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News Briefs

Coalition for Education in the Outdoors

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News Briefs

Leading Conservation Organizations Ask the Bush Administration to Follow Science, Economics and Restore Natural Flows to Missouri River

A dozen of the nation's leading conservation organizations are asking the Bush Administration to restore more natural flows to the Missouri River and protect the \$85 million that anglers, hunters, and outdoor enthusiasts spend in local economies annually throughout the eight-state Missouri River Basin.

"The Administration says policy decisions should be made based on sound science and good economics," said Paul Hansen, executive director of the Izaak Walton League. "The upcoming decision about the Missouri River will be an excellent good opportunity to apply that principle to natural resource policy."

By early June, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is expected to make public the final Environmental Impact Statement for recovery efforts on the Missouri River. The Administration must decide this summer whether to accept and implement changes now being considered for the operation of dams along the river. The changes being considered would restore more natural flows in the spring and summer.



In a letter to President Bush, the conservation groups wrote, "As we approach the Lewis and Clark Bicentennial celebration, Mr. President, you have an opportunity to leave a lasting legacy by championing efforts to reverse the decline of the Missouri River. Generations of Americans, who enjoy hunting, fishing, and outdoor recreation, need to be able to take part in these activities on our nation's longest river. It makes good conservation sense, but it makes even better economic sense. We urge you to seize this opportunity." [IWLA]

American Retailers May be Key to Improving Environmental Stewardship of Livestock Feedlots

St. Paul, Minn. - Retail powerhouses in the food service industry including fast food, grocery, and restaurant chains, should require large livestock feedlots and processing facilities that supply retailers with meat, eggs and dairy products to meet strict environmental standards, according to a new report issued by the Izaak Walton League.

"American consumers care about how their food is produced," said Rachel Hopper, an agriculture associate in the League's Midwest Office. "And consumers tend to associate their food with the retailers who sell it rather than the livestock feedlots and processing facilities that produce and process it. Grocery stores and fast food restaurants can't afford to avoid this issue any longer.

The issue, according to the report, *Going to Market: The Cost of Industrialized Agriculture*, is the increasing number of pollution problems at large livestock feedlots - commonly called factory farms - which often operate under production contracts with agriculture and retail corporations. The League cites the 433 manure spills in the Upper Midwest that caused 134 fish kills and killed nearly three million fish over a five-year period, as one example of the environmental damages caused by concentrated livestock production. To read the report, visit www.iwla.org/reports/market.html. [IWLA]

Climate Solutions Authors Win Award at New York Book Fair

Olympia, WA -- The authors Guy Dauncey and Patrick Mazza, along with their publishing house New Society Publishers, have just won the coveted Nautilus Award at the New York Book Expo, that was held in New York from May 5th-9th, 2002. The annually awarded NAPRA Nautilus Awards recognize books that make an exceptional contribution to promoting conscious living and positive social change.

Stormy Weather: 101 Solutions to Global

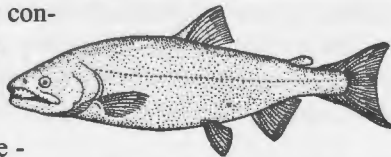
Climate Change, by Guy Dauncey with Patrick Mazza, was the overall winner in the Ecology/Environment category. Their book is described as "a must read for anyone who wants a cleaner, healthier planet" by James Hansen, Director of NASA's Goddard Institute for Space Studies, one of the world's leading climate scientists. It provides a concise and comprehensive overview of global warming, and describes 101 detailed solutions that can be put into practice by individuals, schools, colleges, churches, cities, businesses, power utilities, corporations, governments, and global treaty makers.

Bob Hunter, co-founder of Greenpeace, called it "the most important ecological book of our generation" in Toronto's EYE Magazine; the Green Business Letter called it "one of the clearest, most concise guides yet on coping with climate change."

When asked about his response to winning the award, Guy Dauncey said, "My hope is that the public - from churchgoers to farmers, from governments to corporate leaders - will read the book, and realize that while global warming is one of the greatest challenges facing humanity, there are many solutions which will benefit everyone; they are not something we need be afraid of." [Earth Island Institute]

Tukwila Certified As Community Wildlife Habitat

May 10, 2002 - Leading a nationwide trend in community concern for habitat loss, the city of Tukwila was officially designated as a Community Wildlife Habitat, the first in Washington and only the fourth in the country to receive such an honor. The National Wildlife Federation (NWF) commends the dedicated residents of Tukwila and the Tukwila Wildlife Habitat Project (TWHP) for their wildlife conservation efforts and for coming together for a common purpose - to create a community where people and wildlife can flourish.



