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Maine Chapter of the Sierra Club February - March 2005

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Defending the Arctic Refuge: A Winning Strategy

The polling places had hardly closed on Nov. 2 before a cocky Bush Administration began crowing of an alleged mandate to drill in the Arctic. Media reports egged them on with predictions that with Republicans in control of the Senate by a margin of 55-45, they will finally muscle Arctic drilling through the Senate—the body that defeated drilling in 2003 by a vote of 52-48.

This is truly counting their chickens before they hatch. Recognizing the broad opposition to drilling in this pristine area and without the 60 votes needed to stop a filibuster on a normal bill, they plan to rev up this year's attack on the Arctic by slipping Arctic drilling revenues into the Federal Budget resolution (which can't be filibustered) early in 2005.

Polls have consistently shown steady opposition to ruining the wilderness of the fragile coastal plain for a dubious, very limited, difficult to exploit amount of oil. Senate leaders, fully recognize the broad opposition to drilling in this pristine corner of northeast Alaska. And we have a good chance to stop them—as we have always stopped them before! We need to expose the dishonesty of sneaking the Arctic into the budget as we contact key members of Congress :

House of Representatives:

In the past, House Budget Chairman Jim Nussle (R-IA) has declined to use his budget as a vehicle to move Arctic drilling. He supports opening the Arctic and has voted to do so in the energy bill, but he has always kept his budget clean. We must appeal to him to keep up that worthy stance.

Some other moderate Republicans who can help on the House side are Reps. Christopher Shays and Nancy Johnson (CT), and Charles Bass (NH).

Senate:

In the Senate the spotlight is on the new Chairman of the Budget Committee Judd Gregg (R-NH). This is the first budget Gregg will usher through Congress; we hope to convince him that adding Arctic drilling revenues to the Budget will muddy the message, complicate the process and could jeopardize passage of the overall Resolution.

Maine Senators Olympia Snowe and Susan Collins have consistently opposed drilling in the Refusege.

Other Senators who will be key to keeping Arctic drilling out of the Budget resolution include Republicans who previously voted to delete the provision: Sens. Gordon Smith (OR), Norm Coleman (MN), Mike Dewine (OH), John McCain (AZ), and Lincoln Chafee (RI). We must retain the support of Maine's Senators and Democrats who will be under pressure to change their votes: Blanche Lincoln (AR), Tom Carper (DE), and Ben Nelson (NE).

We MUST urge all other Senators not to use the Budget process to open the Arctic Refuge to oil development—including some who have voted against us in the past—such as Republican Senators Richard Lugar (IN), Arlen Specter (PA) and John Ensign (NV); and Democrats Mary Landrieu (LA), and Daniel Akaka and Daniel Inouye (HI). Urge these last three to stick to party unity.

In addition to direct contacts to all members of Congress, with special focus on those listed above, we need many Letters to Editors on the importance of protecting the threatened coastal plain of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. Letters can incorporate one or two of the following points, but should be kept to 200 words or less.

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Sears Islands Future

Sierra Club calls for an open and inclusive public participation process regarding the future of Sears Island

A management plan for Sears Island appears to be heading in many different directions, depending on the interest group or town or state government spokesperson outlining the details. After several months of meetings with government agencies, media reports and FOIA accounts, no clear vision has emerged nor has a clear process for developing this vision become evident.

At a meeting with Governor Baldacci in July 2004, we were especially appreciative of his proposal to initiate an inclusive and meaningful stakeholder process to develop a long-term management plan that would provide for participation by the larger Maine community that would include plan to include the whole island.

We believed that if organized wisely, this would be, by far the best way to incorporate the range of the views about this special place in Penobscot Bay and successfully conclude thirty years of controversy. This has not happened. Before a process could even be set up, MDOT Commissioner David Cole announced that the state proposed setting aside 280 acres of the island's total 941 acres for future transportation-related developments and that a plan for the remaining 70 percent of the island will hinge partly on input from the community.

In meetings set up by MDOT that included Chapter representatives and other long time involved groups, we were chagrined to discover the agency had set up a separate committee in Searsport and drawn up a Memorandum of Understanding detailing the working relationship expected with the

with the town. This includes DOT's reviewing any of the town's recommendations for the use of 660 acres of Sears Island that will not create incompatibility with uses on the remaining 280 acres as a marine related transportation facility. In our continued relationship with MDOT, we have further been dismayed at their approach to separate us from them (Searsport community) and separate 280 acres from the discussion of the whole island.

The future of Sears Island is about Penobscot Bay and mid-Maine's economic, cultural and environmental future. We continue to urge that the whole island be on the table for discussion and that the process is open to all key stakeholders without excluding anybody with a legitimate interest in the outcome.

Background Information

The Maine Chapter and others involved in stopping the cargo port in the '90s expected the Maine DOT to develop a long term management plan for Sears Island consistent with, the requirements for funding assistance set up by the Federal Highway Administration's and the Conservation Principles set out by a Sears Island Management Advisory Committee made up of state officials, Searsport officials and the public and environmental organizations. Any management plan, would of course, have been developed in an open process with required public hearings. In 1997 several conclusions emerged and four guiding principles were agreed upon:

Continued on page 3

Message from the Chair

Barbara J. Winterson



Natural Healing

We work passionately to protect and restore nature and maintain healthy, balanced ecosystems. Nature is the focus of our work, but it is worth understanding that nature gives back health. If we take care of nature – nature will take care of us.

