 1964 to 1993 proves to be an increase of more than 51,000 logging and milling jobs, during the period when the opposite was supposed to be happening."

"Statistics show that by the early 1960s in the Pacific Northwest we had chopped down all the big old trees, then shut down the mills that processed them. The process had run its course before the first of the 'job-killing' environmental laws were enacted. Even though trees were a renewable resource in principle, the rate at which old-growth trees were cut down wasn't renewable."

"If there is a real connection between environmental protection and job loss, it doesn't come from too much protection today. It comes from not having had enough environmental protection in earlier decades."

—Charles Lemke is a freelance journalist in Fort Atkinson, Wisconsin.



# Institute for marine reporting begins operations

The Michael P. Metcalf Institute for Marine & Environmental Reporting opens its doors this year to reporters looking to sharpen their skills and broaden their knowledge in covering marine and environmental affairs.

Programs at the Institute, based at the University of Rhode Island's Graduate School of Oceanography on the coast of Narragansett Bay, will be offered to journalists working in the print, broadcast, and electronic media.

Presentations will feature leading scientists and writers on current environmental issues. A several-day symposium for younger journalists will offer basic grounding in the scientific method and exploring some of the ethical and cultural challenges that scientists face.

Scientists at the oceanography school have volunteered to take part in talks and

training sessions with reporters. Programs will be tailored each year to bring light to complex science issues that are topical, newsworthy, and in the public interest.

Funding for the Institute comes from an endowment established by the Providence Journal Co.; its parent company, Belo Corp.; and the *Washington Post*. The institute is named for the late *Providence Journal* publisher, Michael Metcalf, who had a keen interest in marine and environmental issues.

Executive director is Jackleen de La Harpe, editor of *Maritimes*, a research magazine at GSO. Co-directors are Haraldur Sigurdsson, professor of oceanography and an internationally recognized expert on volcanoes, and Peter Lord, environmental writer at the *Providence Journal*.

Lord and de La Harpe, both members

of SEJ, organized a regional meeting for SEJ two years ago that brought more than a dozen oil spill experts to URI to talk with some two dozen journalists from around New England. By carefully selecting speakers and keeping in mind the needs of journalists, they plan to have the new institute create similar programs that will provide basic background information and often generate immediate news stories.

The Institute plans to cover most of the expenses of journalists attending programs that run for more than one day. For more information, or to make suggestions, contact de La Harpe at the Metcalf Institute, Graduate School of Oceanography, U.R.I., Narragansett Bay Campus, Narragansett, RI, 02882-1197; or call (401) 874-6211; or email jack@gso-sun1.gso.uri.edu.

## Letters...(from page 3)

suggest that the issue comes down to conflicting values, is simply incorrect.

Finally, an industry which is in serious trouble even with an estimated \$400 million in annual subsidies can't save the West from a multi-billion dollar real estate boom. In a very few cases, ranchers can receive money from groups like the Nature Conservancy and keep developers out. This is a tradeoff, not a religion, and no environmental group can afford to do this on a large scale. To suggest otherwise distracts from covering newsworthy efforts to institute modern zoning and other land reforms in the West, as Tim Egan and others have so ably done.

Mr. Marston failed to point out any inaccuracies in my piece. The incident described in the lead really happened and I believe the facts are correct.

—Susan Zakin



To the Editor:

I feel that Jay Letto's summary of the October SEJ conference, "Tucson meeting sparks coverage" took some cheap shots at the panel on "Collaborations between Environmental Scientists and Journalists." It claimed that members didn't like the panel, on the basis that five respondents attacked or disagreed with parts of the dis-

cussion. However, there were some 70 people in attendance, and several positive stories have already been generated from the contacts made there.

Journalists can take or leave the information provided by media consultants who work with either conservation scientists or industry, but very few journalists are "so independent" that they have never used information packets provided by scientists or their media consultants. If you think science journalism doesn't still need improvement, I can send you the early, miserable stories about the widespread declines of pollinators, which totally misunderstood the crisis. Our Forgotten Pollinators Campaign collaboration with Environmental Media Services generated more than 120 more informed stories about pollinator declines and the multiple causes.

If SEJ members are to advance their craft even further, it might do them well to accommodate scientists and science communication experts in their discussions, rather than treating them like adversaries.

—Gary Paul Nabhan, PhD.

Arizona-Sonora Desert Museum



Mr. Letto responds:

I'm in the unenviable position of defending myself against someone whom I

not only greatly admire, but also personally agree with on this issue (that the science and media communities should explore better ways of moving relevant and truthful science information from the labs to the public).

That said, in an attempt to report on the conference in an objective manner, I rely solely on evaluation forms and other feedback from attendees, rather than my own personal observations.

In this case, SEJ received negative comments on this session (such as "worst SEJ session in 7 years" and "not well conceived") in five of seven evaluation forms. In addition, several people told me the session attracted about 50 attendees, not 70. This would mean that 14 percent of the session's attendees responded.

Because of the harshness of the criticism, before publishing the responses I queried several reliable SEJers who had attended the session. They generally seconded the evaluations; therefore I felt compelled to say that "members didn't like the panel."

I concede that SEJ's evaluation reliability is suspect due to a low number of forms actually returned. For '98, SEJ plans to have evaluation forms available for each session, and we will ask that you complete a form before leaving.

—Jay Letto

SEJ National Conference Coordinator

## JUNE

3-6. **Who Owns America? How Land and Natural Resources are Owned and Controlled** (with sessions on property rights, indigenous cultures, urban growth, taxation, land loss, alternative forest uses, and land trusts). Madison, WI. Contact: Land Tenure Center, Univ. of Wisconsin-Madison, 1357 University Ave., Madison, WI 53715; Ph: (608) 262-3657; E-mail: itc-nap@facstaff.wisc.edu; Web: <http://ltcweb.ltc.wisc.edu/nap>

7-11. **Bioelectromagnetics Society annual meeting** (with sessions on sources of electromagnetic fields and studies exploring links between EMF exposures and health effects, including cancer). St. Pete Beach, FL. Contact: Bioelectromagnetics Society, 7519 Ridge Rd., Frederick, MD 21701-3519. Ph: (301) 663-4252; Fax: (301) 371-8955; E-mail: 75230.1222@compuserve.com

7-12. **Land-Water Interface: Science for a Sustainable Biosphere** (with sessions on arctic contamination, carbon uptake and release by boreal forests, effects of harmful algal blooms, and pollutant effects on Gulf of Mexico). St. Louis. Contact: ASLO/ESA Meeting Info, 5400 Bosque Blvd., Ste. 680, Waco, TX 76710-4446. Ph: (800) 929-ASLO; E-mail: [business@aslo.org](mailto:business@aslo.org); Web: [www.aslo.org](http://www.aslo.org)

8-11. **WasteExpo '98**. Chicago. Contact: Jane Harnad, Environmental Industry Associations, 4301 Connecticut Ave., NW, Ste. 300, Washington DC 20009. Ph: (202) 424-4700; Fax: (202) 966-4818; E-mail: [envasns.org](mailto:envasns.org); Web: [www.envasns.org/eii/wasteexpo](http://www.envasns.org/eii/wasteexpo)

14-19. **Air & Waste Management Association annual meeting** (with sessions on particulate pollution, hazardous wastes, indoor-air quality, mercury, noise, and volatile organics). San Diego. Contact: A&WMA, One Gateway Center, 3rd fl., Pittsburgh, PA 15222. Ph: (800) 270-3444; Fax: (412) 232-3450

15-16. **New Jersey as a Microcosm and The Commons Revisited** (back-to-back meetings sponsored by the U.S. Scientific Committee on Problems of the Environment—SCOPE). Piscataway, NJ. Contact: Mitchel Rosen, Environmental and Occupational Health Sciences Institute, 45 Knightsbridge Rd., Brookwood Plaza II, Piscataway, NJ 08854-3923. Ph: (732) 235-5062; Fax: (732) 235-5133

June 17-20. **Native American Journalists Association conference: Two Worlds, Two Views, One Truth** (with a focus on strengthening communications between tribal leaders and mainstream media). Tempe, AZ. Contact: Loren Tapahe, NAJA, 2601 N. 3rd St., Ste. 100, Phoenix, AZ 85004. Ph: (602) 212-0741; Fax: (602) 212-0743. Fee: \$400.

19. **SEJ regional: New Jersey Conference on Sustainability** (co-sponsored by New Jersey Network public TV). Trenton, NJ. Contact Chris Rigel, SEJ, P.O. Box 27280, Philadelphia, PA, 19118. Ph: (215) 836-9970; Fax: (215) 836-9972; E-mail: [crigel@aol.com](mailto:crigel@aol.com); Web: [www.sej.org](http://www.sej.org)

20. **SEJ regional: Reporting on the Delta: The CALFED Bay/Delta ecosystem restoration program** (co-sponsored by the *Contra Costa Times* and the *San Jose Mercury News*; and hosted by the Delta Science Center at Big Break). Antioch, CA.

Contact Chris Rigel at SEJ, P.O. Box 27280, Philadelphia, PA, 19118. Ph: (215) 836-9970; Fax: (215) 836-9972; E-mail: [crigel@aol.com](mailto:crigel@aol.com); Web: [www.sej.org](http://www.sej.org)

21-26. **Water Quality International 1998**. Vancouver, British Columbia. Contact: Conference Secretariat, Venue West, 645-375 Water St., Vancouver, BC V6B 5C6, Canada. Ph: (604) 681-5226; Fax: (604) 681-2503; E-mail: [congress@venuewest.com](mailto:congress@venuewest.com)

22-25. **IBC's Annual International Conference on Phytoremediation** (with sessions on cleaning up metals, petroleum products and complex organics using plants). Houston. Contact: IBC USA Conferences, 225 Turnpike Rd., Southborough, MA 01772-1749. Ph: (508) 481-6400; Fax: (508) 481-7911; E-mail: [inq@ibcusa.com](mailto:inq@ibcusa.com). Web: [www.ibcusa.com](http://www.ibcusa.com)

27-July 1. **National Environmental Health Association educational conference and exhibition** (including sessions on newly emerging foodborne disease organisms, advanced wastewater treatment, ensuring water supplies to the western states, national survey on groundwater pathogens, and Yucca Mountain nuclear Waste site). Las Vegas, NM. Contact: National Environmental Health Association, 720 S. Colorado Blvd., Ste. 970S, Denver, CO 80246-1925. Ph: (303) 756-9090; Fax: (303) 691-9490; Web: [www.neha.org/~beckyr](http://www.neha.org/~beckyr)

30-July 2. **Green Chemistry and Engineering Conference** (with sessions on environmentally benign chemicals and processes to make them). Washington, DC. Contact: Nancy Blount, American Chemical Society News Service, 1155 16th St., NW, Washington DC 20036. Ph: (202) 872-4440; Fax: (202) 872-4361; E-mail: [n\\_blount@acs.org](mailto:n_blount@acs.org)

