

RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN ENVIRONMENTAL LAW—MAY 16

Alan Knauf, Esq. Partner in Knauf Koegel & Shaw, LLP will present a Special Topics session on recent development in Environmental Law at the federal, state and local levels on Wednesday, May 16 from 7:00 to 9:30 p.m. The CEI-sponsored program will be held at the Arts Center, A-183, Nazareth College on East Avenue, Pittsford.

The program will provide an update on recent developments, and identify problem areas in environmental law and regulation. The session will be appropriate for those who have not had any exposure to environmental law,

and also for those who participated in last year's four session course and want to keep

up-to-date on recent information and legislation.

Alan Knauf is a past chair of the Environmental Law Committee of the Monroe County Bar Association and is active with the Environmental Law Section of the NYS Bar Association. He has organized CEI's award-winning environmental law course for many years.

Cost of the program is \$40 for CEI members and \$50 for non-members. Student fee is \$20. For further information about registration and member discounts contact the Center for Envi-

ronmental Information at 262-2870 or email ceiroch@aol.com.

SAVE THE DATE

The chairman of the Great Lakes Commission, Nathaniel E. Robinson, will be the speaker at the Annual Community Salute to the Environment, sponsored by the Center for Environmental Information. The meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, October 24 at the Hyatt Hotel. Mark the date on your calendars. Further information will be forthcoming in the Summer 2001 Issue of the Sphere.

BUSH ADMINISTRATION PERSPECTIVES AND PRIORITIES FOR ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE—JUNE 6

William Muszynski, Acting Regional Director, Region II (New York, New Jersey), of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, will speak at a Special Topics program on Wednesday, June 6 about Bush administration perspectives and priorities for environmental compliance.

President Bush has indicated some of his priorities in the environmental area: a renewed emphasis on cleaning of "brownfields", and full funding for the Land and Water Conservation Fund which makes available federal dollars for state and local open space protection. This session will provide an overview of the new administration's perspective on environmental problems and identify priorities for monitoring of pollutants and compliance with regulations in Region II. EPA's responsibilities cover both large and small businesses and state and local government facilities and activities.

Cost of the program is \$40 for CEI members and \$50 for non-members. Student fee is \$20. For further information about registration and member discounts contact the Center for Environmental Information at 262-2870 or email ceiroch@aol.com.

CEI'S FUTURE? . . . A LONG-RANGE PLANNING EXERCISE

As we told you in the last issue of the CEI SHERE, after a quarter century of meeting the environmental information needs of this Community, CEI's Board of Directors feels that it is essential that we now assess the environmental information needs of the Community. We are doing this as a means of determining what, and even if, the Center should be doing in the future. Have we outlived our usefulness? Is there more that needs to be done in the area of environmental communication, education and information? What?

ACID RAIN:

ARE THE PROBLEMS SOLVED?

May 2-3 Conference to Convene in D.C. CEI has organized a national conference on acid rain to be held at the Holiday Inn Capitol in Washington, D.C. on May 2 and 3. Leading scientists, economists and policy analysts will speak at the conference, along with Congressional representatives. EPA Administrator Christine Todd Whitman has been invited to give a luncheon address.

Speaker affiliations include U.S. EPA, National Park Service, U.S. Geological Survey, National Acid Precipitation Assessment Program, RAND Corporation, Electric Power Research Institute, American Electric Power, Resources for the Future, Environmental Defense, University of Virginia, Syracuse University, New York University, North Carolina State University, Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, California Air Resources Board, Illinois State Water Survey, and Environment Canada.

Current scientific findings and assessments make clear that the problems resulting from acid deposition have not been resolved; and that reductions of the serious on-going ecological and economic impacts of acid deposition—nationwide—require new policy initiatives. The conference will inform decision makers about North American regional impacts,

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How? By Whom? There are still environmental groups that arise with each new intrusion by "progress" into a wetland, wildlife habitat, or environmentally sensitive area. Who will assist those people who want to protect the last of Nature's treasures? Who will provide a forum for reasoned discourse on the environmental issues of the present and the future? Beyond these traditional roles, there might even be new purposes and new ways to which we can apply CEI's reputation for

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ENVIRONMENTAL ACTIVISM

Sierra Club Named Most Effective Environmental Organization

In a survey of members of Congress and key decision makers in the Clinton Administration, the Sierra Club was named by Republicans and Democrats alike as the national nonprofit organization they believe has the most effect on public policy. The survey was conducted by the Aspen Institute, a nonpartisan public policy research and education organization. Sierra Club received twice as many votes as the next closest environmental group and more than any of the groups who lobby to weaken environmental safeguards.