The aftermath of the recent tsunami in the Indian Ocean reminds us that clean water is a necessity for health. It has been said that since the nineteenth century, the treatment and disinfection of drinking water has saved more lives than all the doctors and hospitals in history.

For over a hundred years, we also have been painfully aware of the link between dirty air and lung diseases, and have made considerable strides to correct the problem (although there is clearly plenty of work to be done). In the mid 20th century, Rachel Carson and others, helped us see the connections between harmful chemicals and the destructions of species and human health.

But how gardens, parks and wilderness may aid our health has eluded us scientifically. Of course, there are numerous literary protestations about the benefits of the out-of-doors, some pointing to the psychological: “Those who contemplate the beauty of the earth find reserves of strength that will endure as long as life lasts” (R. Carson); spiritual: “My father considered a walk among the mountains as the equivalent of churchgoing.

“(A.Huxley), and both: “Everybody needs beauty as well as bread, places to play in and pray in, where nature may heal and give strength to body and soul.”(J. Muir)

But recently, a remarkable set of studies have emerged from the University of Illinois.* Drawing on earlier studies regarding nature and mental restoration, Drs. Kuo, Sullivan and Taylor have shown specific psychological effects of natural settings on children and adults. For example, inner city girls with green and natural views from their homes did better on tests of self-discipline than those who had less green views.

In a large national study, natural, green outdoor environments reduced symptoms of attention deficit/hyperactivity disorder regardless of gender, age, severity of symptoms, region and family income. They also report beneficial social effects. Urban residents with green views and access to green spaces had better coping behaviors and more hope than those who did not.

Other studies showed that trees and greenery made public housing dramatically safer preventing personal violence and vandalism. So nurturance that many of us feel when we get back to nature is beginning to be supported by data.

This emerging body of evidence on the benefit of nature should offer us even more reason to renew our energies – working to protect clean water, clean air and special natural places, small and large.

Defending the Arctic Refuge Con't from page 1

The majority of the American people oppose drilling in the Arctic Refuge. Despite the tone reported in the media, this election was not a referendum on punching holes in America's Arctic National Wildlife Refuge.

Drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge would ruin one of America's last unspoiled wild places for what the U.S. Geological Survey and oil company executives concede is only a few months' worth of oil that would not even be available for a decade. Protecting the Arctic Refuge is important ecologically and culturally. The narrow coastal plain is the biological heart of the Arctic Refuge with its spectacular diversity of wildlife. The area is the birthing grounds of the Porcupine caribou herd, the basis of the subsistence and culture of the Gwich'in people.

The push to drill in the Arctic is part of a much broader agenda. This debate transcends the pristine expanses of the Arctic – the integrity of all of America's remaining wild places is at stake. Last year, Rep. Tom DeLay (R-TX) told a group of high-ranking Republicans that the controversy over drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge is

a “symbolic” fight over whether energy exploration will be allowed in sensitive areas elsewhere. If they can get into the Arctic, no place in America is safe.

No matter what one thinks of drilling, it's wrong to sneak this into the national budget:

Slipping controversial drilling into the Budget Resolution has nothing to do with the budget or with generating revenues for America. Instead of using normal open debate for the important issue of drilling in the Arctic, drilling proponents want to include speculative revenues from leasing in the FY2006 budget. Speculative, indeed: even some big oil companies have expressed skepticism about economics of such remote development.

It's a dishonest trick to base a budget on revenues that may never occur, and it could worsen our serious budget deficit. Keep the budget *clean*.

You, the many concerned Sierra Club activists around the nation, are our winning Arctic strategy!

Your letters and phone calls in the next few months will make the difference! Please start now:

WHAT YOU CAN DO NOW:

- Write or call your Senators and Representative: urge them to keep Arctic drilling out of the 2005 Budget Resolutions.
- Write or call Budget chairmen Gregg and Nussle with this message. You're not from New Hampshire or Iowa? No matter: their budget responsibilities have a national significance, and everyone is their constituent on these money topics. Judd Gregg: (202)224-3324; fax: (202)224-4952. Jim Nussle: (202)225-2911, fax: (202)225-9129
- Write and call the key legislators mentioned above, and reach out to your neighbors and friends to get them to do so also.
- Send letters to Editor, to newspapers in your state, opposing Arctic drilling and opposing including it in the budget.

For more information, sample letters, and ways to get involved, Joan Saxe, Joan.Saxe@sierraclub.org

CONTACT YOUR SENATORS:

Thank both Senators for their good votes against Arctic drilling in the past; and point out their championship is more important this Congress than ever before; urge them to stay firm against including Arctic drilling in the budget resolution. Fax, rather than mail letters to DC offices.

Honorable Olympia J. Snowe
Edward S. Muskie Federal Bldg.,
40 Western Ave., Room 408C
Augusta, ME 04330
Phone: 207-622-8292 or 800-432-1599
Washington, DC: phone: 202-224-5344
fax: 202-224-1946
olympia@snowe.senate.gov.