## JULY

5-9. **Soil and Water Conservation Society annual conference** (with sessions on managing maturing ecosystems, water use by agriculture and urban communities, and intensive agriculture) San Diego. Contact: Charlie Persinger, SWCS, 7515 NE Ankeny Rd., Ankeny, IA 50021-9764. Ph: (515) 289-2331 ext. 12; Fax: (515) 289-1227; E-mail: [charliep@swcs.org](mailto:charliep@swcs.org); Web: [www.swcs.org](http://www.swcs.org)

7-10. **International Interdisciplinary Conference on the Environment** (sponsored by the Interdisciplinary Environmental Association): Washington, DC., Contact: Kevin Hickey, Assumption College, 500 Salisbury St., Worcester, MA 01615-0005; Ph: (508) 767-7296; Fax: (508) 767-7382; E-mail: [khickey@eve.assumption.edu](mailto:khickey@eve.assumption.edu); Web: [www.assumption.edu/HTML/Academic/conf/IICEcall.html](http://www.assumption.edu/HTML/Academic/conf/IICEcall.html)

12-15. **3rd International Conference on Arsenic Exposure and Health Effects. San Diego**. Contact: Willard Chappell, University of Colorado at Denver, Campus Box 136, P.O. Box 173364, Denver, CO 80217-3364. Ph: (303) 556-3460 or 3460; Fax: (303) 556-4292; E-mail: [as98@cudenver.edu](mailto:as98@cudenver.edu). Web: [www.cudenver.edu/as98](http://www.cudenver.edu/as98)

12-16. **International Symposium on Tropical Hydrology and Caribbean Islands Water Resources Congress** (with sessions on such topics as sustainable development, desalinization, water reuse, climate change, and floods). San Juan, PR. Contact: American Water Resources Association, 950 Herndon Pkwy, Ste.

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## Calendar

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300, Herndon, VA 20170-5531; Ph: (703) 904-1225; Fax: (703) 904-1228

12-16. **Health Physics Society annual meeting** (with sessions on health effects and remediation of radon and other sources of radiation, including nuclear wastes). Minneapolis. Contact: Health Physics Society, 1313 Dolley Madison Blvd., Ste. 402, McLean, VA 22101. Ph: (703) 790-1745; Fax: (703) 790-2672; E-mail: hps@burkinc.com; Web: www.hps.org

30-Aug. 2. **Green and Gold: California's Environment, Memories and Visions.** Santa Cruz. Contact: Carolyn Merchant, Environmental Science, Policy, and Management, 207 Giannini Hall, University of California, Berkeley, CA 94720-3310. E-mail: greengold@nature.berkeley.edu. Web: www.cnr.berkeley.edu/departments/espm/env-hist/

### AUGUST

2-6. **Ecological Exchanges Between Major Ecosystems** (the annual meeting of the Ecological Society of America). Baltimore. Contact: Fred Wagner, Ecology Center, Utah State University, Logan, UT 84322-5205. Ph: (801) 797-2555; E-mail: fwagner@cc.usu.edu

15-19. **Conference of the International Society for Environmental Epidemiology** (with sessions on the effects of pesticides on children's health, mercury's toxicity, chemicals in drinking water, and reproductive hazards). Boston. Contact: Carol Rougvie, JSI Research and Training Inst., 44 Farnsworth St., Boston, MA 02210-1211. Ph: (617) 482-9485; Fax: (617) 482-0617; E-mail: isee@jsi.com; Web: www.iit.edu/~butler/isea

23-27. **American Fisheries Society annual meeting.** Hartford, Conn. Contact: Betsy Fritz, AFS, 5410 Grosvenor La., Ste. 110, Bethesda, MD 20814-2199. Ph: (301) 897-8616, ext. 212; Fax: (301) 897-8096; E-mail: main@fisheries.org; Web: www.esd.ornl.gov/societies/AFS/annual98/index.html

23-27. **American Chemical Society national meeting** (with sessions on topics that include nuclear-waste storage, the fate of turf chemicals, multiple-chemical sensitivities, and natural toxins) Boston. Contact: Nancy Blount, American Chemical Society News Service, 1155 16th St., NW, Washington DC 20036. Ph: (202) 872-4440; Fax: (202) 872-4361; E-mail: n\_blount@acs.org

### SEPTEMBER

1-3. **Annual International Symposium on the Measurement of Toxic and Related Air Pollutants.** Cary, N.C. Contact: Air & Waste Management Association, One Gateway Center, 3rd Floor, Pittsburgh, PA 15222. Ph: (800) 270-3444; Fax: (412) 232-3450

9-12. **Restoring Whitebark Pine Ecosystems.** Missoula, MT. Contact: Diana Tomback. Ph: (303) 556-2657; E-mail: dtomback@carbon.cudenver.edu

12-16. **Pesticides and Susceptible Populations** (the 16th International Neurotoxicology Conference). Little Rock, AR. Contact: Joan Cranmer, Dept. of Pediatrics, University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences, 1120 Marshall-Rm. 304, Little

Rock, AR 72202. Ph: (501) 320-2986; Fax: (301) 320-4978; E-mail: cranmerjoanm@exchange.uams.edu

13-18. **17th Congress of the World Energy Council** (with sessions on the greening of fossil fuels, moving towards sustainable systems, and technological prospects for advanced nuclear and renewable resources). Houston. Contact: Houston World Energy Congress, 1620 Eye St. NW, Ste. 1050, Washington, DC 20006. Ph: (202) 331-0415; Fax: (202) 331-0418; E-mail: hwec98@aol.com; Web: www.wec98congress.org

16-18. **Connections '98: Transportation, Wetlands, and the Natural Environment** (a national conference on biological issues associated with environmental mitigation and surface transportation). New Bern, NC. Contact: Ph: (919) 515-8620; Web: http://itre.ncsu.edu/itre/cte/Conferences/Connections 98.html

23-26. **1998 Radio and Television News Directors Association International Conference & Exhibition.** San Antonio, TX. Contact Ph: (800) 807-8632; Web: www.rtnda.org

### OCTOBER

1-4. **National Lesbian and Gay Journalists Association 7th Annual Convention.** Las Vegas, NV. Contact NLGJA, 1718 M St. NW #245, Washington, DC 20036. Ph: (202) 588-9888; Fax: (202) 588-1818; E-mail: nlgja@aol.com; Web: www.nlgja.org

8-11. **Society of Environmental Journalists 8th Annual Conference.** Chattanooga, TN. Contact SEJ, P.O. Box 27280, Philadelphia, PA 19118. Ph: (215) 836-9970; Fax: (215) 836-9972; E-mail: sejoffice@aol.com; Web: www.sej.org

### SELECT INTERNATIONAL MEETINGS

Aug. 24-26. **Passive Smoking and Children.** Essen, Germany. Contact: Toxicology Laboratory, Institut für Hygiene and Arbeitsmedizin, universitätsklinikum Essen, Hufelandstrasse 55, D-45147, Essen, Germany. Ph: (49) 201-723-5956; E-mail: toxicol98@aol.com

### APPLICATION DEADLINES

October 15 for a new **four-month fellowship program funded by The Pew Charitable Trusts**, beginning in January, to study international affairs such as environmental issues overseas on a reporting project. (see page 8) Contact John Schidlovsky, Director, Pew Fellowships in International Journalism, SAIS, 1619 Massachusetts Ave. N.W. Washington, D.C. 20036. Ph: (202) 663-7761. Fax (202) 663-7762. E-mail: pew@mail.jhuwash.jhu.edu

### WORKSHOPS

June 30-July 5. **1998 Santa Fe (N.M.) Science Writing Workshop**, with separate programs for veteran and novice science writers. Register by writing to: Plaza Resolana en Santa Fe, 401 Old Taos Highway, Santa Fe, NM 87501. Fax: (505) 986-1917. Taught by three writers for the *New York Times*, one from the *Washington Post*, and an academic from the University of Oregon. Costs \$600 to \$950, depending on accommodations.

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## MAI...(from page 1)

The agreement's opponents argue the MAI threatens national healthcare, social service and environmental protection programs. It may, they say, dramatically reduce national or regional sovereignty. And the public has not been consulted, in Canada or the United States.

What is this proposed agreement that has some segments so alarmed, and others so uninformed?

The MAI was planned as the free trade agreement for corporate and personal international investment. It would protect the rights of corporations and individuals to invest for profit without any discrimination, in any country party to the agreement. In those countries, no preferential treatment could be given to a domestic investor, and regulations that would jeopardize an investor's ability to make a profit could be challenged.

"The scope of the definition of investment covers every conceivable investment one could make in another country," said Dr. Fred Gale, international political economist at the University of Victoria, B.C. Besides direct foreign investment, he said, the agreement covers equity investments and even resource extraction licenses.

"[The definition] leads to all sorts of ambiguities," said Gale. "If there is a Canadian public trading company that has a substantial amount of foreign investment in equity, and the Canadian government decided to revoke their forest license, could the foreign investors push the Canadian directors to lodge a complaint for their lost investment?"

Investors' rights would supersede national or local laws giving preferential treatment to local workers, as well as for licensing. This, said Taylor, includes the granting of fishing, harvesting, and business licenses, and threatens community reinvestment programs.

Programs requiring charter banks to contribute loans and equity to poor communities where they set up, he added, constitute a "performance requirement" and would be in violation of the MAI. Essentially, the agreement forbids any legislation that inhibits an investor's ability to make a profit. And it's hard to know what the agreement's exact impacts will be, he said, because the agreement

is still in the works.

What would the agreement mean to the environment? The legislation would give foreign investors the ability to "knock out environmental legislation for reasons ordinary people would find bizarre," according to Elizabeth May, executive director of Sierra Club of Canada. In effect, foreign investors could sue a government because environmental legislation in the host country prevented them from making a profit.

A dispute between an American company, the Ethyl Corporation of Richmond, VA, and the Canadian government over an interpretation of the NAFTA agreement is seen by MAI opponents as a preview of possible MAI scenarios.

Because of the fear of health and environmental risks, the Canadian government banned the use in Canada of Ethyl's gasoline additive MMT. Automakers also oppose MMT's use, saying it interferes with emission control systems. MMT is not produced in Canada, but exists in stockpiles at fuel refineries. Ethyl is challenging the Canadian ban as a violation of NAFTA, and is asking the Canadian government for \$350 million in damages.

Taylor describes the suit as "a preview of coming attractions," because of similarities between the NAFTA and MAI. "We almost hope the Ethyl case will go the wrong way," she said. "Just to have an example of what will happen."