Tukwila, with a population of 17,000 and located just 10 minutes from Seattle, could be considered the poster child for communities everywhere suffering from rapid growth and unchecked development. However, despite the odds, Tukwila retains important stretches of wildlife habitat. Running the length of Tukwila is the Duwamish River, which plays a vital role in the salmon recovery effort underway throughout the Northwest.

The Community Wildlife Habitat project is part

of the NWF's Backyard Wildlife Habitat program. Since 1973, NWF has provided millions of people with the basic guidelines for making their landscapes more wildlife-friendly. [NWF]

Water Works Wonders

Alexandria, VA -- Water Works Wonders(tm), the national awareness campaign to increase participation in recreational fishing and boating, just might be a more prophetic name than anyone could have imagined. Not only is this young outreach program of the Recreational Boating and Fishing Foundation



(RBFF) achieving early successes, it is also uniting the boating and fishing industries like never before, and serving state agencies and conservation organizations with marketing prowess

RBFF is a non-profit organization formed in 1998 to oversee a strategic five-year outreach plan authorized and funded through Congressional action to address declining participation trends in recreational boating and fishing. The initiative serves as an umbrella under which all with an interest in recreational boating and fishing can work together in a common effort to increase participation and grow stewardship of the resources upon which these activities depend. The total effort will generate nearly 700 million consumer impressions.

Roadless Areas under Attack

February 5, 2002 National Forest Roadless Areas are again under attack by the Bush Administration and the U.S. Forest Service. This time, the Forest Service has proposed two new administrative "directives" that eliminate safeguards for roadless areas, allowing more destructive road construction on our national forests.

On December 20, 2001, the Forest Service proposed two new "Interim Directives" covering transportation and roadless area management on our national forests. These directives are the latest in a series of administrative maneuvers that have weakened or removed important roadless area safeguards provided by the Roadless Area Conservation Rule and the Transportation Policy. The proposed Transportation System Analysis Directive effective-

ly would give Forest Service managers added power to decide if certain road building projects should undergo environmental and public review.

Currently, any new road construction or reconstruction in inventoried roadless areas and contiguous unroaded areas can only occur if the Regional Forester determines a "compelling need." This directive would eliminate that requirement. As a result, small-scale road projects could be approved *without* an Environmental Impact Statement, (EIS). Further, by removing protection for uninventoried roadless areas, the ecological values of these unroaded areas, including their value as important wildlife corridors, are also threatened.

The proposed Inventoried Roadless Area Management Directive would do anything but protect roadless areas. It doesn't stop logging or road building; it simply gives the Chief of the Forest Service responsibility to approve such actions. And it totally exempts the Tongass National Forest in Alaska from *any* protection of its 9.4 million acres of roadless areas!

In fact, this interim directive provides no precautions to ensure that the Regional Foresters and the Chief won't simply rubber-stamp all logging and road-building projects that come across their desks.

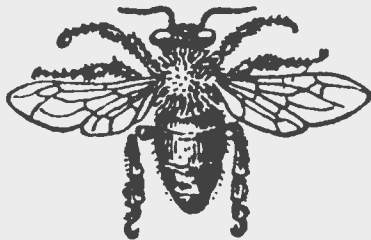
In contrast, the Roadless Area Conservation Rule provides permanent protection of all inventoried roadless areas in our National Forests from logging and road building. However, this rule remains unimplemented due to stalling tactics and lack of defense in court by the Bush Administration. [Wilderness Society]

Wild Honeybees Face Big Trouble

May 14 - Under cover of darkness, Wilson Bowles loads up his 1958 Dodge pickup and heads west toward the mountains with his sleeping cargo. BOWLES IS carrying 20 hives of honeybees from his apiary in Boyce, Va., to the apple orchards on the far side of Winchester - 1 million bees, now snug and huddled for the night between frames of honey and brood comb.

The next morning, the sun coaxes them out into a new world - the 350-acre fruit orchard of John Marker, where the bees will spend much of April gorging themselves on the pollen and nectar of 45,000 apple and pear trees.

Marker used to count on bees just showing up



in his orchards, but no more. The farmer's abiding friend for thousands of years, the honeybee in America stands on the edge of the abyss.

In recent years, two tiny spider-like parasites have been weakening and killing bee populations across the United States. While the mass media have played up the threat of Africanized "killer" bees in the Southwest, the rest of the country has been losing 80 percent or more of its wild honeybee populations.