Honorable Susan M. Collins:
Edward S. Muskie Federal Bldg.,
40 Western Ave., Room 507
Augusta, ME 04330
Phone: 207-622-8414
Washington, DC: phone: 202-224-2523
fax: 202-224-2693

Support the Maine Sierra Club through payroll deduction!

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P.O. Box 2095, Augusta, ME 04338
(207)622-0105 giving@maineshare.org

Sears Island Future Con't from page 1

1. Sears Island should be maintained as much as possible in its present undeveloped, natural and relatively unspoiled condition
2. The public should have free access to the island for traditional uses, such as hunting, fishing, picnicking, hiking and cross-country skiing
3. The island should be used to enhance public education about the environment
4. The Town of Searsport should receive direct and indirect revenues from the island

However, in February of 2004, a FOIA (Freedom of Information Act) of the Baldacci administration correspondence indicated the potential for selling the Sears Island and possible LNG siting – “Every indication is that opportunities exist for development of the island, and that a primary concern should be structuring a sale at a high standard in the best interests of the taxpayers,” alerted the environmental community and others involved that the guiding principles had been thrown to the wind. It was time to activate.

The Chapter then requested “Interested Parties Status” of Maine DOT to receive complete information as it become available and a meeting with

the Governor to discuss LNG siting requirements and the future of the Island. In the meantime, former interested party members, including the Maine Chapter met in Rockland along with Searsport residents to develop a “Charette” to be used as a starting point for discussions about the future of the island.

In May, 2004, the Governor, to the town of Searsport, “I know that MaineDOT has actively communicated its interest in working with Searsport in the town’s comprehensive planning and implementation processes. Through that process, the community and MaineDOT can work toward defining a vision for the future of Searsport and Sears Island.” According to Selectmen’s meeting minutes, the Sears Island Alternative Use Committee (SIAUC) was established by a 4-0 vote of the Board of Selectmen on June 1, 2004, at which time Maine DOT offered to provide a facilitator for the process.

At the second meeting with MDOT in November 2004 we continued to stress the whole island needed to be on the table for discussion and an all inclusive stakeholder process. The MDOT has not yet arranged for another meeting as promised.

Guiding Principles from the Sears Island "Charette":

- A. Because it is a unique coast of Maine resource, Sears Island should only be used for functions that can only occur on the island. Proximity to Route One and tourist traffic should not be a reason to open the island to general development that can and should occur on the mainland.
- B. Sears Island is a unique ecosystem that supports a variety of plants and animal life not commonly found on the mainland.
- C. Unbroken habitat on Sears Island is one of its most significant features. It is important to maintain a significant percentage of the island in its current undeveloped state. Any future development should minimize habitat fragmentation.
- D. Construction that does occur on Sears Island should be a model of sustainable, green development.
- E. Up to 10 percent of available land (approximately 75 to 100 acres) may be a reasonable amount of land for appropriate development without unduly affecting its inherent nature.

Some combination of activities resulting in a research, education, and recreation facility would seem appropriate. A place to celebrate Penobscot Bay’s past, present and future, including a year-round environmental, cultural education center having classrooms, demonstration and research areas and meeting facilities, related structures and perhaps small-scale residential buildings for staff and attendees. An agricultural area that restores old fields and serves as a demonstration farm. A modest sized public pier for fishing, passenger and boating access. Preservation land should be the majority of the land. A trail system to connect various points of interest and the other developed locations could be created in a low to zero impact manner. Swimming could be allowed at the existing beach.

These principles and ideas are also consistent with the primary principles for Sears Island agreed upon by Searsport residents and environmental groups meeting in 1996 and 1997.

Chapter Supports Many Recommendations in State Climate Action Plan

The recently released Maine State’s Climate Action Plan (CAP) includes 55 proposed measures—some which will require legislation, some executive orders, and some just a sign-up from volunteer partners— that will lead to reductions in green house gas emissions in Maine. The entire Plan (both volumes) has been posted on the GHG website:

<http://maineghg.raabassociates.org>

The Maine Chapter joins other state wide environmental groups to study the recommendations and work together to promote and monitor actions taken by the legislature and the administration to achieve the goals of the CAP. These goals include reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions to 1990 levels by 2010, 10% below those levels in 2020, and by a sufficient amount to avoid the threat of global warming over the long term.

The law that required a state Climate Action Plan came as a result of a New England Governors and Eastern Canadian Premiers resolution calling for similar reductions.

Several New England states are well on their way to either developing action plans and or implementing them.

Maine’s Global Warming action group supports a strong global warming action plan for amine that includes:

- Policies to adopt stronger emissions standards for cars made available for sale in Maine
- Policies promoting development of new, appropriately-sited new renewable power generation in Maine with a special focus on wind and solar generation
- Policies promote energy efficiency, including support for programs that help reduce demand and policies promoting improvement in energy efficiency throughout all sectors of Maine’s economy

For more information or to volunteer to work on the Chapter’s Energy and Global Warming Action Committee please contact Joan Saxe at jsaxe@suscom-maine.net.

Book Review

Wright, Ronald, *A Short History of Progress*, House of Anansi Press, 2004.