"The suit has made it harder for the Canadian government to sell the public on MAI," said May, "but there is almost no end to the hypotheticals. The problem is that the impacts are so widespread."

The agreement, said May, grants corporations property rights in order to protect their profit-making capability. These rights resemble those of takings legislation enacted by many states, which allow property owners to challenge restrictions on private land development. They extend the constitutional property rights of U.S. citizens to corporations. The MAI, May said, will further extend those rights to foreign investors. "The MAI would essen-

tially impose massive takings legislation all over the world," she said.

In their book, *MAI: The Multilateral Agreement on Investment and the Threat to Canadian Sovereignty*, Maude Barlow and Tony Clarke cover potential environmental impacts from the agreement on a sector by sector basis.

Under NAFTA, they point out, Canada is required to maintain resource exports to the states on a proportional basis. In other words, if Canada ran into a petroleum shortage, it could only reduce exports to the U.S. if they also reduced domestic sales. The same holds true for forest products, mineral resources, fish, and, if it ever is exported, water.

The MAI works on a similar principle, they say, but the requirement is not on a nation-to-nation basis. If, using the petroleum example, Canada chose to cut back on resource development, then extraction companies could sue on the grounds that Canada was expropriating their resources.

### ***Essentially, the agreement forbids any legislation that inhibits an investor's ability to make a profit.***

The same rules apply to the U.S. or any other signatory nation. Despite some vague statements in the MAI in favor of environmental protection, virtually everything in the agreement circumvents a government's ability to enact or enforce new or existing legislation.

"Any time new legislation comes up, a corporation has the leverage to say 'If you pass that, we'll sue you,'" said Taylor. With the expense of modern lawsuits, that threat could be very real for governments. "It will have a chilling effect," said May. "Politicians will not take the risk."

Despite the postponement of ratification in April, it is likely that the new round of talks will emerge with a target of having the agreement signed in the fall. Like with other multilateral agreements, countries are actively seeking exceptions and exemptions in order to maintain some economic protections, and with mounting opposition, this specific agreement could well collapse.

But MAI is far from dead, and the  
*(Continued next page)*

## MAI...(from page 20)

opponents of global free trade will continue to lobby for multilateral agreements, be it through regional agreements like APEC or NAFTA, or other systems like the OECD or WTO.

Either way, said Gale, environmentalists and those covering the environment need to spend more time and energy analyzing trade agreements, because they are tightly linked.

"Environmentalists would not want to see any agreement that would promote free investment," said Gale. "Indeed, free investment, like free trade, is a bad thing from an environmental point of view. Some investments are good, some are clearly bad."

For example, he said, if a country opens up to tobacco investment, then it will face increased health and environment problems. Because of those costs, the new development does not ultimately produce wealth, and therefore, said Gale, would not be desirable. Instead, environmentalists should seek out agreements that encompass the full cost of treatment for problems that would arise. "Free trade doesn't do that," he said.

In contrast, a good fuel cell would be desirable everywhere, said Gale, in order to create a cleaner environment. "You would want multilateral agreements that would promote good investment," he said. Such an agreement should allow screening, and rejection of bad products or investments.

Such agreements would, of course, require a great deal of pressure from NonGovernmental Organizations (NGOs) and the public, neither of which were consulted in Canada or the U.S. regarding the MAI. As a result, it can be difficult to create a story that will hook readers in, and hold their interest long enough to give them even a basic understanding of an agreement.

Local angles and interesting news hooks can be found by looking into local initiatives. Many cities are facing votes on legislation that would directly violate the MAI, and non-national governing bodies are looking at setting up their own protectionist measures. If a company disputed such local legislation as a violation of the MAI, it would force the federal

government to take a stand against its citizens. As Taylor said, it would force the federal government into a position of "threatening and subverting state and local laws."

Berkeley, Seattle, and San Francisco recently passed such legislation. Also considering anti-MAI legislation are Boulder, Washington State, Portland, Oregon; Santa Monica, Santa Cruz, Los Angeles, Sacramento, Santa Barbara, Dallas, Austin and Boston. Motions are being brought

## Corporate financials...(from page 1)

One year ago, Friends of the Earth, the Sierra Club, and Citizen Action sent a letter to the SEC requesting an investigation of the entertainment giant Viacom Inc. for failing to file over \$300 million in Superfund liabilities on the corporations annual report. Under securities law, all publicly traded companies are required annually to file "significant environmental material expenses" to shareholders, using generally accepted accounting principles (GAAP) and following the SEC's regulations.

The three environmental groups climbed aboard these requirements as a stealth maneuver, hoping to enter the culture of finance and reveal corporate non-compliance to environmental regulations.

The SEC has yet to reply to their request.

The groups also targeted the Big Six accounting firm, Price Waterhouse, which audited and approved Viacom's annual report with release of Superfund liability figures. Price Waterhouse and Viacom have yet to release those figures.

The story was covered by the *Wall Street Journal* on March 4, 1997 by Lisa Brownlee and was viewed by stock analysts as insignificant, with no financial repercussions on the company's stock price. In Wall Street terms, Viacom's failure to release their Superfund liability costs was a "nonevent."

Is financial reporting of environmental performance and due diligence also a nonevent? The issue has been largely ignored by the press.

Financial researchers say that Viacom's non-disclosure is par for the

forward in Manhattan, Birmingham, Brooklyn, and Binghamton.

As local campaigns spring up it brings the agreement to a local level and puts local voices and faces into the story, providing a comfortable familiarity for readers or viewers and sparking interest.

All it might take is a trek down to your local punk bar.

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*Craig Saunders is National Coordinator for the Canadian University Press and a Director of the John H. MacDonald Journalism Foundation.*

course, and that most corporations do not fully account for their environmental costs and liabilities. This allows a corporation to make only a partial revelation of its total financial expenditures and to overstate its profit reports—a practice known as "cooking the books".

"Only once in the last twenty years has the SEC enforced environmental GAAP in filings," says Martin Freedman, professor at the School of Management at the State University of New York at Binghamton.

Two years ago, Freedman and A.J. Stagliano, of the College of Business and Administration at Saint Joseph's University in Philadelphia, randomly chose 26 firms from the Environmental Protection Agency's list of 900 publicly traded potentially responsible parties (PRPs) to Superfund sites listed on the National Priority List. Only 12 companies had made any sort of financial disclosure of their environmental expenses.

In 1997, the nonprofit Investor Responsibility Research Center (IRRC) conducted a study of the extent of multinational corporate disclosure of environmental track records abroad. IRRC found that 73 of 97 companies with foreign operations do not include any financial environmental data in publicly available documents. Financial analysts say the tactic of nondisclosure of corporate environmental costs allows for a higher price per earnings statement and a stronger index rating on the stock exchange.

So, who's at fault here?

Publicly traded corporations often promote their business ventures (ie.min-

## Corporate financials...(from page 21)

ing, timber, manufacturing, oil exploration) to stakeholders without the financial filing of the negative impact of pollution and natural resource clean up costs, and we (the public) seek out those investments which will give us the greatest returns.

Policing the corporate filing of financial performance is the job of the SEC. The American accounting culture is unique because it relies on a government/private partnership to write and enforce the rules and models of GAAP.

By legislative agreement, the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants (AICPA) and the Financial Accounting Standards Board (FASB) write our nation's accounting standards and the SEC enforces them. Spokesman for the AICPA and FASB claim that they only enforce GAAP on their certified members (CPAs). They say the Securities and Exchange Commission is in charge of enforcement of GAAP in the marketplace. The SEC, on the other hand, cites limited resources and says it relies on the AICPA/FASB to assist in enforcement.

The fingers point in all directions.

As environmental laws emerged in the 1970's, most of them eventually took on strict codes of enforcement. Accounting was the exception, and it wasn't until December 15, 1996 that AICPA and FASB approved a new accounting model to tighten the screws on corporate filing of environmental costs.

"The 1975 Statement of Financial Accounting Standards (SFAS) No.5 stated that you record a liability when it's probable and the amount is estimable, but many companies choose not to estimate," said Fred Gill, Senior Technical Manager of AICPA. "The new model (SOP96-1) requires corporations to disclose what they can estimate."

So, the laws and regulations are in place. The catch is enforcement, and the key is the SEC. Environmental organizations are counting on the SEC to open up the books, but the SEC is maintaining its unofficial policy of confidentiality for

corporate environmental internal audits.

"Disclosure of internal environmental audits is neither prohibited nor mandated by the Commission's rules or staff policies," says William E. Morley, Senior Associate Director of the SEC's Division of Corporation Finance, "although the staff believes that disclosures meeting the requirements of securities laws need not include internal environmental audits."

Officials at the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency acknowledge the SEC's policy of confidentiality for corporate environmental internal audits, and don't object to the financial environmental audit privilege granted to publicly traded corporations.

"EPA requirements to disclose do not include SEC requirements to disclose underlying accounting work," says a spokeswoman of the EPA's Office of Enforcement and Compliance Assurance. "I really don't think it serves our public interests to force this disclosure under SEC rules," she says.

Despite the SEC's and EPA's positions on the matter, the environmental groups look to a long siege on the issues of disclosure of corporate environmental liabilities. "We plan to follow up our charges on Viacom with the SEC", says Michelle Chan-Fishel of Friends of the Earth, "and Viacom isn't the only company we'll be targeting for failure to report".

Environmental group efforts to have stricter enforcement of environmental financial accounting seems to have awakened the international monetary community. On January 18, 1998 the World Bank's International Finance Corporation (IFC) released its environmental accounting guidelines draft "Environmental, Social and Disclosure Policies & Procedures" which the International Monetary Fund (IMF) has endorsed. And, on February 13, 1998 the United Nation's Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) and the Intergovernmental Working Group of Experts on International Standards of Accounting and Reporting (ISAR) adopt-

ed their international guidance documents for environmental accounting, entitled "Accounting and Financial Reporting for Environmental Costs and Liabilities".

In recent weeks, even the federal government has taken the first steps toward recognizing its failures in reporting environmental clean-up liabilities. In a report released March 30, the Government Accounting Office noted that "widespread problems with record-keeping and documentation are preventing the government from properly accounting for billions of dollars in property." According to GAO,

***Widespread problems with record-keeping and documentation are preventing the government from properly accounting for billions of dollars in property.***

federal environmental clean-up liabilities are inadequately reported and in some cases ignored. Correction of those failings may now be in the works.

In light of the Kyoto conference treaty and the recent Asian financial crisis, the UN, World Bank, IMF and now perhaps the federal government are responding to investor/stakeholder demands for stricter accounting and transparency of (environmental) costs and liabilities. Followup by the press would likely continue that response.

By April 15, all U.S. citizens had to file their gains and losses to the U.S. government, filings scrutinized by the Internal Revenue Service. Many of those citizens now feel that corporate and agency reports on environmental gains and liabilities should be just as strictly reviewed.