Only people living within a mile or two of a beekeeper have much chance of seeing the industrious, golden-bodied insect at work on a flower. For everyone else, this icon of the garden and orchard might as well be extinct.

In the garden this means a scant harvest of cucumbers, squash, pumpkins and other vegetables requiring insect pollination, as well as feeble flowering and fruiting of many ornamental trees and shrubs. Wildflowers are not reseeding themselves as they should. Most important, one third of food crops need insect pollination, of which the honeybee is by far the most consistent and reliable source.

Even commercial beekeepers, which take extraordinary measures to ward off pests and disease, are in trouble. During the winter of 2000-2001, Maryland was among East Coast states hit particularly hard by drought and mite-related causes. While a federal program has helped to restock the hives, winter losses generally remain far higher than in pre-mite times. Wild bees remain scarce; longtime beekeepers are calling it quits, and too few new ones are taking their place. [Washington post, 2002]

The Road to Reduced Greenhouse Gas Emissions in Developing Countries

WASHINGTON, DC. - With transportation-related emissions of carbon dioxide growing at a rapid pace around the globe, the Pew Center on Global Climate Change today released two reports identifying policies and strategies that could help slow the growth of emissions in developing countries.

According to one of the Pew Center reports released today, *Transportation in Developing Countries: An Overview of Greenhouse Gas Reduction Strategies*, transportation-related carbon dioxide emissions grew at an annual rate of 5.6 percent in the developing countries of Asia between 1980 and 1998; the rate of growth for all developing countries was 4 percent. If current trends continue, the report projects that the number of motor vehicles in use around the world will double in the next 20 to 30 years, with much of the increase occurring in developing nations. Despite the projections, howev-

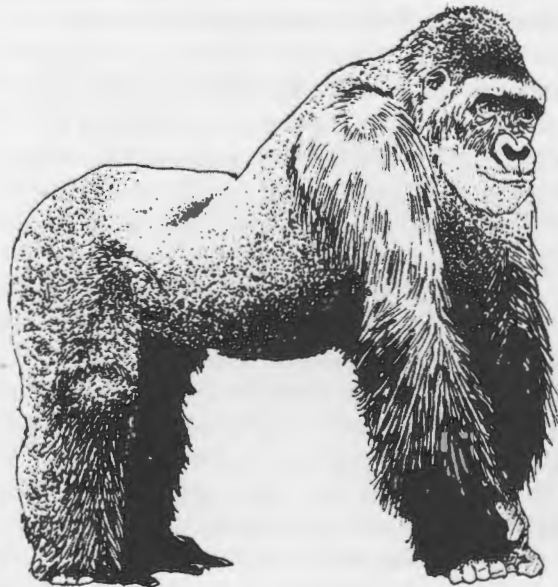
er, the report identifies many inexpensive and attractive options to keep emissions growth to a minimum—from improved motor vehicle technologies to the promotion of "car sharing" and other strategies.

The other report, *Transportation in Developing Countries: Greenhouse Gas Scenarios for South Africa*, builds on previously released Pew Center studies focusing on Shanghai, China, and Delhi, India. While projecting significant increases in transportation-related emissions of carbon dioxide in South Africa in the coming years, the report identifies public and private sector initiatives that could reduce emissions growth while easing traffic congestion and cutting air pollution.

"Our objective is not to prevent developing countries from growing or from enjoying the convenience of personal transportation," said Claussen. "Rather, the goal must be to make sure that South Africa and other countries develop transportation systems that are climate-friendly at the same time that they meet the needs of the people who use them." [The Pew Center on Global Climate Change]

Mountain Gorillas Killed

The unthinkable happened in Rwanda late in the afternoon of May 9th. Two highly endangered female mountain gorillas were slaughtered in the Parc National des Volcans. With a mere 660 mountain gorillas in the world, their conservation status has afforded them considerable protection. Nonetheless, poachers killed two mothers, Impanga (11 years old) and Muraha (25 years old), ostensibly for their babies. One of the babies is missing, and



the other was found huddled next to her dead mother.

"All the evidence seems to indicate that the gorillas were killed in order to obtain gorillas for sale on the illegal market," says Annette Lanjouw, the Director of the International Gorilla Conservation Program (IGCP) which is supported by African Wildlife Foundation, the World Wide Fund for Nature and Fauna and Flora International.

Lanjouw is concerned that this incident will compound threats already facing the mountain gorilla population—among them, civil unrest and war in the region as well as the loss of habitat to human settlements and agriculture.