“Each time history repeats itself, the price goes up”. So says a cynical graffiti about the hazards of progress, stating the theme of the 2004 Massey Lectures broadcast on the CBC’s Ideas series. Ronald Wright, an award-winning novelist, historian, and essayist, poses provocative questions about where we have come from and where we are going and answers them with wittily told cautionary tales about the rise and fall of earlier overreaching civilizations. The twentieth century was a time of runaway growth in human numbers, consumption, and technology, placing a colossal load on all natural systems, especially earth, air, and water. The great question of the twenty-first century is how, or whether, this can go on.

Wright concludes that we have the tools and the means to share resources, clean up pollution, and set economic limits in line with natural ones — live within our environmental means. But without a transition from short-term thinking to long-term thinking we may well miss this last chance to get the future right.

Book Note

http://www.newyorker.com/archive/content/?050103fr_archive03

Tsunamis caused by underwater earthquakes in the Indian Ocean claimed tens of thousands of lives. In this article, the third of three parts from 1951, Rachel L. Carson considers the science of waves, and the relationship between the earth and the sea. For some readers, Carson’s prose is far more enlightening than all the high-tech onsite TV images and callously maudlin interviews with distraught survivors put together.



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Support fair wages for farms and their workers by drinking your daily cup of java. The Sierra Club and Sacred Grounds Organic Coffee Roasters have partnered to sell certified organic, shade-grown, fair-trade coffees and fair-trade, organic teas under the Sierra Club name. Visit <http://www.sierraclub.org/store/> under coffee and tea, www.sacredgroundcoffee.com, or check your local store.



Clothing



Sierra Club apparel is dedicated to the spirit and principles of the Sierra Club, which means they are created with you in mind, using organic cotton, renewable resources, such as wool, and technical synthetics made from OEKO TEX (<http://www.oeko-tex.com/en/main.html>) certified fabric mills. All are produced to have the least impact on the environment. A portion of each purchase goes to support the Sierra Club's programs and activities. Visit <http://www.sierraclub.org/store/> under apparel.

Planning your Summer Vacation?

The Sierra Club offers a number of trips around the United States, internationally, and locally right in Maine. The best part is, when you vacation with the Sierra Club, you'll get a great trip and you'll also help make the planet a better place. Here are some local Maine and regional trips:

Vision for the Maine Woods: Restoring Valuable Wilderness—Activist
July 17-23, 2005 #05102A

Monhegan Island Service, Maine
September 11-17, 2005 #05309A

Mt. Agamenticus Service, Maine
September 11-17, 2005 #05310A

A Taste of the White Mts: NH Lodge and Hut-to-Hut Adventure
July 17-23, 2005 #05171A

Cape Cod National Seashore Service, Massachusetts
September 11-17, 2005 #05306A

For more information on these trips, as well as national excursions and international and to places such as Africa, Asia, Mexico, etc., go to <http://whistler.sierraclub.org/TripSearch/>. Or check out your Sierra Magazine.

Extreme Weather a Feature of Global Climate Disruption?

By Elizabeth May, Executive Director, Sierra Club Canada

The conversation about extreme weather, like many before, suffers from a lack of precision about the term “climate change” or “climatic disruption” or “global warming”... While the phenomenon described by these terms can be discussed, there are many different end points. The world at 550 parts per million (ppm) atmospheric carbon dioxide concentrations, is very different from a world at 1000 ppm, which is also different from 1500 ppm.

Nothing about atmospheric chemistry suggest that atmospheric concentrations will stabilize without very very drastic reductions in emissions (to avoid a doubling we need a 60% reduction globally below 1990 levels.) Bush's re-election makes it unlikely we can avoid doubling. But there is no reason that the rise will stop at doubling if emissions keep rising.

We likely would survive a 550 ppm (or 2 X CO₂) world. It would be a challenge to adapt. The poorest in all nations, but particularly the developing world, would have the hardest time among humans. Many, many species just would not adapt and would go extinct. We might not survive even in a 2X CO₂ scenario, but that depends a great deal on “nasty surprises” — trip wires in the atmosphere, “tipping points” that we do not know and will only be able to examine in post mortem. Abrupt climate change is hard to anticipate, but the U.S. Department of National Defense study setting out the stalling

of the Gulf Stream in 2010 as a “plausible” scenario is pretty sobering.

We could not likely survive the theoretical worst case scenario — a run away greenhouse effect where all the feedback loops from humanity's release of GHG results in more forest fires (pumping out more carbon), melting permafrost (also pumping out more carbon) and so on, in a spiraling out of control increase in warming gasses. Nothing we do then will matter much and we'll just have to hope some other factors intervene and keep a breathable atmosphere.

The essence of this issue is that we are playing Russian roulette with the planet's atmospheric chemistry. We are gambling it won't be too bad. We are equally likely to be very unlucky as very lucky. But the stakes of the game are too high for any sane society to continue down this course. Anyone paying attention to the science — and I don't just mean any Sierra Club member or any environmentalist — any human being with a thought for the future looking at this issue will conclude it is a bigger threat than terrorism, or any other threat that we know of.