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*Donald Sutherland is a freelance writer in St. Louis, MO, who specializes in the financial aspects of environmental reporting.*

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## Indonesian fires...(from page 1)

Trees cannot run away from fire. Small insects that cannot fly are burned. Big animals such as orangutans run away when they feel the air getting hotter, fleeing to unburned parts of the forest to find food and water. If they can't find enough because the forest is so dry, the last chance to avoid starvation may be in villages.

So the orangutans go to villages near the forest and peel the tree bark. They lick the water off cambium. Angry villagers burn the trees and kill the unlucky orangutan that goes there in desperation. There are no data on how many orangutans were affected by the forest fires, but they suffer much.

The Orangutan Rescue and Rehabilitation Center Wanariset in Balikpapan, East Kalimantan (two hours by plane from Jakarta), reported that during the Kalimantan on fire in 1997, they received more than 60 baby orangutans, which means the parents have died. From only January 1998 to mid-April they have received more than 30 baby orangutans and some adults. The total impact on orangutans is believed to be twice the known number.

Except for a brief shower in December 1997, East Kalimantan from June 1997 until April 1998 got no rain at all. Climatologists estimated that due to El Niño the phenomena will continue at least until June 1998. It is difficult to know when it will end. So far, the drought pattern has almost exactly the pattern of the extreme El Niño drought of 1982-83, in which more than three million hectares were destroyed by fires before rains began again.

If in May 1998 there are no rains, the park will be in greater danger. A larger forest area will be on fire, with not only ground fires but canopy fires which will burn big trees. More than 60,000 people could starve.

The total area of forest and non-forest burned in 1997 is still not fully known, because the fires were very scattered. According to a conservative estimate made by remote sensing experts from the European Union working in Indonesia, two million hectares have burned.

The fires in East Kalimantan have

escalated to an extent that extinguishing them is far beyond suppression capabilities. Only rain could put off the fire, said Ludwig Schindler of the IFFM, which has been helping the Indonesian Forestry Department set up forest fire management in East Kalimantan.

Wildfires in Indonesia are almost always of human origin. A large percentage result from agricultural burns—done to clear the land—which get out of hand.



**Fires devastate Indonesian forests**

Fire is the cheapest and the only available tool for plantation companies to reduce vegetation cover and fertilize the extremely poor soil. And even though the government has prohibited the use of fire in land clearing, fires undoubtedly will continue to be used for that purpose.

The Dayak people, an indigenous tribe in Kalimantan, have been practicing slash and burn for thousands of years. They have experience and strict traditional rules of using fire to clear their agricultural land. But the huge number of settlers coming from other islands and plantation companies do not apply such rules in using fire.

Fire is only a symptom. The three real

problems are an unfortunate land use policy, a land tenure system, and lack of law enforcement.

The extensive forest conversion policy is one of the substantial problems of forest fires. The government of Indonesia has a plan to convert 400,000 hectares of forest a year to agricultural plantations and forest plantations. The government has reserved a total of 20 million hectares of natural forest for conversion to plantation areas after trees are cut for commercial purposes. The forest conversion program cannot be implemented without fires. If the land use policy is not changed, forest fires will recur every year.

Actually, the Kalimantan soil is not suitable for palm oil plantations or timber plantations, according to the fire management advisor, Ludwig Schindler. It is only suitable for sustainable forest use.

But it is difficult for the government to change its policy in today's bad economic climate. Indonesia needs foreign exchange to pay its foreign debt. So, more forests will be converted to cash crop plantations.

Why were people able to burn small areas for thousands of years without firing the whole forest? The answer is in the land tenure system.

Originally, local people cared about the forest because it provided for them. But in accordance with the umbrella law of forestry issued in 1967, all Indonesian forest was owned by the government, which gave many concessions to retired generals. The new owners had the right to log the forest and local people were prohibited from even going inside those forests. This led to conflicts between local people and concession companies, and explains why locals do not care when their own fires stray into other forests. "It is not our forest any longer, so let the fires destroy it," said one villager.

As long as the local people do not care, the big landowners seek to make money, and the government supports policies that promote clearing land, Indonesia's forests will continue to burn.

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*Harry Surjadi works the science-technology-health-environment desk at Kompas, the largest daily based in Jakarta. He's been on the environment beat for about two years.*



The following list includes new SEJmembers through May 21, 1998.

### Alaska

- Faith Gemmill (Associate), Gwich'in Steering Committee, Anchorage
- Suzanne Zolfo (Active), Anchorage

### Alabama

- Joey Bunch (Active), *Mobile Register*, Bay Minette
- Daniel Cusick (Active), *Mobile Register*, Mobile

### Arizona

- Dale Booth (Active), Creative Environments, *Sustainable Communities*, Tucson
- Jennifer McKean (Academic), University of AZ Journalism Dep't, Tucson

### California

- Ron Cogan (Associate), *Green Car Journal*, San Luis Obispo
- Ann Dowley (Associate), Common Counsel Foundation, Acorn Foundation & Mesa Writers' Refuge, Oakland
- Betsy Rosenberg (Associate), BSR Production, *KCBS Radio*, San Francisco
- Casey Walker (Active), *Wild Duck Review*, Nevada City

### Colorado

- Thomas Lalley (Active), Colorado Public Radio, Denver
- Dan Whipple (Active), Broomfield

### Connecticut

- Naomi Starobin (Academic), Columbia University, Stamford

### District of Columbia

- David J. Anable (Associate), ICFJ
- Laura Litvan (Active), *Investor's Business Daily*
- John McQuaid (Active), *Times-Picayune*, New Orleans, Washington Bureau
- Dan Sayre (Associate), Island Press
- Larry Schuster (Active), UPI
- Randy Showstack (Active), American Geophysical Union, *EOS*

### Florida

- Barbie Bischof (Active), Miami
- James F. Carstens (Academic), University of South Florida-St Petersburg, Mass Communication-Journalism

### Georgia

- Camille Feanny (Active), CNN, Environment Unit, Atlanta
- David Goldberg (Active), *Atlanta Journal Constitution*, Decatur

### Iowa

- Anne Scott (Active), *Iowa City Press-Citizen*, Iowa City

### Illinois

- Jon Krenek (Academic), Roosevelt University, Des Plaines
- Kristopheré Owens (Active), *The Rock Island Argus/Moline Dispatch*, Rock Island
- James Sandrolini (Academic), Columbia College, Chicago

### Kansas

- Mary Desena (Active), Tom Bell Publisher, *U. S. Water News/Water Investment Newsletter*, Wichita

### Louisiana

- Mike Dunne (Active), *Baton Rouge (LA) Advocate*, Baton Rouge

### Maine

- Genevieve K. Howe (Academic), Northeastern University, Graduate School of Journalism, Jamaica Plain
- Monica M. Allen (Active), *Bangor Daily News*, Bangor

### Massachusetts

- Peter J. Howe (Active), *Boston Globe*
- Carol Cruzan Morton (Active), CenterWatch, *New Medical Therapies*, Watertown

### Michigan

- John Flesher (Active), AP, Traverse City

### Missouri

- Jessica Larson (Academic), University of Missouri-Columbia, School of Journalism
- Donald Sutherland (Associate), St. Louis

### Montana

- Caroline Lupfer Kurtz (Associate), University of Montana-Missoula

### New York

- Monica Michael Willis (Active), *Country Living Magazine*, New York

### North Carolina

- Eric Rhodenbaugh (Academic), University of North Carolina, School of Journalism and Mass Communication, Chapel Hill

### New Mexico

- Kenny Ausubel (Associate), Inner Tan, Inc., Santa Fe

### New York

- Mindy Penny Backer (Associate), *Mother & Others for a Liveable Planet*, *The Green Guide*, New York
- Marguerite Holloway (Active), New York
- Anne Matthews (Academic), New York University, Dept. of Journalism & Mass Communication, New York

### Ohio

- Megan Defendis (Active), Crain Communications Inc., *Waste News*, Akron
- Kimberly W. Gillie (Academic), Ohio

State University, School of Journalism, Columbus

- Erin B. Martin (Academic), Ohio University, Carrollton

### Oregon,

- Promise King (Active), Skanner Group Newspapers, Editorial Dep't, Portland
- April Streeter (Active), Mac Publications LLC, *MacWeek*, Portland

### Pennsylvania

- Mark Harris (Active), Bethlehem

### Rhode Island

Mary Grady (Active), *Providence Journal-Bulletin*, Providence

### Texas

- Kathy Gilbert (Active), *Big Spring Herald*, Big Spring

### Utah

- Matthew Baker (Academic), Brigham Young University, Provo
- Nicole Larson (Academic), Brigham Young University, Provo
- Shiloh Roan (Academic), Brigham Young University, Pleasant Grove
- Melissa Robertson (Academic), Brigham Young University, Department of Communications, Provo

### Virginia

- Catherine Puckett Haecker (Associate), USGS-Biological Resources Division, Reston
- Marc Norman (Associate), Arlington
- Suzanne Yohanna (Active), Inside Washington Publishers, *Defense Environment Alert*, Alexandria

### Washington

- David J. Fassler (Academic), Washington State University, Environmental Science & Communication/Journalism, Pullman
- Carol Kaesuk Yoon (Active), Bellingham
- Steven Tomasko (Active), *Ashland Daily Press*, Ashland

### Australia,

- Keith Suter (Associate), Sydney
- Ronald A. Wood (Academic), Univ. of Technology, Sydney, Department of Environmental Sciences, Gore Hill

### Thailand

- Noah Shepherd (Academic), Prince of Songkla University, Hotel & Tourism Management, Phuket

### Zambia

- Bwalya Lyapa Nondo (Active), Zambia Information Services, Kafue



# Green Beat Correspondents

## Contribute to Green Beat

The Green Beat is designed as an idea exchange for environmental journalists and educators. It relies on information submitted by reporters about important issues, outstanding coverage, and developments in environmental education and the communications profession on a state-by-state basis.

To submit ideas for possible mention in The Green Beat, contact the SEJ correspondent for the appropriate state(s) or, if none are listed, contact the SEJ office.