The dead gorillas were part of the Susa group, one of the most popular for tourists, due to its large size and the calm and trust of the individuals in the family. It has been monitored daily and visited by tourists for almost 20 years. The bodies of the adult females were found on the morning of May 10th by trackers. They also discovered that one of the group's young males had been wounded.

Local authorities and the military have suspects in custody. Katie Frohardt, African Wildlife Foundation's Program Technical Director and former Rwanda Director for IGCP from 1995-1997, says that if the baby was sold, it has probably already left Rwanda to a destination abroad. "We are appealing to anyone who has knowledge of Ubuzima's whereabouts to go to the authorities immediately," she pleads. Lanjouw reiterated that there are no mountain gorillas held in captivity in any legal zoo, private collection, or captive-breeding center in the world. Whoever is holding this gorilla is breaking the law and will be prosecuted. [African Wildlife Foundation]

Horseshoe Crab Census Underway, Counting Valuable Creature

Every spring, horseshoe crabs in the Delaware Bay come to shore to lay their eggs on Delaware and New Jersey's beaches. This spawning period is an ideal time for Delaware Sea Grant Marine Education Specialist Bill Hall and a host of volunteers to count the number of crabs along the shoreline. The "crab census" takes place on peak spawning days in May and June, and is conducted on 24 beaches in the Delaware Bay.

Delaware Sea Grant organized the first census in 1990 in an effort to learn more about the important animal's population status. Horseshoe crabs fill a critical niche in both the ecology of the Delaware Bay and in human pharmacology. Newly spawned eggs provide food for shorebirds on their way from South America to the Arctic. In the pharmaceutical

industry, horseshoe crabs are bled to obtain a compound that can test intravenous drugs for dangerous bacteria. They are used in prosthetics like heart valves and artificial teeth as well. The horseshoe crab is also commercially fished and used as a bait-fish. [National Sea Grant College Program]

Altered Algae Eating More Metal than Before in Lake Erie

May 13, 2002 - Bio-remediation researchers supported by Ohio Sea Grant funding are further enhancing genetically altered algae to maximize its ability to pick up trace metals. Metals such as mercury, cadmium and zinc from area industry accumulate in Lake Erie sediment and eventually pose a human health risk. The algae, *Chlamydomonas reinhardtii*, is a unicellular algae that is widely available, can be genetically engineered easily, and grows quickly in high volumes.

Previous research by Ohio State University researcher Richard Sayre found the algae to be more effective, less costly and safer than using chemical extraction methods. Now, Sayre and his team have found further ways of altering the algae to increase the algae's ability to attach itself to heavy metals in Lake Erie sediment. They used three approaches of genetic alteration, and found that each enhanced the cell's ability to bind with the metals.

The most effective method involved attaching metallothionein, a protein that binds heavy metals, to the outside of the algae cell. It picked up five times more metal than a regular cell and grew three times faster when surrounded by high concentrations of heavy metals. Research will continue to study how much of each trace metal binds to the *Chlamydomonas* cell. Sayre will also work with engineering firms to test pilot facilities for treatment of contaminated wastes and sites.

"By increasing the algae's ability to attach to trace metals, we believe this research will be an important step in the identification of the best strate-

gies for reducing heavy metal pollution and the remediation of contaminated sites and waters of the Great Lakes," said Sayre. [National Sea Grant College Program]

Death of Natural History?

Writing in the "The Future's Edge" section of the San Diego Union-Tribune, reporter Richard Louv indicates that most "ecology" students (and many professional scientists) are unable to identify significant numbers of flora and fauna in their area of work. An interview with professor of oceanography, Paul Dayton, at the Scripps Institution of Oceanography reveals most elite graduate students in marine biology exhibit "no evidence of training in any type of natural history." Dayton, an Ecological Society of America honoree, says few upper-division ecology majors or undergraduates in marine ecology "know even major phyla such as Arthropods or Annelids" and "even talk about tiny larval whales!"

The blame, according to Dayton and other respected scientists, lies in "the dominance of molecular biology in higher education." Dayton believes the "explicit goal of the new philosophy of modern university science education is to get the ologies - invertebrate zoology, ichthyology, herpetology - back into the 19th century where they belong. Universities set the tone for science education at every level."

It seems that most current scientists began their careers as children, chasing bugs and snakes, collecting spiders and feeling awe in the presence of nature. Such "untidy activities" are disappearing as children now spend much of their time gazing into computer screens learning about exotic species and are greatly unaware of the thousands of creatures that constitute their home environment. The long term cost of "electronic" education may be very high.