As an environmentalist concerned about and running campaigns on issues from toxic contamination, air and water pollution, species at risk, forest biodiversity, protection of our oceans and wilderness, I have no problem recognizing that climate change trumps them all.

Conservation Values

If you are looking for a site that combines conservation values with an online community of forward thinking people, check out the New American Dream at <http://www.newdream.org/>. New American Dream is a non-profit organization with a mission to: “..help Americans consume responsibly to protect the environment, enhance quality of life, and promote social justice”.

new
american
dream

<http://www.gomaine.org/>



Interested in carpooling? Here is a quick fact using Go Maine's Cost Calculator: For a 20-mile commute, the average commuter spends \$2,550.00 a year. Carpooling with just one person reduces that cost to \$1275.00. Why wait any longer? Check out the Go Maine site for commuting possibilities, including their emergency ride home service.

Land for Maine's Future Program Bonding Makes Dollars & Sense for Maine

- ✓ The LMF program invests in Maine by sustaining natural resource based jobs and businesses.
- ✓ LMF protects family farms and working forestlands. Through the purchase of conservation easements, LMF keeps land in private hands, helps farmers and woodland owners continue responsible land management, and secures natural resource based jobs.
- ✓ LMF supports nature-based tourism and outdoor recreation, including hunting and fishing, by conserving Maine's natural heritage and traditional uses.
- ✓ Land prices are rising across the State so buying land today is more cost-effective than buying it later. For example, assuming that land prices escalate by 10% a year (a conservative estimate) a \$10 million project today will *cost* an additional \$1 million next year.
- ✓ The need for land conservation will not recede as prices rise but rather will become more pressing, as well as more expensive, over time.
- ✓ Bonds raise substantial amounts of money, enabling the state to make important acquisitions now while land is available and at lower cost than in the future. In addition, the cost of paying off the bonds are spread out over a long time horizon, and therefore borne by both current and future beneficiaries.
- ✓ Maine has fiscally sound bonding policy and practices; Maine's debt is low, its debt ranking (a national indicator) is high, and old bonds are retired before new debt is taken on.
- ✓ Maine is spending down old bonds before bringing new bonds online. Maine retired \$52 million more debt than it issued from 2000 to 2004.
- ✓ Previously authorized bonds are being spent down. By the end of FY 05, the state expects to have only \$63 million in authorized but unissued bonds.
- ✓ Maine is responsibly below the key guideline for a state's debt service burden of no more than 5% of tax supported revenues.
- ✓ Maine's debt levels are lower than the national average
- ✓ Maine ranks 36th in the nation for tax supported debt per capita, 30% below the national average of \$701/capita.
- ✓ Maine's tax supported debt as a percentage of personal income is 1.8%, well below the national average of 2.4%, and lower than any other state in New England except NH (1.5%).
- ✓ Maine has excellent credit ratings
- ✓ Moody's Investors Service assigned Maine the highest rating available for General Purpose Bond Anticipation Notes, reflecting the state's financial strength.
- ✓ Similarly Moody's favorable rating of Maine's general obligation bonds is due to the continued diversification of the state's economy, responsible debt levels, and prompt response to previous years' lagging tax revenues.
- ✓ Interest rates are low and the state's economic health is stable, making new bonding fiscally sensible.
- ✓ Authorizing new bonds now is less expensive than they will be when interest rates rise, as they invariably do.
- ✓ The Maine Economy is growing. Now is the time for responsible, planned bonding program

Join the Chapter Action Team!

Each year potential Congressional and state legislative and administrative action presents unique challenges that provide opportunities for us to come together as activist to influence public policy. Grassroots activism is the most influential tactic when it comes to protecting our environment.

This year, we especially need you to help us remind our elected officials that we are following their actions or in-actions. Therefore, we invite you to join the Chapter's ACTION TEAM NOW!

Nationally we anticipate:

- another attempt to open up the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge to drilling
- more attacks on the Endangered Species Act,
- judicial nominations hostile to environmental protections, and
- further assault on the Clean Air Act

Maine is fortunate to have Senators and Congressmen who share our concern for the environment and who listen to their constituents. However, we not only need to let them know how much we appreciate their efforts, we must continue to build on our longstanding relationships.

In Maine, The Land for Maine's Future (LMF) bond will be ramping up again soon and we will need your help organizing in your neighborhoods and at the state house. Lobby Day, scheduled in mid-February, for the Land Bond is a great opportunity speak up for the environment at the state level.

In addition to LMF, we anticipate working to support:

- the just released Climate Action plan and related energy issues
- natural Resources Protection: Enforcement/Implementation through our state agencies
- Water: Androscoggin River/St. Croix dissolved oxygen standard, and
- Public Health: Lead poisoning prevention

What you can do

- Join the ACTION ALERT list hosted by the Maine Chapter. You will receive action alerts emailed to you about once a week. To join online, you can follow this link: <http://lists.sierraclub.org/SCRIPTS/WA.EXE?SUBED1=maine-cons-alerts&A=1>
- write letters to the editor of your local newspaper
- call your senators and representatives in Washington
- contact your state representative

You can make a difference at whatever level fits into your busy schedule. Our Chapter Leadership Team will help you to hone your political skills and we urge you to participate in a skills building workshop. JOIN OUR CHAPTER ACTION TEAM and get involved. Participate and make a difference. It's as easy as returning the attached volunteer form to the Chapter Office at One Pleasant St., Portland, ME 04101. For more information Contact Joan Saxe – 865-3648.