### Alabama — Vacant

### Alaska — Vacant

**Arizona and New Mexico** — Patti Epler, *Phoenix New Times*, PO Box 2510, Phoenix, AZ 85002, pepler@newtimes.com, (602) 229-8451

**Arkansas** — Robert McAfee, Thinking Like A Mountain Institute, 2610 West Hackett Rd, Hackett, AR 72937, arkenved@aol.com, (501) 638-7151

### California:

#### Northern California — Vacant

**San Francisco Bay Area** — Jane Kay at the *San Francisco Examiner*, Box 7260, San Francisco, CA 94120, janekay@examiner.com, (415) 777-8704

**Southern California** — Marni McEntee, *Los Angeles Daily News*, 20132 Observation Drive, Topanga, CA 90290, (805) 641-0542

**Colorado** — Todd Hartman, *Colorado Springs Gazette*, 30 S. Prospect St., Colorado Springs, CO 80903, toddh@gazette.com, (719) 636-0285

**Connecticut, Rhode Island** — Peter Lord, *Providence Journal*, 75 Fountain St., Providence, RI 02902, plord@projo.com, (401) 277-8036

**District of Columbia** — Cheryl Hogue, BNA, *Daily Environment Report*, 1231 25th St., N.W., Room 361-S, Wash., DC 20037, chogue@bna.com, (202) 452-4625, fax (202) 452-4150

**North Florida and South Georgia** — Deborrah Hoag, 727 Egret Bluff Lane, Jacksonville, FL 32211, hoagd@aol.com, (904) 721-3497

**South Florida** — Andrew Conte, Stuart News, 1591 Port St. Lucie Boulevard #K, Stuart, FL 34592, conte@stuartnews.com, (561) 337-5827

### North Georgia — Vacant

### South Carolina — Vacant

### Hawaii — Vacant

**Idaho** — Rocky Barker of the *Idaho Statesman*, 2875 Harmony Street, Boise,

ID, 83707, (208) 377-6484, rbarker@micron.net

**Illinois** — Jonathon Ahl, *WCBU 89.9*, 1501 W. Bradley Avenue, Peoria, IL, 61625, ahl@bradley.edu, (309) 677-2761

**Iowa** — Perry Beeman at the *Des Moines Register*, P.O. Box 957, Des Moines, IA 50304, pbeeman@dmreg.com, (515) 284-8538

**Kansas** — Mike Mansur at the *Kansas City Star*, 1729 Grand Ave., Kansas City, MO 64108, mmansur@kcstar.com, (816) 234-4433

**Kentucky** — Andrew Melnykovich, *Louisville Courier-Journal/Metro Desk*, 525 West Broadway, Louisville, KY 40201, Amelnyko@louisvil.gannett.com, (502) 582-4645

**Louisiana** — Mike Dunne, *Baton Rouge Advocate*, Box 588, Baton Rouge, LA 70821-0588, mdunne@theadvocate.com (504) 383-0301

**Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont** — Robert Braile, *Boston Globe* correspondent, P.O. Box 1907, Exeter, N.H., 03833, braile@nws.globe.com, (603) 772-6380

**Maryland and Delaware** — Tim Wheeler, *The Sun*, 501 N. Calvert St., Baltimore, MD 21278, tbwheeler@aol.com, (301) 332-6564

**Massachusetts** — David Liscio, *Daily Evening Item*, 38 Exchange Street, Lynn, MA 01903, dliscio@aol.com, (617) 593-7700

**Michigan** — Jeremy Pearce, *Detroit News*, 615 W. Lafayette Boulevard, Detroit, MI 48226, (313) 223-4825

**Minnesota, North Dakota, South Dakota** — Tom Meersman at the *Minneapolis Star Tribune*, 425 Portland Avenue, Minneapolis, MN 55488, meersman@startribune.com, (612) 673-4414

**Missouri** — Bill Allen, *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, 900 N. Tucker Blvd., St. Louis, MO 63101, 72263.3236@compuserve.com, (314) 340-8127

**Montana** — Todd Wilkinson, P.O. Box 422, Bozeman, MT 59771, tawilk@aol.com, (406) 587-4876

**Nebraska** — Julie Anderson, *Omaha World-Herald*, 1334 Dodge Street, Omaha, NE 68102, julieand@radiks.net, (402) 444-1000 ext. 1223

### New Jersey — Vacant

### New York — Vacant

**Nevada** — Mary Manning at the *Las Vegas Sun*, 800 S. Valley View Blvd., Las Vegas, NV 89107, manning@lasvegas-sun.com, (702) 259-4065 or Jon Christiansen of *Great Basin News*, 6185 Franktown Road, Carson City, NV 89704 (702) 882-3990

**Ohio, Indiana** — Charlie Prince at *Ohio Environmental Reporter*, 516 Ludlow Ave. Cincinnati, OH 45220, chasprince@aol.com, (513) 221-0954

### Oregon — Vacant

**Pennsylvania** — John Bartlett, *Erie Daily Times*, 513 13th St., Franklin, PA 16323, (814) 437-6397

**Puerto Rico/Caribbean Islands** — Albi Ferre at *El Nuevo Dia*, Box 297, San Juan, PR 00902, (809) 793-7070, ext. 2165

**Tennessee and Mississippi** — Debbie Gilbert at *The Memphis Flyer*, 460 Tennessee St., Memphis, TN 38103, memflyer@aol.com, (901) 521-9000

### Texas and Oklahoma:

#### North Texas and Oklahoma —

Randy Loftis at *The Dallas Morning News*, 508 Young St., Dallas, TX 75202, loftis@ix.netcom.com, (800) 431-0010

#### Central and West Texas —

Robert Bryce, *The Austin Chronicle*, 3812 Brookview, Austin, TX 78722, rbryce@compuserve.com, (512) 454-5766

#### East and Coastal Texas — Bill

Dawson, *The Houston Chronicle*, Box 4260, Houston, TX 77210, bill.dawson@chron.com, (713) 220-7171

**Utah** — Brent Israelsen, *Salt Lake Tribune*, 143 South Main, Salt Lake City, UT 84111, israel@sltrib.com, (801) 237-2045

### Wyoming — Vacant

### Virginia and North Carolina — Vacant

### Washington State — Vacant

**West Virginia** — Ken Ward, *Charleston Gazette*, 1001 Virginia St. East, Charleston, WV 25301, kenward@newwave.net, (304) 348-1702

**Wisconsin** — Chuck Quirmbach of *Wisconsin Public Radio*, 111 E. Kilbourn Ave., #1060, Milwaukee, WI 53202, quirmbach@vilas.uwex.edu, (414) 271-8686 or (608) 263-7985

**Canada** — Doug Draper, *The Standard*, 17 Queen Street, St. Catherines, ON L2R 5G5, (905) 684-7251 x229

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Any SEJ member is welcome to volunteer, but journalism experience and an eye on the news is a must. Journalists will be given preference.

Contact Chris Rigel at rigel@voicenet.com or at the SEJ office: (215) 836-9970, P.O. Box 27280, Philadelphia, PA 19118

## ALBERTA

► An international consortium of Canadian and U.S. organizations recently kicked off Phase II of a project to develop new technology to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, according to a February story in *Canadian Environmental Regulations & Compliance News*. CO<sub>2</sub> is injected into Alberta's deep unmineable coal beds, absorbed by the coal and stored in the coal seams, displacing the trapped methane. According to the consortium, the new process would lower their CO<sub>2</sub> emissions and produce methane. Project participants include the U.S. Energy Department's Federal Energy Technology Center, the Alberta Research Council, Environment Canada, the Geological Survey of Canada, and others. For more information contact Arlene Bouwman, *Canadian Environmental Regulation & Compliance News*, (905) 873-7309 days or (905) 702-8392 evenings, e-mail arlene@stn.net.

## ARIZONA

► The Mexican gray wolf returned to the Southwest in March, according to Mike Taugher, environmental reporter for the *Albuquerque Journal*, who wrote several pieces leading up to the wolves' March 30 release. A few days before 11 wolves were released in Arizona near the New Mexico line, New Mexico ranch groups sued to block the release. A judge refused to stop the release, and ranchers, who continue to pursue legal action, now want the wolves rounded up and put back in their pens. (See Michigan story, page 30) For more information contact Mike Taugher at mtaugher@abqjournal.com or (505) 823-3833.

► Headed for the U.S. Supreme Court is the question of whether Indian tribes can claim sovereign immunity when it comes to complying with federal environmental laws, particularly the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). In March, the Ninth U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals ruled against a small group of traditional Hopi elders who argued that the Hopi Tribal Council and the Indian Health Service failed to comply with NEPA when it put a sewer system in an isolated Hopi village. The traditionalists had opposed the million-

dollar project—funded largely through a grant from the Environmental Protection Agency—because they believe the buried sewer pipes are blocking the path of their prayers to the Creator and that the lack of spiritual communication is causing widespread environmental and moral problems, including El Niño and the political turmoil in Iraq. The Hopi lawsuit and traditionalist concerns were detailed in a March 26 story in the *Phoenix New Times* by associate editor Patti Epler. The traditionalist Hopi, who generally oppose any kind of government interference with their affairs, have asked the nation's highest court to decide, in essence, whether tribes can ignore federal environmental law. Call Patti Epler at (602) 229-8451 or e-mail pepler@newtimes.com.

## BRITISH COLUMBIA

► British Columbia recently introduced the use of "creative sentences" under the province's Fish Protection Act to give judges a new set of tools to address offenses against fish habitat. Under the new provisions, the court may order offenders to: pay the government compensation for the cost of any remedial action undertaken; pay money to Fisheries Renewal BC or the Habitat Conservation Trust Fund; perform community service; post a bond to ensure compliance with a creative sentencing order; take action to remedy or avoid any harm to the environment resulting from the offense; and publish, in any manner the court considers appropriate, the facts relating to the commission of the offense. The April story ran in *Canadian Environmental Regulation and Compliance News*. For more information contact Linda Hannah, Ministry of Environment Lands and Parks (250) 387-9670.

## CALIFORNIA

► Hillside and canyon communities across the state are slipping and sliding under earth loosened by El Niño, yet Bay Area home builders and urban planners continue to place developments on unstable terrain, according to a March 15 story in the *Oakland Tribune*. Despite U.S. Geological Survey maps and planning records documenting potentially dangerous slide zones, developers plan new homes along steep ridges above Richmond, in the emerald hills west of

Dublin, along deep canyons south of Portola Valley, and other open spaces. Call Dennis J. Oliver, *Oakland Tribune/ANG Newspapers* at (510) 208-6450.

► A plan unveiled in November to force people out of their cars while visiting Yosemite National Park would require construction of the fifth-largest bus system in California—a fleet of 348 buses, larger than the San Mateo County Transit District or San Diego Transit. It would cost a staggering \$214.6 million to set up and run year-round, take at least 12 years to build and require \$17.7 million a year to operate. The most practical solution for reducing traffic probably means scrapping a year-round car ban and providing buses only in busy summer months. The *San Jose Mercury News* story ran March 6. Call Paul Rogers, (408) 920-5045.