Source: Sierra Club

Protection of Arctic National Wildlife Refuge Environmental Priority

Protection from oil drilling for the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, a refuge and habitat of global significance, is a priority for national environmental organizations. They maintain that less than 3% of U.S. electricity is generated from oil; that the U.S. Geological Survey estimates of economically recoverable reserves amount to about a six month supply of oil at present rates of consumption. Since it would be many years before such oil could be brought to market it would not provide near-term relief for high oil prices. Estimates are given that if SUV's and light trucks were as efficient as today's cars, in less than 3 years the country would save more gas than the Arctic Refuge could provide.

Sources: Union of Concerned Scientists, Natural Resources Defense Council, Wilderness Society, Sierra Club etc.

EPA Seeks Public Comment

In response to a legal petition asking the EPA to address emissions of greenhouse gases by cars and trucks, the agency has opened a public comment period. Comments can be sent to "Docket No. A-2000-04" and emailed to A-and-R-docket@epa.gov or sent to Room M-1500 (MC 6102), 401 M St. SW, Washington, DC 20460.

Public Service Commission Expands Energy Efficiency Funding

The NYS Public Service Commission has expanded and extended the System Benefits Charge (SBC) paid by electricity users to fund public policy programs in the areas of energy efficiency, energy demand reduction, research and development, and

energy affordability for low-income utility customers. The program, administered by the state's Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA), increases the total amount of support for these programs from \$78 to \$150 million annually, for a total of \$750 million commitment over 5 years. The action was widely praised by environmental and business groups.

The program is expected to result in peak demand reduction of up to 300 MW by Summer 2001 and electricity savings of about 670 million kWh. In addition to significant reductions in air pollutant emissions, the program is also expected to support the creation and retention of over seven thousand jobs annually by 2006, as well as leveraging external funding by about \$3 billion in private sector investments. More information can be found on the website www.nyserda.org.

Majority of Adirondack Development Permitted by Local Government

A study completed by the Residents' Committee to Protect the Adirondacks has determined that over 8000 new structures have been built in the Adirondack Park in the past decade, with 57 % of that development regulated solely by local governments. 43% of the development was regulated by the NYS Adirondack Park Agency (APA) under the Adirondack Park Land Use and Development Plan. Approximately 45% of the 6 million acre Adirondack Park is public land (Forest Preserve) where development is not permitted. Data for the study was obtained from the 92 towns and 11 villages in the Park and from the APA Projects Database.

Given the steady development pattern and the significant regulatory authority retained by local governments for the majority of projects, the Committee made several recommendations. These include: funding for a Local Planning Assistance Program terminated in the 1980s; funding for increased Resource Analysis and Scientific Services staff at the APA to make available more expertise to town and village planning boards; establishment of cumulative environmental impact analysis and research on carrying capacity of lake watersheds; continued land acquisition and purchase of conservation easements. The summary report with graphs

and charts is available from RCPA, P.O. Box 27, North Creek, NY 12853-0027.

Quality Communities Task Force Makes Recommendations

Last September, Lieutenant Governor Donahue spoke at the Annual Community Salute to the Environment, sponsored by the Center for Environmental Information, about the work of the Interagency Task Force on Quality Communities which she chairs. The Task Force has issued a report and recommendations in five areas: State Leadership, Interagency Collaboration and Assistance to Local Governments; Using Technology; Revitalizing Downtowns; Maintaining New York's Leadership in Open Space Conservation; Renewal of New York Agriculture; Transportation Infrastructure; Quality for All; and Economic Growth.