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Maine Chapter

Yes! I want to be on the Chapter's Action Team. I can...

- ___ Join the Chapter Action Alert List
- ___ Write Letters to the editor
- ___ Participate in a Lobbying Workshop
- ___ Attend/comment at a hearing in Augusta
- ___ Write/Call my legislator in Augusta
- ___ Write/call my Senators/Representatives in DC
- ___ Learn more about an issue that interests me
- ___ Call me for other volunteer opportunities

Name _____ Phone _____

Address _____

City _____ Zip _____

Email _____

Downeast Rally Against Terminal in Passamaquoddy Bay

by Vivian Newman

On Saturday January 8 the high school gym in Eastport swarmed with 300 local citizens gathered to Rally for the (Passamaquoddy) Bay. The event was a thorough-going grassroots affair, combining education, politics, and entertainment.

The program opened with a Blessing by Fredda Paul, Medicine Man from Sipayik. This was followed by poetry readings, musical performances by both professional musicians and school groups featuring sea songs, fiddling, drumming, and a blanket dance, and interspersed with "Speaking Out" sessions expressing opposition to the Pleasant Point terminal proposal from a wide variety of perspectives — artisans and poets, a fisherman, a grandmother, a community leader, a

Maine guide, educators, a marine biologist, a health professional, local entrepreneurs, and concluded with well-known Passamaquoddy artist David Moses Bridges. Family groups filled the bleachers and rose to their feet with a roar of approval when one speaker called for political accountability.

All in all, this event demonstrated profound concern by the public at large, as well as a desire to learn more details and to hold open discussion. The organizers from the three-nation group Save Passamaquoddy Bay from LNG did what state and federal governments have still utterly failed to do — inform, engage, listen.

For photographs of the rally, visit <http://www.savepassamaquoddybay.org/>

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Please send Senator Collins a Thank-you

For the past year and a half Mainers have been resisting unsuitable siting of LNG terminals on our coast. Fortunately, none of the proposals reached the stage of federal review and approval.

At the end of 2004, Congressional Appropriation Committee conferees slipped controversial language into an explanatory report accompanying the FY 2005 Omnibus Appropriations bill. This language declared that the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) could trump state jurisdiction over liquefied natural gas (LNG) terminals. It stated that the "conferees agreed" with a March 24, 2004 FERC order that asserted federal jurisdiction over the approval and siting of LNG terminals. While this statement technically does not have the force of law, it is contrary to democratic process.

Three Cheers for Senator Collins who issued a statement saying, "I am disappointed that the conferees included language in the Omnibus Conference Report relating to FERC versus State jurisdiction over the siting of LNG terminals. This issue should be addressed by the proper authorizing committee and then considered on its merits by the full Senate—not buried in report language on an appropriations bill. Not only does this report language not carry the force of law, but I can also state that it does not represent the views of this Senator." See page 2 for contact information.

SAVE THE DATE!

**Celebrating,
Protecting and
Restoring the
Allagash Wilderness
Waterway**

Date: Saturday April 30, 2005

Time: 9:00 AM-4:00 PM

Place: University of Maine – Alumni House, Orono

**For More information, contact
Karen Woodsum at 207-761-5616,
or Karen.Woodsum@sierraclub.org**

Eco Book Discussion Group Maine Chapter Sponsors FUN Book Club!

The Eco-Book Club is an informal group that meets at 5:30 p.m. at the Sierra Club office, 1 Pleasant Street, Portland (next to Hi Bombay Restaurant). For more information call the Sierra Club office at 761-5616 or visit our web site at <http://mainesierraclub.org>.



Winter 2005 theme: WOMEN'S VOICES FOR MAINE WILDERNESS

Friday February 11, 2005 Wilderness Journal: Life, Living Contentment in the Allagash Woods of Maine by Dorothy Boone Kidney about her life in the North Country in the 1970s.

Friday March 18, 2005 Nine Mile Bridge: Three Years in the Maine Woods by Helen Hamlin. Early 20th century life in the Maine Woods.

Spring 2005 theme: HUMOR AND THE OUTDOORS

Friday April 29, 2005 Bill Bryson, I'm a Stranger Here Myself: Notes on Returning to America After 20 Years Away. Columns on America he wrote weekly, while living in NH in the 1990s, for a British newspaper.

Friday May 20, 2005 A repeat of our book club's favorite: the hilarious A Walk in the Woods: Rediscovering America on the Appalachian Trail by Bill Bryson.

Tuesday June 28, 2005 When you look like your passport photo, it's time to go home by Erma Bombeck. "Wry meditation on the art of surviving one's long-dreamed-of and hard-earned exotic vacations" says one reviewer.

Waves of Ocean Legislation Anticipated for Congress

Be prepared for what the news service Environment and Energy Daily calls "waves of ocean legislation" slated for the 109th Congress. Any of these could profoundly affect Maine.