► Hoping to preserve California's scenic landscape before it succumbs to the asphalt of growing population pressure, the David and Lucile Packard Foundation will donate \$175 million over the next five years to protect open space, farmland, and wildlife habitat. The private gift matches the scope of Rockefeller family donations between the 1920s and the 1950s to establish Grand Teton, Acadia, and Virgin Islands National Parks. By 2002, the foundation hopes to have protected 250,000 acres, including sections of the central coast from San Francisco to Santa Barbara, the Central Valley and the Sierra Nevada. Grants will go to partnerships with non-profit land trusts, community organizations, and local governments. The story ran March 10 in the *San Jose Mercury News*. Call Paul Rogers, (408) 920-5045.

► A committee convened by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to screen for chemicals that may disrupt human endocrine systems has recommended testing breast milk and phytoestrogens in soy-based infant formula, according to a March 16 story in *Food Chemical News*. The Endocrine Disruptor Screening and Testing Advisory Committee, formed by EPA under amendments to the Food Quality Protection and Safe Drinking Water acts, is also searching for estrogenic effects in chemicals found at hazardous-waste sites

and in chlorination byproducts, gasoline, and pesticides. Penny Fenner-Crisp, at EPA's Office of Prevention, Pesticides, and Toxic Substances, has more information. Contact reporter Janet Byron at (510) 848-4008.

► It's in the rain and the fog, it's in the Delta and the San Francisco Bay—and it's deadly. A popular class of pesticides used by residents to poison ants and fleas and by growers to kill insects on fruit and nut trees is polluting California's waterways, say environmental officials. Organophosphates, diazinon, and chlorpyrifos are found in the Sacramento and San Joaquin Rivers and urban creeks at levels high enough to kill off simple forms of aquatic life, causing scientists to sound the alarm over the health of the Bay. Water officials claim that using the insecticides to kill roaches, fleas, and ants around homes according to the labels still produces a toxic runoff during rainstorms. "Poisons from Home" ran March 29 in the *San Francisco Examiner*. Call Jane Kay at (415) 777-8704.

► In a *Contra Costa Times* column February 28, James Bruggers commented, "Sometimes boycotts work." Two California-based Mitsubishi companies with combined sales of \$6 billion have agreed to some environmental measures such as switching to tree-free paper in corporate offices and donating money from product sales to indigenous peoples and forest restoration projects. In return, Rainforest Action Network, after a nine-year boycott, gave its stamp of approval to buy Mitsubishi cars and televisions. Boycotts against other Mitsubishi companies continue because of a partnership with the Mexican government to expand a salt plant in the gray whale's last pristine breeding ground in Baja California. Contact Bruggers at (510) 943-8246.

► The Environmental Defense Fund launched the EDF Chemical Scorecard onto the Internet in April, making "right to know" a household word. The site—[www.scorecard.org](http://www.scorecard.org)—makes it easy to scan 17,000 businesses in 50 states by name, zip code, city, county, chemical, and map. A few clicks of the mouse will also find the addresses and contact names reported by businesses to the federal

Toxic Release Inventory, making it easy to fax off a complaint. What's so different about this site is that designer Bill Pease, an EDF toxicologist and UC-Berkeley adjunct assistant professor in the School of Public Health, developed a ranking system that weights businesses, counties, and the rest as to their potential hazard from releases of chemicals linked to cancer and a host of other diseases. The site includes health effects for 5,500 chemicals. For more information, contact Jane Kay at the *San Francisco Examiner*, (415) 777-8704.

### COLORADO

► Thomas Lalley of Colorado Public Radio explored in March the problems arising when hard rock mines leave the public stuck with the tab for cleaning up polluted waters. The story focused on bonds posted by mines that prove insufficient to cover cleanup costs when pollution problems persist for years or if the mine's method of water treatment eventually fails. Water treatment alone has already cost taxpayers tens of millions of dollars at the failed Summitville mine in Colorado's San Juan Mountains. Colorado has convened a task force, but it's deadlocked on the issue. The BLM, Montana, and Washington state are among those also examining the issue. Contact Thomas Lalley at (303) 871-9191, ext. 21 or email at [tlalley@cpr.org](mailto:tlalley@cpr.org).

► The *Denver Post* wrote an in-depth report on the potential threat posed by gigantic hog farms rapidly moving onto Colorado's eastern plains. Still reeling from the the pollution problems exposed in North Carolina, corporate hog farmers are increasingly attracted to Colorado and its limited regulations. Of major concerns in Colorado and other Plains states are millions of gallons of urine and feces contaminating the giant Ogallala Aquifer, the primary source of water for hundreds of communities and thousands of ranchers and farmers. The March 8 piece, which also included possible technological solutions to the hog waste problem, helped boost debate in the state legislature over the issue. (See also Kansas, page 28.) Contact Mark Eddy at [wmarkeddy@aol.com](mailto:wmarkeddy@aol.com).

► Colorado environmentalists have a

new ally in their fight to slow the growth of Colorado ski resorts: the Environmental Protection Agency. Usually the scourge of industries, mining companies, and utilities, the EPA is joining the chorus of voices concerned about the growth in high-country playgrounds. The EPA's main concern is centered around how growing ski resorts—with increased tourist activity, construction, and pollution—are jeopardizing clean water by filling in mountain wetlands. Needless to say ski areas, already under the thumb of the U.S. Forest Service, aren't keen on the EPA's new interest. The story ran in the *Colorado Springs Gazette* March 16. Contact Todd Hartman, [toddh@gazette.com](mailto:toddh@gazette.com)

### DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

► A growing number of oil company executives are shifting their stance in the climate change debate, according to a March 3 report in the *Washington Post*. These industry chiefs are acknowledging that fossil fuels may be changing the world's climate and are focusing on how to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, said the article by Business section staff writer Martha M. Hamilton. Her story may be downloaded for a fee from the *Washington Post's* archives at <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-adv/archives/front.htm> on the Web. Hamilton may be reached at (202) 334-6166.

► Federal judges are attending expenses-paid seminars on property rights and the environment at Montana resorts. The seminars, run by the Foundation for Research on Economics and the Environment, are underwritten by conservative foundations that are also funding property rights litigation in federal courts, the *Washington Post* reported April 9. Ruth Marcus, money and politics reporter for the *Post's* national desk, dug up the story, which ran with a list of 109 judges who attended the seminars from 1992 to 1996. Her A-1 story may be downloaded for a fee from the *Washington Post's* archives at <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-adv/archives/front.htm> on the Web. Marcus may be reached at [marcusr@washpost.com](mailto:marcusr@washpost.com). The number for the *Post's* national desk is (202) 334-7410.

## FLORIDA

► The *Stuart News* reported March 3 that thousands of fish had been found in the St. Lucie River and Indian River Lagoon with lesions and tumors. After the report, scientists from the Florida Department of Environmental Protection found a micro-organism in the water that resembles *pfisteria*, an algae that killed fish in Maryland and North Carolina in 1997. Scientists believe the organism, called *Cryptoperidiniopsis*, thrives on nutrient-rich fresh water flowing into the brackish estuary from Lake Okeechobee. The *News* has written 19 stories about the sick fish and national newspapers such as the *New York Times* and the *Washington Post* have since reported the story. For information, contact Debi Pelletier or Andrew Conte, the *Stuart News*, (561) 337-5827 or [conte@stuartnews.com](mailto:conte@stuartnews.com).

► The *Florida Times-Union* in Jacksonville reported on January 24 of a recurrent outbreak mysteriously afflicting sea birds along the northeast Florida coast with impaired motor function and inability to eat, fly, and resist the cold. Officials are investigating whether Aqueous Film Forming Foam (AFFF) expelled into the St. Johns River for petroleum-fire fighting is the cause. The birds include migratory and resident loons, northern gannets, and various seagull breeds. Contact *Florida TU* staff writer, Derek L. Kinner at (904) 359-4280. This story was first covered by *Foto Weekly* in May 1995 (contact Deborra Hoag, [hoagd@aol.com](mailto:hoagd@aol.com); 904-721-3497), with further coverage by the *Florida Times-Union* on Feb. 13, 21, 26 (contact Kinner), and March 16 (contact Beau Halton, 904-359-4280).

► On February 7, the *Times-Union* reported on criticism leveled at Georgia-Pacific's plan to build a \$21 million pipeline that will release 36 million gallons of effluent from their Palatka paper mill into the St. Johns River every day. The company's chemists claim the pipeline will protect the narrow Rice Creek, into which they've been dumping wastewater for 50 years, by diverting it into the broader river. Fishermen and Putnam County Commissioner Howard Grisham, who plans to lobby at the EPA level, are in opposition. *Times-Union* staff writer Thomas B. Pfankuch can be

reached at (904) 359-4280.

► The Navy has been fined \$130,000 for dumping engine wash contaminated with cadmium onto the ground at Jacksonville Naval Air Station, reported the March 27 *Times-Union* edition. The contaminated water comes from flushing anti-submarine compressors. Until 1996, when environmental regulators were tipped off, the Navy dumped an estimated 7,200 gallons of the fluid annually onto aircraft parking pads and into drainage ditches flowing into the St. Johns River. Call John Fritz, staff writer at (904) 359-4272, or e-mail [jwfritz@aol.com](mailto:jwfritz@aol.com).

► Political debate continues surrounding the St. Johns River nomination into the American Heritage Rivers program. The *Times-Union* reported on April 15 that the Florida House approved a bill that could block the process, but will likely die in the Senate. The bill would extend the local (counties) approval requirements beyond the federal panel's May decision time frame. The Everglades were exempted since South Florida lawmakers feared the battle about the St. Johns would jeopardize their nomination to the program. Governor Lawton Chiles and Jacksonville's Mayor Delaney support the designation favoring federal grant money, but opponents fear federal involvement in local land-use and development. Contact Jim Saunders, staff writer, (904) 359-4280.

## INDIANA

► Turning aside objections from environmentalists and the Environmental Protection Agency, the Army Corps of Engineers in February granted a permit for a massive riverboat gambling project in southern Indiana, across the Ohio River from Louisville. The EPA said the Corps' environmental analysis was inadequate, but stopped short of blocking the permit. Environmentalists plan to sue to stop the project. For more information, contact Andrew Melnykovich at *The (Louisville) Courier-Journal*, (502) 582-4645.

## KANSAS

► International attention is beginning to focus on tiny Doniphan County in northeast Kansas, where regulators recently revealed that vinyl chloride, a

chemical known to cause cancer in humans, contaminates the drinking water of many rural water customers. The water district's plastic pipes are releasing the chemical into the drinking water, raising concern across the Midwest that a similar problem may occur in thousands of other drinking water districts that use the plastic pipe. The *Kansas City Star* in February revealed that state and federal regulators knew of the Doniphan County contamination as long ago as 1993, but failed to act to reduce the exposure until the newspaper began to raise questions. Since then, the states of Missouri, Nebraska, Iowa, Kansas, and Texas have agreed to test rural districts with the plastic pipes. Officials in other countries, including Australia, are looking at the problem. For more information, contact Mike Mansur, the *Kansas City Star*, [mmansur@kstar.com](mailto:mmansur@kstar.com) or (816) 234-4433.