The Report quotes Supervisor Bill Carpenter of the Town of Pittsford who defined a quality community as follows: "It is a safe family environment, it's a vitality and community pride with the residents, it is community involvement with a strong rapport with local officials. It is growth in accordance with local plans and policies, it's concern for the environment. It's protection for the character of our communities. It's a place we call home." www.state.ny.us/lgtgovdoc/

Erin Crotty Named New Environmental Commissioner

Erin M. Crotty has been nominated by Governor Pataki and confirmed by the Senate as the new Commissioner of the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC), replacing John Cahill who has been named Senior Policy Advisor to Governor Pataki. Crotty is expected to carry on the leadership and commitment exhibited by Cahill since he became Commissioner in 1997.

Crotty was director of Government Relations for Plug Power, a leading developer of fuel cell technology for residential applications. She served two years as Deputy Commissioner for Water Quality and Environmental Remediation at DEC and was involved in the negotiation of the historic New York City Watershed Agreement. Previously she was a policy analyst for the NYS Senate Commission on Toxic Substances and Hazardous Wastes.

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WALSH ELECTED TO BOARD; PRICHARD ELECTED SECRETARY

Thomas F. Walsh, Esq., managing partner of Jaeckle Fleischmann & Mugel, LLP Rochester office, has been elected to fill a vacancy created by the departure of Ginger Lamb from New York State.

Tom Walsh is a long time CEI member and supporter and has been a regular presenter at the Survey Course on Environmental Law, sponsored by CEI.

He is past chair of his firm's Environmental Practice Group and an Adjunct Professor of Environmental Law at RIT. He has published numerous articles on environmental law.

Thomas F. Walsh

Walsh is chair of the Monroe County Local Emergency Planning Committee, and a member of the Monroe County Bar Association's Academy of Law. He is also a two term past chair of the Environmental Committee of the Monroe Bar Association, and a member of the Environmental Committee of the New York State Bar Association.

Sandi Prichard, Esq. of Nixon Peabody, elected to the Board in December 2000, was elected Secretary of the Board to replace the position vacated by Ginger Lamb. CEI welcomes both enthusiastically.

FUTURE (cont. from p. 1)

accurate, credible, balanced perspective on environmental issues.

For the next few months we are following a process that draws in maximum input from our membership, past Boards of Directors, and the current Board. We also need the view of "outsiders" who are also stakeholders in the future of a quality environment in this Region and State. Our process begins with a Steering Committee, Long-Range Planning Committee and a series of focus groups that will try to draw out as many perceptions of CEI, its past, present and, and future. With this, we will develop a survey document that assembles the ideas from the focus groups into reaction-type questions. These questionnaires will allow us to

quantify responses from as many environmentally conscious participants as possible. Out of this, we'll develop recommendations for the future, for the Board to accept, modify or reject. Our eight month schedule aims to have recommendations completed by the end of the year.

The most important element of this process is participation, by the members and friends of CEI. Without a broad range of participants, our decision will be under-informed, and at best, a guess that could come back to haunt us in the years to come.

We cannot succeed without your individual input. Please respond with your support to our effort when you are asked. Thank you.

*Lee Loomis, Chair,
CEI Long Range Planning Committee*

2001-2002

ENVIRONMENTAL DIRECTORY

The 2001-2002 edition of the Directory of Environmental Agencies and Organizations for the Rochester-Genesee Finger Lakes Region will be available in May.

This limited edition publication is always a "best-seller", so be sure to order your copies right away. Over 350 public and private agencies and organizations are listed with complete contact information. The Directory costs \$10, plus \$3 for shipping and handling for members, and \$20, plus \$3 for shipping and handling for non-members. Become a CEI member today and take advantage of the member discount! Inquiries and orders should be directed to the CEI Office, phone 716-262-2870.

WEB SITE AGAIN ON LINE

The CEI web site is up and running. It will be updated regularly. In the future, links will be established to other sites that provide information about environmental matters of interest in the Rochester region. Bookmark the site for future reference! www.rochesterenvironment.org

CEI Sphere
published by the
Center for Environmental Information, Inc.
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Rochester, NY 14604-1314
(716) 262-2870
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E-mail <ceiroch@aol.com>
www.rochesterenvironment.org
Printed on recycled paper.

Center for
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Nonprofit Org.
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Rochester, NY
Permit No. 563