Last year two separate commissions, the privately funded Pew Oceans Commission and the federally funded U.S. Commission on Ocean Policy (USCOP), highlighted the need for reform of U.S. governance of offshore resources. They both declared that coastal waters and oceans are in a state of crisis and that federal oversight is too fractured to protect ocean ecosystems stressed by overfishing, burgeoning development, loss of coastal wetlands, contaminated sediments, and nutrient pollution. Among 200 recommendations, USCOP called for consolidating management responsibilities within the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)

and significantly boosting federal ocean research funding.

The reports promptly generated a slew of bills late in the 108th Congress, and most of them are likely to be reintroduced. The House Oceans Caucus, co-chaired by Maine's Rep. Thomas Allen, plans to reintroduce a bill titled "Oceans-21" that would implement many of the commission's recommendations.

The 109th Congress will also feature efforts to reauthorize two landmark ocean policy laws: the Marine Mammal Protection Act and the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act. Magnuson, which dates to 1976, has formed the basis of U.S. fishery management in waters between three and 200 miles offshore, an area known as the Exclusive Economic Zone. Rep. Vernon Ehlers

Continued on Page 8

Legislature FAQ — A beginners primer

What is the legislative session?

It is when the Senate and House consider legislative business (basically a voting meeting) concerning bills, resolutions, and related actions. The Legislative session occurs on both Federal and State levels.

Why is the legislative session important to me?

The legislative session is a time when many bills and legislation get passed, or do not get passed. This includes national level issues such as the Energy Bill and local level items such as the Land Bond.

How can I contact my U.S. (Federal) legislator?

Your Federal legislators are Senator Susan Collins, Senator Olympia Snowe, Representative Thomas Allen, and Representative Michael Michaud. For more information go to: <http://www.maine.gov/portal/howdoi/government.html>

How can I find my state legislator?

Finding out who your State Legislator is and how to contact them is a little more complicated because there are many. However, if you have an issue specific to your area, it makes sense to contact the legislator for your region, since you are a constituent, and you have impact!

Find your legislators at <http://janus.state.me.us/legis/>

Statewide issues: contact the Republican and Democrat Maine offices.

State Democratic Office

State Republican Office

State House Address:

3 State House Station, Augusta 04333

State House Address:

3 State House Station, Augusta 04333

Senate Democratic Office:

Phone: 207-287-1515

Fax: 207-287-1585

Senate Republican Office:

Phone: 207-287-1505

Fax: 207-287-1527

For Both parties:

Hearing Impaired: 207-287-1583. To leave a message: 1-800-423-6900

Women's Snow Shoeing and Meditation Retreat

March 4-6 — Denmark, Maine

Nestle into our cozy, wood-heated retreat center on Pleasant Mountain, as the first circle to officially gather in this wonderful space. We will share in guided meditations, journaling, and other group and solo awareness activities, honor our physical and natural worlds by exploring the woods and mountain on gently paced snow shoeing day trips, track wild animals in the fresh mountain snow to perhaps get a glimpse of their wanderings and activities.

Fee: \$275-\$350 includes organic, home-cooked meals, simple accommodations, and programming. Snow shoes are available by first request only, as available. Rentals may be arranged. For information go to nurturethroughnature.tripod.com

MIDCOAST GROUP STARTING UP!

Excomm members strive to provide more opportunity for local conservation, outings, and programs.

If you live in Waldo, Knox, or Lincoln County and are willing to help us with planning, please contact Bill Pearce ph. 594-8413, email billpearce@adelphia.net, or Vivian Newman 594-7534, newviv@adelphia.net.

Calendar of Events

February

- 4,5,6 NERCC meeting - Energy/Training Academy, Rhode Island; for more info: http://mainesierraclub.org/energy_training.htm
- 7 Beach Workshop, Crowne Plaza Hotel, Warwick, RI; <http://www.neiwpsc.org>
- 8 Sharing Public Waters - A Community Discussion, 7-9pm Portland High School. For more information: <http://www.state.me.us/dmr/baystudy/meetings.htm>
- 9 Maine Share Retreat, 8:30-1:00, Augusta, Pine Tree State Arboretum
- 10 Wild Utah: America's Redrock Wilderness - 6:00pm, Patten Free Library, Bath.
- 11 Book Club discusses Wilderness Journal: Life, Living Contentment in the Allagash Woods of Maine by Dorothy Boone Kidney about her life in the North Country in the 1970s. 5:30, Maine Chapter Office
- 11 Beach Workshop, Urban Forestry Center, Portsmouth, NH; <http://www.neiwpsc.org>
- 11 "Oil on Ice" movie and partnership meeting, 6:30pm, First Universalist Church, Rockland
- 15 Wild Utah: America's Redrock Wilderness - 6:30pm, Camden Public Library, Camden.
- 20 If you have an item for the April/May newsletter, please send it to maine.chapter@sierraclub.org
- 28 Executive Committee meeting & conference call 6:30-8:30pm

March

- 4-6 Women's Snow Shoeing and Meditation Retreat, Denmark, Maine
- 8 Wild Utah: America's Redrock Wilderness - 7:00pm, Portland Public Library, Portland.
- 9 MaineShare Mtg, 9:30-12:30, Augusta, Pine Tree State Arboretum
- 12 "Oil on Ice" People are gathering in homes across the country to view this movie. FMI: www.oilonice.org.
- 18 Book Club discusses Nine Mile Bridge: Three Years in the Maine Woods by Helen Hamlin. Early 20th century life in the Maine Woods. 5:30, Maine Chapter Office
- 26 Executive Committee meeting