► The hog industry is changing Kansas politics. When a Kansas City-area based company, Seaboard Corp., suggested opening a new slaughter plant to process four million hogs a year in central Kansas not far from Cheyenne Bottoms, the state's most significant wetland, many Kansas residents began a campaign to stop the hog plant. In Great Bend, anti-hog forces managed to unseat the City Council, placing four new council members aligned with them through write-in ballots. Now state legislators, worried that being pro-hog might bite them at the ballot box, are beginning to take heed, anti-hog forces say. (See Colorado, *Denver Post* story, page 27.) Contact Charles Benjamin of the Kansas Sierra Club in Topeka, (785) 232-1555.

## KENTUCKY

► Kentucky's booming timber industry was the focus of a three-day series in the (Louisville) *Courier-Journal*. Almost all of Kentucky's timber is on private land, on which logging is unregulated. Widespread erosion problems and poor silvicultural practices have prompted calls for state action to prevent another round of cut-and-run logging, like that which decimated Kentucky's forests early in this century. The *Courier-Journal's* stories examined the causes of the boom, problems caused by poor logging practices, proposals to regulate the industry,

and examples of how to manage woodlands for sustainability. For more information, or to obtain copies, contact Andrew Melnykovich at [amelnyko@louisvil.ganett.com](mailto:amelnyko@louisvil.ganett.com) or (502) 582-4645.

► Opposition from property-rights advocates prompted Kentucky lawmakers to water down forestry reform legislation proposed by Gov. Paul Patton. The measure passed after being stripped of many of its enforcement provisions. Lawmakers also tackled other environmental issues, including factory hog farms, billboards, pollution from boat toilets and lax standards for sewage treatment in rural communities. For more information, contact Melnykovich.

## MAINE

► The *Maine Times* ran a cover story in its February 5-11 issue on the growing controversy over hunting coyotes, "Killing Coyotes, For Sport and Profit." Staffwriter Andrew K. Weegar offered an eloquent weave of hard scientific information and colorful field reporting of a hunt to explore the issue. While in the field, Weegar reported on hunter Warren Trundy, whose dogs had encircled a coyote deep in a snowbound Maine forest: "Warren sticks the barrel of the shotgun through the branches. The shot is surprisingly soft, muted by the barrel's contact with the coyote's flank, but the dogs scatter at the noise." For more information or to obtain copies, contact Andrew Weegar, *Maine Times*, (207) 647-8111.

► The *Bangor* (ME) *Daily News* reported on December 13, 1997 that Maine became the first state in the country to refuse to allow two chemical and seed companies to distribute genetically engineered field corn. Engineered by DEKALB Genetics and Novartis Seeds, the corn produces the pesticide *Bacillus thuringiensis*, or Bt. Proponents argued that the Bt would attack crop-devastating European corn borers, leveling the playing field in corn production and allowing Maine, which has a short growing season, to compete with the rest of the country. But critics said the evidence of a pest problem in Maine is largely anecdotal at best—and therefore unreliable—and that the companies had failed to prove the engineered corn harmless to the environ-

ment. Contact Orna Izakson, *Bangor Daily News*, (207) 990-8149.

► The *Portland* (ME) *Press Herald* and other newspapers reported on Dec. 15, 1997 the announcement by Interior Secretary Bruce Babbitt and Assistant Commerce Secretary Terry Garcia that the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and National Marine Fisheries Service had withdrawn a proposal to protect Atlantic salmon on seven Maine rivers under the federal Endangered Species Act. The feds instead endorsed a six-year, \$15 million conservation plan developed by Maine Governor Angus King in cooperation with industry to protect the salmon. The plan is touted as a national model for combining protection with regulatory flexibility under the ESA. Critics fear tough restrictions on logging, herbicide spraying, sports fishing, and aquaculture. But environmentalists said the Maine plan will not work, noting that when you're down to less than 50 salmon in a river, flexibility should not be one of the concerns. Contact Dieter Bradbury, *Portland Press Herald*, (207) 791-6328.

## MARYLAND

► Responding to last summer's fish kills and human health problems that prompted the closure of three Maryland waterways, the state General Assembly adopted legislation in April requiring farmers to reduce runoff from their land of nutrient-rich fertilizer and animal manure, which scientists have linked to outbreaks last summer of fish-killing microorganisms. Under the bill, farmers have until 2003 to adopt plans for controlling runoff of nitrogen from their fields and animal feedlots, and until 2005 to limit losses of phosphorus. Failure to comply could mean fines of up to \$2,000 per violation. For more information, contact Heather Dewar at [heather.dewar@baltsun.com](mailto:heather.dewar@baltsun.com) or (410) 332-6100.

► Residents of Wagner's Point, a 12-block working-poor neighborhood in South Baltimore surrounded by 12 chemical plants and other industries, have called on government officials and the businesses to buy their homes and relocate them from the path of a planned "ecological industrial park." Three cancer-causing chemicals—benzene, butadiene, and car-

bon tetrachloride—have been measured in the air at levels up to 30 times what the EPA deems safe. Industry officials insist their facilities are not harming anyone's health, and EPA officials say the pollutants residents breathe are "typical for urban areas across the U.S." But local public health officials say rates of three types of cancer reported in Wagner's Point and two adjoining neighborhoods are significantly higher than the citywide average, itself one of the highest in a state with the highest cancer rate in the country. For more info, contact Dewar.

## MASSACHUSETTS

► Coastal waters north of Boston have become markedly cleaner over the past decade, mostly due to the construction of sewage treatment plants in Lynn and Salem, but the outcome has lobstermen fuming. The situation reached boiling point in mid-April, when the Massachusetts Water Resources Authority (MWRA) announced that its new regional treatment plant would soon go on-line. The \$3 billion Deer Island plant, nestled on a peninsula within view of Boston's cityscape, will separate, chlorinate, and then channel the effluent from about 40 towns and cities into the ocean at the outskirts of the harbor. Lobstermen say their catch disappeared from traditionally rich expanses of sea bottom once the Lynn and Salem plants went into operation, and they fear a similar fate for Boston Harbor. Several leading marine scientists agree. Contact David Liscio, (781) 593-7700 ext. 236 or [dliscio@aol.com](mailto:dliscio@aol.com).

► State Environmental Affairs Secretary Trudy Coxe wants communities to curtail their consumption of drinking water, especially in areas of new housing growth where the demand is causing rivers to literally run dry. According to Coxe, in worst-case scenarios excessive water withdrawals through pumping have caused some rivers to flow backward or simply run dry. Communities that draw water from rivers, such as the 14 communities on Boston's North Shore which depend on the Ipswich River, will be required to conserve water and protect their supplies before seeking state permission to dig new wells. Dry riverbeds or extremely low flows were reported last summer in the Ipswich, Neponset,

Namasket, Taunton, and Upper Charles river basins. The regulatory changes dovetail with stiff increases in the cost of drinking water and sewage treatment in many parts of the state. Contact Liscio for more information.

## MICHIGAN

► Three of the 11 Mexican gray wolves just released into the federal Blue Range Wolf Recovery Area in Arizona and New Mexico came from—of all unlikely places—a Michigan zoo. Although some ranchers are opposing the effort, federal biologists hope the predators will reach numbers of at least 100 by the year 2005. The three wolves from Binder Park Zoo in Battle Creek, MI, are considered “good genetic matches” and were released in early April. They’ve been tracked by radio collar to a mountain site at 8,000 feet. (See Arizona story, page 26.) For more information about the April 4 story, call Liz Wyatt, *Battle Creek Enquirer*, at (616) 966-0676.

► Tracking the toxic disaster that led to the slaughter of 31,000 head of cattle, Booth Newspapers environmental writer David Poulson has taken a long second look at the PBB scandal that made Michigan notorious two decades ago. But Poulson found the Velsicol Chemical Co. plant, which mixed PBB with cattle feed, may now have left a far more deadly legacy: volumes of the insecticide DDT in a nearby river. Scientists say the Pine River’s bottom and fish contain the highest levels of DDT in the Great Lakes region—and perhaps the nation. For more information about the March 15 story, call Poulson at (517) 487-8888.

► Great Lakes Radio Consortium reporters broadcasted a four-part series about the danger of lead in the home after federal housing officials announced a \$50-million public information campaign about lead poisoning. Segments were entitled “Getting the Lead Out of Home Renovations,” “Federal Policy Spurs Clean-up,” “One Woman’s Crusade,” and “Unique Treatment Program Makes Progress.” The campaign targeted cities from the East through the Midwest, from New York to Detroit. To listen to the series, which aired on Feb. 9, visit the GLRC web site at [www.glrc.org](http://www.glrc.org). For

more information about the reporting, call the consortium’s managing editor, David Hammond, at (734) 764-9210.

► *Detroit News* reporter Jeremy Pearce may have hit on a larger suburban bird problem than Michigan’s ubiquitous Canada geese. Mute swans, once admired for their devotion to their young and for their spotless white plumage, have suddenly become less beautiful. The exotic birds are attacking boaters and swimmers, and are driving out fragile native bird species such as the black tern. Naturalists say the state’s population of 2,600 mutes is three times the number the ecosystem can bear. State environmental officials are considering capturing, relocating, or possibly destroying some of them to make room for native trumpeter swans. To learn more about the April 12 story, call Pearce at (313) 223-4825.

## MINNESOTA

► An investigation by the *Minneapolis Star Tribune* revealed that more than a million gallons of gasoline have leaked into soil and groundwater from about two dozen corroded storage tanks and underground pipelines at Koch Refinery just south of St. Paul, and that the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency has done little to enforce cleanup during the past decade. A review of monitoring well data, consultants’ reports, and correspondence between the company and the agency showed that the gasoline has moved steadily underground towards the Mississippi River, and in one case reached a wetlands area on the fringe of the river. EPA officials have also begun an investigation of above-ground storage tanks at the refinery. Koch’s parent company is Koch Industries, Inc. of Wichita, Kansas, which owns other subsidiaries whose refineries and pipelines are also subjects of EPA investigations and a major lawsuit. Contact Tom Meersman and Joe Rigert, (612) 673-4414.

► The mystery of what’s causing deformities in frogs from Minnesota and other states—including extra, missing, and contorted legs, missing eyes, abnormal jaws, and webbed skin—is far from solved. Emerging evidence increasingly points to natural or man-made chemicals in the water, although parasites and

exposure to ultraviolet radiation are also being studied as possible causes. One of the more active areas of research is retinoic acid, a natural derivative of vitamin A that is synthesized by the body and plays a critical role as a hormone in normal limb development. It is theorized that retinoids or retinoid mimics might be causing the malformities, and that many compounds and their breakdown products will need to be tested for retinoid-like properties. Contact Tom Meersman, (612) 673-7388.

## MISSISSIPPI

► Bruce Reid of the *Clarion-Ledger* wrote several stories about a controversial \$62 million flood-control project in the Mississippi Delta. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers ultimately won approval for its plan to dredge extensively in the Big Sunflower River basin. In April, Reid looked at the environmental impact and also profiled area farmers who felt their concerns were being ignored. Reid’s number is (601) 961-7063.

► Reid also covered another controversy, in which a businessman nominated to serve on Mississippi’s Commission on Environmental Quality was found to own a paper mill that had violated waste-water regulations. The state senate confirmed William Van Devender to serve on the commission anyway, Reid reported in April. Contact Reid at (601) 961-7063.

## NEVADA

► Yucca Mountain, the Nevada site proposed for burying the nation’s nuclear waste, could have an earthquake or lava flow every 1,000 years or so, about 10 times more frequently than earlier estimated, a new study published in the March 27 issue of the journal *Science* suggests. Nevada politicians from Gov. Bob Miller to Sens. Harry Reid and Richard Bryan, all Democrats, hailed the study as another reason not to build the nation’s high-level nuclear waste repository 90 miles northwest of Las Vegas. Both the *Las Vegas Review Journal* and the *Las Vegas SUN* covered the story. Contact Keith Rogers of the *Review Journal*, (702) 383-0264, and Mary Manning of the *Las Vegas SUN*, (702) 259-4065. E-mail: [manning@lasvegassun.com](mailto:manning@lasvegassun.com).

## NEW HAMPSHIRE

► The *Boston Globe* reported on Jan. 11, 1998 that in the first-in-the-nation test of the effectiveness of the timber industry's Sustainable Forestry Initiative, the industry was refusing to release the results, even though SFI calls for public disclosure of such results, and three of the four people involved in compiling them were state employees on public salaries. Timber companies in New Hampshire that belong to the American Forest and Paper Association, the national trade group that devised SFI in 1994 to promote more ecologically-minded forestry among its members, agreed last year to have their lands in the state—some 400,000 acres—audited by a team of four for compliance with SFI's 12 guidelines for better forestry. The audit of International Paper, Champion International, and other AFPA member company lands was completed in January. For more information, contact Robert Braile, the *Boston Globe*, (603) 772-6380.

## ONTARIO

► The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) recently presented the White House with a brief emphasizing that international pollution agreements, including those signed with Canada, may be one way to cap dangerous U.S. emissions of mercury, nitrogen oxide, sulphur dioxide, and carbon dioxide. According to a February *Canadian Environmental Regulation & Compliance News* story, the EPA and New England states have been lobbying for stricter emission controls to be included in pending legislation that will deregulate the U.S. electric industry. Environmentalists claim that without added safeguards electric utilities will turn to dirtier fuels, such as coal, to cut costs. Contact Arlene Bouwman, (905) 873-7309 days (905) 702-8392 evenings. E-mail: arlene@stn.net

► For the first time in more than two decades, there is some evidence of improvement in one of the most chemically contaminated water bodies in the Great Lakes Basin. The Ontario Ministry of Environment reported in March that for the first time in more than 20 years of monitoring, levels of PCBs in young-of-the-year spottail shiners have fallen to concentrations the International Joint

Commission considers safe for fish-eating wildlife. On the other side of the table, environmental groups like Great Lakes United point out that many of the larger game fish in Lake Ontario, downstream from the Niagara River, are still flagged by government agencies as unfit for human consumption because of concentration of dioxin and other chemicals known to have leaked from disposal sites along the Niagara River shore. Environmental groups also note that the cleanup effort along the Niagara River has focused on "containment strategies" rather than removing the toxic wastes and destroying them, raising the question of how long it will be before the wastes leak from the sites again. For more information, contact Doug Draper at the *St. Catharines Standard*, (905) 684-7251.

## PENNSYLVANIA

► Hazardous materials on a Salem Township farm may threaten a plan to strip mine and reclaim the land, according to an April 5 front page story in the *Sunday Tribune Review*. A portion of the farm had been used by the owner to dump septic and industrial sludge. Recent DEP tests show trichloro-ethylene (TCE) may be percolating through the ground in the neighborhood. Although Superfund toxic cleanup program investigators have found dangerous levels of lead and cadmium in one neighbor's well water, DEP officials are still not certain anything hazardous is still present. Municipal Authority of Westmoreland County officials insist there is no cause for alarm at the nearby Beaver Run Reservoir, a municipal water source for 160,000 people. For more information, contact Debra Erdley, (724) 830-6293 or Diana Stricker, (724) 834-1151.

## QUEBEC

► Canada and the U.S. signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) March 18 on Collaboration in Energy Research and Development to provide a framework for joint projects in energy conservation, energy efficiency, renewable energy, alternative transportation fuels, fossil energy, and environmental protection and health, according to a story in *Canadian Environmental Regulation and Compliance News*. Several joint projects in heat pumps, combustion, bioener-

gy, and transportation are expected to be finalized now that the 10-year agreement has been confirmed. The countries have also agreed to accept a recommendation from the International Joint Commission (IJC) to establish new bionational watershed boards that would adopt an integrative ecosystem approach to the full range of water-related issues in the transboundary environment. Contact John Embury, Natural Resources Canada (613) 996-2007 or Amber Jones/Bill Wicker, U.S. Department of Energy (202) 586-5806.

## TENNESSEE

► Early in this century, much of the Mississippi Delta region was clearcut in order to plant soybeans and cotton. Now there's a trend toward reforestation, as farmers are discovering that trees can be a valuable cash crop. Tom Charlier reported on this phenomenon in the January 26th *Commercial Appeal*. Charlier can be reached at (901) 529-2572.

► After a devastating January flood that killed seven people in East Tennessee's Carter County, contractors were hired by federal and local governments to remove flood-related debris from streams. The February 28 edition of *The Tennessean* reported that the overzealous contractors, who did not have Clean Water Act permits, bulldozed and dredged parts of the Doe River and its tributaries, destroying some of the state's most popular wild trout streams. Contact Anne Paine, (615) 259-8071.

## TEXAS

► Air pollution from "grandfathered" industries—facilities exempt from having to obtain state emission permits since 1971—has been a major environmental issue in Texas since it re-emerged from obscurity about a year ago. The issue came to public attention last year when the *Houston Chronicle* disclosed that state officials had been negotiating quietly with business representatives about possible legislation to require permits for grandfathered plants. Although the initial talks broke down, the Texas Legislature subsequently ordered the state's environmental agency, the Natural Resource Conservation Commission, to devise a program to persuade grandfathered plants to get permits voluntarily. Environmentalists and

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## The Green Beat

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the governor's Democratic opponent in this year's election, state Land Commissioner Garry Mauro, have criticized the voluntary approach as too little, too late, and are calling for mandatory permits. For a couple of pertinent clips or other information, contact Bill Dawson at the *Houston Chronicle*, (713) 220-7843. E-mail: bill.dawson@chron.com.

### UTAH

► A Colorado environmental group filed a petition to list Utah's state fish, the Bonneville cutthroat trout, as a threatened species. The petition is part of a campaign by the Biodiversity Legal Foundation and other environmental groups to reverse the decline of native cutthroat throughout the Rocky Mountain region. The *Salt Lake Tribune* story by Brent Israelsen ran in March. Contact Reed Harris, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, (801) 524-5001 and Jasper Carlton, Biodiversity Legal Foundation, (303) 443-5518.

► Water in the Great Salt Lake's south arm is becoming too fresh for brine shrimp, an important piece of the lake's ecology, while water in the north arm is becoming too salty. The imbalance, according to a March *Salt Lake Tribune* story, may be caused by a railroad causeway that runs east-west across the lake. State and federal officials are looking at plans to open the causeway more to better mix the lake's waters. Jim Carter, of the Utah Department of Natural Resources, said if the brine shrimp population crashes, it threatens the survival of migratory birds. It also threatens a multimillion-dollar industry that harvests brine shrimp as fish food. For more info, contact Thomas J. Hannum, Bonneville Artemia

International, (801) 972-4704 or Jim Carter, (801) 538-5340.

► Rep. Chris Cannon, R-Utah, introduced House Bill 3625, which would establish the San Rafael National Heritage/Conservation Area in part of southern Utah. While Cannon says it's a step toward resolving Utah's contentious wilderness debate, the Southern Utah Wilderness Alliance (SUWA) says the bill would preserve too little land now being protected as "wilderness study areas." The April story ran in the *Salt Lake Tribune*. Contact Rep. Cannon at (202) 225-7751 and SUWA at (801) 486-7639.

► A group of loggers in Utah endorsed the recent U.S. Forest Service directive that halts new road-building in roadless areas, according to an April story in the *Salt Lake Tribune*. The Southern Utah Forest Products Association sent Forest Chief Michael Dombeck a letter saying they support his road-building moratorium if it means the forests will be managed in a more sustainable way to support local sawmill operations. It was the strongest endorsement to date from the timber industry, said Dombeck spokesman Chris Wood. For more information, contact Chris Wood, (202) 205-1038, and Michael Garrity, University of Utah economics professor, (801) 581-7481.

### WEST VIRGINIA

► Strip mining remained a hot issue among the media in West Virginia. Steve Myers of the *Charleston Daily Mail* wrote a lengthy article about valley fill coal mine waste piles, and the *Charleston*

*Gazette* kicked off an occasional series of articles about the growth of mountaintop removal strip mining in West Virginia. The *Gazette's* series is available online at <http://wvgazette.com>. Television stations and wire services joined in to cover a dispute between EPA and the state over whether Gov. Cecil Underwood should sign a bill to make it easier for coal operators to fill in streams with valley fills. Call Ken Ward at the *Gazette* at (304) 348-1702 or email to [kward@wvgazette.com](mailto:kward@wvgazette.com).

### WISCONSIN

► Two Wisconsin newspapers prominently ran environmental stories near the time of Earth Day. But they offered contrasting layouts. A Milwaukee weekly, *Shepherd Express*, ran a story April 23, on how environmental and grass roots groups got Wisconsin's governor to sign a bill fiercely opposed by the mining industry. The front cover of the paper featured a Gulliver-type figure wrapped in money, being pulled down by a crowd of Lilliputian-size people. Call *Shepherd* editor Joel McNally at (414) 276-2222.

► Meanwhile a mainstream *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel* chose the Sunday before Earth Day to feature a story that had been making the rounds for weeks—on how environmental and outdoors groups want the legislature to take away the governor's power to appoint the head of Wisconsin's Department of Natural Resources. The following Sunday, the paper ran an editorial backing the change. But editors also carried an op-ed letter from the DNR Secretary, denying the agency has been hampered by politics. Contact Martin Kaiser at (414) 224-2000.

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