April

- 15 "Toxics in our Midst" – Film about the hazards of vinyl products, followed by discussion; 6:30 at the First Universalist Church, 345 Broadway, Rockland.
- 17 HOPE Festival, Brewer
- 22 Earth Day
- 21 John Muir's Birthday
- 29 Book Club discusses Im a Stranger Here Myself: Notes on Returning to America After 20 Years Away, by Bill Bryson. Columns on America he wrote weekly, while living in NH in the 1990s, for a British newspaper. 5:30, Maine Chapter Office
- 30 Celebrating, Protecting and Restoring the Allagash Wilderness Waterway, 9:00-4:00; FMI: Karen Woodsum 207-761-5616

May

- 14 Executive Committee meeting
- 20 Book Club discusses a favorite, A Walk in the Woods: Rediscovering America on the Appalachian Trail by Bill Bryson. 5:30, Maine Chapter Office
- 28 Sierra Club's Birthday - 112 years old!

June

- 1 Nominations due for national Club awards, <http://www.sierraclub.org/awards>
- 8 MaineShare Mtg. Pine Tree State Arboretum
- 20 Executive Committee meeting
- 28 Book Club discusses When you look like your passport photo, it's time to go home by Erma Bombeck. 5:30, Maine Chapter Office

JOIN THE SIERRA CLUB!

YES, I want to be a member of the Sierra Club.

YES, I want to give a gift membership.

Name _____

Address _____

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email _____

I understand that a gift announcement card will be sent for my use. I've entered my name and address above and the recipient's name and address below.

Gift Recipient _____

Address _____

City/State _____ Zip _____

Check enclosed, made payable to Sierra Club

Payment method: Visa Mastercard Visa Exp. Date ____/____/____

Cardholder Name _____

Card Number _____

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INTRODUCTORY	<input type="checkbox"/> \$25	
REGULAR	<input type="checkbox"/> \$39	<input type="checkbox"/> \$47
SUPPORTING	<input type="checkbox"/> \$75	<input type="checkbox"/> \$100
CONTRIBUTING	<input type="checkbox"/> \$150	<input type="checkbox"/> \$175
LIFE	<input type="checkbox"/> \$1,000	<input type="checkbox"/> \$1,250
SENIOR	<input type="checkbox"/> \$24	<input type="checkbox"/> \$32
STUDENT	<input type="checkbox"/> \$24	<input type="checkbox"/> \$32
LIMITED INCOME	<input type="checkbox"/> \$24	<input type="checkbox"/> \$32

Contributions, gifts and dues to the Sierra Club are not tax-deductible. They support our effective, citizen-based advocacy and lobbying efforts. Your dues include \$7.50 for a subscription to *Sierra* magazine and \$1.00 for your chapter newsletter.

Sierra Club

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Protect America's Environment:
For Our Families, For Our Future.

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Waves of Ocean Legislation Con't from page 6

(R-Mich.) plans to reintroduce his NOAA organic act that would codify NOAA for the first time, claiming it would move the agency further toward an ecosystem-based management approach.

In the Senate, incoming Commerce Committee Chairman Ted Stevens (R-Alaska) may reintroduce legislation reported out of the committee last year that would set out a national oceans and atmosphere policy to codify a long-range program of oceanic research, conservation, management and education. In addition, Sen. Barbara Boxer (D-Calif.) is planning to introduce her own stand-alone ocean policy bill. Other important legislation is Maine Senator Olympia Snowe's bill to reauthorize the Coastal Zone Management Act and a bill to grant the Commerce Depart-

ment authority over offshore aquaculture operations.

Meanwhile, the Bush Administration has responded to the USCOP report with its own Ocean Action Plan and an Executive Order creating a new Cabinet-level "Committee on Ocean Policy" chaired by James Connaughton, head of the White House Council of Environmental Quality, to coordinate federal ocean policy.

Funding, as usual, is a key sticking point and was conspicuously absent from the White House announcement, aside from \$2.7 million for coral reef protection efforts. Funding for ocean research has fallen in the past 25 years, from 7% of total federal R&D to 3.5% today.

FMI: Vivian Newman, 207-594-7534 or newviv@adelphia.net

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STATEMENT OF PURPOSE OF THE SIERRA CLUB

"To explore, enjoy and protect the wild places of the Earth; to practice and promote the responsible use of the Earth's ecosystems and resources; to educate and enlist humanity to protect and restore the quality of the natural and human environment; and to use all lawful means to carry out these objectives."

Create an Environmental Legacy.

Bequests have played a key role in the Sierra Club's environmental successes over the years.

Planning now may make your gift more meaningful and reduce taxes on your estate. We have many gift options available. We can even help you plan a gift for your local chapter.

For more information and confidential assistance, contact:

John Calaway
Director Gift Planning
85 Second Street, 2nd Floor
San Francisco, CA 94105
(415) 977 5639 or email:
planned.giving@sierraclub.org